

Reading Activities at Home



Children spend a lot of their time at home. You can support your child's learning while you do daily chores. You can invite your child to help you, or you can provide an activity for your child to do close to you. That way, you can talk and listen to your child while you work.

Baby/Toddler

Pretty Picture. Make sure your baby has interesting things to look at while you are busy around the house. A colorful picture or a vase of flowers in front of her will get her attention. Her favorite thing to look at is you! As much as possible, place her where she can see you and hear you as you work. Talk to her about what you are doing using simple language like "Watching baby, watching baby, washing dishes, watching baby!"

Pots and Pans Music. While you work in the kitchen you can keep your baby close. Give her some light pots and pans of different sizes. Then give her a wooden spoon. She can make music while you use words like loud, soft, bang, and tap. Show her what the words mean by using your body and voice too. For example, when you say "That's so loud!" cover your ears. When you say "That's so soft!" speak in a whisper.

Recycle Problem-Solving. Toddlers love to create and solve problems using simple materials. Give your child some clean recycled items like cans of different sizes. Make sure there are no sharp edges. He will spend a long time fitting the cans inside of each other. As he works, introduce words like small, medium, large, inside, and fit.



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Preschooler/Kindergartner



Super Shadows. Place a large sheet over a table so that it hangs down around the table. Show your child how to use a flashlight safely. Invite him to go into his cave under the table to make shadows. Use words like dark, light, bright, night, shine, and shadow. Notice words that rhyme like light, night, and bright. Add small toys and encourage him to make shadow shapes in his cave. Notice words that start with the same sound like shine, shape, and shadow.

Making Boats. Your child can use recycled materials to make boats. Collect items like foam meat trays, small pieces of cloth, toothpicks, craft sticks, tape, bottle caps, paper, and crayons. You will also need scissors. Help your child think about how he can use these materials to make a boat. "What will you use for the bottom of the boat?" "Will you make a sail?" Then, help him to make the boat. Later, he can use it in the bathtub. "Do you think it will float?"

Reading Corner. Make a small reading corner for your child. Put pillows and a soft blanket in a corner of the room where you are working. Add some of your child's favorite books, or some new books, for him to look at. Ask him to choose a book, look at the pictures, and tell you the story in his own words. Give him lots of encouragement for looking at books independently.

Pretend Party. Children love to play pretend. Invite your child to have a pretend birthday party. Provide paper and markers or crayons so she can make the invitations. "Who will you invite?" Write down the names of the friends she wants to invite. She can copy these names onto the invitations. Then decide on the menu. Explain that the menu means what food she will have at the party, just like the menu at a restaurant. "What will you wear to the party?" If possible, let her dress up. Then have a special snack and a party for two!

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First-Grader/Reader-Writer

Scrubbing bubbles. Older children love to help with washing dishes. Provide a stool for your child at the sink. Give him the dish soap and read the label together. For example, one phrase may be “Avoid contact with eyes.” Explain what that means. Then, tell him and show him the steps for washing a dish (remove fragile items). For example: 1) Put water in the sink; 2) Add dish soap; 3) Scrub the dish; 4) Rinse the soap off; and 5) Place the dish in the drainer. Later, during a family conversation, encourage him to explain the steps for washing dishes.

Sorting Socks. While you fold laundry, put your child in charge of matching the socks. “Now you can match the socks in pairs.” Invite him to make a plan to do it. “How do you think we should start?” Tell him and show him how to separate different colors and sort them into piles. Next, tell him and show him how to put socks together that look the same. Remind him to compare the size and the design of each sock as he puts them together.

Make a Book. Give your child some paper and markers or crayons. Invite her to write a story about a favorite activity, for example, playing at the park. First, talk with her about what she did. “First you played baseball with your friends. Then we looked at trees and collected leaves.” Then help her put each activity into the story. Use words like begin and end. “How will you begin the story?” When she is finished encourage her to number the pages and decorate the cover. Help her to write her name on the cover using the words author and illustrator.



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