Intended for literacy students who want to share the pleasure of reading with the children they love, this book describes 26 easy, inexpensive activities to expose children to reading. Each activity explains the type of activity, lists materials needed, and provides instructions or suggestions for extending the activity. A suggested book list categorizes 168 books suitable for sharing with a child into these groupings: libraries and books: an eye-opening experience; adventures in reading and writing; stories about literacy; cultural diversity: a world's eye view; school days; did I see that?; alphabet explorations; colors; fun with numbers; move that body; grown up issues for children, including homelessness, race and gender, inter-racial families, birth and babies, siblings, adoption, war, holocaust, day labor, death: loss and sadness, alcoholism, dangerous strangers/sexual abuse, divorce, and children with special needs; that's just how I feel; and just for fun! (YLB)
Kid's Play

Activities for adults & the children they love
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Activities for adults & the children they love

Edited by Dena Spanos-Hawkey
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Dedication

To literacy students who share the pleasure of reading with the children they love.
Kid's Play
Activities for adults & the children they love.

Introduction

Children learn by doing. Turn off the television set and the computer. Read a book or do one of the easy, inexpensive activities suggested in this book. Just fifteen minutes each evening is a good place to start.

Parents are their children's first and most influential teachers. Parents have an incredible opportunity. Don't miss out. Nothing is more important.

A list of books to share with your children is included at the end of Kid's Play. Choose a book to educate or entertain, and expose your children to the magic of reading.
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Alphabet Twister

Activity: twist-tie art
Need: lots of plastic twist ties used to seal bread, garbage bags, and other food packages

Twisters can be used by your children to form letters, numbers, and other sculptures. Best of all, the twisters can be used again and again.

ABCDEFghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Alphabet Rummy

Activity: card game
Need: 26 index cards
black and red markers

Write the 26 letters of the alphabet on index cards -- one letter on each card. With a group of three or four children, deal five cards to each child. The remaining cards are placed in the center of the table, top card face up. The children draw and discard one card at a time. The object is to get five letters in alphabetical sequence.
TEMPERATURE BUSTER

Activity: water painting
Need: sand buckets, flat paint pans, brushes, all sizes, paint rollers, spray bottles

On a hot day, take the children out to paint with water. Have them paint everything and anything on cement sidewalks, brick walls, fences, trees, etc.

TWEETS

Activity: pine cone bird feeder
Need: 2 parts peanut butter, 1 part corn meal (more needed on a hot day), pine cones, popsicle stick, string

Mix peanut butter and corn meal. Spread the mixture on the petals of the pine cone with a popsicle stick. Tie a string around it and hang it on a tree limb.
Funny Faces

Activity: edible art
Need: large, flat sugar cookies
canned icing
popsicle or spatula
candy and dried fruit decorations (raisins, licorice laces, red hots, gum drops, candy sprinkles, jelly beans, shredded coconut)
paper plate or wax paper

Place cookie on paper plate or sheet of wax paper. Allow your youngster to spread the icing on with a popsicle stick or spatula. Decorate and make a funny face with a variety of candy and dried fruit decorations of your choice. Your child can then gobble up the funny face for a snack with a glass of milk.

Mud Good Enough To Eat

Activity: mud pie
Need: 15 chocolate graham crackers
4 tablespoons melted margarine
9-inch pie pan
bowl
wooden spoon
softened pint of chocolate or chocolate-chocolate-chip ice cream
gummy worms
fudge sauce

Place chocolate graham crackers in a plastic bag. Let your child crush them with a rolling pin. Empty the crumbs into a bowl and stir in the melted margarine. Allow to cool. With clean little hands, let your child press this mixture into the pie pan to form a crust. Freeze the pan for 20 minutes. Put softened ice cream into a bowl and stir with a wooden spoon. Place ice cream in the pie shell. Sprinkle a few gummy worms on top for that "earthy" touch. Spoon on a nice muddy layer of fudge sauce. Freeze for one hour while clean up your "muddy" adventures in the kitchen.
**SAND DARTS**

Activity: beach dart game  
Need: piece of driftwood, three markers for each player

Draw a dartboard in the sand. Draw six concentric circles and give each ring a point value. Each player should choose three markers that look the same (three shells, three small rocks). Take turns tossing the markers at the dartboard, and keep score in the sand.

