

Dennis-Yarmouth Title I

Volume 1, Issue X

From the Title I Coordinator

Whether it's a sunny afternoon or a dark evening, the outdoors is full of opportunities for learning. Here are fun ways to help you children practice reading, writing, and math outside.

Flashlight story telling. Invite your children to stretch their imaginations and work on writing skills by telling stories around a nighttime "campfire." The hardest part is waiting for the dark.

Materials: paper, pencil, flashlights.

Before you go out, brainstorm a few story ideas together. Write them on a piece of paper to keep handy. *Examples:* You find a monster under the bed. A genie gives you three wishes. Your dog brings home a mysterious object. Then, pick a safe outdoor place, such as your porch or backyard, for a pretend campfire.

Take turns holding a flashlight while telling your part of a story. Have one person start with a few sentences. Then another family member adds to the story, and so on. You could use a cue word like "suddenly" to let the next storyteller know it's his turn. For instance, one of your children might say, "one dark night, my dog brought home a mysterious bottle. I pulled out the cork and suddenly....."

Then, you jump in: "A cloud of purple smoke appeared! I was still coughing when suddenly..." Keep passing the story -and the flashlight—along until you're finished. **TIP:** Turn on the flashlight under your child for a spooky storyteller's face.

Here's another fun way for your family to tell a story. One person states a silly problem: "There was an elephant in my chair." The next person adds a line that starts with "Fortunately" (..he had peanuts for everyone"). The third storyteller begins with "Unfortunately" ("...the peanuts were rotten"). Keep alternating "Fortunately" and "Unfortunately" until you agree that the story is over.

IDEA: Discover the night sky together. Get a book like Find the constellations by H.A. Rey, a star chart printed from the internet, or a free stargazing app such as Google Sky. Then, try to locate a few of the constellations in the night sky. For a fun twist, suggest that each child find and name a group of stars. You might even make up stories about them together!



June 2019



As always, for further information, or answers to your questions, please contact me, Cookie Stewart at 508-778-7599 or stewartv@dy-regional.k12.ma.us Or at M.E. Small Elementary 440 Higgins Crowell Rd. West Yarmouth, MA 02673

NUMBER HIKE

The next time your family walks around the block or through a shady park, take math with you.

Materials:

Paper, pencil, ruler

Your children can practice skip counting as you walk. Take turns picking a number to count by (3s or 5s) and a number to count to, such as 30. Walk through your town or city, and look for each number (3, 6, 9, 12) on buildings and license plates. *Variation:* Try to find odd or even number in order.

Here's a fun way to work on addition. Name two numbers for your children to add together. (8+10, 23+42). They can look for signs as you walk through a park and search for the number that equals the sum (18, 65). You could do this with subtraction, multiplication, or division, too.

Challenge your children to a math treasure hunt in your neighborhood or at a park. Make a list of items to spot—each one containing a number or a measurement. *Examples:* a leaf with 4 or more points, 7 grey pebbles, 10 blades of grass that are 2 inches tall. Or write the list as math equations, and have them bring you the number of items representing the answers. *Examples:* 3×2 twigs, $8/4$ leaves. (They should bring you 6 twigs and 2 leaves.



Idea: Before you head out, mix up some "math munchies." Let your kids pick out the ingredients for trail mix, such as cereal, pretzel sticks, peanuts, dried fruit, chocolate chips, and mini marshmallows. They could practice fractions by using a $1/4$ cup measure for each one. For example, can you child figure out how many $1/4$ cups are in 2 cups? (8) After they measure, they should shake the ingredients together in a large zip-top bag to mix.

SIDEWALK READING AND WRITING

Sidewalk chalk and a little imagination go a long way with these language arts activities.

Materials: sidewalk chalk, broom (to use as an eraser), books

Practice phonics with this variation of hopscotch. Draw a hopscotch grid, but fill the boxes with letters (one per box) instead of numbers. To play, say a word that starts with the letter in each box as you hop on it (rainbow, elevator, ballet). On the way back, say a word that ends with each letter (knob, smile, mirror). When everyone has had a turn, erase the letters, and fill in new ones.

Work on reading comprehension and memory skills with this idea. Read a story outside together. Then, take turns using sidewalk chalk to write names of the characters or words describing the setting (dusty, wooded). Write as many as you can remember. Or try this: Write the names of five items or characters from the story, and ask you child to number them in the order they appeared.

This activity can strengthen vocabulary. While your child isn't looking, copy a

sentence from a book onto the sidewalk, leaving a blank for one of the words. Take turns writing a word that would make sense in the blank. Finally read the book to find out what word really goes there.



Editor's Note: Can't get outside? With a little imagination, you could enjoy these activities indoors, too. Set up a make-believe campground in a dark room for campfire stories. Stroll through a shopping center for the number hike. And for sidewalk games? Use colored pencils and large sheets of paper or poster board.

CRAFTS THAT TEACH

Kids love colorful construction paper, squishy clay, and bold paints. With these projects, your child will enjoy crafts that will boost her school skills.

WORD COLLAGE

Your house is full of "big" words that you child can learn to read. This idea lets her work on reading skills while she makes a collage. Encourage her to walk around the house looking for unfamiliar words. She might find them in the recycling bin on for packages (*potassium, quinoa*) or on discarded mail (*approved, premium*). Let her cut out the words and arrange them on a piece of paper. She could sort them by number of syllables or according to whether they begin with a vowel or a consonant, for instance. When she's happy with the arrangement, have her glue down the words. Finally have her get a Dictionary and look up her words to find out what they mean and how to pronounce them.

CLAY PICTURES

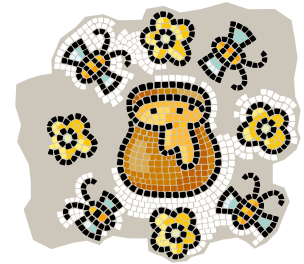
Encourage your child to explore geometry by sculpting 2-D and 3-D shapes. Using clay and cookie cutters or plastic knives, have her make 5 to 10 flat circles, squares, triangles, and rectangles. Then, she can move the shapes around to make a picture. For instance, she might make a house with a triangle for the roof, a square for the main part, and a rectangle for the front door. When she is finished, let her take a photo of her 2-D shape.

Your child could also mold clay into 3-D shapes like cylinders, spheres, pyramids, rectangular prisms, and cubes. Suggest that she sculpt an object by combining shapes. A cat for example, might have a cylinder for its body, a sphere for its head, rectangular prisms for legs, and tiny pyramid ears.

NATURE MOSAIC

Coloring books aren't just for coloring! Here's a fun way your child can use them to work with items from nature. Help her find small objects outside on the ground, such as seeds or leaves (Note: she could also use kitchen items like sunflower seed or dried beans.)

Then have her tear a page from a coloring book. She should cover each section with glue and then with a different kind of item and label it. (Suggest that she look up the items in a nature guide if she isn't sure what they are.) When the mosaic is dry, she can hang it on the refrigerator.



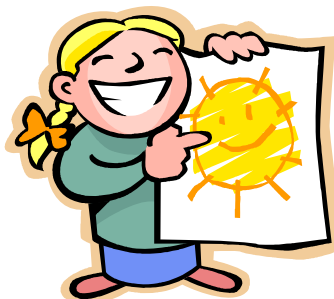
HOMEMADE GREETING CARDS

Making greeting cards is a fun (and thoughtful) way for your child to practice writing. Suggest that she start a collection of cards she can send throughout the year for birthdays, holidays, and other special occasions.

Help her gather supplies like paper, envelopes, and colored pencils. She could decorate each card with drawings and stickers and write a personalized message inside.

Example: "Happy 10th birthday to a superstar cousin!"

