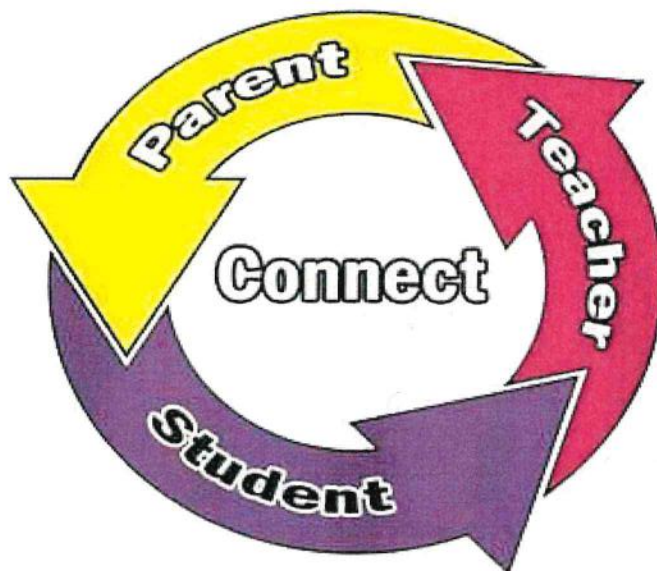


The Leaguers, Inc.

Home School Connection Packet

4 Year Old



Dear Parents and Families,

The Leaguers Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start Program individualizes by providing children and families with prolonged absences with a variety of learning experiences in the home environment through our Home-School Connection.

As always, our first priority is your child's wellbeing and education. During this time that your child is out of school our education staff has provided hands-on learning activities directly from The Creative Curriculum to continue to support your child's learning and development.

This Home-School Connection packet is compiled to ensure learning is continued during your child's absence from school and is comprised of learning activities extended from the classroom into the home environment

Home-School Connection is how parents are able to reinforce what children are learning in the classroom at home through activities related to the Unit or Topic of study.

Included in this Home-School Connection Packet are activities for child's development and learning in the following areas:

- Language Development
- Literacy Development
- Mathematics Development
- Social-Emotional Development

*"Together may we give our children the roots to grow
and the wings to fly"*

Teaching Strategies: Development and Learning Activities
Language Development



Down on the Farm

Primary Objectives

- 4. Demonstrates traveling skills
- 5. Demonstrates balancing skills
- 9a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary

Why It's Important

The sounds from and names of farm animals can be the first ones that children remember. From singing "Old MacDonald Had a Farm," some children already know many animal sounds. Your child can learn how to pretend to be different farm animals by imitating some of your actions.

Materials

Large open floor space or outdoor area; books or magazines with pictures of farm animals; music with animal sounds (optional)

What You Do

1. Invite your child to join you in a discussion about what it would be like to visit a farm. Look at the pictures of farm animals together, and talk about what the animals look like and how they live. *Look at the cow's long tail. She uses it to swat flies away. What do you think she eats?*
2. Talk about the various animal sounds. If you have a recording of animal sounds, listen to it and talk about each animal you hear.
3. Encourage your child to make the sounds that the animals in the pictures make. Offer assistance, if needed, by singing "Old MacDonald Had a Farm" and let her fill in the sounds during the song.
4. Invite your child to think of an animal she would like to act out. Demonstrate, if necessary, by hopping like a bunny, chewing like a cow, etc. Talk about what you see her doing. *It looks like you are a happy dog because your tail is wagging and you are running around!*
5. You can continue the activity by taking turns acting out the animals and guessing each other's imitations.



Talking Walking Collage

Primary Objectives

4. Demonstrates traveling skills

9a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary

Why It's Important

Engaging your child in conversations about her surroundings is a good way to develop vocabulary and make her more aware of her immediate environment. By making a collage from materials relevant to the conversation, you give your child an opportunity to recall the details of your talk and make it easier to share the memory with others.

Materials

Paper; glue; tape; paper bag

What You Do

1. Invite your child to join you on a "talking walk." Explain that you will explore outside and see what you can find. *What do you think we will see on our walk around the playground?*
2. As you walk together, talk about what you see. Point out insects under stones and squirrels in trees. Observe the weather, clouds, people, and passing cars.
3. Encourage your child to use the paper bag to collect leaves, sticks, and other materials. Wonder aloud and ask questions that prompt her to describe what she finds. *I wonder why some leaves are green and some are brown. I hear a bird singing high up in the tree. What do you hear?*
4. When you return from the walk, encourage your child to talk about what she saw and heard. Provide her with paper and glue to make a collage using the objects she collected.
5. Offer to write down her description of the objects as she works on the collage. When finished, display the collage and description and encourage your child to share it with other family members or friends.



