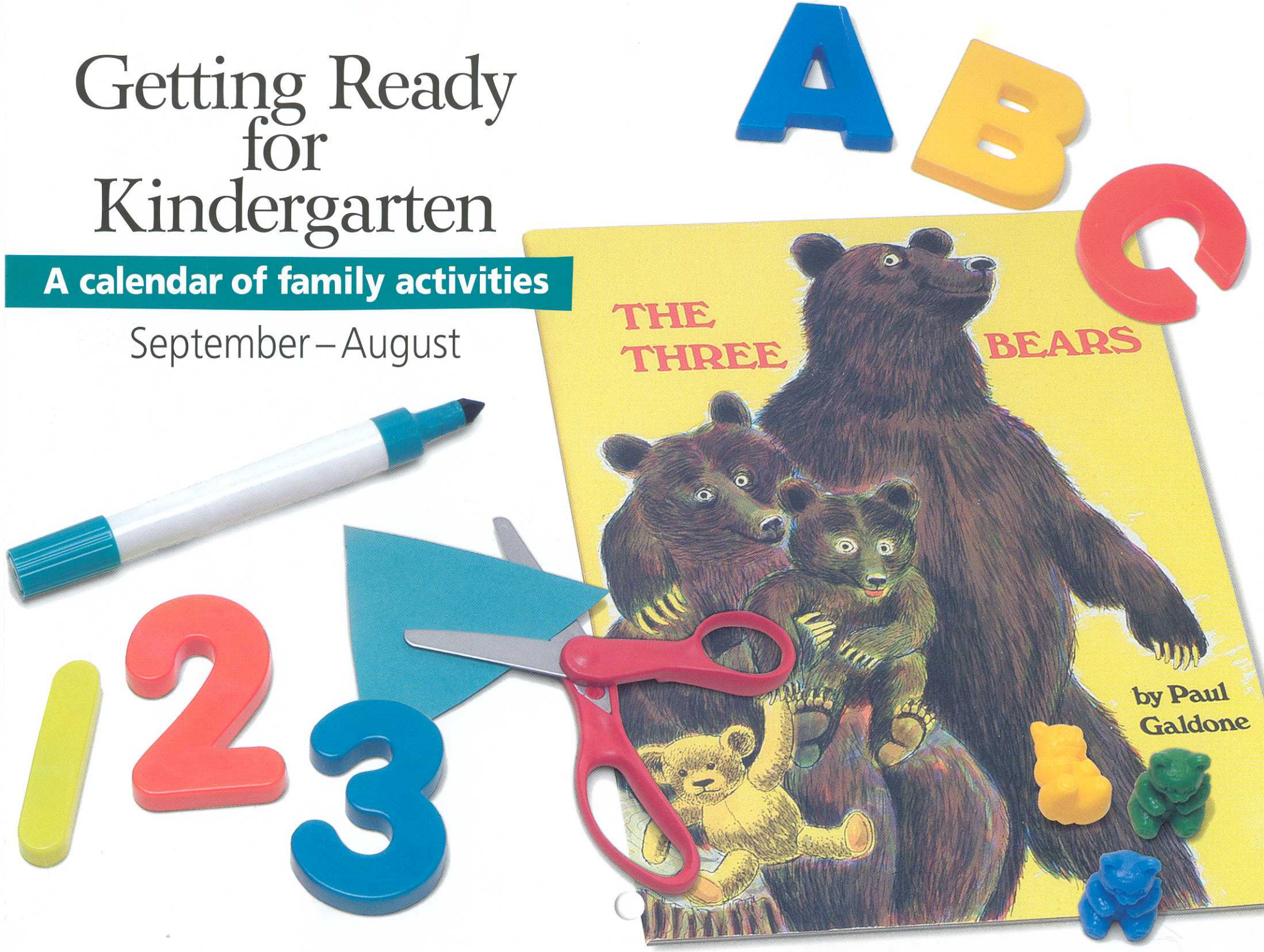
Getting Ready for Kindergarten

A calendar of family activities

September – August



Welcome!

One of the most exciting days for you and your child is that day when he or she goes to kindergarten. The family calendar of kindergarten readiness activities is designed to help you and your child get ready for that special day.

The family calendar is filled with kindergarten readiness activities and ideas that

- Focus on spending special time with your child
- You and your child can do together at home and in your community
- Often use materials found in your home and that cost little or no money
- Give your child a foundation for experiences he or she will have in kindergarten
- Are based on the Arkansas Department of Education Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

Below is a list of the Kindergarten Readiness Indicators developed by the Arkansas Department of Education. Notice that a month is listed to the right of each indicator. By referring to the list you can know in advance in which calendar month an indicator will be presented. You may also use the list as a guide should you decide to work with your child on certain indicators at a different time than is suggested.

Calendar

The Family Calendar runs from September through August. For each month there is a theme that focuses on specific kindergarten readiness indicators. Each month is divided into four weeks with suggested activities that you and your child can do together each week. Be flexible. If your child is not interested in a suggested activity, move on to something else. Allow your child to repeat activities. Children learn through repetition.

Each month includes additional and special activities, a list of children's books and web sites. Add your own creative ideas to those presented in the family calendar.

Memories of Our Year

A "Memories of Our Year" section follows the calendar pages. Use this space to make notes about special activities you and your child do together each month. Make this memories section of the calendar a keepsake to be shared with your child.

Kindergarten Registration Information

Information needed to register your child for public school kindergarten can be found on the back of the calendar.

Have a wonderful year together as you and your child get ready for the **Big Day – Going To Kindergarten!**

Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist

		FOCUS MONTH
1.	Speaks in complete sentences	February
2.	Follows directions with at least two steps	February
3.	Understands words such as "top" and "bottom" and "big" and "little"	February
4.	Makes simple predictions and comments about a story being read	September
5.	Matches two pictures that are alike	May
6.	Looks at groups of objects and says which are the same shape, color or size	May
7.	Tells things that go together; for example a spoon and fork are for eating and a fish and a boat go in the water	June
8.	Repeats a pattern you start; for example, step, step, jump – step, step, jump	June
9.	Puts 3 pictures in order; for example 1. Planting flower seeds 2. Flowers growing 3. Picking flowers	June
10.	Says or sings familiar songs and nursery rhymes	March
11.	Retells a simple story such as *The Three Little Pigs* after listening to it while looking at the pictures in the book	September
12.	Works puzzles	June
13.	Recognizes and names at least 5 colors	May
14.	Recognizes his or her own first name in print	December
15.	Recognizes letters in his or her own first name	December
16.	Begins to write some of the letters in his or her own first name	October
17.	Recognizes words or signs he or she sees often; for example, McDonald's, Wal-Mart, the name of the local grocery store where the family shops, or stop signs and exit signs	December
18.	Holds and looks at books correctly; for example holds the book right side up and turns the pages one at a time from front to back	September

		FOCUS MONTH
19.	Recognizes rhyming words such as cat and hat	March
20.	Recognizes and names at least 10 letters of the alphabet	December
21.	Matches a letter with the beginning sound of a word; for example matches the letter "b" with a picture of a banana	March
22.	Expresses ideas through pictures he or she draws; for example a child draws a picture of 3 family members and says who each one is	October
23.	Counts at least 5 objects such as 3 bananas and 5 forks	January
24.	Sees the written numeral "3" and understands this means 3 objects such as 3 bears	January
25.	Adds and subtracts familiar objects such as cookies	April
26.	Puts written numerals in order from 1 to 5: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	January
27.	Recognizes and names 3 shapes: circle, square and triangle	May
28.	Counts from 1 to 10 in correct order	January
29.	Uses the words "more" and "less" correctly	April
30.	Tells if he or she is a boy or girl	July
31.	Tells first and last name	July
32.	Tells first and last name of parent(s)	July
33.	Tells how old he or she is	July
34.	Takes care of own needs such as toileting, washing hands and dressing	August
35.	Adjusts to new situations without parents being there	August
36.	Uses pencils, crayons and markers for drawing and writing and cuts with scissors	October
37.	Draws a line, circle, X and +	October
38.	Runs, jumps, hops, throws, catches, and bounces a ball	November

September

Read with your child each day.