Give your child a list of addresses, and have her write them neatly on the envelopes. When special dates are coming up, her cards will be ready to mail!



GROCERY STORE MAP

Let your child cut pictures from grocery circulars or magazines to make a map of the grocery store.

The next time you go shopping together, ask him to jot down notes about how the store is laid out. Maybe the produce is in the front, frozen food are along a side wall, the meat and the deli are on the back wall, and cereals and snacks are in the middle.

TIP: Have him list the food categories in each aisle (canned goods in aisle 8).

At home, your youngster can cut out pictures of food and glue them on a piece of paper to match the locations in the store. For instance, he might put a photo of a banana or a carrot where the produce section is located and a muffin or bagel where the bakery is. Finally, he should label each section. Together use the map to organize future shopping lists-and to find your way around the store.



AMERICAN FLAG

With this activity, your child can explore patterns on the American flag. Together, look at a real flag or at a picture of one in his social studies book or on line. Ask him to count the stars (50) and the stripes (13). Talk about the colors and patterns (the stars are in alternating rows of six and five, and the stripe pattern begins and ends with red.)

Then, let him create his own flag with red, white, and blue construction paper. To make the stars, he could dip a finger in white paint and stamp 50 fingerprints on a rectangle of blue. Once he glues that on his flag, he should use a ruler to measure the paper and figure out how wide each stripe should be. Next, he can cut them to fit.

TIP: Encourage him to read a book or website to find out why there are 50 stars and 13 stripes and how the colors were chosen.



Summer Slide can cause kids to fall 2 years behind by 5th grade!

There are no workbooks, and the subject matter focuses on things like swimming and pizza that are sure to capture kids' attention. The atmosphere is fun, and the environment is casual. But the mission is serious—to prevent summertime academic regression that can cost a child later in life. It's not just a theory; kids most at risk can fall two years behind in their reading level by fifth grade. It depends on the environment and the situation they're in. But for many, many kids, it's extremely real. While children from lower income families can be especially susceptible the summer slide can be an issue for children of any socioeconomic background. Not every child will suffer from the summer slide. Those that read a lot on their own, or engage in new experiences while traveling, typically retain information better. For others, teachers agree, **reading is the key!**

The Children's Literacy Initiative encourages the setting of goals—like reading every day—choosing age-appropriate books, visiting the library and keeping it fun. Support from parents or other authority figures is key. " You have to plant that seed, and you have to get the kids excited about it," Kiki Sweigart says. "That's the hard part. If there's not a person in their lives or people around them who are reading and interacting, it's not going to happen. That's why you start really young with them and let them set the goals." "Maybe when the kids are writing a story, you weave it around swimming, because swimming is the utmost experience for many children in the summertime. You set it up so they're kind of in charge, and they get to learn the things they want to learn. You want them invested."

- adapted from David Caraviell

Be a Reading Star

2019 EDITION

Your youngster can pick books from the list below and start reading! Every time he reads a new book, help him fill in the log on page 2. Complete the log, and he's an official reading star!



Chocolate Milk, Por Favor! (Maria Dismondy)

When Gabe starts school in America, he speaks only Spanish and has no friends. Then during recess he shows the kids a cool soccer trick, and his classmate Johnny realizes they're not that different after all. Based on a true story.



Oops, Pounce, Quick, Run! **An Alphabet Caper**

(Mike Twohy)

Follow along from A to Z as a dog's ball rolls into a mouse's house, leading to a wild chase.

Will the two end up making peace? Perfect for a read-aloud.

The Book of Mistakes (Corinna Luyken)

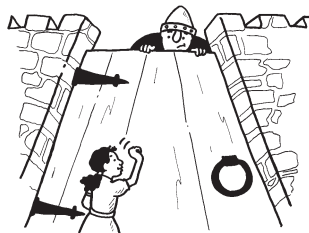
With this story, children will discover that making mistakes isn't always a bad thing. In fact, mistakes can lead to creativity. Watch as the illustrations come to life page by page, mixing "good ideas" and "mistakes" to create a wonderful, whimsical scene.

Because of an Acorn (Lola M. Schaefer and Adam Schaefer)

What does an acorn have to do with a hawk? Readers can find out in this nonfiction book about a forest. Learn how plants and animals depend on each other for survival and why a little acorn is so important. A glossary lists forest-related science words.

The Very Last Castle (Travis Jonker)

The town where Ibb lives has a single castle with a guard in the tower. But the townspeople think there might be monsters, giants, and even snakes inside. One day, Ibb knocks on the door—only to run away when she hears a scary sound. Then she gets an invitation to visit and decides to bravely see for herself what's inside!



Pink is for Blobfish: Discovering the World's Perfectly Pink Animals (Jess Keating)

Forget everything you know about the color pink! It's not just for flowers and "pretty" things. From blobfish to pink dolphins and naked mole rats, this nonfiction book contains information on all kinds of pink creatures. Your child will learn about their diets, habitats, and more. Part of the World of Weird Animals series.

Quinito, Day and Night / Quinito, día y noche

(Ina Cumpiano)

A little boy named Quinito introduces us to his family and his life in this story told in English and Spanish. Readers meet his siblings Clara and Juan, and Quinito explains how they're alike and different. Explore how families are made up of all kinds of people. Includes a bilingual glossary.

The Good Egg (Jory John)

In a carton of wacky and wild eggs, there's one good egg. He's always doing favors and good deeds, but he gets frustrated that the other eggs aren't "good" like him. When his shell starts to crack from all the stress, he takes a break and leaves his carton. He finds he needs to take care of himself if he wants to care for others, and he even starts to miss the carton!



Keep a Pocket in Your Poem: Classic Poems and Playful Parodies (J. Patrick Lewis)

This collection of classic poems and parodies will have readers laughing and perhaps even inspire them to create their own silly versions of poems. Enjoy a twist on Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," called "Stopping by the Fridge on a Hungry Evening," and more.




My Reading Log



1	Title	Author
2	Title	Author
3	Title	Author
4	Title	Author
5	Title	Author
6	Title	Author
7	Title	Author
8	Title	Author
9	Title	Author
10	Title	Author
11	Title	Author
12	Title	Author
13	Title	Author
14	Title	Author
15	Title	Author

_____ is a

Name



Reading Connection Beginning Edition

Be a Reading Star

2019 Edition

Encourage your youngster to pick a book from the list below and choose a cozy place to read. Each time she finishes a book, she can write the title and the author's name in the special star log on page 2—and be on her way to becoming a reading star!

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The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora (Pablo Cartaya)

Summer break for Arturo means hanging out with his friends and working at his grandparents' Cuban restaurant, La Cocina. When a land developer wants to buy the restaurant, Arturo and his family fight to protect La Cocina and their community. Includes poetry and family recipes.

What a Waste! Where Does Garbage Go? (Claire Eamer)



Learn everything you wanted to know—and probably a lot more—about trash! This nonfiction book features weird, gross, and interesting facts. Discover how humans create garbage, what happens to it, and innovative ways for reducing waste.

Our Moon: New Discoveries About Earth's Closest Companion (Elaine Scott)

Youngsters will blast off into space as they read fun facts about the moon. For instance, it would take 135 days to travel to the moon by car (if it were possible to do so!). Contains detailed photos, charts, and a glossary.

Power Forward (Hena Khan)

Zayd Saleem dreams of becoming the first Pakistani-American NBA player. But his parents want him to play the violin rather than basketball. Will Zayd's parents ever understand why he loves basketball so much? The first book in the Zayd Saleem Chasing the Dream series.

Draw Out the Story: Ten Secrets to Creating Your Own Comics (Brian McLachlan)

Fans of comic books and graphic novels will love this guide. Set up in a graphic-novel format, it offers tips on everything from storytelling to grammar. All your child has to do is grab a pencil and paper, pick a format, and begin!