Simon Says

Primary Objectives

- 4. Demonstrates traveling skills
- 5. Demonstrates balancing skills
- 8b. Follows directions

Why It's Important

Active games that encourage your child to listen to details and directions will nurture his ability to understand spoken language and move his body in new ways.

Materials

Large open floor space or outdoor area; audio recording, if needed

What You Do

1. Invite your child to dance with you. Play music, and encourage your child to move to the beat. Prompt him to describe his movements with words such as *flap, slide, leap, twirl, tiptoes, wiggle, sway, jump, and hop*.
2. Explain that you will now play Simon Says together. If desired, eliminate the rule about only moving when you say "Simon Says." Give simple directions such as *Simon says flap your arms. Simon says march around the table*.
3. You can increase the difficulty of the game by adding more complex directions such as *Simon says clap your hands, then jump, jump, jump*. You can also increase the speed of the game to make it more challenging.
4. Invite your child to take a turn as the leader of the game. Follow his directions and describe your actions as you move.
5. Continue the game for as long as your child is interested.



Inquiring Minds

Primary Objectives

10a. Engages in conversations

Why It's Important

Young children are continually learning about the world around them. Your child's ability to communicate via spoken language becomes increasingly important as she attempts to gain new information by asking questions.

Materials

None

What You Do

1. Invite your child to interview a friend or family member in order to learn more about that person. Ask her to choose whom she would like to interview and help her get permission to do so if needed.
2. Encourage your child to think of two questions to ask. Help her think of appropriate questions, such as *How old are you? Do you have any pets? Do you have a brother or a sister? What color do you like best?*
3. Give your child the opportunity to practice the interview with you if she chooses. Ask her if she would prefer to conduct the interview with help from you or on her own.
4. After the interview, talk about what your child learned about the person she spoke with. Remind her that asking questions is a good way to learn new information.



Sandwich Stories

Primary Objectives

7a. Uses fingers and hands

10a. Engages in conversations

Why It's Important

Working with your child to invent her own culinary creations helps her build confidence in her developing conversational skills.

Materials

Cookie cutters; bread; sandwich ingredients that are easy to cut through (peanut butter, jelly, cheese); plastic spreader

What You Do

1. Explain to your child that she will be making her own sandwich snack. Show her the ingredients and cookie cutters. Invite her to choose her ingredients and spread them on the bread. Assist as needed.
2. Next, invite your child to choose a shape for her sandwich. Talk with your child about the different shapes that are available and ask her to describe them to you.
3. Show her how to press down with the cookie cutter and peel away the edges (which can be saved and eaten with the snack after the activity). Make comments about what she is doing. *I see that you have chosen the dog-shaped cookie cutter. You are working hard at pressing that down to cut out your shape.*
4. Before your child eats her sandwich shape, ask her about the shape that she chose. *What does a dog sound like? Where would you found a tree like that one?*
5. Enjoy the sandwiches together. Talk about the other shapes you can use at another time.



Question of the Day

Primary Objectives

9b. Speaks clearly

11d. Shows curiosity and motivation

Why It's Important

Children are naturally curious. They learn about the world around them through observation, inquiry, and interaction. Giving your child opportunities to ask questions about his interests promotes language and understanding of new concepts.

Materials

Paper; markers, pens, pencils, or other writing tools

What You Do

1. Explain to your child that each day, he may ask you one special question.
2. Encourage your child to think about the special question he wants to ask you today. Give him time to put it into words. Listen to his question without interrupting him.
3. Offer prompts if your child is having difficulty thinking of a question: *If you would like to know what we are going to do today, you could ask me, "What are we going to do today?"*
4. Make sure to give your child an answer to his question.
5. Write your child's question on paper as he says it to you. Then write your answer and read to him what you have written, pointing to the words as you read.



Head and Shoulders

Primary Objectives

8b. Follows directions

Why It's Important

There are many children's songs that you can use to teach your child how to follow a two-step movement. The rhythm of musical directions helps children remember and sequence the steps in the directions and adds playfulness to the learning activity.

Materials

Audio recording; if needed, song: "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes"

What You Do

1. Invite your child to sing a song with you. Explain that this song requires him to listen to the words of the song and pay attention to the motions he will do while singing.
2. Sing the song slowly, allowing plenty of time for your child to follow along and copy the movements you demonstrate.
3. Repeat the song, and alter the tempo, if desired. You can also adapt the song to include different body parts such as arms, elbows, hair and chin, hair and chin.
4. Give your child a chance to do the actions on his own without you moving along with him. *Now it's your turn to do the actions on your own while I sing.*
5. You can add another step to the directions by singing the song again, but choosing a body part to silently point to instead of saying the word. *This time when we sing, we won't say head, we'll just point to our heads without saying the word. Let's try it together.*
6. Look for other movement songs to use with this activity such as "The Hokey Pokey," "The Green Grass Grows All Around," "Down by the Bay," and others. Check your local library for audio recordings of children's music.

