

Family Activities



Readiness Skill: Shows curiosity and motivation to learn

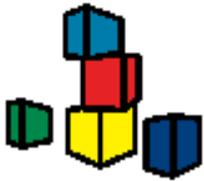
Children are naturally curious about the world around them. Young children and adults do not think in the same way. Preschoolers' thinking is very concrete and they should be exposed to hands on learning opportunities that are engaging, motivating, and fun.

No Such Thing as a Dumb Question

Young children should be made to feel that asking questions is okay and parents should accept this as a natural part of their child's growth and development. Encourage your child to ask questions and to seek answers. Create an environment where it is safe to ask questions without the fear of being made to feel that the question is somehow inappropriate or irrelevant.



The Power of Play



Children learn through play. Parents can support their children's play by providing adequate time for children to engage in play. Provide your child with materials that stimulate creative play such as blocks, puzzles, and things from nature i.e. rocks, shells, acorns, and pine cones. Sand and water are also great for stimulating creativity.

Choice

In addition to encouraging your child to try and explore new things, you should also provide him or her with plenty of opportunities to explore and choose activities of his or her own interest. This freedom to choose activities will help your child sustain their natural curiosity.



Reward

Parents can help stimulate curiosity in their child by allowing discovery and exploration to be its own form of reward. When overused, external rewards such as treats and goodies can stifle your child's interest in activities, so use them sparingly.



Set an Example



Children look to their parents for guidance and knowledge. Parents should model curiosity and ask questions. When your child sees that you are enthusiastic about a topic they are more likely to explore and try new things.

I wonder . . .

Parents can help instill a sense of wonder in their child by asking questions that spark curiosity. Questions that begin with “**I wonder how?**” or “**Why?**” or “**What would happen if...?**” are great for eliciting creative discussions. A listing of questions and discussion starters has been provided with this family print activity. Keep it handy when talking with your child and refer to it if you need ideas for questions or to enhance the discussions you have with your child.



Creativity Books

There are many children's books available that inspire creativity and imagination. Check your local public library for many of these great titles.



A Color of His Own by Leo Lionni
Not a Box by Antoinette Portis
Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak
The Giant Jam Sandwich by John Vernon Lord
Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs by Judi Barrett

Questions and Discussion Starters for Children

- **Tell me about your picture.**
- **What else can you do with the play dough? or other object**
- **Why do you think this happened?**
- **What do you think would happen if . . . ?**
- **Is there another way to . . . ?**
- **I wonder how...?**
- **What do you suppose...?**
- **In what way...?**
- **How did that happen...?**
- **What do you think...?**
- **Tell me about . . .**
- **What would you do...?**
- **How can we...?**
- **How did you...?**
- **How did you figure that out?**
- **How is this the same? How is this different?**
- **Tell me more about that.**
- **Why did you . . . ?**
- **Tell me about what you are working on . . .**

Note to Family: Print this page and keep it handy when you are working with your child. Refer to it when you need an idea for a question or discussion starter with your child.