Water Rolls, Water Rises / El agua rueda, el agua sube (Pat Mora)

Water is the star of this poetry book that presents each verse in English and Spanish. Readers will learn about the



states of water (liquid, gas, solid) and the many ways it shapes landscapes. Illustrated with watercolor paintings inspired by real places.

Woof: A Bowser and Birdie Novel (Spencer Quinn)

In a Louisiana swamp town, Birdie and her dog Bowser try to find a missing family heirloom: a stuffed marlin stolen from Birdie's grandmother's bait shop. The duo combines excellent smelling skills (Bowser) and investigative techniques (Birdie) in this tale narrated by Bowser. The first book in the Bowser and Birdie adventure series.



Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus (Dusti Bowling)

Aven is a young girl who was born without arms. Her world is turned upside down when her family moves to Arizona and she has to go to a new school, meet new people, and explain why she has no arms. Then she meets Connor, a boy with Tourette syndrome. The two bond over their challenges—and work together to solve a mystery.

Library on Wheels: Mary Lemist Titcomb and America's First Bookmobile (Sharlee Glenn)

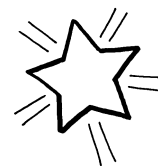
Go back in time to the early 1900s in this true story about a librarian named Mary. She wanted everyone to have access to books, so she invented the bookmobile: a horse-drawn wagon that delivered books to people who lived far from libraries.



continued



My Reading Log



1	Title	Author
2	Title	Author
3	Title	Author
4	Title	Author
★ 5	Title	Author
6	Title	Author
7	Title	Author
8	Title	Author
9	Title	Author
★ 10	Title	Author
11	Title	Author
12	Title	Author
13	Title	Author
14	Title	Author
★ 15	Title	Author
16	Title	Author
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18	Title	Author
19	Title	Author
★ 20	Title	Author

_____ is a

Name

BOOSTING COMPREHENSION

Chloe predicts what might happen next in a book. Thomas draws pictures about the stories he reads. And Jayla puts on puppet shows to act out her favorite books. These children are deepening their understanding of stories. Doing the activities in this guide will strengthen your youngster's reading comprehension, too.

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TAKE A PICTURE WALK

A picture is worth a thousand words! Try this idea to show your child how looking at illustrations before reading helps her get ready to understand a book.

Choose a picture book your youngster hasn't read before, and cover up the words with sticky notes. Then, have her go on a "picture walk" by turning the pages and describing what she sees. *Example:* "The bulldozer is scooping up dirt."

Now remove the sticky notes, and read the book with her. Ask your child to point out information she picked up just from the pictures.

ACTIVATE BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE



Does your youngster know that everything he learns gets "saved" in his brain—just like files are saved on a computer? Help him "activate" this background knowledge to improve his comprehension.

Have your child draw a picture of his brain on a sheet of paper. Look at a book cover together, and let him fill the brain with words that come to mind. For a story about the beach, he might write *ocean*, *waves*, *swim*, *sandcastle*, *bucket*, and *hot*. Ask him to tell you about the words. ("You need sand and water to make a sandcastle.") These are things he knows about the beach!

Then, read the book with him. Each time he spots a word he wrote, he gets to put a check mark beside it on his "brain." He'll see that knowing something about a topic makes a story easier to understand—and more fun to read.



MAKE FLASHLIGHT PREDICTIONS

Thinking about what could happen next can deepen your youngster's comprehension. Encourage her to make predictions as she reads with this activity.

Take turns holding a flashlight while you read a book together. When the person holding the flashlight has a prediction, she turns on the light and says, "Light bulb moment!" Then, she shares what she predicts will happen and why. ("I think the dragon that Harold drew with his purple crayon will eat all the apples on the tree.")

Keep passing the flashlight back and forth and sharing predictions until you reach the end of the book. *Note:* The flashlight holder may also call a "light bulb moment" to revise a prediction she has already made. ("Oh, the dragon scared Harold. Now I predict Harold will draw a way to escape.")



continued

CREATE CHARACTER AWARDS

Encourage your youngster to get to know storybook characters by giving them awards. That will help her better understand characters' traits, feelings, and actions, increasing her overall comprehension of the story.

After reading a book, suggest that your child think of an award that each character deserves. For *Make Way for Ducklings* (Robert McCloskey), maybe she'll give Mrs. Mallard an award for being careful and Michael an award for being helpful. Now she could use construction paper and crayons to make certificates. She can write each character's name on the award, along with the title of the book and what the award is for.

Let your youngster hang the awards on her bedroom door and use them to tell you about the characters.



TRADE CLUES

Play this game to help your child draw conclusions from a story.

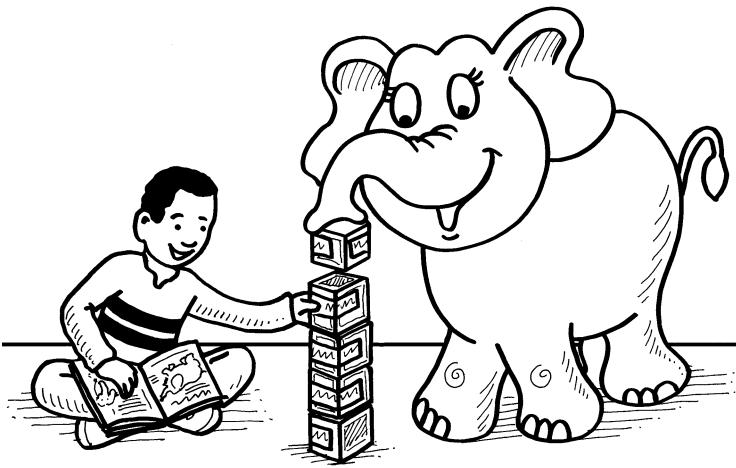
Skim through a book (without showing it to your youngster), and write down three sentences that could lead him to a conclusion about the plot. *Examples:* "Jack's mother took his temperature." "Jack watched through his bedroom window as other kids played outside." "Jack was excited to go back to school." Ask your child what he might conclude (Jack was sick).

Now let your youngster browse through a book and write three sentences for you to use to reach a conclusion.

BUILD A MAIN IDEA TOWER

Here's a hands-on way for your youngster to explore main ideas and details in nonfiction.

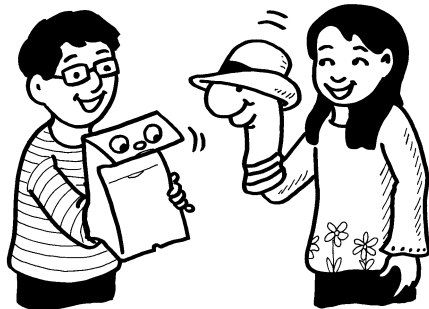
Let your child choose a nonfiction book. After you've both read it, ask him what it was mainly about (for instance, how and where elephants live). He can write this main idea on a strip of masking tape and put the tape on a building block. Now search the book for details about the main idea, and help him label another block for each one. *Examples:* "Eat grass and leaves," "Live in Africa and Asia," "Use trunks to hug." Finally, suggest that he stack the blocks with the "main idea" block at the top. He'll see that details "support" the main idea.



RETELLING A TALE

When your child tells a story in his own words, he strengthens his reading comprehension. Retelling is also something he does in school—it shows his teacher how well he understands what he reads. Use these ideas to make retelling fun at home!

PAINT A STORY MURAL. Have your youngster paint story events on separate sheets of paper labeled "Beginning," "Middle," and "End." When his paintings dry, help him tape them together and hang his mural in a hallway. Then, he can pretend to be a museum tour guide and lead your family down the hallway, using his paintings to retell the story.