Teaching Strategies: Development and Learning Activities
Literacy Development



Give a Dog a Bone

Primary Objectives

15a. Notices and discriminates rhyme

Why It's Important

"This Old Man" is a familiar song to young children and often one of their favorites. Your child will enjoy making up new verses of the song to sing at school and share with her family and friends.

Materials

Paper; markers

What You Do

1. Invite your child to sing "This Old Man" with you. Explain to her that she will help create new verses to the song by offering new words that rhyme. Review the first verse of "This Old Man" with her before asking her to fill in new words. *This old man, he played one. He played knick knack on my drum, with a knick knack, paddy whack, give a dog a bone. This old man came rolling home.*
2. Ask your child to tell you some words that rhyme with one. Record her responses on the paper.
3. Insert one of your child's suggested words into the song and then sing it together. Remember that the focus of the activity is to rhyme, so it is okay to have words that do not make sense. *This old man, he played one. He played knick knack on my fun....*
4. Continue with additional verses as long as your child is interested. Commonly sung words include the following:

*one....drum
two....shoe
three....knee
four....door
five....hive
six....bricks
seven....heaven
eight....gate
nine....line
ten....hen*

Rhyming Riddles

Primary Objectives

15a. Notices and discriminates rhyme

Why It's Important

Children can develop their understanding of rhyme by thinking of rhyming words. Giving your child riddles to figure out keeps him interested as he uses thinking skills to solve the word riddle.

Materials

None

What You Do

1. Invite your child to play a game called "Rhyming Riddles." Explain that rhyming words sound alike at the end. Offer a few examples and invite your child to name any rhyming words he knows.
2. Explain to your child that a riddle is a word puzzle or a word problem that he will figure out the answer to. Pose a riddle that prompts your child to supply a rhyming word. *I'm thinking of something that you wear on your hands in the winter that rhymes with kittens. What am I thinking of?*
3. If your child gives an incorrect response, offer comments or questions to help him figure out the answer. *Yes, we do wear gloves on our hands in the winter. Listen as I say the two words: kittens... gloves. Do they sound the same at the end? Can you think of something else you might wear on your hands that sounds like the word kittens?*
4. Continue the game for as long as your child is interested.
5. You can use this activity throughout your day by making riddles for your child to answer. *Let's go to the kitchen for our snack. We're having something that rhymes with suit.*



Clap a Friend's Name

Primary Objectives

15c. Notices and discriminates discrete units of sound

Why It's Important

Your child may enjoy hearing his name in a song and playing with the sounds of language. Songs, poems, and fingerplays that invite your child to play with the sounds in his name help him to become aware of the sounds and syllables that make up words.

Materials

None

What You Do

1. Introduce the following song to your child. Invite him to sing along as he learns the words. Use the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb." *Clap a friend's name with me, name with me, name with me. Clap a friend's name with me. Let's try Shirley. Shir-ley!*
2. Clap as you sing each syllable of the name. Repeat the song, substituting your child's name. Invite him to clap the syllables with you.
3. Ask your child whose name he would like to sing and clap next. Continue the activity for as long as he is interested. Invite your child to think of new ways to accentuate the syllables, such as stomping or jumping.
4. You can use this activity throughout the day by clapping the syllables of your child's name when you call his name.



Playing With Grocery Store Print

Primary Objectives

17b. Uses print concepts

Why It's Important

Children enjoy reenacting real-life experiences. Adding real food containers to your child's play about a grocery store is an excellent way to help him learn more about print. Your child may write grocery lists as he pretends to be a daddy or mommy shopping. Playing with print will help your child connect meaning to print.

Materials

Collection of environmental print, e.g., cereal boxes, wrappers from favorite snacks, local supermarket bags, logos from familiar restaurants, toy labels

What You Do

1. Gather some grocery store-related environmental print, e.g., cereal boxes, grocery bags, package labels, clean and empty food containers.
2. Talk with your child about the print in this collection. Explain that he may use it to set up a pretend grocery store.
3. Add props to develop the play theme, e.g., sale ads, labels, cash register, play money.
4. As your child engages in his pretend play, draw his attention to the features of the print. *Yogurt begins with a Y, which looks like it has a tail on it. Or, The word cheddar has two of the same letter standing side-by-side. Can you tell me what it is?*
5. Give your child time to interact with the print and props. Observe how he uses the environmental print and how he develops the grocery store play.



Story Skits

Primary Objectives

14b. Engages in sociodramatic play

18a. Interacts during reading experiences, book conversations, and text reflections

Why It's Important

You can reinforce your child's enjoyment and comprehension of books by encouraging her to act out the main events from the story. If she includes others in her play, she will also gain experience in cooperation and teamwork.

