

Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

SEPTEMBER 2020

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 Learn with tall tales

Boost your youngster’s reading and storytelling skills by exploring tall tales—made-up stories with wildly exaggerated characters and events.

Ingredients: books or internet access

Check out a library book of tall tales or search for tall tales online. Read a few together—can your child spot instances of exaggeration? For example, in the Paul Bunyan story about Babe the Blue Ox, the cold weather is exaggerated: “Late at night, it got so frigid that all spoken words froze solid before they could be heard.”

Now encourage your youngster to tell his own tall tale by exaggerating an event from his day. “I threw a ball so far, it traveled around the world, and I caught it when it came back here.”



SCIENCE Dancing raisins

Can raisins dance? They will when your youngster creates this chemical reaction!

Ingredients: clear jar or glass, baking sheet, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup white vinegar, 3 tsp. baking soda, 6 raisins

Let your child set the jar on a baking sheet. Now he can measure vinegar into the jar and add baking soda. The mixture will fizz and bubble up out of the jar. As the fizzing subsides, your youngster should drop in the raisins—and watch them “dance” as they sink and rise over and over again.

Why does this happen? Mixing baking soda and vinegar creates carbon dioxide, a gas. Gas bubbles attach to the raisins, so when the bubbles rise, the raisins do, too! When the bubbles reach the surface, they pop, and the raisins fall.



MATH Unstack to subtract

Taking block towers apart in this game lets your child see subtraction in action.

Ingredients: Legos or other interlocking blocks, die

Each player stacks 20 Legos. Take turns rolling the die and subtracting that number of blocks from the tower while saying the number sentence. If your youngster rolls 4 on her first turn, she would say, “ $20 - 4 = 16$ ” as she removes 4 blocks from her tower.

Keep rolling and subtracting. If you don’t have enough blocks left to take away the number rolled, it’s the next player’s turn. Win the game by being the first to remove your last block by exact count.



HANDWRITING

Give your child’s writing muscles a workout with a sponge-wringing contest. Each player measures 1 cup water into a bowl and places it in a sink. Race to see who can empty his bowl first—by soaking a sponge in his bowl of water and squeezing the water into the sink.



LANGUAGE ARTS

Encourage your youngster to collect words to use in stories she writes. Have her make a chart labeled “Verbs (action words)” and “Adjectives (descriptive words).” When she reads or hears a word she likes (bolt, sizzle, kaleidoscopic), she can add it to the correct column.

Verbs	Adjectives
~	~
~	~
~	~
~	~
~	~
~	~

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WRITING Proofreading checklist

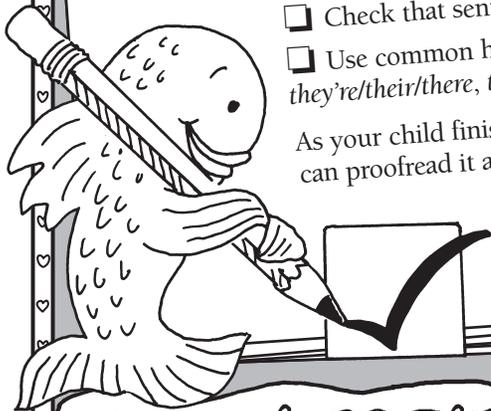
Suggest that your child create a checklist to help her turn in error-free reports and essays.

Ingredients: *graded reports or essays, paper, pencil*

Have your youngster look through old assignments for mistakes. Then, she can make a list that will remind her to correct those areas in the future. Her list might look something like this:

- Begin each sentence with a capital letter.
- Make sure nouns and verbs agree.
- Check that sentences are complete.
- Use common homophones correctly, especially *they're/their/there, too/to/two, and it's/its.*

As your child finishes each draft of a paper, she can proofread it against her checklist.



Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)

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FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

This treasure hunt will help your youngster practice following directions. Hide a toy, and write steps for finding it. ("Stand in the middle of the yard." "Walk away from the house." "Stop at the fence.") Then, let your child hide the toy and write instructions to lead you to it.

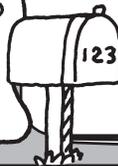


OBSERVATION

Have family members pass around several small objects (pencil, toy car), examine them closely, and put them away. Now each person lists as many details as possible. ("The pencil is about 4 inches long." "The car has two white stripes.") Check your observations to see how many you each got right.

ROUNDING

Take a walk to look for numbers with two or more digits, and ask your child to round each one to the nearest 10. If he sees 123 on a house, he would say 120. *Tip:* If a number ends in 1-4, it rounds down to the nearest 10. Numbers ending in 5-9 round up to the next 10 (so 38 rounds to 40).



Character Corner

PATIENCE

"When will dinner be ready?" If your youngster has to wait, have him plan an activity that will take that amount of time (coloring, folding laundry). He can set a timer to keep an eye on, rather than asking you again.



INITIATIVE

Encourage your child to be a self-starter by having her set up a home office. Let her choose a quiet spot, organize her supplies, and add decorations. Suggest that she post "office hours" so she knows when she'll do schoolwork each day.



MANNERS

Teach your child to thank the people who deliver mail or packages to your home. Encourage him to wave and call "Thank you!" when items arrive. Or he could write "Thank you for the mail and packages" on the porch or sidewalk.

Thank you!



MUSIC

Suggest that your youngster pretend she's a songwriter and combine tunes and lyrics from two or more songs. A mashup of "The Wheels on the Bus" and "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" might begin: "The people in the boat called, 'Row, row, row ...'" Invite her to sing her song to you.

