

Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

OCTOBER 2008

Refrigerator Poster

Just hang your *Recipes* poster on the refrigerator and sneak in an activity when you have a few minutes. These fun activities will help develop school success and positive behavior. Check off each box as you complete the "recipe."

LOGIC Descriptive

Your youngster can sharpen his logical-thinking skills with this activity.

Ingredients: pencils, paper

Think of an object for your child to guess. Write down three clues that could describe the item. The catch? Don't include any words that are part of its name. For example, if you choose a beach ball, you could write "toy," "round," and "water," but not "beach" or "ball."

Read the clues to your youngster, one at a time, to help him guess your object. *Examples:* "My object is a toy." "It's round." "You play with it in the water." Continue to add to the description ("You throw it back and forth") until your child guesses correctly. Then, let him think of an object and make up clues for you.



READING Read and Go Seek

The more your child reads, the better her chance of winning this month-long challenge.

Ingredients: reading materials, calendar, pen

Start by brainstorming different kinds of reading materials (fairy tale, poem, cereal box, weather report, blog). Have your youngster write each one on a different calendar square.

The first person to read an item that's listed on that calendar day shares it with the rest of the family and marks the space with her initials. At the end of the month, the person with the most initials wins. Celebrate with a trip to a library or bookstore.



SPELLING Fix the Mistake

Catching spelling errors can be fun—especially if your youngster is finding yours!

Ingredients: paper, pencil

Let your child give you a spelling "test." She can read her list of spelling words while you write them on a sheet of paper.

Here's the twist. Make at least one mistake in each word. For example, you might add an extra "l" to "watermelon" or leave a "c" out of "accent."

Then, your youngster gets to grade the test. Give her a red pen and have her write the words correctly. Can she fix all of your mistakes?



FRACTIONS

Ask your youngster to calculate how many halves or fourths can be made from different numbers of fruits. For instance, 3 oranges = 6 halves or 12 fourths. Or reverse it: 5 halves or 10 fourths = $2\frac{1}{2}$ apples. Let her count as you cut the fruit to check her guesses.



SCIENCE

Send your child on a virtual tour to learn about animals that live in the wild. At <http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/wildcam>, he can watch live videos of grizzly bears in Alaska, wallabies in Australia, and crocodiles in Africa.



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Character Corner

MATH Hit or Miss Multiplication

Need to target multiplication skills? This game provides plenty of practice.

Ingredients: pencil, paper

Draw a tic-tac-toe game large enough to cover a sheet of paper, and write the numbers 1 to 9 in the squares.

Players take turns closing their eyes and touching a pencil to the board. The first player multiplies the number he touches by 1 to find his score. *Example:* Touch 5, multiply 5×1 , and write a score of 5.

The next player touches a number and multiplies by 2. Continue, recording and adding each person's score, until a player has multiplied his number by 10.

The winner is the person with the highest score.

LISTENING

Work together to tell a story aloud. Start with a two-word sentence (John raced). Your youngster continues the tale with three words (He ran fast). Take turns, adding one word with each sentence until you both decide the story is over. Your child will build listening skills as she counts the words in each line.

VOCABULARY

Choose an unfamiliar word from the dictionary, and ask your youngster to make up his own definition for it. For instance, he might define "uncanny" as "something not stored in cans." Compare the real and made-up definitions to see how close he came. Then, let him pick a word for you to define.

HANDWRITING

Mazes are a great way to develop muscles needed for good handwriting. Help your child find a book of mazes, or print some from a Web site like www.printactivities.com/Mazes.html. She might even tape two fine-tipped pens together tightly and move them around on paper to draw her own.

COURAGE

Encourage your child to try something new that she's hesitant about. For example, maybe she wishes she could swim but doesn't like getting her face wet. Help her follow through by signing her up for swim lessons.

RESPONSIBILITY

The next time your youngster receives an invitation to a party, give him the job of responding. He can call, e-mail, or write the hosts to let them know whether he's coming. He'll be practicing good manners and learning responsibility.

SELF-ESTEEM

Build your child's confidence with a family talent show. Each person can do something he enjoys. You could sing, and your child might recite tongue twisters. After the performances, work together to make silly certificates, like a "Never Tongue-Tied" award.

WEIGHT

Make a simple scale with your child. Have him put five pennies in one sandwich bag and five nickels in another. Clip them to opposite ends of a coat hanger and hang it on a doorknob. Which coins weigh the most? Tell your youngster that the hanger tilts toward the heavier ones (the nickels).

Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)