Materials

Glue stick; pencils; crayons; notebooks

What You Do

1. Choose a few books that you think your child may enjoy acting out. Make sure the stories are familiar to her and have characters with active roles, such as Goldilocks from *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* or the peddler from *Caps for Sale*. Have your child pick a book from the collection. *Which book do you like best?*
2. If you want to include more children, choose a book with multiple active roles.
3. After your child chooses a book, create a simple outline of the events from the story. Talk with your child about what happens in the beginning, middle, and end of the story, as well as any important parts of the plot. Next, talk about the characters and roles that your child and the others will play.
4. Encourage your child to practice how her character might speak and move. Remind her that it is not important to repeat the words exactly from the story, but to relay what the character is like and what happens to him/her.
5. When your child is ready to act out the story, you can serve as the narrator by reading the story or talking about upcoming events.
6. Encourage your child to act out the story for others if she is interested.



Budding Author

Primary Objectives

9b. Speaks clearly

18c. Retells stories and recounts details from informational texts

Why It's Important

Using mostly-wordless books can teach your child how to create a story inspired by the book's illustrations alone. Eventually, he will be telling his own tales of what is happening in the picture book—tales that might be quite different from the author's original ideas. For many children, this is what makes reading fun and deeply satisfying.

Materials

Markers; pens, pencils, or other writing tools; tape, picture books; notepad

What You Do

1. Show your child the wordless books you have gathered. Invite him to choose one that he would like to read to you. Ask him to tell you about the book he chose. *Why did you choose this book? What do you like about it?*
2. Explain to your child that this book needs some words. Invite him to tell you the story by reading the pictures. Tell him that you are going to write down his words and then attach them to each page after he has finished reading the book to you.
3. As he tells you the story, write down the words he uses on sticky notes. Listen carefully to your child's version of what is happening in the pictures on each page. Ask questions. *What is the gorilla doing? How did Carl get into the shopping center?*
4. When your child is finished telling you the story, place the written descriptions on the correct pages. Later, you can read his version to his friends and family members.

Teaching Strategies: Development and Learning Activities
Mathematics Development

What Time Is It, Mr. Fox?

Primary Objectives

4. Demonstrates traveling skills

Why It's Important

Giving your child the opportunity to explore her physical abilities with minimal adult assistance will help her gain confidence and strength as she develops her gross-motor skills.

Materials

Masking tape; fox puppet

What You Do

1. Use the masking tape to make a line on the ground.
2. Invite your child to play a game with you. Explain that while she stands on the line, you and Mr. Fox (the puppet on your hand) will stand a few feet away. Increase or decrease the distance as is appropriate for your child's age and ability.
3. Encourage your child to ask, *What time is it, Mr. Fox?*
4. Mr. Fox will answer with the time: *1 o'clock*, *5 o'clock*, etc. Your child should then take that number of steps toward Mr. Fox.
5. As your child gets closer, have her continue to ask the time with each turn. When she gets very close and asks the time, answer, *Midnight!*
6. Explain that when your child hears the word *midnight*, she may run back to the starting line to play again.
7. Provide as much assistance as needed.
8. Encourage your child to play this game with other children, on the playground, or with another family member.

Five Little Monkeys

Primary Objectives

- 5. Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills
- 20a. Counts

Why It's Important

Movement activities that involve counting help your child to learn number sequences while developing motor skills.

Materials

Markers; scissors; medium-sized paper grocery bags

What You Do

1. Cut a hole big enough for your child's face to show through on one of the large rectangular sides of each bag. Draw ears next to the hole to look like monkey ears.
2. Invite your child and four others to play "Five Little Monkeys" with you. Ask each child to put on a monkey mask.
3. Count the children with the monkey masks. *One, two, three, four, five. There are five monkeys.*
4. Sing the song: *Five little monkeys jumping on the bed. One fell off and bumped his head. Mama called the doctor and the doctor said, No more monkeys jumping on the bed! Four little monkeys jumping on the bed....*
5. Continue until there are no more monkeys in the song. As you sing, encourage the children to jump up and down.
6. As each monkey "falls off the bed," have one of the children pretend to fall and then sit next to you.
7. After each monkey falls off the bed, recount the children. Encourage the children who are no longer jumping to count with you. *Can you help me count the rest of the monkeys? One, two, three. Only three monkeys left to jump.*
8. When the song is finished, encourage the children to sing it again on their own. Keep the monkey masks with your child's other toys for her to use at a later time.



Friendship Fruit Salad

Primary Objectives

20b. Quantifies

Why It's Important

Grocery shopping, counting fruit, and mixing ingredients can teach your child a lot about math and reasoning skills. This activity will support her growing ability to use numbers as she counts individual items for the salad.