PUT ON A PUPPET SHOW. Let the next book your children read become the inspiration for a puppet show. Give them brown paper lunch bags or old socks to turn into puppets. They could draw each character's face on the bottom of a bag or glue craft materials onto a sock. It's show time! Listen as they retell the story in their own words, using a different voice for each character.

FOLLOW A PATH. Ask your child to draw a long, winding line on pavement with sidewalk chalk. Next, help him add these labels spaced out along the line: "Characters," "Setting," "Problem," and "Solution." He can pretend the line is a tightrope and walk along it. Whenever he gets to a label, he retells that part of the story before moving on. For example, on "Setting," he'll describe where the story takes place. ("The brothers lived on a big farm with green fields and a red barn.")

How to Nurture Healthy Digital Habits This Summer

As the last bell rings and summer beckons ... kids want to stay in touch with friends! These tips will help you guide how your child has fun online.

1. Start the conversation.

Explain the importance of passwords and security. Discuss your screen time philosophy. What do kids want to do online over the summer and why?

2. Look for quality content.

What content is fair game, and what needs a second look from you? The Family Online Safety Institute is a great resource to find content for kids of all ages.

3. Turn screen time into social time.

Empower kids to stay connected to friends and family through [Messenger Kids](#), a safer app where kids can chat with friends and share stories from camp!

4. Emphasize online responsibility.

Have regular conversations about what kids send or share. Talk about how online environments are just like the playground: “If you see something, say something.”

5. Keep checking in.

Check in to ensure your kid’s online interactions are fulfilling and fun. Follow along online, but keep that conversation offline thriving!



Messenger Kids

How It Works

Messenger Kids is a **safer** messaging app that lets kids have **fun** with their friends and family in a parent-controlled space:

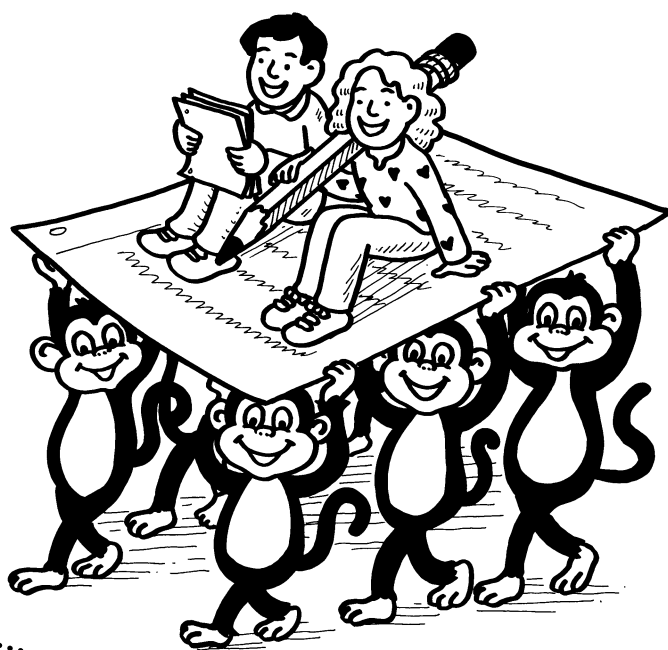
- Free messaging and video chat
- Parents control the contact list
- Parents can set “off times” for the app
- Kids express themselves with kid-appropriate stickers, GIFs, and filters
- No ads or in-app purchases



Sponsored by **Messenger Kids**

It's Fun to Write!

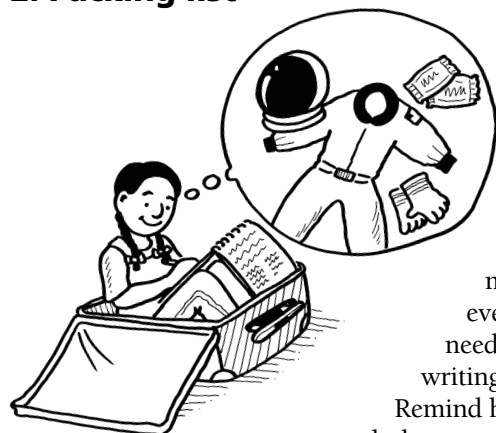
All kinds of writing practice can fit easily into your child's days. With the 10 activities in this guide, he'll write to entertain, inform, and even persuade his readers. And he'll build skills like using descriptive language, being specific, adding details, and more.



1. Family survey

Does your family prefer cats or dogs? Would you rather eat noodles or rice? Your youngster can conduct a daily poll to find out the answers to questions like those. He'll learn to write questions, and you'll all discover more about one another. Help him write a question with two choices for an answer ("Do you like spring or fall better?") and tape it on an empty tissue box. Each person should vote on a slip of paper and drop it in the box. At the end of the day, have him count the votes and announce the results.

2. Packing list



Is your child planning a sleepover at Grandma's, or is your family taking a vacation? Ask your youngster to make a list of everything she'll need. She'll see that writing is practical.

Remind her to include clothes, toothbrush and toothpaste, books, toys, and snacks. *Idea:* Suggest that she make a list for an imaginary trip to anyplace she likes (the moon, a castle, ocean floor). She can think about what special supplies each place would require. Perhaps she'd pack a space suit and freeze-dried food for the moon, or scuba gear and a water-proof camera for an undersea adventure.

3. Picnic menu

Making a menu is a great way to work on descriptive writing. The next time you plan a picnic, let your youngster write out a special menu. Ask him to look in the refrigerator and pantry to decide what you'll eat. Fold a sheet of paper into thirds, and help him write the names of the foods in categories. He might put sandwiches in one column, side dishes in another, and drinks in a third. Encourage him to use as many adjectives as possible: "Creamy peanut butter and sweet strawberry slices on whole-wheat bread" or "Crunchy orange carrots with cool ranch dip." Use your child's ideas to pack the food, and then display his menu at your picnic!

4. Comedy skit

Your youngster will be motivated to write with this laugh-out-loud activity. For one week, ask each family member to find something that makes her laugh, and write it down. You could help your child jot down a joke that a friend told her or a silly line from a TV show. Or write your own original jokes! At the end of the week, hold a stand-up comedy night. Everyone takes a turn reading their funny material.

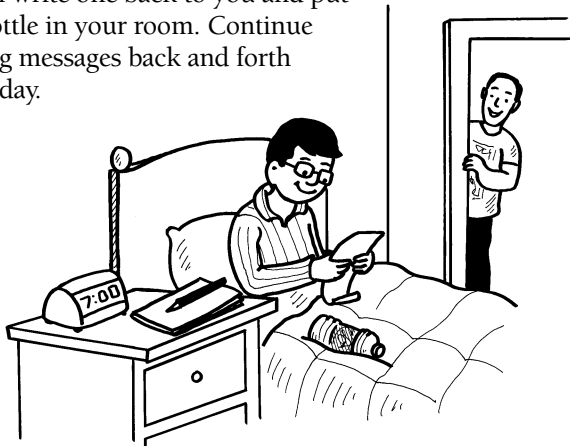


5. Greeting cards

Work on poetry by creating homemade greeting cards. Put your youngster in charge of writing the verses to go inside. She can do this for birthday, anniversary, get well, and thank you cards. Give her ideas by showing her old cards your family has received. Also, you could help her make lists of words to use (*blue, Sue, new, shoe*). *Example*: "Roses are red, violets are blue, Happy Birthday to my Aunt Sue!" Suggest that your child fold construction paper in half, write her verse inside, and use markers or crayons to illustrate her card.