WEEK 1
Create a reading area for your child.

- Store your child's books in a special place such as a basket or drawer or on a low shelf.
- Place a small rug or pillow in the area to create a cozy and comfortable place for reading.
- Join your child and enjoy reading together.
- Talk with your child about how to care for books, including how to return books to their storage place.

WEEK 2
Give your child a variety of books for reading.

- Visit your local library or book mobile with your child.
- Let your child look at the picture books in the children's section of the library and select several books to take home.
- Get a library card for your child.
- Look for other places to find books:
  - garage or yard sales
  - thrift shops
  - book clubs
  - friends or relatives
  - public library sales
  - book stores

Focus on Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

Makes simple predictions and comments about a story being read

Retells a simple story such as *The Three Little Pigs* after listening to it while looking at the pictures in the book

Holds and looks at book correctly; for example, holds the book right side up and turns the pages one at a time from front to back

Once upon a time...

Additional Ideas

Bring along a book bag containing some of your child's favorite books when you leave home. Your child can read in the car, on the bus, at the laundromat or at the doctor's office. You can read with your child as you wait together.

WEEK 3

Set aside a special time each day to read with your child.

- Read with your child in a special place such as a comfortable chair away from distractions.
- Hold your child close to you when you read to help develop a positive attitude toward reading.
- Read your child's favorite books over and over.
- Read favorite books from your childhood.

WEEK 4

Let your child participate in book reading.

- Talk with your child as you enjoy reading a book together. For example:
  - Talk with your child about the illustrations and information on the cover of the book; for example the title, author (person who wrote the story) and illustrator (person who drew the pictures).
  - Ask your child to look at the illustrations on the cover of the book and predict what he or she thinks the book is about.
  - Show your child how to start at the beginning of the book and how to turn the pages.
  - Ask your child to retell the story in his or her own words.

SPECIAL ACTIVITY

Begin the "Memories of Our Year" section of the calendar by recording activities you and your child do together. Here are some examples for September:

Start a list of books you have read with your child.

Place a star by your child's favorite books.

Your child may draw a picture after you read a story. Add the picture to the "Memories of Our Year" section.

Suggested Books to Read with Your Child

Clifford's First School Day by Norman Bridwell, Scholastic (1999)

Corduroy by Don Freeman, Viking (1968)

Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown, Harpercollins (1947), Clement Hurd, illustrator

If You Take A Mouse to School by Laura Numeroff, Harpercollins, (2002), Felicia Bond, illustrator

The Three Little Pigs by Paul Galdone, Clarion (1979)

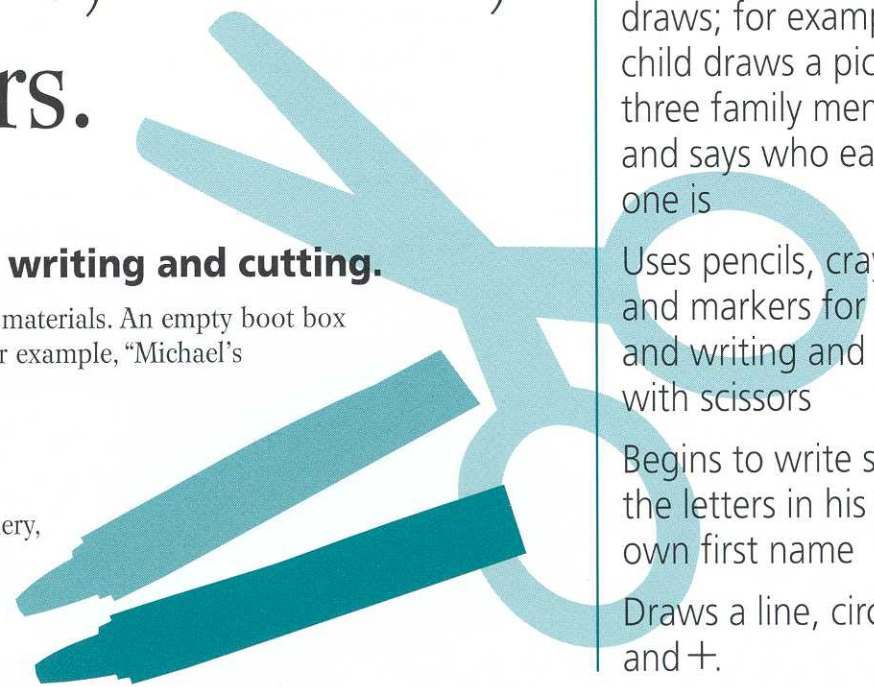
Web Sites

http://www.naeyc.org/resources/eyly/1998/19.asp

http://www.scholastic.com/families/

http://www.hssd.k12.wi.us/readingchild.htm

Let your child use school tools such as pencils, markers, crayons and scissors.



WEEK 1

Gather and organize materials for drawing, writing and cutting.

- Help your child select a storage container for drawing and writing materials. An empty boot box is a good size. Help your child decorate and label the container, for example, "Michael's Drawing and Writing Box."
- Add some of these tools to the box: crayons, washable markers, pencils, chalk, colored pencils, blunt-tip scissors, paper punch.
- Add paper to the box. Look for note pads, loose-leaf paper, stationery, envelopes, paper bags, typing paper and index cards.
- Decide on some simple rules for using the drawing and writing materials. For example, "Markers may be used at the kitchen table or outdoors," or "Scissors are for cutting paper."

WEEK 2

Encourage your child to explore with drawing materials.

- Suggest that your child draw pictures
  - in the kitchen while you prepare dinner
  - in the park while you enjoy the bright fall days

Focus on Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

Expresses ideas through pictures he or she draws; for example, a child draws a picture of three family members and says who each one is

Uses pencils, crayons and markers for drawing and writing and cuts with scissors

Begins to write some of the letters in his or her own first name

Draws a line, circle, X and +.

Additional Ideas

Outdoors, allow your child to draw and write with chalk on the sidewalk. Draw in dirt or sand with a stick. Use small brushes to draw with water on the sidewalk.

Make large playdough pancakes. Encourage your child to write or draw on the pancakes with pencils or with craft sticks.