Materials

Small cups; plastic knives and spoons; 3–5 apples, oranges, bananas, and any other fruit that your child likes; plastic bags

What You Do

1. Go to the grocery store and ask your child to help you pick out the fruit.
2. When you get home, invite your child to look at the fruit with you. Talk with her about what types of fruit you have. Ask her questions about what she sees. *Which of these fruits do you like best? Do you like bananas on your cereal in the morning?*
3. Have your child pick out three apples, three bananas, three oranges, and three pears (or any other seasonal fruit) from the collection of fruit. Listen as she counts and offer help if needed. Have her place each set of fruit into a separate bag.
4. Prepare for making the fruit salad by asking your child to wash her hands and then gather the bags of fruit. Encourage her to count the items in each bag again. *Do the bags all have the same amount of fruit in them?*
5. Ask your child to wash the fruit. As she washes the fruit, encourage her to count each piece aloud. *How many are washed? How many are left to be washed?*
6. Remind your child how important it is to be careful when using a knife. Give her appropriately sized soft fruit chunks to cut with the plastic knife.
7. Challenge your child to count out five pieces of each fruit after it is cut and place the pieces in separate bowls or cups. *Do the cups have the same amount of fruit? How many are in the banana cup? How many are in the apple cup?*
8. Invite her to pour all the fruit cups into the bowl to make fruit salad. As you share the salad, talk about the amounts of fruit you used.



Stepping Stones

Primary Objectives

- 4. Demonstrates traveling skills
- 21a. Understands spatial relationships

Why It's Important

Many children love to move their bodies through space in different ways. This activity encourages your child to be active while helping him master spatial concepts.

Materials

Masking tape; sidewalk chalk; large open floor space or outdoor area

What You Do

1. Use chalk outdoors or masking tape indoors to create a path of “stepping stones” around the space.
2. Invite your child to jump from stone to stone. As he moves, help him notice where he is in relation to his surroundings. *I see that you are near the door, but you are far from the window.*
3. Encourage him to describe where he is in relation to you or any other people participating. *Whom do you think is closest to you? Who is behind you?*
4. Switch places, and continue the activity by moving along the stones and asking your child to describe your position as you move. *Where am I now? What am I next to?*
5. Vary the game by placing the stones in a different area of the room or outdoor space. Continue the activity for as long as your child is interested.



Block Patterns

Primary Objectives

- 21b. Understands shapes
- 23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

Why It's Important

When you encourage your child to answer simple questions about a choice between two objects, you help him develop listening skills and learn how to respond to questions.

Materials

Markers; cardboard; sturdy paper; pencils; blocks in different shapes

What You Do

1. Before you begin the activity, create several block pattern cards by lining up a pattern of 6–8 blocks on a piece of card stock. Trace around the blocks with a pencil. Remove the blocks from the paper and retrace the pencil outlines with a marker. Leave space on the paper for one more block, but do not trace it. Make sure to include some challenging patterns (square, cylinder, triangle, square, cylinder, triangle) and some simple patterns (square, triangle, square, triangle, square). Bring the patterns with you and sit down with your child in a quiet area.
2. Invite your child to join you in playing a block game.
3. Show him your pattern cards. Demonstrate how to place the blocks atop each outline and then complete the pattern by adding another block.
4. Show your child two patterns. Invite him to choose which one he would like to try.
5. As he works on completing the pattern, provide as little assistance as possible. Offer encouraging words. Ask questions to help him figure out the pattern. *You filled in all of the empty spaces. There is a square, then a triangle, a square, a triangle, and another square. I wonder what comes next.*
6. When he is finished, invite him to read the completed pattern to you. Encourage your child to choose another pattern and try again.
7. Allow your child to continue with the activity for as long as he is interested. Store the patterns in the Block area so he can use them again later.

Copycat Rhythm

Primary Objectives

23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

Why It's Important

Children enjoy making sounds and rhythms with everyday objects. This activity helps your child recognize and repeat patterns as she learns how to make different sounds.

Materials

Wooden blocks; spoons

What You Do

1. Invite your child to listen to the sounds you make with the blocks. Clap two wooden blocks together in a simple rhythm, such as one-two, one-two. Give your child her own blocks to use, and encourage her to repeat the rhythm.
2. When your child can repeat a simple rhythm, extend the pattern, such as one-two-three, one-two-three. Ask questions that prompt your child to think about and discuss the sounds she hears. *Listen to the blocks. Can you make your blocks sound like that?*
3. Observe your child as she repeats the rhythm. Note if she is keeping a steady beat or randomly clapping the blocks together. Speed up or slow down the rhythm as needed.
4. Continue the game by encouraging your child to create a pattern for you to repeat. It's your turn to make a rhythm. *I'll copy the pattern you make.*
5. Explain to your child that she may use other materials to make rhythm patterns such as spoons, rhythm sticks, or her clapping hands.