6. Message in a bottle

Keep in touch with your youngster while encouraging him to write. Secretly write a message for him on a piece of paper, roll it up, and slip it into an empty, dry water bottle (make sure the paper is sticking out of the bottle so it's easy to pull out). Leave the bottle in his room. After he reads his message, he can write one back to you and put the bottle in your room. Continue leaving messages back and forth every day.



7. Advertisement

Have your child practice persuasive writing by creating an advertisement. If you're holding a yard sale or hiring a babysitter, let her help you write a classified newspaper ad. Or she can suggest descriptions of household items to sell online. Talk about ways to describe objects (color, size) and how to get readers' attention ("perfect condition" or "one of a kind"). For example, if your youngster has outgrown her bike, she might write, "Lime green bike. 12 inch. Looks brand new."

8. Family announcements

Your child is probably familiar with morning announcements at school. Together, discuss what they usually contain (results of games or tournaments, schedule of upcoming events). Then, help your youngster write weekly announcements to keep everyone in your house up to date. Each Sunday evening, he can post a list on the refrigerator: "Jake's soccer team won on Saturday" or "Mom has a job interview on Monday." *Idea*: Help him make stationery for his announcements on the computer or by hand and add a special heading ("Radcliffe Family News").



9. Author mail

Your youngster can write to her favorite author or poet! Together, find the person's email or regular address by typing his name and "fan mail" into a search engine. In her letter, suggest that she say which of his books she likes best and why. For instance, she could tell Mo Willems, "*Knuffle Bunny* is my favorite because I have a favorite stuffed animal who goes places with me, too!" Remind your child to ask the author a question or two (*example*: "How old were you when your first book was published?"). Finally, help her proofread her note by checking that each sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a period.

10. Game rules

Has your youngster ever played Dinosaur Hide-and-Seek? How about Musical Tag? Ask him to invent a new game and create a set of rules for it. He'll learn to write clear instructions. You may need to prompt him with questions such as "What do you do first?" or "How do you win the game?" For Dinosaur Hide-and-Seek, he might list:

1. Pick one person to be "It."
2. Everyone else hides.
3. "It" counts to 10.
4. Everyone roars like a dinosaur.
5. "It" follows the sounds to find the players.
6. The last person he finds wins and becomes "It."



Keys to Math Fluency

Playtime, snack time, story time... it's always a good time to work on math fluency. A youngster who's fluent in math thinks about numbers in different ways and uses various strategies to solve problems. Plus, he can explain his strategies, which shows he understands the "why" behind math operations. Try these activities that will fit "fluently" into your child's daily routines.



Playtime

Whether your youngster counts blocks or rocks, he can practice counting fluently as he plays. First, ask him to make the tallest building possible by placing one block on top of another, counting as he builds. Next, go outdoors, and let him fill up his dump truck with rocks. Now he gets to dump it out and count the rocks. How could he fit in more rocks? (He'd need to find smaller ones!)

Snack time

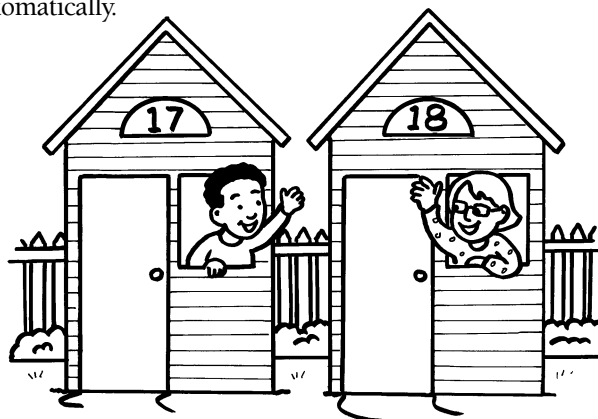


Here's a fluency-builder that tastes yummy! Choose a snack with small pieces, such as raisins, cereal rings, or blueberries. Arrange a handful (say, 12 blueberries) in two groups on your plate (maybe 8 on one side and 4 on the other), and say the number sentence you made ($8 + 4 = 12$). Let your child take the same number of snacks and show the number

in a different way (perhaps $5 + 7$). *Idea:* Turn your plates around and say the number sentences ($4 + 8 = 12$, $7 + 5 = 12$). She'll see that the total is still the same. That's the *commutative property* of addition—add numbers in any order, and the sum will be the same.

On-the-go time

How is 17 related to 18? They're "neighbors," because 17 is *one less than* 18, and 18 is *one more than* 17! Spotting relationships between numbers helps your youngster solve math problems fluently. In the car or on a walk, work on "neighborly numbers." Point out a number, and ask him to tell you its neighbor. If you pick 35 on a speed limit sign, he would say that 34 and 36 are its "neighbors." *Variation:* Have him tell you which number is 10 less (25) and 10 more (45). *Note:* At first, he may need to start counting at 1 to figure out a number's neighbor. As he becomes more fluent, he'll be able to answer automatically.



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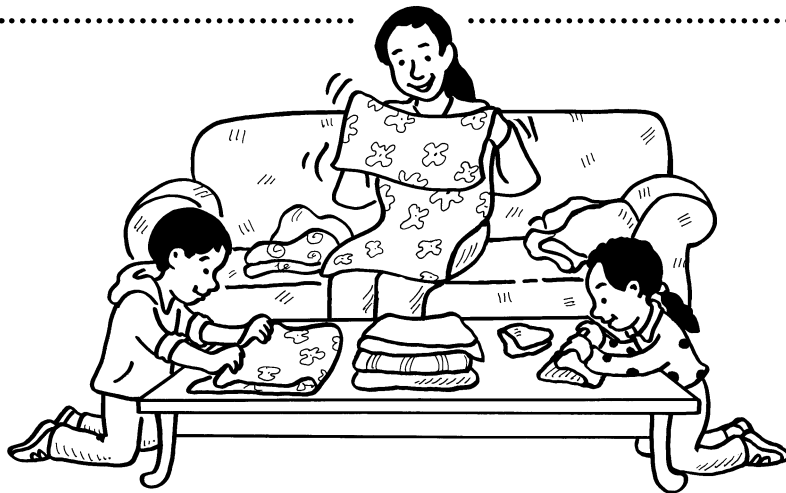
Story time

Read aloud to your child, and make up math stories related to the book for each other to solve. If you read *Jack and the Beanstalk*, you might say, “Jack had 25 beans. He spilled 8 of them. How many beans did he have left?” ($25 - 8 = 17$) Then, talk about the strategy used to solve the problem. Your youngster could say, “ $25 - 5 = 20$. 8 is 3 more than 5, and $20 - 3 = 17$.” A different strategy would be working up from 8 to 25 using numbers that are easy to add. (“ $8 + 2 = 10$, $10 + 10 = 20$, and $20 + 5 = 25$. Then $2 + 10 + 5 = 17$.”) She’ll learn to approach problems in multiple ways and see that more than one strategy leads to the answer.



Chore time

Doing household chores is a great way for your child to practice estimating accurately—an important part of math fluency. Have him get the towels out of the dryer and estimate how many there are, then count to check. He can also estimate the number of napkins in a stack before he sets the table or the number of boxes in the recycling bin before he helps you take it out. If he estimates frequently, he’ll learn to eyeball different quantities, and his estimates will become more accurate.



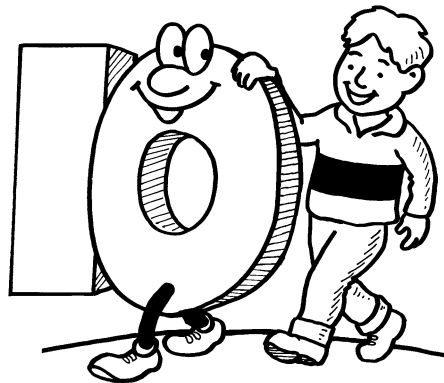
The friendliest number

The “friendly” number 10 can help your youngster add and subtract fluently, because our number system is based on 10. Here are ideas for working with 10 and its multiples (20, 30, 40, and so on).