- after reading a favorite story or singing a favorite song
- in the doctor's office while waiting for your appointment

✿ With your child, draw pictures about family events and experiences
- Our trip to the grocery store
- Grandma's house

✿ Talk with your child about the pictures and decide on a place to display your favorites. Choose a picture to attach to the "Memories" page.

WEEK 3

Support your child as he or she practices using scissors.

✿ Designate appropriate places for your child to use scissors and discuss safety rules.

✿ Be sure that your child knows how to hold the scissors, how to open and close the blades, and how to hold the paper.

✿ Encourage your child to snip playdough snakes and soda straws into little pieces.

✿ Provide strips of construction paper and cards from junk mail for your child to snip.

✿ As your child's skill improves, offer old magazines for cutting.

WEEK 4

Let your child see that written words are a part of daily life.

✿ Make a grocery shopping list together or write a note to a relative or friend.

✿ Clearly label your child's belongings with his or her name.

✿ Spell your child's name with magnetic letters on the refrigerator.

✿ Encourage your child to use the materials in the drawing and writing box if he or she is interested in writing.

SPECIAL ACTIVITY

Make the world's longest picture.

Use a roll of freezer paper or shelf paper (or tape together many sheets of paper).

Suggest that your child begin drawing at one end, adding new drawings each day.

Measure the picture with a ruler or yardstick.

Encourage your child to continue to add to the "world's longest picture" for several days or weeks, as long as he or she is interested.

Suggested Books to Read with Your Child

A Letter to Amy by Ezra Jack Keats, Puffin (1988)

The Art Box by Gail Gibbons, Holiday House (1998)

Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type by Doreen Cronin, Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing (2000)

Harold and the Purple Crayon by Crockett Johnson, Harpercollins Juvenile Books (1981)

My Hands by Aliki, HarperCollins (1962, 1990)

The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats, Puffin (1981)

Web Sites

http://www.hssd.k12.wi.us/readingchild.htm#scissors

http://www.crayola.com/activitybook/print.cfm?id=1129

Give your child daily opportunities to use large muscles.

Focus on Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

Runs, jumps and hops

Throws, catches and bounces a ball

WEEK 1

Collect safe toys and equipment to help your child develop large muscles.

- hoops (hula hoops) found at discount or dollar stores
- empty water bottles to use as bowling pins
- bean bags or bean socks (Make bean socks by partially filling a sock with beans and tying a knot in the sock.)
- tricycle to steer and pedal
- balls for throwing, catching and bouncing (9 to 12 inch rubber balls), beach balls
- basketball hoop at height child can reach with a ball

WEEK 2

Let your child spend time outdoors and have space and freedom to use large muscles.

- Have a safe outdoor place for your child to run and play; your yard or a near by park, for example.
- Set up empty water bottles and let your child use a beach ball to bowl.

Additional Ideas

Go through your collection of tapes and CDs. Select the ones you think will encourage your child to use large muscles to march, hop, bend and sway, for example. Play a tape or CD and invite your child to move to the music. Try different ones to find your child's favorites. Join your child in moving to the music. Check with a music store to see if they carry any children's tapes or CDs that are intended to encourage children to move and use their large muscles.

- Hang a hula hoop from a limb so that your child can throw a ball through the hoop.
- Let your child pedal a tricycle outdoors.
- Hang a basketball hoop low enough so your child can successfully "make a basket."

WEEK 3

Give your child opportunities to use large muscles indoors.

- Invite your child to toss bean bags or bean socks into a basket, a hoop or a masking tape circle on the floor.
- Put rolled up socks or bean socks in a small basket. Let your child try balancing the basket on his or her head while walking.
- Create an obstacle course in a room with space for moving. Include a taped line to walk on, a table to crawl under, chairs to crawl through, a book to jump over and a large box to crawl through.
- Suggest that your child move like different animals: hop like a rabbit, slither like a snake, crawl like a bug and fly like a bird.

Week 4

Join your child in active play.

- Play toss and catch with your child using 9 to 12 inch rubber balls.
- Set up an obstacle course and encourage your child to steer a tricycle through it. Milk jugs weighted down with sand or rocks can be used to mark the course.
- Draw a hopscotch pattern on your patio or driveway (if safe). Show your child how to hop the pattern. Let your child hop according to his or her ability. Using stones or markers to play the game is a skill for older children.
- Recall singing games from your childhood such as Hokey Pokey and Looby Loo and involve your child and other family members in playing the game.

SPECIAL ACTIVITY

In the "Memories of Our Year" section of the calendar, write "How I Use My Large Muscles." Talk with your child about all the ways he or she uses large muscles and record these on the "Memories" page. Let your child show you what he or she can do. Some examples to include are: walk, run, tiptoe, jump, hop, gallop, bend, twist, stretch, wiggle, shake, roll, toss a ball, catch a ball, bounce a ball, pedal a tricycle, "make a basket." As your child develops new large muscle skills such as skipping, add these to the list.

Suggested Books to Read with Your Child

From Head to Toe by Eric Carle, Scholastic, Inc. (1997)

Miss Mary Mack by Mary Ann Hoberman, Megan Tingley (1998), Nadine Bernard Westcott, illustrator

Quick as a Cricket by Audrey Wood, Child's Play Intl Ltd. (1990), Don Wood, illustrator

Shake My Sillies Out by Raffi, Crown Books for Young Readers (Reprint 1988), David Allender, illustrator

Skip to My Lou by Mary Ann Hoberman, Silver Burdett & Ginn (1996), Nadine Bernard Westcott, illustrator

Web Sites

http://www.hssd.k12.wi.us/readingchild.htm#muscle

http://pbskids.org/arthur/grownups/activities/gross.html

http://www.hummingbirded.com/fine_large_motor.html

Help your child become aware of letters and words at home and in the community.

WEEK 1

Help your child recognize his or her own first name in print.

- Make a name card for your child. Use an upper case letter to write the first letter of the name and lower case letters for the remaining letters. For example, this is how you would write **Chris**. Talk with your child about the names of each letter.
- Display your child's name card on the refrigerator.
- Invite your child to watch you write his or her name to label personal belongings such as coat, sweater and backpack.

WEEK 2

Help your child recognize the letters in his or her first name.

- Provide a complete set of upper and lower case alphabet letter magnets.
- Place the alphabet letter magnets that are found in your child's name on the refrigerator or a cookie sheet for your child to play with.

Focus on Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

Recognizes his or her own first name in print

Recognizes letters in his or her own first name

Recognizes words or signs he or she sees often; for example McDonald's, Wal-Mart, the name of the local grocery store where the family shops or stop signs and exit signs.

Recognizes and names at least 10 letters of the alphabet

Additional Ideas

Make a set of cards with the names of family members. Use upper and lower case letters as you did when writing your child's name. Mix up the family name cards and encourage your child to find the name of each family member.

These cards can also be used as place cards at the dining table.

- Encourage your child to arrange the letters in the correct order, using his or her name card as a guide.
- Hide the alphabet letter magnets that are found in your child's name. As your child finds a letter, have him or her name the letter before looking for the next one.
- Place the alphabet letter magnets in a sack or bag. Encourage your child to pull out the letters one at a time and name them.