**THREE IN A ROW**  
**AT THE BEACH**

Activity: sand tic-tac-toe  
Need: 2 pieces of driftwood, sandbox or the beach

Make a nine-square grid in the sand. Draw X's and O's with the driftwood. First to get three in a row wins!
Landlubber Fishbowl Snack

Activity: edible fishbowl
Need: 1 well scrubbed, very clean fishbowl
1 cup grapes
3 6-ounce packages of blueberry gelatin
1 package of gummy fish

Make a rocky ocean floor by pouring 1 cup of grapes into a clean fish bowl. In a separate bowl, prepare the 3 packages of blueberry gelatin, according to the directions. Refrigerate until partially set. Spoon the blue gelatin or "water" over the grapes. Place the gummy fish into the gelatin. Chill until firm. When done, "fish" for a snack with a ladle and enjoy.
Honey Pot Snacks

Activity: honey ball snacks
Need: 3 tablespoons honey
      4 tablespoons peanut butter
      1/2 cup nonfat dry milk
      1/2 cup dry cereal flakes, crushed


Finger Licking Paint

Activity: finger painting with pudding
Need: instant chocolate or vanilla pudding (made according to package directions)
      cookie sheet lined with waxed paper
Optional: whipped cream
      colored sprinkles

With clean hands spread around about 1/3 cup of pudding on the cookie sheet. Allow your child to use his whole hand, a spoon, a fork, or cookie cutters to make pictures and designs. The whole scrumptious finger paint creation can be decorated with whipped cream and sprinkles. When done, eat the leftover pudding for a snack.
Crunch and Munch
Snow People

Activity: edible popcorn people
Need: bowl
wooden spoon
7 1/2 cups popped popcorn
1/2 stick of butter or margarine
10-ounce package of mini-marshmallows
pretzel sticks
raisins
dried cranberries
candy corn
gumdrops
red hots
licorice laces or fruit leather

Put the popcorn in a large mixing bowl and set it aside. Melt the butter in a non-stick saucepan over low heat. Add all the marshmallows, stirring continually with a wooden spoon until they are completely melted.

Pour the mixture over the popcorn and stir to coat evenly. As soon as the mixture is cool enough to touch, rub a little butter on your hands and make popcorn balls (one cup per ball).

Build and decorate your snowmen on a sheet of waxed paper. For each one, stack three popcorn balls. Push pretzel stick arms into the sides of the middle ball. Use raisins, cranberries, candy corn, red hots, and gumdrops to make the eyes, nose, mouth, and buttons. For a scarf, use licorice laces tied around the neck.

If your popcorn balls aren't sticky enough to hold the decorations, mix up a small batch of stiff white icing (add water a few drops at a time to 1/4 cup confectioner's sugar and stir until smooth) and use it to "glue" the candy in place.
PUZZLE MANIA

Activity: inexpensive puzzles
Need: colorful magazine pictures
cardboard (cereal box cardboard is perfect)
glue
scissors

Don't waste magazine photos. Mount a picture on a piece of stiff paper or cardboard. Cut it into 2, 3, 4 or more pieces (depending upon the ability of the child), and have the child put it back together.

YARN
ETCH-A-SKETCH

Activity: yarn drawings
Need: glue
coarse sandpaper
shoe box with lid
heavy string and yarn of various colors, lengths, and thickness

Glue a sheet of coarse sandpaper to the bottom of an upside-down shoe box. This will give your child a raised surface to work on. Using yarn or heavy string, encourage your child to make an outline picture on the sandpaper. The yarn will stick to the sandpaper. When your child wants to make another picture, she just pulls up the yarn and starts over. Then store the yarn in the box when it is not in use.
ALL BOXED IN

Activity: box sculpture
Need: shoe boxes, cereal boxes, egg cartons, gelatin boxes, paper towel rolls, tape

Children can do amazing things with boxes, paper rolls and egg cartons! Simply provide the cartons and the tape and then watch them go to work.

A TREASURE BOX OF STORIES

Activity: tale spinning with a felt board
Need: shoe box with lid, felt and felt scraps, scissors, glue, sandpaper, magazines
Optional: family pictures

To make a felt storytelling board, cut one piece of felt to fit on the inside of the box lid and glue it in place. Blue is a good color for this background. Cut the scraps of felt into figures which will naturally stick to the story board. You can also clip magazine pictures and real photos for the board. Glue the cut-outs to cardboard. Glue a small strip of sandpaper to the back so they will adhere to the fabric.

Once you have a variety of characters, let your storyteller begin. When your child is done, just pack up the felt figures and conveniently store them in the shoe box.
POPSICLE PUPPETS

Activity: puppet show
Need: popsicle sticks or paper towel rolls
       plastic lids or small paper plates
       yarn and fabric scraps
       colored paper
       scissors
       glue

Make puppets to go along with some of your favorite classic children's tales. Glue or staple a lid or paper plate to the top of the popsicle stick or paper towel roll to create a head or body. Then use the fabric, yarn, and paper to create your story characters.

The following books are perfect for creating a puppet show:

FINGER THEATER

Activity: finger puppets
Need: old pair rubber gloves
       scraps of yarn, fabric, string, and paper
       small sequins and buttons
       glue
       scissors

Cut the tips off the rubber gloves (1 - 1 1/2 inches). Then make a face using the yarn, fabric, buttons, and paper. Create funny characters for each finger and you have a ready-made cast for a puppet show!
"What If Pigs Could Fly?"

