

# Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

APRIL

## MEASUREMENT A "handy" ruler

Your child can use her hand as a "ruler" to learn about measurement.

**Ingredients:** pencil, construction paper, scissors

Have your youngster trace her hand on paper and cut it out. This "hand" will become her unit of measurement.



Next, ask her to find things to measure and write down her results.  
*Examples:* "TV, 5 hands wide," "Chair, 6½ hands high."

Then, suggest that she measure distance. Perhaps she'll see how far she can jump—as far as the width of the TV or as high as the chair? Help her mark starting and landing points for each attempt, and she can use her "hand ruler" to determine the distance between them.

## HISTORY

Imagining ways to update a historic landmark may inspire your child's interest in learning about the past. Say she chooses the Liberty Bell. Encourage her to read about it and decide what modern twist she'd add. She might say visitors could



use wireless earbuds to listen to audio recordings of what the bell sounded like.

## SPEAKING

The more your youngster speaks in front of people, the more comfortable he'll be giving presentations in school. Take turns naming a random topic (cars, ice cream) and giving a 30-second speech about it to each other. Remind your child to speak clearly and at a conversational pace.



## READING I found a poem!

Exploring "found poetry" is a fun way for your youngster to practice reading and explore word choice.

**Ingredients:** newspaper or magazine, pencil

Together, read an article in a newspaper or magazine. Then, encourage your child to "find" a poem in the article. To do this, he should focus on one word at a time and decide which words to use to create a poem. He can circle words he wants to keep and cross out the others. *Example:* Dogs can run and play in dog parks. Leashes are required in all other public places throughout the city. (the mayor said today)

Then, enjoy listening to him read the circled words in order ("Dogs run and play / all through the day"). Now you make a poem to share with him!



## Refrigerator Poster

Just hang your *Recipes* poster on the refrigerator and sneak in an activity when you have a few minutes. These fun activities will help develop school success and positive behavior. Check off each box as you complete the "recipe."

## SCIENCE Floating liquids

Colorful layers of liquid let your child explore density.

**Ingredients:** measuring cup, three small cups, corn syrup, vegetable oil, water, three colors of food coloring, clear jar or glass

Help your youngster measure ¼ cup corn syrup, ¼ cup oil, and ¼ cup water into three separate cups. She should add a drop of different food coloring to each liquid (so she will be able to see which liquid is which). Now, have her pour the corn syrup into the jar followed by the oil.

What happens? (The oil is less dense, so it "floats" on top of the corn syrup.) Then she can add the water. What does she observe? Each liquid will be a separate layer, with the densest on the bottom and the least dense on top.

Suggest that your child try the experiment again, pouring the liquids in another order. Do their positions change?



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## Character Corner

### SORTING

#### A treasure trove of tools

Encourage your youngster to learn the nuts and bolts of sorting.

**Ingredients:** tools, nails, screws, nuts, bolts, washers, variety of containers

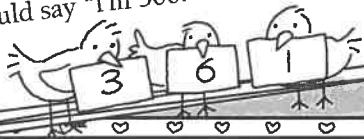
Your child can help you do a little spring cleaning by organizing your tools, screwdrivers, washers, nails, screws, and other hardware. Challenge him to sort them by category into separate containers (say, flathead screws in one box and Phillips-head screws in another).

Next, he could break down the categories even further and sort again. For instance, he might sort each group of screws into smaller boxes according to length—short, medium, and long.



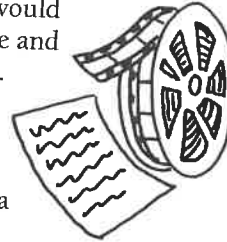
### PLACE VALUE

Have each family member write any number, 0–9, and hold up her paper. Your child calls out a number with all the digits (say, 361 or 613 for 3, 6, and 1). Players arrange themselves to form the number and name their values. *Example:* The person holding a 3 in the hundreds place would say “I’m 300.”



### READING

Invite your child to pretend you’re a movie producer and he’s “pitching” a book to you. He can choose a book he thinks would make a great movie and summarize its plot. Next, he should explain why he believes audiences would want to see a film based on it.



### MUSIC

Ask your youngster to personalize a song for your family. She can make up new words to a familiar tune, perhaps including hobbies or interests. (*Example:* “Ella kicks a soccer ball, soccer ball, soccer ball...” to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb.”) Now let her teach her song to everyone.



### CURIOSITY

Create a “curiosity zone” where family members can place interesting or unfamiliar objects like a spark plug or a garlic press. Let your youngster try to figure out what they are and how they’re used.



### DIVERSITY

Learning words in sign language will show your child that people communicate in different ways. Have him write down words you each want to know the signs for, such as *play* or *homework*. Look them up online, and use the signs during conversations.



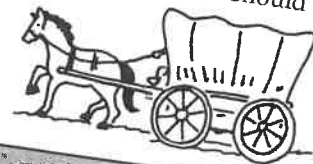
### DECISION MAKING

Listing “pros” and “cons” can help your youngster make a good decision. Say she wants to accept a birthday party invitation but has plans with another friend for the same time. A “pro” might be having fun celebrating a birthday, while a “con” could be disappointing her friend.



### VOCABULARY

Using your child’s vocabulary list, take turns making up sentences and leaving blank spaces where the word goes. *Example:* “The wagon rumbled across the \_\_\_\_.” Say your sentence aloud, and your youngster should look at his list to figure out which term belongs in the blank (*prairie*).



## Congratulations!

We finished \_\_\_\_\_ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)