WEEK 3

Encourage your child to "read" familiar signs.

- Give your child printed materials such as telephone books, magazines, grocery store ads and menus from favorite restaurants to play with.
- Involve your child in making a grocery list using pictures cut from grocery store ads.
- Invite your child to "read" road signs and business signs with you as you drive.

WEEK 4

Give your child opportunities to recognize and name letters of the alphabet.

- Encourage your child to find letters in his or her own name in signs you see.
- Read alphabet books with your child and allow him or her to name the letters he or she recognizes.
- Read a book and encourage your child to go back and look for a certain letter of the alphabet, such as the "b's" found in the story.
- Place the alphabet letter magnets on the refrigerator in order. Have your child touch each letter as you slowly sing the alphabet song.
- Save clean milk jug caps. Write a letter of the alphabet on each cap. (both upper and lower case). Invite your child to make his or her own name with the letters and to name each letter that he or she recognizes.

SPECIAL ACTIVITY

Help your child make an "I Can Read" book about his or her favorite stores and eating places.

Provide newspaper ads from places such as Wal-Mart and McDonald's that are familiar to your child.

Encourage your child to cut out the names and logos of the stores and eating places and glue them to paper.

Place these pages in a three-ring binder or staple the pages together. Include extra pages so your child can add additional names.

Help your child write "I Can Read" on the title (cover) page.

Encourage your child to read the book and share it with family members or friends.

Suggested Books to Read with Your Child

A My Name is Alice by Jane Bayer, Puffin, reprint (1992), Steven Kellogg, illustrator

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault, Simon & Schuster (1989), Lois Ehlert, illustrator

Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert, Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich (1989)

I Read Signs by Tana Hoban, Greenwillow (1983)

Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book by Muriel Feelings, Dial (1974), Tom Feelings, illustrator

Web Sites

http://www.naeyc.org/resources/eyly/2001/07.asp

http://pbskids.org/lions/printables/games/alphabet_uc.html

Introduce your child to numbers and counting.

WEEK 1

Collect a variety of materials your child can use for counting and for learning about numbers.

✿ Items found around the house
- bottle caps from milk jugs
- plastic measuring cups and spoons
- catalogs and magazines with pictures
- old keys
- margarine tubs
- plastic lids
- thread spools

✿ Purchased items
- pegs and peg boards
- colored counting cubes
- plastic links
- dominos
- counting bears

WEEK 2

Use number words and point out written numerals as you and your child do things together.

✿ In the kitchen
- "On this package of rice it says to add 2 cups of water."
- "I need you to put 3 forks and 3 plates on the table."

✿ Folding laundry
- "These 3 shirts are for Granddad."

Focus on Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

Counts at least 5 objects such as 3 bananas and 5 forks

Sees the written numeral "3" and understands this means 3 objects such as 3 bears

Puts written numerals in order from 1 to 5: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Counts from 1 to 10 in the correct order

Additional Ideas

Play "I Spy Numbers" with your child.

Begin at home. Ask your child to look for numbers in your home. Your child may see numbers on the telephone, in the telephone directory, on a clock, on the mailbox or house, on the keyboard of your computer, and in sale papers.

Play "I Spy Numbers" as you and your child go places by car or take a walk in the neighborhood. Your child may see numbers on auto license plates, mailboxes, house numbers, and signs with gasoline prices.

The possibilities are endless.

- "Fold these 4 washcloths and put them in the bathroom."

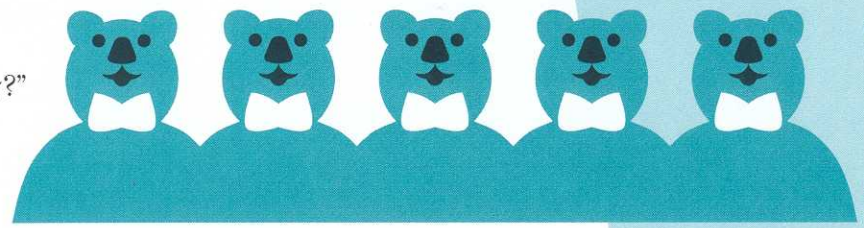
✿ Grocery shopping
- "That sign says bananas are 49¢ a pound."
- "Pick out 4 apples and put them in this bag."

✿ At play
- "See how many scoops of sand it takes to fill that margarine tub?"
- "Can you put 5 counting bears in a row?"

SPECIAL ACTIVITY

Help your child make a number book.

Staple or tie together with yarn 6 plain sheets of paper.



Write "My Number Book" on the cover page. Write or have your child write his or her own name and draw pictures on the cover page.

Write one numeral from 1 to 5 on each page.

Let your child put the correct number of stickers or paste cut-out magazine pictures on each page.

Add pages to the book as your child learns numbers beyond 5.

WEEK 3

Involve your child in number and counting activities.

✿ Listen as your child counts from 1 to however high he or she can count.

✿ Play Simon says. Say to your child "Simon says clap your hands 5 times." "Simon says take 3 steps forward." Let your child have a turn being Simon.

✿ Play counting games such as "How many doorknobs can you find in this room?" "How many legs are on the kitchen table?"

✿ Make number cards. Write on index cards the numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, one numeral per card. Ask your child to place the correct number of bottle caps on each card.

WEEK 4

Read, tell stories, sing songs and say nursery rhymes about numbers and counting with your child.

✿ Read or tell stories such as *The Three Bears* to your child.

✿ Say nursery rhymes such as "One, Two, Buckle My Shoe" and "Baa Baa Black Sheep" with your child.

✿ Sing songs you remember; songs such as "This Old Man."

Suggested Books to Read with Your Child

Count by Denise Fleming, Henry Holt (1992)

Fish Eyes – A Book You Can Count On by Lois Ehlert, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich (1992)

Mouse Count by Ellen Stohl Walsh, Harcourt Brace Javonovich (1991)

Ten, Nine, Eight by Molly Bang, Greenwillow (1986)

This Old Man by Pam Adams, Child's Play Intl Ltd (1989)

Web Sites

http://www.hssd.k12.wi.us/readingchild.htm#counting

http://www.hubbardscupboard.org/kindergarten_prep.html#Math

Encourage your child to listen and use language to express ideas.

I had fun today

Focus on Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

- Speaks in complete sentences
- Follows directions with at least two steps
- Understands words such as "top" and "bottom "and "big" and "little"

WEEK 1

Take time each day to listen to and talk with your child.

✿ While traveling together
- Turn off the radio or CD player in your car as you and your child are going places together.
- Encourage your child to talk with you about where you are going and what might happen when you get there.
- Invite your child to tell you something he or she enjoyed doing that day.

✿ At home together
- Turn off the TV and spend a few minutes talking with your child about things that interest him or her.
- Talk with your child about some things that each of you did that day.

WEEK 2

Use pictures to encourage your child to express ideas.

✿ Collect magazine pictures that show action; pictures of children playing together, a family in a car or a team playing a sport, for example.
- Let your child look at the pictures one at a time.
- Ask your child to tell you what he or she thinks is happening in each picture.
- Add to the collection as you find interesting pictures for your child to look at and discuss.

