

PRESCHOOL



Art, Music and Movement: **Family Song Book**

Share with your children one of your favorite songs or ask your child to sing a favorite song of theirs to you. Tell children that you want to create a book that includes all of their favorite songs. Have children write each of their favorite songs down on a separate piece of paper as you do the same. If they can't write all the words, you can help them or just let them write one word to stand for the song. Even young toddlers have favorite songs, so draw simple pictures to represent songs they enjoy. For example, if they like the "Itsy Bitsy Spider", then draw a spider on the page. Then, let them decorate each song page to make the pages colorful. If they aren't able to write the complete title of the song, encourage them to draw pictures or designs that help them remember what the song is. Once all the pages have been decorated, punch holes in them and put them in the binder or simply put them in a folder. You could even record children singing and performing their songs and play it for them again later so they can sing along with it.

Children experience:

- Drawing
- Singing
- Writing



Communication, Language, and Literacy: **Alphabet Clue Game**

Children experience:

- Alphabetic knowledge

Tell children that you're going to give them a clue and they are going to have to guess what it is you're drawing. Draw one line of a letter at a time, asking children to guess which letter it will be. Answer children with comments, as in the following steps for guessing the letter R:

1. Draw a straight vertical line. Then say something like, "Well this could be an L because L has a tall straight line, but I'm thinking of a different letter."
2. Next, draw the curved part at the top. Then, say something like: "This sure looks like a P, doesn't it? But I'm not done making the letter I'm thinking of."
3. Then say something like, "I'll draw one more short line (draw bottom diagonal line). Can you tell me what it is now?"

For younger children, use letters they are most familiar with, including the letter their first or last name starts with. This game can also be adapted for any drawing you might start drawing, like a face or a bird. For older children, you can ask them to guess a whole word, watching you write one letter at a time, or you can ask the child to do the writing and you can do the guessing!

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Math, Science, and Technology: **Measure Me!**

Take a piece of yarn and stretch it out from children's head to their toes. Cut the yarn. Tape the yarn to a wall, taping at the bottom so it is in a straight line. Label the yarn with the children's names. Use the yarn to show children how tall they are! Then, tell children that they are going to go on a hunt around the house to find out how long or tall other things are. Let children choose the things they want to measure. Make sure they have a standard measuring tool, such as a ruler, yard stick, or tape measure. Help them count the number of inches or feet of the objects they find. Then, measure a piece of yarn the same length as the object they measure and cut it. Tape it to the wall at the top and bottom next to the yard that shows their height. Label the yarn with masking tape to indicate what object it is.

Children experience:

- Measuring
- Comparing Sizes
- Cutting
- Numbers

When children have finished measuring, make observations about their results including:

- "The ____ is the longest object you measure."
- "The ____ is the shortest."

And ask questions to prompt a discussion including:

- How could we reorganize the pieces of yarn? (shortest to longest, longest to shortest)
- What was your favorite object to measure?

For younger children, don't use the ruler and just ask them to find something big or small. For older children, ask them to write down the measurement of the objects they measure.



Myself and Others: **Feeling Cube**

Children experience:

- Understanding and expressing feelings
- Reading

We all have our ups and downs and children are no different! Helping them express their feelings and emotions can go a long way toward keeping your household calm. Start by making a feelings cube for children. Tape pictures (pictures of family members, magazine clippings, or images found online) of people expressing a variety of different emotions to a small box.

Then, read a book about feelings with your child. Here are a few recommendations:

- *Miss Spider's Tea Party*, by David Kirk
- *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, by Judith Viorst

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- *The teacher from the Black Lagoon*, by Mike Thaler and Jared Lee
- *My Many Colored Days*, by Dr. Suess
- *When Sophie Gets Angry*, by Molly Bang

After reading the story, go back to the pages and review what happened. Ask questions like:

- “Do you remember what happened on this page?”
- “Why do you think the character was feeling so ____?”
- “Do you like or dislike this story? Why?”

After you have talked about the story, show children the feelings cube. Tell them you are going to let them roll the cube and that, whatever face it lands on, they have to show the same face! Take a turn as well and really exaggerate the look on your face! As children make a face, use feeling words to describe what you see. For younger children, use words they are familiar with, such as: “Oh, you look sad.” For older children, use this as an opportunity to develop new vocabulary such as, “You look depressed or concerned.” Guide the conversation to talk about how to handle that emotion in an appropriate way such as talking about the feeling. End by singing, “When you’re happy and you know it!” For older children you can turn this into a daily practice where they create “My Journal” and write or draw their feelings for the day.



Physical Development and Healthy Habits: **Bean Bag Toss**

Have children warm up their throwing arm by doing simple exercises, such as windmills and shoulder rolls. Give children a sponge and set up the box a few feet away. Tell children to try throwing their sponge into the box. Then place several more boxes around them or just in a line and see if children can throw the sponge into each box. You can offer different items for children to throw, like balls, small pillows, bean bags, or a sock rolled up. Move the boxes closer or farther away to make the activity challenging and fun, but not frustrating. Take turns throwing into the boxes. Show excitement when children get their sponge in a box, and provide guiding questions or comments when they don't.

Children experience:

- Throwing
- Eye-hand coordination

Offer comments like “Can you think of another way to throw your sponge?” or “Last time you got it in when you slowed down and took a breath before throwing.” For younger children, give children larger, open containers like laundry baskets and place containers closer to children. For older children, you can use alternative containers like laundry baskets or mixing bowls. Or, you can assign a number to each container and ask children to write down the number each time they successfully throw into that basket.