Bead Patterns

Primary Objectives

- 7a. Uses fingers and hands
- 23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

Why It's Important

Exploring the different shapes, colors, and sizes of beads provides a great opportunity for your child to learn about patterns and build important fine-motor skills. She may enjoy forming her own original creative patterns.

Materials

Beads of various colors; shapes; and sizes; sturdy string or yarn

What You Do

1. Create a simple bead pattern to use as an example that you can share with your child.
2. Show your child the different beads that are available for her to use to make a pattern.
3. Discuss the features of the different types of beads. *This bead is blue, and it is also in the shape of a heart. What do you notice about the bead you are holding?*
4. Share your bead pattern with her and read the pattern together. *I made a pattern with red and green beads. It is red, green, red, green, red, green, red, green.*
5. Invite your child to create her own pattern by stringing the beads.
6. As she strings the beads, make observations about what she is creating. *I see red, yellow, and green beads on your string.* When she is finished, ask her to tell you about the pattern she created.
7. Display her finished pattern, and encourage her to read the pattern to others.
8. Continue the activity for as long as she is interested. Encourage her to create different types of patterns.



Parachute Play

Primary Objectives

5. Demonstrates traveling skills

21a. Understands spatial relationships

Why It's Important

Cooperative group experiences that engage your child also encourage him to interact with others. Using parachutes in a variety of play experiences provides a fun way to support your child's participation in group activities.

Materials

Water; plastic tub; child-sized pitcher; small cups

What You Do

1. Look for an opportunity to include your child in a group activity with other children. Before going outside, explain to your child and the other children what the parachute or sheet is and how it will be used. Once outside, spread out the parachute on the ground.
2. Invite your child and the others to each hold on to one of the handles. Explain that the air will lift the parachute if everyone lifts their arms up and down at the same time. *Lift your arms up high in the air.*
3. Describe what happens to the parachute. *It lost all of its air and came back down.*
4. After you have repeated this several times, tell the children that they may take turns running under the center of the parachute and back out if they wish when you call their names. *Listen carefully for your name! When you hear your name, that means that it is your turn to run under the parachute and back out.*
5. When the parachute is up in the air, call out your child's name and encourage him to run to the center and run back out. It may take a few tries for the children to understand that one person goes at a time. Reinforce the concept of taking turns. *Let go and run into the middle only when I say your name.*
6. Make sure that everyone gets a turn. Some children may not want to run underneath the parachute. They may shake their heads or do nothing when you call their names. Acknowledge this behavior as well. *You don't want to run in the middle right now. That's okay.*
7. You can extend this activity by throwing large, bouncy balls onto the parachute as the children lift it up and down. Talk about the movement of the balls as they fly up and down on the parachute.



B-I-N-G-O

Primary Objectives

- 5. Demonstrates balancing skills
- 23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

Why It's Important

An engaging way to illustrate a pattern is by singing a song. The repetition of a song's refrain helps your child anticipate what comes next.

Materials

Wall chart with the words to "Bingo": *There was a farmer had a dog and Bingo was his name-o. B-I-N-G-O, B-I-N-G-O, B-I-N-G-O, and Bingo was his name-o.*

What You Do

1. Hang the song chart on the wall in an area where your child can easily see it.
2. Invite your child to sing a song with you. Explain that you will sing the song together and clap your hands while spelling out the name *B-I-N-G-O*.
3. Start singing slowly so that your child learns the tune and the words. Refer to the song chart as you sing.
4. Repeat the song several times using different motions each time. *This time when we sing, let's jump for each letter when we say Bingo's name.*
5. Encourage your child to lead the song and decide what the motion should be.
6. Encourage him to teach the song and body movements to a family member or friend.

The More, the Better

Primary Objectives

20b. Quantifies

Why It's Important

This activity will support your child's growing ability to compare the quantities of small groups of objects and correctly use comparison words, such as more and less. Becoming more aware of "number" words will help him begin to use comparison words in daily conversation.

Materials

Paper; glue; small objects (rocks, paper clips, beanbags, seashells, etc.); two small jars or clear cups; cotton balls

What You Do

1. Before you begin, place six cotton balls in a small jar. Fill another jar with ten cotton balls. Place the jars on two separate pieces of paper.
2. Invite your child to explore the jars and guess which jar holds more cotton balls. Write the words *more* and *less* on the jars he designates.
3. Explain that he can check his prediction. Encourage him to empty one of the jars and glue the cotton balls on the paper. Ask him to count the cotton balls. Write the number of cotton balls on the bottom of the paper.
4. Repeat with the other jar. Provide assistance, if needed, as he counts and glues the cotton balls.
5. Once your child has counted both sets of cotton balls, ask him which paper has more and which has less.
6. Continue the activity for as long as he is interested. You can vary the game by using collections of other small objects.

Go Fish

Primary Objectives

20c. Connects numerals with their quantities

Why It's Important

Playing with a deck of cards gives your child the opportunity to practice numeral recognition. For numbers he may not yet recognize, he can count the symbols on the card to determine the number. Using cards for simple games also teaches cooperation and turn taking.