Make a chart

With this colorful chart, your child will see all the ways to make 10. On a large sheet of paper or poster board, have him write the numbers 0–10 across the top and 10–0 across the bottom.

Using different-color crayons, let him draw lines connecting the pairs of numbers that make 10 (0 and 10, 1 and 9, 2 and 8, 3 and 7, 4 and 6, 5 and 5). Then, he can write the number sentences for each pair ($1 + 9 = 10$, $2 + 8 = 10$). Suggest that he hang his chart in his room, and he’ll soon be fluent in making 10.





Play a game

Now let your youngster use what she knows about facts from 1 to 10 to add and subtract bigger numbers. Each person should make a game board by dividing a piece of paper into 4 rows and 4 columns. In each square, a player writes any two-digit number that does not end in 0 (examples: 12, 53, 38, 21).

Take turns rolling either one die or two dice (your choice). If the number rolled can be added to or subtracted from a number on your board to make a multiple of 10, cover that number with a token. (Place only one token per turn). Perhaps your child rolls a 2. She knows that $8 + 2 = 10$, so she could put a token on 38, because $38 + 2 = 40$, and 40 is a multiple of 10. The first person to fill her board wins.

Note to parents: Post this calendar on your refrigerator, and encourage your child to do an activity a day to strengthen reading, writing, math, science, and social studies skills.




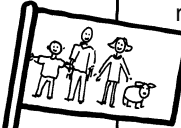





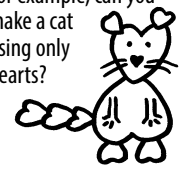


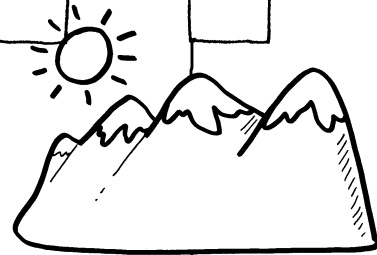
A Learning Activity a Day

MONTH						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 <p>Start at 100 and count backward for every car you see today. How close to zero can you get?</p>	<p>Tell a "knock knock" joke—but write back and forth instead of speaking. ("Knock, knock." "Who's there?" "Boo." "Boo who?" "Don't cry. It's only me!")</p>	<p>Discover a new author by swapping favorite books with a friend. When you finish reading, trade again.</p>	<p>Gather a few small toys. Predict which ones will float and which ones will sink. Test your predictions in a sink full of water.</p> 	<p>Use a magnifying glass to examine rocks outside. Draw or write about what you see (color, size, shape, texture).</p>	<p>What did your grandparents do for fun as children? Ask them to describe or teach you games they enjoyed.</p> 	<p>In the car, write down a word from the first five street signs you see. Use the words to write a poem.</p>
<p>With a friend or parent, take turns writing the name of a state on a piece of paper. Can you come up with all 50 states? Look at a map to find any you missed.</p> 	<p>Write a "recipe" for a fun activity. <i>Example:</i> Take two friends, add a basketball, and mix together on a court.</p>	<p>How many triangles can you make with nine toothpicks? Start with one big triangle, and see how many triangles you can fit inside. Now try it with 18 toothpicks.</p> 	<p>Name three things you read today (menu, newspaper, greeting card). Ask family members to tell you three things they read, too.</p>	<p>Hold a family election. Vote on the choices for tonight's dinner, bedtime story, or activity. The majority wins.</p> 	<p>Choose a word (<i>run</i>), and take turns calling out synonyms for it (<i>jog, sprint</i>). When you can't think of any more synonyms, pick a new word.</p>	<p>Gather 10 books. Look on the copy-right pages to find out when they were released. Arrange the books in order from oldest to newest.</p> 
<p>Estimate which item in your living room is the longest. Use a tape measure to find out if your estimate is correct.</p>	<p>Who is your favorite book character? Where does he live, and what does he like to do? Draw a picture of him having fun in the story's setting.</p>	<p>Make a "rainbow" with brightly colored objects from your house. Put the colors in the correct order (red apple, orange sock, yellow sticky note...).</p> 	<p>Count every knob in your house. Find them on doors, cabinets, and drawers. How many tens and ones are there? <i>Example:</i> 64 knobs = 6 tens and 4 ones.</p> 	<p>Write instructions for brushing your teeth. Cut the sentences apart, mix them up, and have someone reassemble them. Then, let that person write and cut up directions for you to put in order.</p>	<p>Collect leaves from the ground. Mix them up. Then, match them to the trees they came from.</p> 	<p>Read a story that takes place in an earlier time period, such as <i>Little House on the Prairie</i> (Laura Ingalls Wilder). Name five ways your life would be different if you lived back then.</p>
<p>Read the dedication page in several books. If you wrote a book, what would it be about, and who would you dedicate it to?</p> 	<p>Imagine you are flying over your town. Write a description of things you might see (roof of your school, a river, tops of trees).</p>	<p>Flip through a magazine and find three unfamiliar words. Look them up in the dictionary to learn what they mean.</p>	<p>Be a reading "spy." Walk around your house with a paper towel tube. Look through it to read everything you can (brand names, book titles, board game boxes).</p>	<p>Browse through a favorite book. Write down 10 verbs (action words) and 10 adjectives (describing words).</p>	<p>Look at a U.S. map and find place names that are also foods (Toast, North Carolina; Sandwich, Illinois). How many can you spot?</p> 	

★
Recipes for Success

Note to parents: Post this calendar on your refrigerator, and encourage your child to do an activity a day to strengthen reading, writing, math, science, and social studies skills.

A Learning Activity a Day

MONTH						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			Pack something in your lunchbox to read (poem, joke, comic strip). Share it with classmates at your cafeteria table.	Fill a large saucer with water, and place it outside as a birdbath. Stand back and observe. How many different types of birds visit?	Slide a piece of cardboard inside a plain T-shirt. Write a quote or saying on the front of the shirt with fabric paint. 	Make a time line of your life, starting on the day you were born. Add stickers or symbols to mark important events (vacation, first pet), and label each one.
Take turns naming words that sound the same but are spelled differently. Write a sentence that uses one of the pairs. ("Use a pencil to write with your right hand.") 	Write fractions based on your family. <i>Example:</i> "I make up $\frac{1}{5}$ of my family" if there are 5 people in your family. How could you represent the children in your family as a fraction?	Turn off the TV. Make popcorn, and listen to an audiobook as a family. Can you "see" the illustrations in your imagination?	How many ways can you think of to "see" the wind? Make a list (kite flying, hair blowing, wind sock swaying).	The U.S. flag has 50 stars for the states and 13 stripes for the original colonies. Design and draw a flag that uses symbols for your family. 	Pick a letter of the alphabet (N). Write a sentence in which every word ends with that letter. ("Jan ran in rain.") Try again with a different letter.	What costs more per ounce: milk, juice, or bottled water? Ask a parent to save a grocery receipt. Then, divide the price of each beverage by the number of ounces. 
Read an item that came in the mail today. <i>Examples:</i> catalog, phone bill, newsletter. 	At dinner, look for mixtures (salad) and compounds (bread). In mixtures, ingredients can be separated. In compounds, ingredients combine to make new properties.	Choose a chapter book. Take turns reading chapters aloud with someone.	Survey 10 people to find out their favorite sports team. Make a graph to show what you discovered. 	Go outside and blow soap bubbles. Use a watch with a second hand to time how long the biggest one lasts before it pops.	Email a relative and ask him to be your pen pal. Plan to send a new message each week. 	Ask family members to tell you about their favorite president. Write down what you discover.
Observe a squirrel, and sketch and write about what you see. What does it look like? How does it move? What is it doing?	What happened on this day in history? Visit learning.blogs.nytimes.com/on-this-day/ to find out. 	Combine two or more outdoor toys (ball, hula-hoop) to invent a sport. Write down the rules for your game.	Choose a shape or symbol, and use it to draw a picture. For example, can you make a cat using only hearts? 	Read the labels on five pieces of clothing. List the materials they're made of (cotton, polyester, wool). How many contain the same materials?	Play a geography game with someone. Take turns naming countries. Each one must start with the last letter of the one before it (Canada, Austria). 	Flip through a dictionary with a grown-up. Try to pick a word the adult doesn't know. When you find one, read the definition aloud—you've both learned a new word!
	Have each family member look in a mirror and count his teeth. Find the average number of teeth in your family. (Add everyone's total and divide by the number of people.)	Arrange yarn to make letters and spell words. Take turns "writing" words for the other person to read.	Roll two different balls (marble, golf ball) down a ramp or slide. Predict which will reach the ground first. Were you right?	Look at a map or globe. Name all the land and water formations that you see (mountain, ocean, desert). 		

