

Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

FEBRUARY 2015

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."



READING

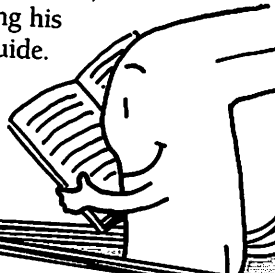
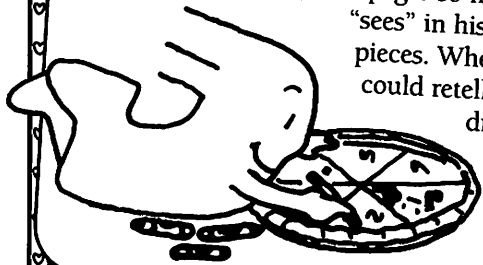
Make a story pie

Help your child practice creating images in his mind to better understand what he reads.

Ingredients: storybook, plain paper plate, pencil, ruler, crayons

Ask your youngster to divide the paper plate into six pie wedges and number them 1–6. Then, let him pick a book for you to read to him.

Suggest that he close his eyes, listen carefully, and think about what he hears. Stop after every few pages so he can open his eyes, tell you what he "sees" in his mind, and sketch it in one of the pie pieces. When you finish the book, he could retell the story, using his drawings as a guide.



SCIENCE

Do the raisin dance!

Your youngster can make raisins dance around as she experiments with a simple chemical reaction.

Ingredients: tall clear glass, water, baking soda, raisins, vinegar

Have your child fill the glass halfway with water, stir in 1 tsp. baking soda, and drop in six raisins. What happens? (They sink.) Next, she can slowly pour in vinegar. Soon the raisins will begin bobbing up and down.

The vinegar and baking soda combine to create carbon dioxide—the gas that makes soda bubbly. When the raisins are covered in bubbles, they float to the surface, and the bubbles pop. Then, the raisins drop back down, and the process starts again.



SUBTRACTION

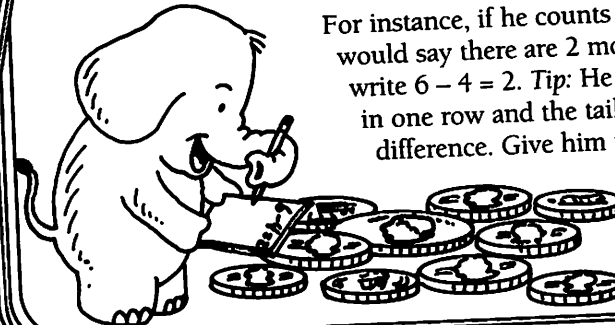
How many more?

Your child will have fun using coins to create and solve subtraction problems.

Ingredients: assorted coins, plastic bowl or container, paper, pencil

Your youngster should place the coins in the bowl, give it a shake, and dump them onto a table. Ask him to count the number of heads and tails—and turn the results into a subtraction equation.

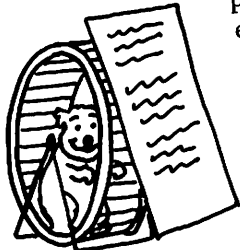
For instance, if he counts 6 heads and 4 tails, he would say there are 2 more heads than tails and write $6 - 4 = 2$. **Tip:** He can line up the heads in one row and the tails in another to see the difference. Give him more coins to practice counting higher and subtracting larger numbers.



POETRY

Ask your youngster to write 10 words describing her best friend, a favorite aunt, or even her pet (clever, kind, loyal). Suggest that she write a poem about the person or

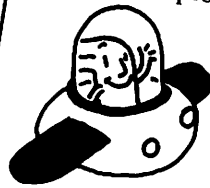
pet, using each of those words. Mention that her poem can rhyme or not!



SOCIAL STUDIES

Let your child imagine going to a city a few hours away. Locate it together on a map, and have him name all the ways he could travel there. **Examples:** car, train, bus, plane. What are the pros and cons of each?

Then, he could imagine how he'd get there if he went back or forward in time (stagecoach, flying car).



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Character Corner

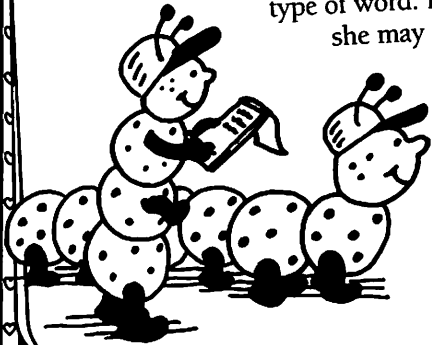
VOCABULARY Walking for words

Build your youngster's word skills as you walk around your neighborhood together.

Ingredients: notepad, pencil

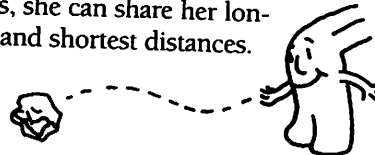
Prepare for your "word walk" by deciding on a type of word to look for. For instance, you might seek out words with two syllables, words ending with a specific letter, or words with a double vowel. Have your child write the category at the top of a page.

Then, as you walk, take turns creating sentences using that type of word. For two-syllable words, she may say, "I see a *mammal*" or for words with a double vowel, "There's an *ever-green* tree." She can jot down the sentences on the page. Tomorrow, pick a new category, and take another word walk.



MEASUREMENT

Start by having your youngster crumple a sheet of used paper into a ball. She'll stand at a fixed spot and toss it underhand. Let her use a measuring tape, ruler, or yardstick to see how far the ball traveled and record the data. After five turns, she can share her longest and shortest distances.



FITNESS

Blow up and knot a few balloons. Then, name one body part, such as left thumb, right arm, or left knee. Challenge each person to keep her balloon in the air using that body part only. The last one to drop her balloon chooses the next body-part challenge.



EFFORT

Ask your youngster to rate how much effort he put in today at school, using a scale of 1 (for little effort) to 5 (for best effort). Let him explain his rating to you. How can he maintain or improve his effort tomorrow?



REFLECTION

If your child is upset about an argument with a friend, invite her to "hit rewind." Suggest that she work back in her mind to the beginning of the fight. Then, talk about how she might have acted differently. ("Could you have played her favorite game first and then played yours?")



RESPECT FOR THE EARTH

Have your youngster report the temperature on your home's thermostat. Can he think of ways to save energy and conserve resources? He might say, "We could set the temperature 2 degrees lower and wear sweatshirts in the house."



ORGANIZATION

Help your child organize his belongings and practice handwriting at the same time. First, he could sort toys into separate boxes or containers. Then, give him blank labels for marking the contents (*trains, colored pencils, action figures*). Encourage him to write neatly so he'll be able to find what he wants at a glance.



Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)

SPEAKING

Give your child speaking practice by having him do the talking when you run errands. He could ask the store clerk where the vacuum cleaner bags are or tell the dry cleaner you'd like to pick up your clothes on Saturday. He'll build oral language skills—and confidence.