Additional Ideas

Go through your family photo album with your child. Find photos that show recent family events that you and your child attended together; events such as the county fair, a church picnic or a family trip. Encourage your child to talk about the people who were there and the things that happened at the event.

WEEK 3

Involve your child in activities that require listening and following directions.

- Give your child directions that involve two steps. Here are some examples:
  - Take off your shoes and put them in the closet.
  - Pick up your plate and put it on the cabinet.
  - Hop to the door and open it.
- Give your child an object such as a small ball or a bean bag. Ask your child to do certain things with the object. Here are some examples:
  - Put the ball under your chin.
  - Put the ball on top of your head.
  - Put the ball behind your back.
  - Touch the bottom of your shoe with the ball.
  - Put the ball up in the air then down on the floor.
- Let your child tell you some things to do with the ball. Encourage him or her to use words such as under, over, behind, in front, beside, on top, on bottom, up, down.

SPECIAL ACTIVITY

Divide a sheet of paper in two sections by drawing a line down the middle of the page from top to bottom.

At the top of one section write the word "Big" in large letters. At the top of the other section write the word "Little" in tiny letters.

Help your child locate pictures of objects in two sizes. A picture of a big shoe and a picture of a small shoe, a picture of a big ball and a picture of a small ball are examples of pictures to collect.

Guide your child to paste the two like objects in the correct column. Let your child add pictures of big and little objects he or she finds.

WEEK 4

Read or tell stories that have characters of different sizes.

- Read or tell the story *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*.
- Have your child show you the pictures of the little Billy Goat, the middle Billy Goat and the big Billy Goat.
- Invite your child to retell the story to you.
- Suggest that your child draw pictures of the three Billy Goats Gruff. Notice if he or she draws three sizes of goats.

Suggested Books to Read with Your Child

Big Dog, Little Dog by P. D. Eastman, Random House (1973)

The Mitten by Jan Brett, Putnam (1990)

Peter's Chair by Ezra Jack Keats, HarperCollins (1967)

The Three Billy Goats Gruff by Paul Galdone, Clarion (1981)

The Three Bears by Paul Galdone, Clarion (1985)

Web Sites

http://www.drspock.com/article/0,1510,4833,00.html

http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content3/AmericaReads/preschol.html

Enjoy the sounds of language with your child.

Focus on Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

Says or sings familiar songs or nursery rhymes

Recognizes rhyming words such as cat and hat

Matches a letter with the beginning sound of a word; for example, matches the letter "b" with a picture of a banana

WEEK 1

Collect materials that focus on rhyming and beginning sounds.

- Locate books of Mother Goose Rhymes and poetry for young children. See the list of suggested books on this page for examples.
- Collect objects or pictures of things that rhyme. Some examples are cat, hat, rock, sock, soap, rope, spoon and moon.
- Collect pictures of objects that are familiar to your child.
- Collect magazines and/or catalogs for your child to cut out pictures.

WEEK 2

Read rhymes with your child.

- Read Mother Goose Rhymes with your child. Encourage your child to complete the rhyme with the correct rhyming word, such as "Hickory, Dickory, Dock, The mouse ran up the_____ (clock)."
- Invite your child to say with you his or her favorite rhymes over and over again.

Additional Ideas

Involve your child in creating an alphabet book over several weeks. Write one letter in upper and lower case at the top of a piece of paper; for example write Pp. Provide a magazine or catalog for your child to cut out one or more pictures that begin with that letter. For example, your child may find a picture of pizza and a pig for the page with Pp. Begin with the letters that your child recognizes and that you have pictures for. Provide glue for your child to glue the pictures to the page. When your child has completed as many pages as he or she can, put the pages in alphabetic order. Staple or with yarn tie together the pages. Look at the completed book with your child. Invite him or her to name the letters of the alphabet and the pictures on each page.

Your child will soon be able to say the rhymes alone.

- Read simple poems with your child. Encourage your child to complete the poem with the correct rhyming word.

WEEK 3
Play with rhyming sounds.

- Use a collection of objects or pictures of objects such as sock, rock, hat, cat, soap, rope, spoon and moon. Invite your child to choose the two objects or pictures that rhyme and name them.
- Use objects found around the house, such as a sock, ball, and hat. Encourage your child to say a word that rhymes with the chosen object. Accept nonsense words that rhyme as well.

WEEK 4
Help your child match letters to objects or pictures.

- Give your child alphabet letter magnets. (See December Activities)
- Select one of the objects or pictures you have collected; a banana, for example.
- Have your child say the name of the object so he or she can hear the beginning sound of the word.
- Ask your child to find the alphabet letter that matches the beginning sound of the word.
- Provide five alphabet letter magnets. (See December Activities) Allow your child to choose a picture from your collection and match it with the beginning letter sound of the word.

SPECIAL ACTIVITY

Make a book of rhymes that your child enjoys. Print some of your child's favorite rhymes on unlined paper. Provide crayons or markers for your child to draw a picture to illustrate the rhyme.

Suggested Books To Read with Your Child

Barnyard Banter by Denise Fleming, Henry Holt (1994)

Jamberry by Bruce Degen, HarperCollins (1983)

My Very First Mother Goose by Iona Opie, Candlewick Press (1996), Rosemary Wells, illustrator

The Napping House by Audrey Wood, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich (1984), Don Wood, illustrator

Read-aloud Rhymes for the Very Young by Jack Prelutsky, Knopf (1983), Arnold Lobel, illustrator

The Random House Book of Mother Goose by Arnold Lobel, Random House (1986)

Silly Sally by Audrey Wood, Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich (1992)

There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly by Simms Taback, Viking Children's Books (1997)

Tomie dePaola's Mother Goose by Tomie dePaola, Putnam (1985)

The Wheels on the Bus by Maryanne Kovalski, Scott Foresman (Reprint 1990)

Websites

http://www.hubbardscupboard.org/kindergarten_prep.html#Literacy

http://www.justreadfamilies.org/putreadingfirst.html

http://www.rhymezone.com/r/rhyme.cgi?Word=&typeofrhyme=perfect&org1=syl&org2=l

Make math a "hands on" learning experience for your child.

Focus on Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

Adds and subtracts familiar objects such as cookies

Uses the words "more" and "less" correctly

WEEK 1

Add to the materials you began collecting in January; materials that can help your child learn more about math.

- Items found at home
  - plastic berry baskets that can become cages and caves
  - small boxes that can become garages and barns
- Purchased items
  - small cars
  - small animals

WEEK 2

Use the materials you have collected to involve your child in addition and subtraction and "more" or "less" activities.

- Pretend you are a zoo keeper. Put 3 animals in one cage (berry basket) and 5 animals in another. Say to your child "Show me the cage that has more animals."

Additional Ideas

Help your child prepare a "math-on-the-go" bag or shoe box for travel. Let your child choose which materials to put in the bag; for example, the berry baskets and animals one time and the small boxes and cars the next. Your child can play with the materials in the car, on the bus or as you wait in the dentist's office.