Recipes for Success




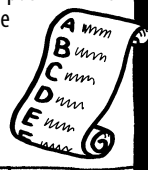
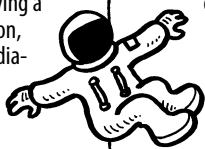


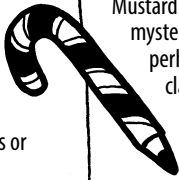
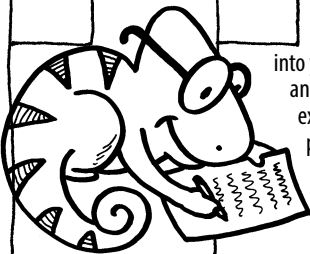

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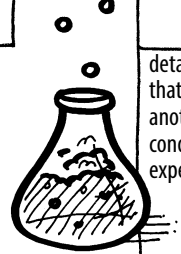
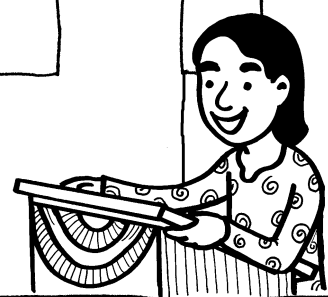
Note to parents: Every day is a great day for writing!
Hang up this calendar to inspire your child to write stories, instructions, persuasive pieces, and more.

Writing Prompt of the Day

MONTH						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		Imagine you're invisible. Write a story about a day in your life. Where would you go, and what would you do? How could you help people if you were invisible?	You meet a time traveler from the past. Write a letter to persuade him to buy (and use) a smart-phone.	Write step-by-step instructions that a kindergartner could use to tie his shoes. Have someone test your instructions. 	Would a kangaroo make a good pet? Write an argument for or against it. Be sure to include kangaroo facts.	Describe something you're an expert at. Tell another person how she could become an expert, too.
	Rewrite a story from a different character's point of view. For instance, retell <i>Peter Pan</i> (J. M. Barrie) with Captain Hook narrating the story.	Fill in the blank: My favorite thing to do on vacation is _____. Then, explain the reasons behind your choice.		Imagine you've conducted an interview with a famous historical figure. Write a news article about the person.	Write a letter introducing yourself to a new teacher. What should he know about you?	Onomatopoeia is when a word sounds like its own name (<i>buzz</i> , <i>pop</i>). Write a graphic novel-style story, and work in 10 examples. 
Pick two very different characters from your favorite book. Imagine that they're having a conversation, and write dialogue for them. 	Write an adventure story about travelers lost in space. What problems do they encounter, and how do they solve them?	What's a chore that you do regularly? Write a "help wanted" advertisement for it. What information should your ad contain?	Select an interesting photo from a book, magazine, or family album. Now make up a story about it, with a beginning, a middle, and an end. 	Describe your favorite meal. Choose specific words so that someone who has never tried it gets an idea of how it looks, smells, and tastes.	Think of a person who was kind to you or helped you with a problem recently. Write a thank you note to that person.	Choose an important lesson you learned when you were younger, and write a "how to" story about it. Example: "How to Make a Friend."
$3 \times 4 = 12$ 	Make up a math story problem based on a fairy tale. Example: "Three bears lived in a cottage. If each bear invited four friends to a party, how many guests would there be?"	Pretend you are starting your own business. Write the script for a commercial that will convince customers to buy your goods or services. 	Use a board game to inspire a story. Maybe Colonel Mustard will solve a mystery in Clue, or perhaps your class will take a field trip to Candy Land.	Invent a holiday to celebrate today. What will you name your holiday? How will you celebrate? Write all about it!	Uh-oh, there's a word shortage. You get only 10 words to describe yourself, so choose carefully. Which words will you pick?	Write about a difficult choice you have made. What were your options, and how did you decide what to do?
	Imagine that you have been turned into your favorite animal. List and explain the pros and cons of your new life.	Name a cause that you care about like animal rights or the environment. Design a flyer filled with information that will persuade others to help, too.	Write a "Did you know?" booklet that includes fascinating facts about your favorite sport, hobby, or place.	Think about your most valued possession. Use vivid adjectives to help a reader "see" your treasure as she reads about it.		

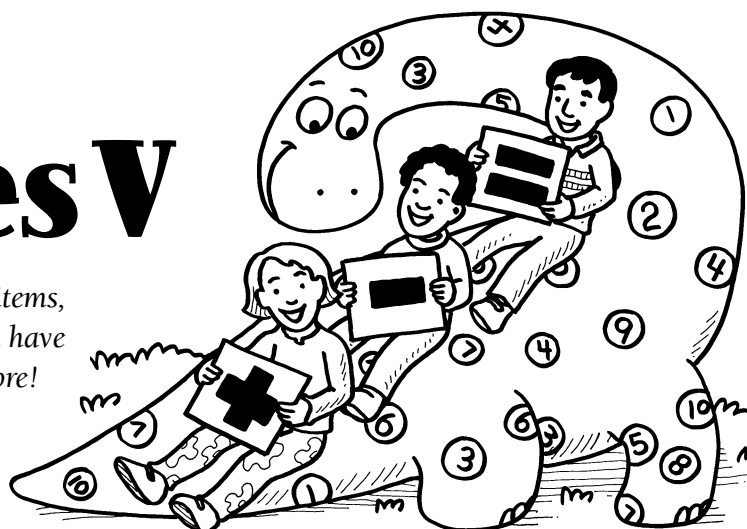
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Writing Prompt of the Day