Materials

Deck of cards

What You Do

1. Invite your child to play a card game with you. Ask him to give seven cards to you and seven to himself. Offer assistance, as needed. Encourage him to hold his cards in his hands or to lay them cards out on the table, if that is easier for him.
2. Explain that he will start by asking if you have the same card as one that is in his hand. For example, if he has a seven, he should ask you if you have a seven. If you do, give it to him. If you don't, say *Go fish!* He then picks up a card from the pile to see if he can get a seven. If he doesn't get a seven, then it is your turn to ask. When someone gets a pair of matching cards, they should take the matched pair out of their hands and place it on the table before taking another turn.
3. If your child has difficulty recognizing the numeral on his card, encourage him to count the number of symbols showing.
4. The game is over when one of you finds matches to all of the cards in your hand. The players then count how many pairs they have.
5. Continue the game for as long as your child is interested.

Teaching Strategies: Development and Learning Activities
Social- Emotional Development

Give Me the Words

Primary Objectives

1a. Manages feelings

Why It's Important

Observe times when your child uses acceptable strategies for managing her own feelings. Also look for times when your child may be in a new situation and may need your assistance to manage her feelings. Guiding your child's behavior helps her learn how to express herself and interact well with others.

Materials

None

What You Do

1. Watch your child and notice how she manages her feelings. When your child uses acceptable strategies, acknowledge the behavior and encourage it by explaining the desired outcome. For example, another child takes a truck from your child. Your child says, *No. That's my truck, and then looks at you.* You might respond by saying, *You told her that was your truck. Now she knows you had it first and that you want it back.*
2. In new situations where your child may not already have proven strategies to try, give her words to use. For example, your child has been trying for several minutes unsuccessfully to put on her own shoes. She begins to kick her legs in frustration. You approach her and say, *I know it is frustrating when you can't get your shoes on. You always ask me for help when you get stuck. You say, "Please help me," and I will help you.*
3. Make sure that you observe that your child needs your assistance before you help so that she can learn how to handle simple problems on her own.



Taking Care of Myself

Primary Objectives

- 1c. Takes care of own needs appropriately

Why It's Important

When children are very young, they obviously depend on adults to take care of any personal needs. Over time, children notice that others do these things for themselves, so they become interested in gaining some of that independence. Finally, they come to realize that in taking care of their own needs they are not only showing off their independence, but they are also keeping themselves safe and healthy.

Materials

None

What You Do

1. Look for opportunities to express appreciation when your child takes responsibility for her personal needs. *You do such a good job of washing your hands.*
2. Read books with self-help themes, such as *Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear?* by Nancy Carlstrom or *On Your Potty* by Virginia Miller.
3. Ask your child to model procedures for younger siblings or friends who might just be learning those skills. *I see that you put on your mittens to go outside. Can you show Tabitha how to put on her mittens?*
4. You can encourage your child's development in other ways, such as by hanging photographs of her working on self-care tasks or inviting her to make a story using the pictures.



Picture Reading

Primary Objectives

1c. Takes care of own needs appropriately

Why It's Important

Picture cards depicting routines will help your child master with his personal care skills independently. Picture cards also help him make meaning from pictures and print.

Materials

Paper; markers; tape; card stock; photos or drawings of the steps in routines

What You Do

1. Make pictorial instructions for routines. Use photos or drawings of children engaged in the routine. Add written steps that describe each picture.
2. Post the pictures from left to right in an appropriate location at your child's eye level (at the sink for hand washing, by his closet for putting on shoes, by the toilet for using the bathroom, etc.).
3. Show the routine picture cards to your child and point out their location to him. *These cards are here to help you remember what to do.*
4. Go through the steps with your child, pointing to each picture as he completes the step. *If says, Turn the water on. Let's turn the water on. Okay, next it says, Wet hands. Let's wet our hands.*
5. Leave the picture cards in place as reminder to your child of how to follow the personal care routines.
6. Refer to the cards at a later time if your child does not remember to complete all of the steps in a routine. You can also make cards for other experiences to help him understand what to do next.



My Feelings Book

Primary Objectives

2b. Responds to emotional cues

Why It's Important

Before children can quickly and accurately verbalize their feelings, they need help identifying and labeling them. Giving your child the tools to recall and recognize his feelings helps him learn how to manage his emotions.