- Add variety to the math games. Use berry baskets as caves for the counting bears and small boxes as garages for cars.
- Play domino dots with your child. Place dominoes face down. Each person turns over a domino and counts the dots. Decide which domino has more dots. Some dominoes will have the same number of dots. You may need to help your child count the dots on the dominoes. Continue this activity as long as your child remains interested.
- Let your child play with the materials on his or her own. You will see your child's creativity and imagination at work.

WEEK 3

Include addition and subtraction words as you talk with your child.

- "I bought you 2 more school shirts. Now you have 6."
- "You have 5 crackers and I have 3. Do you have more or less crackers that I do?"
- "You put 4 crayons in the box. Now add 2 more. How many crayons are in the box now?"

WEEK 4

Tell stories and read books that include math ideas, books in which characters are added or subtracted as the story progresses.

- Tell or read the story of *The Gingerbread Man*. As you retell the story, invite your child to say which character comes next.
- Read a book such as *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*. As a monkey falls off the bed, ask your child to say how many monkeys are left in the bed.
- Look at the list of children's books on this calendar pages for additional books to read with your child.

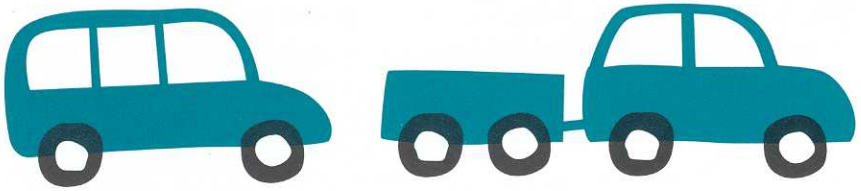
SPECIAL ACTIVITY

Add to your child's "Memories of Our Year" section of the calendar. List the books that include math ideas that you have read with your child.

Place a star by your child's favorite books.

Read some of the favorite books again and again, as long as your child is interested.

Let your child look at the books on his or her own.



Suggested Books to Read with Your Child

The Doorbell Rang by Pat Hutchins, Greenwillow (1986)

The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle, Putnam (1981)

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed by Eileen Christelow, Scott Foresman (1989)

Gingerbread Boy by Paul Galdone, Clarion (1983)

Mr. Gumpy's Outing by John Burningham, Henry Holt (1971)

Roll Over! A Counting Song by Merle Peek, Clarion (reprint 1991)

Web Sites

http://www.naeyc.org/resources/eyly/1997/21.asp

http://www.ed.gov/pubs/EarlyMath/activities1.html

Play learning games with your child.

WEEK 1
Collect materials for learning games.

- Materials to make
  - Cut out 2 circles, 2 squares and 2 triangles, all the same color and about the same size. Make the square about 3" x 3".
  - Make matching pairs of cards with stickers or pictures of animals, for example. Cut cardboard in 3" x 3" squares. Place a sticker or picture on a card. Make a second card exactly like the first one.
- Materials to purchase
  - Old Maid and Go Fish Cards
  - Memory/matching cards

WEEK 2
Involve your child in matching activities.

- Matching Game
  - Start with six pairs of matching cards. Use either the cards you have made or the cards you have purchased.
  - Shuffle the cards and lay them face up on the table or on the floor.
  - Invite your child to find the two cards that match.
  - Add additional pairs of cards as your child becomes more skilled at finding the pairs.
- Sorting Socks
  - Let your child help you fold laundry.

Focus on Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

Matches two pictures that are alike

Looks at groups of objects and says which are the same shape, color or size

Recognizes and names at least 5 colors

Recognizes and names 3 shapes: circle, square and triangle

Additional Ideas

Cut out a large circle, square and triangle from paper grocery sacks. Let your child use washable markers or crayons and draw pictures on the shapes.

Cut out another large circle, square and triangle from paper grocery sacks. Help your child cut out small circles, squares and triangles from construction paper. Suggest that your child paste all the small circles on the large circle, the small squares on the large square and the small triangles on the large triangle. Your child may want to add drawings to the creation.

Show your child shapes by using a washcloth. By laying the cloth flat, it is a square. By folding it corner to corner it becomes a triangle. By folding it lengthwise, the washcloth becomes a rectangle.

- Put all the socks in a pile.
- Ask your child to match the socks and fold the tops or roll them together to make a pair.

WEEK 3

Have fun as you play color games with your child.

✿ Play "I Spy Colors" game indoors and outdoors.

- Play the game by spying different colored objects in your home or outdoors.
- Begin with one color such as red. Say "I spy something red. It's round and you can throw it. What is it?" (red ball)
- Add another color such as yellow. Say "I spy something yellow. You peel it and eat it. What is it?" (banana)
- Continue playing the game by adding other colors of objects such as blue, green and orange.

WEEK 4

Play "shapes" and "sizes" games with your child.

✿ Find the Shapes

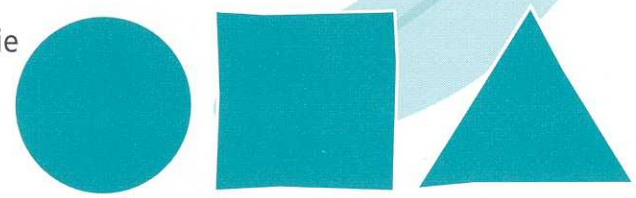
- Show your child the shapes you have cut out. Help your child name each shape: circle, square and triangle.
- Hide one set of shapes somewhere in the room; each shape in a different place.
- Give your child one shape at a time and have him or her find the matching shape and name it.

✿ Sorting Coins by Size

- Show your child a collection of coins: quarters, nickels and dimes.
- Invite your child to put together all the coins that are the same size.
- Tell your child the names of the coins.
- Ask your child to show you the coins that are the biggest, middle size and smallest.

SPECIAL ACTIVITY

Make a color book. Give the book a title such as "My Color Book" and write it on the cover page. Write or have your child write his or her name on the cover. Using a red crayon or washable marker, write the word "Red" on a sheet of paper. Help your child locate pictures of red objects in catalogs or magazines, cut them out and paste them on the sheet. Continue this activity over a few days with your child creating a page for different colors such as blue, green, yellow, orange and purple. Staple or tie the pages together with yarn.



Suggested Books to Read with Your Child

A Color of His Own by Leo Lionni, Random House (1993)

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin, Jr., Henry Holt & Co. (1993), Eric Carle, illustrator

Circles, Triangles and Squares by Tana Hoban, Macmillan (1974)

Little Blue and Little Yellow by Leo Lionni, Morrow (1959/1995)

Mouse Paint by Ellen Stohl Walsh, Harcourt Brace Javonovich (1989)

My Very First Book of Shapes by Eric Carle, Crowell (1974)

Of Colors and Things by Tana Hoban, Scholastic (1989)

Web Sites

http://www.hssd.k12.wi.us/readingchild.htm#shapes

http://www.funbrain.com/match/index.html

Invite your child to think and solve problems.

WEEK 1
Collect materials that encourage thinking and problem-solving.