MONTH						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		Write a haiku about your favorite sound. A haiku is a poem with three lines. The first and last lines each have five syllables, and the middle line has seven.	Come up with a story idea that would make a good movie. Write a summary of it—and an argument for why a movie studio should film it.	Exchange writing prompts with a friend. Each of you thinks of three prompts for the other. Swap and write!	Craft a story from a pet's point of view. What does the pet think about? What does it do when no one is home?	
	Should robots have rights like people do? Write an argument defending your answer.	Make a card for a friend. Draw a picture of him, or glue a photo onto the card. Include a caption for the picture.	Think of an idiom like "when pigs fly" or "bite off more than you can chew." Write a story that explains where the saying came from.	What season do you like best, and why? Describe the weather and your favorite activities of that season.	Write about a job you would like to have when you grow up. What would your typical workday be like?	
Interview someone in your family about the most interesting thing they've ever done. Write and illustrate a picture book about it, and share it with the person.	Make up a poem titled "If My Day Were a Rainbow." Use a different color word in each line.	Write about an event you want to remember forever. Include answers to the "five W" questions (who, what, when, where, and why).	Invent a secret identity for yourself. What would your name be, and what superpower would you have?	Create a travel brochure for an alien from another planet visiting Earth. What places are "must see"? What does he need to know about humans?	On separate index cards, write instructions for different boredom-busting activities that don't involve screen time.	Write a nice description of a family member that doesn't include the person's name. Can your family guess who you described?
Use hyperbole (extreme exaggeration) to finish this sentence: "The fish was so big that _____."		Do a science experiment. Write detailed instructions that would allow another scientist to conduct the same experiment.	If you were traveling to a deserted island, what three things would you pack? Write about what makes each one important for your trip.	Describe a stuffed animal using at least two similes (comparisons that use <i>like</i> or <i>as</i>) and two metaphors (comparisons without those words).	Close your eyes, and put your finger on a spot on a map or globe. Now open your eyes, and write a story with that location as the setting.	Write a menu for your dream restaurant. Be sure to include mouth-watering descriptions of the appetizers, entrees, sides, and desserts.
What do you think is the hardest part of being a grown-up? How does it compare to the hardest part of being a kid? Explain both sides.		Invent a new card game. Make up a fun name for it, and write the rules for playing it.	Write a play or skit based on your favorite book, movie, or TV show.	You discover a secret door. Write about what you find on the other side.	Pretend you are running for a seat on the student council. Write a persuasive speech about a change you'd like to make at school.	

Marvelous Math Games V

With a deck of cards, dice, and a few other household items, your child can play all the games in this collection. She'll have fun counting, adding and subtracting, estimating, and more!



Count the cards

The object of this game is to collect cards from 1–10. Your youngster will practice counting and putting numbers in order.

You'll need: deck of cards (face cards removed, ace = 1)

1. Shuffle the cards, deal 10 to each player, and stack the rest facedown.
2. On each turn, draw a card from the pile and discard one from your hand—with the goal of getting every number from 1 to 10. So if your child draws a card she already has, she should discard it.
3. The first player to get 1–10 (of any suit) wins the game.



Addition pickup

Quick! Grab—and hold onto—as many numbered balloons as you can. The higher the numbers, the better, in this fun-to-play game that lets your child work on addition.

You'll need: a dozen balloons, permanent marker, timer, pencil and paper (optional)

1. Blow up the balloons, and help your youngster carefully number them (1–12).
2. Set the timer for 1 minute.
3. Everyone tries to pick up and hold as many balloons as possible.
4. When the timer goes off, each person adds up all the numbers on the balloons he's holding. (Note: Add in your head or on paper.) The player with the highest total wins.

Watery measurement

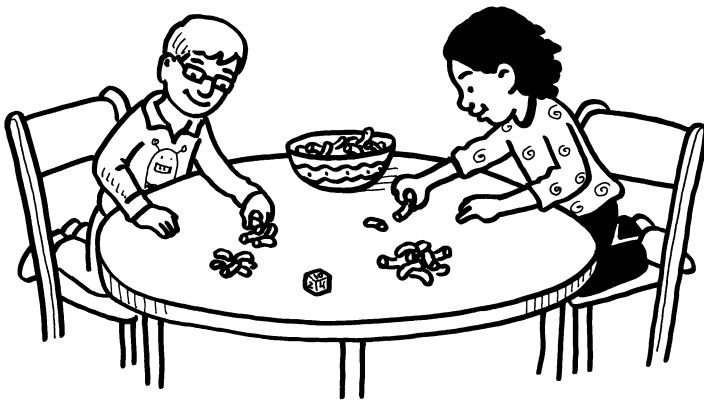
Encourage your child to estimate more accurately with this outdoor game that's great for a warm day.

You'll need: containers of various sizes (buckets, bowls), measuring cups, paper, pencils, water

1. Each person chooses a container and writes down how many cups of water she estimates it will take to fill her container.
2. Have players fill a 1-cup measuring cup with water the number of times they estimated and keep track with tally marks on their papers. If your youngster estimated that her container would hold 7 cups, she would empty 7 cups of water into the bucket. If her estimate was too high, the overflow will let her know right away—and she's out for the round.
3. All the remaining players use the measuring cups to figure out how much more water would be needed to finish filling their containers. The player who would need the least amount of water wins.
4. Pick a new container, and play again.



continued



Macaroni leftovers

How can “leftover” macaroni help your child explore odd and even numbers and equal groups? When you play this game where odd numbers help you win! *Bonus:* Making equal groups gets your youngster ready for division.

You’ll need: bowl of dry macaroni noodles (or beans)

1. Have each player take a small handful of macaroni.
2. Each person divides his macaroni into two equal groups. If there is a noodle left over that means the total is an *odd* amount. Say your child has 13 noodles. He would make two groups of six noodles each, with one noodle left over. He gets to keep the leftover noodle and puts the rest back in the bowl. If he has an even amount, such as 16, he would make two groups of eight noodles each. No noodles are left over, so he would return all the macaroni to the bowl.
3. After 10 rounds, players count their noodles. The person with the most leftover noodles wins.

Domino-chain add and subtract

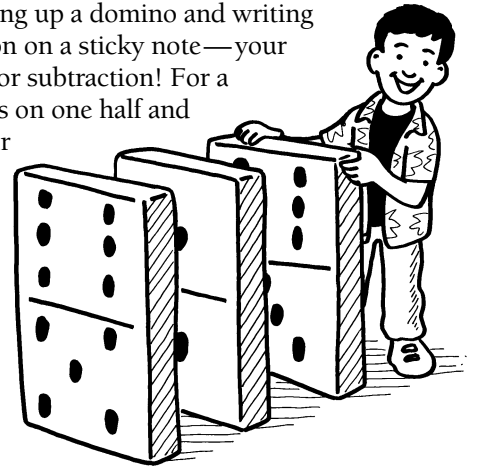
What do 1, 2, 3 and 8, 9, 10 have in common? They’re *consecutive numbers*, or numbers we say in order when we count. To win this addition-and-subtraction game, be the first player to make three number sentences whose answers are consecutive.

You’ll need: dominoes, sticky notes and a pencil for each player

1. Spread out all the dominoes facedown.
2. Take turns picking up a domino and writing a matching equation on a sticky note—your choice of addition or subtraction! For a domino with 3 dots on one half and 2 on the other, your youngster could write $3 + 2 = 5$ or $3 - 2 = 1$.

3. Keep playing until you get answers that are three consecutive numbers. Say your child has one sticky note with $6 - 5 = 1$ and another with $9 - 6 = 3$, then draws a domino with 4 dots on one half and 6 on the other. He could write either $4 + 6 = 10$ or $6 - 4 = 2$. Because he needs a 2 (1, 2, and 3 are consecutive), the subtraction problem would be his better bet to win!

Tip: Suggest that players arrange their sticky notes in order so they can easily see which number they need to win.



Odds and evens war

This two-player twist on the classic card game of War sharpens your youngster’s subtraction skills.

You’ll need: deck of cards (face cards removed, ace = 1), paper and pencil for each player

1. One player is “odds” and the other is “evens.”
2. Shuffle the cards. Deal them equally in facedown stacks to the two players.
3. To start, both players turn over their top card at the same time. Whoever has the bigger number subtracts the smaller number from it

and says the answer. So if your youngster flips over 5 and you flip over 2, your child would say 3, since $5 - 2 = 3$. Then, she tells whether the answer is odd or even. The odds player takes both cards if the answer is odd, and the evens person takes them if it’s even. *Note:* Matching cards equal zero, which is an even number.

4. When every card has been played, count to see who has the most cards—and wins. Switch “odds” and “evens,” and play again.