Materials

Photos or drawings of faces depicting emotions; glue; stapler; tape; crayons; drawing paper

What You Do

1. Arrange the photos on a table so that they are all visible. Invite your child to sit with you and make a Feelings Book.
2. Designate a sheet of paper as the title page, and encourage him to decorate it. Label it *My Feelings Book*.
3. With the faces spread out in front of your child, invite him to find the picture of the happy face.
4. Encourage your child to help you glue the happy face onto one of the sheets of paper. Ask him to finish the following sentence: *I am happy when....* Record his response.
5. Repeat this process for the other three emotions: scared, sad, and angry.
6. To extend this activity, encourage your child to include additional feelings in his book, such as disappointment, embarrassment, loneliness, and frustration.
7. Make the Feelings Book accessible to your child so he can retrieve it to identify an emotion that he is feeling. Encourage him to review the feelings and situations he describes in his book. Invite your child to take the book home and share it with his family members.

Here's the Plan

Primary Objectives

2c. Interacts with peers

Why It's Important

Your child will enjoy working on projects with you or other children. Use this opportunity to help her learn how to think through what she is going to do and how she is going to do it.

Materials

None

What You Do

1. Observe your child's interactions with other children while engaging in pretend play. Look for ways to support her relationships with other children.
2. Suggest activities that encourage pretend play by putting out props or making basic suggestions. Be sure to mostly watch your child play with other children without leading their play. For example, you could put out puppets and see how the children use them, or you could encourage them to make their own puppets.
3. Ask questions that prompt your child and the others to plan what they will do. *What could you do with these puppets? What kinds of things would you need to do to perform a puppet show?*
4. Let the children take the lead. Make comments about what you see them doing.
5. Encourage your child to play in other creative ways with her friends. Ask questions and guide the children when necessary to help them get started. *What will you need for this activity? How much space do you need at the table for everyone to sit?*

Leaf Rubbings

Primary Objectives

3a. Balances needs and rights of self and others

Why It's Important

For your child to learn the concept of sharing and working cooperatively with other children, he must first be able to work and play near others using the same materials. Activities that require your child to use supplies that other children will be using will help him understand how to share a workspace and take turns with materials.

Materials

Crayons without paper wrapping; thin paper; several leaves of varying shapes and sizes; large tray

What You Do

1. Place the leaves and crayons in the tray. Keep the stack of paper close by.
2. Invite your child and one or two other children to make leaf rubbings at the table. Be sure to seat your child next to another child who is working on the same project.
3. Show your child how to place a leaf under the paper and rub the crayon over it on top of the paper.
4. Encourage him to try various leaf shapes and colors. Explain that the crayons and leaves go back in the tray when he finishes with them so that other children can use them.
5. If another child has a crayon that your child wants, explain that he will have a turn when the other child is finished. *I see that you want the red crayon that Summer is using. When she is finished with it, she will put it back in the tray. Then you can use it.*
6. When your child completes his leaf rubbings, have him put the supplies back in the tray. In order to promote sharing and cooperation during cleanup, make sure all the children participate.
7. Display the artwork together as a reminder of the shared experience.



My Turn, Your Turn

Primary Objectives

3a. Balances needs and rights of self and others

Why It's Important

When your child first enters school, he will begin to learn that other children have needs and desires, too. He might need adult guidance as he tries to understand the concepts of turn taking and sharing.

Materials

Toys or games for your child to share with another child

What You Do

1. Invite your child and a playmate to sit at a table where you have placed a marble run toy or some puzzles. Try to find a toy that motivates and interests your child. Give half of the materials (marbles, puzzle pieces) to him, and the other half to the other child. Let them take turns, and continue to remind them whose turn it is.
2. If your child steps out of turn, touch his arm gently and ask, *Do you remember whose turn it is?* Use words of encouragement and enthusiasm whenever he waits for his turn. *You are waiting very patiently for a turn to add a puzzle piece.* After a few activities that require turn-taking or sharing, he may begin to practice this on his own. Observe his progress and continue to encourage his efforts.
3. When you take your child outside to play, observe how he takes turns in a different environment. You can reinforce the turn taking with swings, riding equipment, or sand toys. He might need reminders to wait for his turn. *In two minutes, it will be your turn on the bicycle.* If another child wants a turn, you might say, *Caroline would like a turn. Why don't you swing for two more minutes, and then it will be her turn.*

It's Only Fair

Primary Objectives

3b. Solves social problems

Why It's Important

As your child becomes more and more comfortable with the idea of sharing and looking out for other children, he will come to understand what is fair and begin to explain it to others.

Materials

None

What You Do

1. Notice how your child interacts with other children when he observes a conflict happening.
2. Model fair turn-taking behavior when playing side-by-side with your child and other children.
I think that Jared hasn't had a turn yet; is that right, Jared? I've been using this blue paint for a long time. Todd, I see that you have not had a chance to use it yet. Would you like a turn?
3. Step away from your child's play to allow him to have opportunities to solve his own turn-taking problems.
4. Remind your child and others of the sharing rule in your home when necessary, but see if they can work together to solve problems related to sharing.
5. Encourage your child to use his words to come up with effective solutions and to share his ideas with others.