- Cut out pictures of things that go together and paste each picture on a separate card. Examples of pictures to collect include
  - shoe and sock
  - flowers and vase
  - baseball and bat
- Collect real objects that go together. Examples to collect include
  - cup and saucer
  - hammer and nail
  - comb and brush
- Cut out pictures that your child can put in order and paste each picture on a separate card. Have sets of 3 picture cards. Here are examples:
  - baby, boy and man
  - planting flower seeds, flowers growing and picking flowers

WEEK 2
Involve your child in discovering things that go together.

- Begin with real objects.
  - Place the real objects you have collected on a table or on the floor. Make sure that objects that go together are separated from each other.
  - Ask your child to find the two objects that go together.
  - Invite your child to tell you why the two objects go together.

Focus on Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

Tells things that go together; for example a spoon and fork are for eating and a fish and a boat go in the water

Repeats a pattern you start; for example step, step, jump – step, step, jump

Puts 3 pictures in order, for example, 1: Planting flower seeds 2: Flowers growing 3: Picking flowers

Works puzzles

Additional Ideas

Make and purchase puzzles for your child to complete. Cut up greeting cards or the front of a cereal box in puzzle-like shapes. Give your child the cut-up pieces to fit back together.

Cut up a vinyl placemat in puzzle-like shapes. Use placemats with designs. Give your child a cut-up placemat to fit the pieces back together. Store the puzzle pieces in ziplock bags. Purchase puzzles at dollar and discount stores and at garage sales.

- Use pictures next
  - Lay the picture cards of things that go together face up on the table or floor. Make sure pictures that go together are separated from each other.
  - Ask your child to find the two picture cards that go together and tell you why they do.

WEEK 3

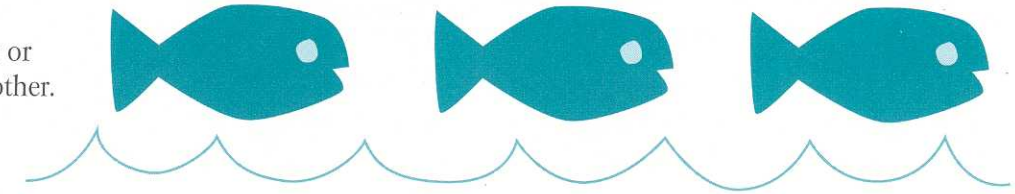
Play pattern games with your child.

- Create a movement pattern and ask your child to repeat it. For example,
  - step, step, jump – step, step, jump (take 2 steps forward, then jump)
  - clap, clap, pat – clap, clap, pat (clap your hands twice, pat your knees once)
- Start a pattern using objects and ask your child to "Make a pattern just like this one."
  - with eating utensils: fork, spoon, fork, spoon
  - with colored counting bears: red, yellow, red, yellow

WEEK 4

Involve your child in putting pictures in order.

- Give your child 3 photos of himself or herself at different ages: baby, toddler and now.
- Ask your child to put the pictures in order, starting with the picture when he or she was the youngest.
- Invite your child to put in order a set of the picture cards you have made; for example, a baby, boy and man.
- Continue this activity with other photos or pictures. For example, you might use 3 photos of other family members at different ages.



SPECIAL ACTIVITY

Do you remember making paper chains when you were a child? This can be a patterning activity your child will enjoy. Cut sheets of colored paper into 1" by 9" strips. Use no more than 3 colors. Help your child start a color pattern by gluing the strips of paper to form a chain. The pattern may be red, green and blue. Encourage your child to continue the pattern. Use the chains as necklaces or as decorations for your child's room.

Suggested Books to Read with Your Child

The Carrot Seed by Ruth Kraus, HarperCollins (1945), Crockett Johnson, illustrator

Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert, Harcourt Brace Javonovich (1988)

If You Give a Moose a Muffin by Laura Numeroff, Harpercollins (1991), Felicia Bond, illustrator

If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Numeroff, Harpercollins (1985), Felicia Bond, illustrator

If You Give a Pig a Pancake by Laura Numeroff, Harpercollins (1998), Felicia Bond, illustrator

Web Sites

http://www.naeyc.org/resources/eyly/1997/17.asp

http://freejigsawpuzzles.com/kids_art_jigsaw_puzzles.htm

Help your child know personal information.

Focus on Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

- Tells if he or she is a boy or girl
- Tells first and last name
- Tells first and last name of parent(s)
- Tells how old he or she is

WEEK 1

Create with your child an "All About Me and My Family" book.

- Help your child make a book by stapling or tying together with yarn blank sheets of paper.
- Help your child create the cover of the book. Use a photo of your child or a picture he or she draws for the cover page.
- Let your child decide on the title of the book and write that on the cover.
- Add your child's name to the cover as the author of the book. Write or have your child write his or her own name on the cover of the book. Include both the first and last name.

WEEK 2

Involve your child in adding personal information to the book.

- Begin writing a sentence and ask your child to complete it. Add to the sentence what your child says, helping as needed with items such as height and weight, so that the information is correct and complete.
  - Here are some examples of what to include.

    My name is _____
    (include child's first and last name)

    Sometimes my family calls me _____ (nickname).

    I am a _____ (girl or boy).

    I was born on _____ and I am _____ years old.

Additional Ideas

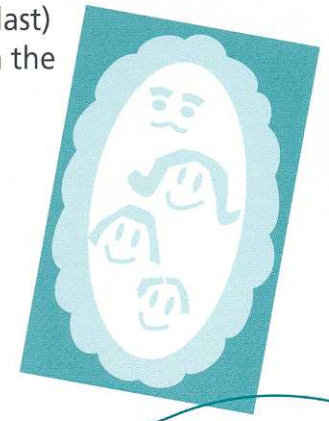
Let your child share the "All About Me and My Family" book and the family tree with other family members and with neighbors. Suggest that he "read" what is written in the book and on the family tree. Your child may not be able to actually read all the words, but with your help can recall what was written. If your child attends a preschool program there may be an opportunity to share the book and family tree with the teacher and the other children.

My eyes are_____ (color) and my hair is_____ (color).

I am _____ inches tall and weigh_____ pounds.

SPECIAL ACTIVITY

Involve your child in making a family tree, using photos or pictures he or she has drawn. Include parents, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. Draw a simple tree trunk with branches. Help your child add the pictures to the branches and write the names (first and last) of each person in the picture.



WEEK 3

Help your child add a family section to the book.

- Add family photos and help your child decide what to write about each family member in the photo. Here are some examples:
  - This is my mother. Her name is_____ (first and last name). She makes good spaghetti.
  - This is my grandfather. He lives with us. His name is_____.
  - I have a baby sister. Her name is_____. She cries a lot.
- Include all of the family members living in your home as well as other family members your child would like to add.
- Ask your child to draw all of the members of his or her family on one page of the family section. Write their names under each figure as your child tells you who each one is.

WEEK 4

Create with your child a section of the book about your family's favorite things.

- Go through photos with your child of family events such as reunions, outings, and trips and select some that are favorites. Add these to the book. With each photo write what your child has to say about the event.
- Make "Family Favorites" lists. Some examples to include: Our favorite songs, movies, TV shows, places to visit, restaurants or cafés, foods, sports.
- Let your child use washable markers or crayons and draw pictures of his or her favorite things. Write on the picture what your child tells you about the drawing.