Activity: travel game for car, bus, train or plane
Need: your imagination

Ask your child WHAT IF...
...trees could talk. What would they say?
...we lived at the North Pole in an igloo. What would we eat?
...we could only walk backwards. How would we see where we are going?

"Just Suppose You Just Landed On Mars"

Ask your child to JUST SUPPOSE...
...that when Goldilocks discovered the little house in the woods, Mama, Papa, and Little Baby Bear were at home. What would happen next?
...that the Seven Dwarfs decided to change their names. What would their new names be?
ONE, TWO, TIE THAT SHOE!

Activity: practice tying shoe laces
Need: cardboard
       hole punch
       shoe laces
       scissors

If you're tired of tying shoe laces, make a cardboard model of the top of a shoe. Punch holes and insert a lace. Have it available for your child to practice on.

FOOT FOLLIES

Activity: make foot people or creatures using your own footprints
Need: white paper or grocery bag paper
       crayons or markers
       glue
       old buttons, beads, sequins, and fabric and yarn scraps
       pipe cleaners

Draw around your shoes on a sheet of white paper. Make these outlines into girls and boys or creepy creatures by adding features with crayon or felt-tipped pens. Paste old buttons or beads for eyes. Yarn scraps make funny hair. Arms and legs may be added using pipe cleaners.
Frost-free Snow

Activity: laundry soap sculptures
Need: 2 cups powdered laundry soap, not detergent
       1/2 cup water
       electric beater
       bowl
       toothpicks
       beads, twigs, cloves, buttons, pipe cleaners, fabric and yarn pieces

Whip up a batch of faux snow with your child. Measure 2 cups of powdered laundry soap (not detergent) into a mixing bowl. Add 1/2 cup of water and beat with an electric mixer until the mixture looks and feels like dough. The mixture will have a grayish tinge.

Using your hands, shape the soap dough into three balls. Stack them by gently pushing a toothpick halfway into the center of the bottom ball. Then, push the middle ball down onto the toothpick until the two balls touch. Do the same for the head.

Add twig arms, clove eyes, shirt buttons, and fabric or yarn scarf. The snow will take a few hours to dry. As the snow dries it will turn bright white.

Bubble Fun

Activity: soap sculpture
Need: kitchen sink
       water
       dishwashing liquid soap
       old shirt or apron
       turkey baster
       food coloring (optional)

Fill the sink halfway with water. Whip in some dishwashing liquid soap and a little food coloring, if you like. Then let your child create soap sculptures. A turkey baster is great for knocking the sculptures down or changing the shapes.
ENERGY BUSTERS

Activity: excercise activities
Need: open space
       radio, tape, or CD player
       pillows

Turn on some bouncy tunes and let your child lead an exercise class. Suggest running in place, jumping jacks, and touching shoulders, knees, and toes. You can also play the game of FREEZE. When the music is turned off, freeze in position. Or play musical pillows; falling over into a soft, fluffy pillow is lots of fun.

Read the book *Toddlerobics* and as you read have your child discover all the moves he or she can make, like "clap your hands, stamp your feet, nod your head, and dance to the beat!"

SING A BOOK

Activity: singing
Need: a child
       a melody

*I Know An Old Lady*

   illustrated by G. Brian Karas, Scholastic, Inc.
   New York, 1960

or *Old MacDonald Had A Farm*

   illustrated by Glen Rounds, Holiday House,
   New York, 1989

Instead of reading the book, add the popular melody. Tone deaf? Sing with enthusiasm!
Snuggle Up & Read: A Suggested Book List

The following book list includes stories about school, literacy, and the library, as well as books dealing with cultural diversity, feelings, and grown up issues, such as death, divorce, and adoption. Books can entertain and educate.

One of the best activities to share with a child is simply the joy of reading. Curl up together in a chair and enjoy sharing the unique pleasures of a book.
Libraries & Books: An Eye-Opening Experience


Adventures In Reading & Writing


---

**Stories About Literacy**


---

**Cultural Diversity: A World's Eye View**


**School Days**


**Did I See That?**


**Alphabet Explorations**


---

**Colors**


---

**Fun With Numbers!**


---

**Move That Body**


---

**Grown Up Issues For Children**

Homelessness


Race and Gender


Inter-racial Families

Birth and Babies


**Siblings**


**Adoption**


**War**


**Holocaust**


**Day Labor**


**Death: Loss and Sadness**


**Alcholism**


**Dangerous Strangers/Sexual Abuse**


Divorce


Children with Special Needs


That's Just How I Feel


Just For Fun!


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# Kici's Play: Activities for Adults and the Children They Love

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