Suggested Books to Read with Your Child

Are You My Mother? by P.D. Eastman, Random Books (1960)

Ask Mr. Bear by Marjorie Flack, Macmillan (Reprint 1971)

Families are Different by Nina Pellegrini, Holiday House (1991)

Happy Birthday Moon by Frank Asch, Simon and Schuster (1985)

Peter's Chair by Ezra Jack Keats, Puffin (Reprint 1998)

The Relatives Came by Cynthia Rylant, Pearson Learning (Reprint 1993), Stephen Gammell, illustrator

Web Sites

http://www.behindthename.com/

http://www.crayola.com/activitybook/print.cfm?id=625

Make "going to kindergarten" plans with your child.

Focus on Kindergarten Readiness Indicators

Takes care of own needs, such as toileting, washing hands, and dressing

Adjusts to a new situation without parents being there

WEEK 1

Support your child's independence.

- Make an "I Did It Myself" poster for your refrigerator or your child's room. Celebrate all of the things that your child has learned to do on his or her own by writing those things on the chart. Here are some examples.
  - Put on my shoes
  - Brush my teeth
  - Button my shirt
  - Zip my backpack
  - Ride my tricycle

WEEK 2

Practice going to kindergarten.

- Begin to gather school supplies for your child.
- Play school with your child. Take turns being the teacher. Ride in the bus or car, read stories, sing songs, draw pictures, play outdoors, eat lunch, and play a game.
- Eat a meal on trays with your child. Encourage your child to carry his or her own tray to the table and return the tray to the kitchen after the meal. Or eat a meal from lunch boxes and bags. Show your child what can be thrown away after eating and what should be brought back home.
- Pretend to take your child to school. With your child, think of lots of ways to say good-bye. Decide how you will say good-bye to each other on the first day of kindergarten.

Additional Ideas

Create a school prop box. Gather items that can be used to play school and put them in a special box, such as a shoebox or clean laundry detergent box. Items for your school prop box might include paper, pencils, crayons, books, watercolor paints, glue, scissors, a ball, a lunch bag, or index cards with the names of family members and friends written on them. Use the school prop box when you and your child play school together.

WEEK 3

Visit your child's school and preview school activities.

- Attend your school's family open house or "meet the teacher day". Here are some things to do when you visit.
  - Talk with the teacher. Try to find out something interesting that you or your child have in common with him or her.
  - Explore the classroom. Look at the books and materials, find out where the children store backpacks and hang coats.
  - Find out about the daily schedule for your child's class. For example, when do they have story time, lunch, outdoor play and rest time?
  - Locate the restrooms and water fountains.
  - Look for the cafeteria, the playground, the principal's office, the nurse's room, media center and other special features of your school.
- After your visit, talk about what you saw. Draw pictures or write stories to help you think about your visit. Answer any questions that your child may have.

WEEK 4

Maintain predictable family routines.

- Establish a regular bedtime for your child. We are healthier when we go to bed and wake up at about the same time every day.
- Be prepared for your morning "before school" time. Getting everyone up and off to school can be hectic. Planning can eliminate some of those morning hassles.
  - Designate a place to collect things that need to go to school tomorrow. For example, put everything in your child's backpack and keep the backpack beside the door.
  - Before bedtime, talk with your child about what clothes he or she will wear tomorrow. Be sure that everything is ready.
  - Give yourself enough time. Setting the alarm 10 minutes earlier can make a big difference in your morning.
  - Have pleasant conversations with your child on the way to school or as you wait for the bus.

SPECIAL ACTIVITY

Read *The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn. Make a kissing hand. Help your child trace his or her hand on paper. Help your child decide how to make the "kissing hand" special. You might give the paper hand a kiss, draw a heart on the hand, glue a family photo to the hand, write the words "I love you" on the hand, or have each family member "autograph" the hand.

Suggested Books to Read With Your Child

The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn, Child Welfare League of America (1993)

Franklin Goes to School by Paulette Bourgeois, Scholastic (1995)

Off to School, Little Duck by Amy Hest, Scholastic (1999)

Timothy Goes to School by Rosemary Wells, Viking (Reissue edition, 2000)

Will I Have a Friend? by Miriam Cohen, Aladdin Library (Reprint edition, 1989)

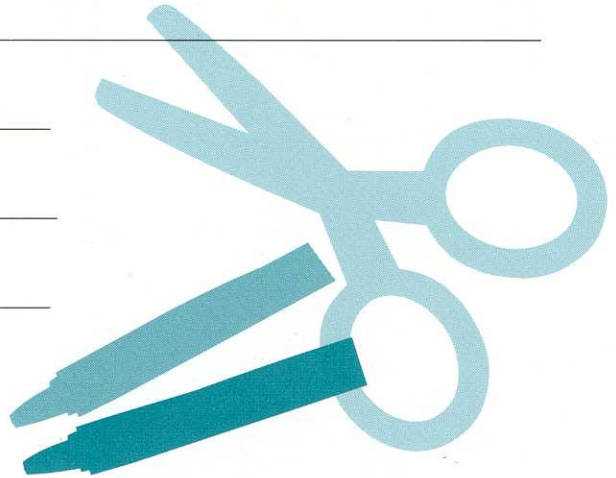
Web Sites

http://www.howtobehave.com/kindergarten.html

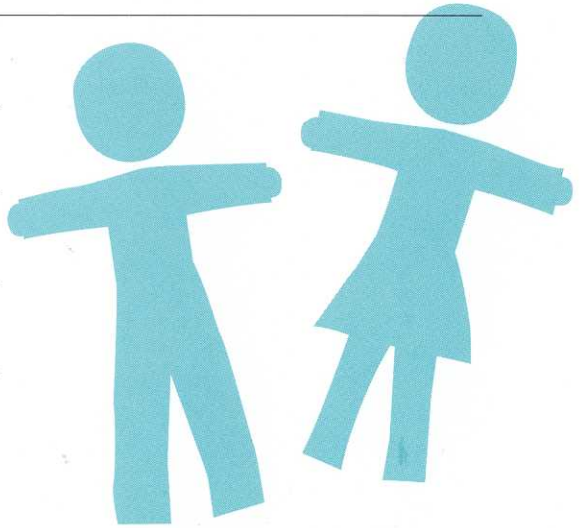
http://www.misterrogers.org/families/

http://www.naeyc.org/resources/eyly/1997/27/asp

Memories of Our Year



Memories of Our Year



Getting Ready for Kindergarten!

Contact your local school district to find out the dates for pre-registration. You will need the following items to register your child for public school:

- ✔ Copy of birth certificate
- ✔ Social Security Card
- ✔ Current shot record (up-to-date immunizations)
- ✔ Health history form completed by parent or guardian (obtain from the school)
- ✔ Physical exam performed by a health care professional
- ✔ Check with your local school district to see if additional information is required for registration

Calendar Development

Project Partners

Arkansas Department of Human Services,
Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education

Arkansas Early Childhood Commission

Arkansas Head Start – State Collaboration Project

Arkansas Department of Education

Arkansas School Readiness Initiative

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families

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ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education

Arkansas Head Start –
State Collaboration Project