



## Readiness is...

- A child who is **creative**...
- A child who is curious about **print**...
- A child who **understands**...
- A child who is **social**...
- A child who **moves**...
- A child who **adjusts**...
- A child who is **independent**...
- A child who **controls** behaviors...
- A child who **thinks**...
- A child who **listens**...
- A child who **expresses**...

## What can families do to prepare their child for school?

These “**Recipes for Readiness**” provide various family-friendly activities that will assist in promoting the skills that Kindergarten teachers are looking for as children enter their classrooms. Activities are designed for use with children age 3–5 and are aligned to the PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood. We hope that these cards are used often in a variety of settings.

# RECIPES FOR READINESS



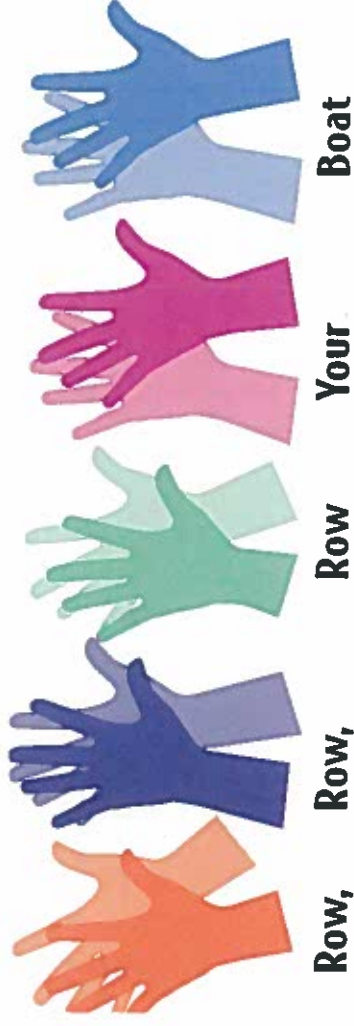
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## Clapping Rhythms

*Your children need your presence more than your presents*  
—Jesse Jackson

### What to do:

- step 1:** Choose familiar words such as your child's full name, familiar songs, or nursery rhymes
- step 2:** While saying these familiar phrases, clap the rhythm such as:



### aking it further:

Once your child has mastered clapping to syllables and words, try clapping a rhythm without the words. Challenge your child to repeat the pattern of the clapping you modeled.

Add instruments such as pots and pans with wooden spoons.

### Tips and Tricks:

- Slow down until your child has the hang of matching the clap to a word or syllable.
- This activity can be done anywhere, anytime...use it while waiting in an office or in the grocery store line, etc.

### PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood Connection:

- 9.la.1 Practice rhythms
- 2.8.3 Recognize and extend simple patterns

**Check your local library for this and other rhythm CDs:**

*Jazz for Kids: Sing Clap Wiggle & Shake* – Audio CD  
(June 22, 2004) by  
Various Artists



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## Writing Your Name

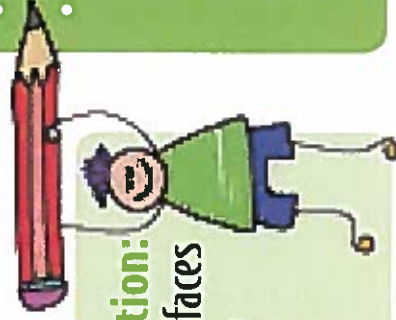
***“Writing is an exploration.  
You start from nothing and learn as you go.”***

***— E. L. Doctorow***

### aking it Further:

Allow your child to use many different writing instruments and materials to practice writing. For example, pencils, crayons, markers, paint brushes, construction paper, wax paper, foil, sand paper, etc. Use your imagination!

Encourage your child to write his/her name with his/her finger in various sensory items. For example, in sand, on a frosty window, in paint, etc.



### PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood Connection:

- 1.5.6 Experiment with a variety of writing tools and surfaces to create letter forms and print the letters in name
- 10.5.3 Use writing tools with correct grip
- 25.1.1 Demonstrate awareness of self

### What to do:

**Step 1:** Label items that belong to your child with his/her first and last name. Point out your child's name on these items.

**Step 2:** Encourage, but never force, your child to write his/her name on drawings and other creations. Drawing a line or box where each letter of your child's name would go can help your child recognize how many letters are needed.

### Tips and Tricks:

- Model and practice the tripod grip with your child.
- Wrap children's play dough around a pencil and have your child hold pencil. This will create an impression in the dough which will remind your child to use the tripod grip.



**Check your local library for resources on writing with your child:**

*How to Hold a Pencil: Simple and Clear Instructions Teach Kids the Tripod Grip* [Paperback],

Megan Hirsch (Author)

## Math with Everyday Objects

### What to do:

**step 1:** Collect up to 20 objects from one of the following groupings (utensils, clothing, toys, etc.).

**step 2:** Have your child count the objects (up to 20).

**step 3:** Challenge your child to group the objects into different categories. For example, by similar color, by similar shape, by type, or by any other similar characteristic you or your child identifies.

### Tips and Tricks:

Provide a concrete visual to help your child see what characteristic they are looking for.



### Taking it Further:

- Once your child has grouped the items, ask your child: *Which group has more items? Less items? Any that are equal?*
- Once your child has mastered grouping by one characteristic, challenge your child to group items by two characteristics, such as placing items of same color and same shape together.

### Additional Resources:

Web-based sorting game featuring Pinky Dinky Doo  
<http://www.nickjr.com/kids-games/pink-eat-it-rear-it.html>

**PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood Connection:**

2.1.1 Count to 20

2.1.6 Sort objects



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## Focus on Turn Taking

### What to do:

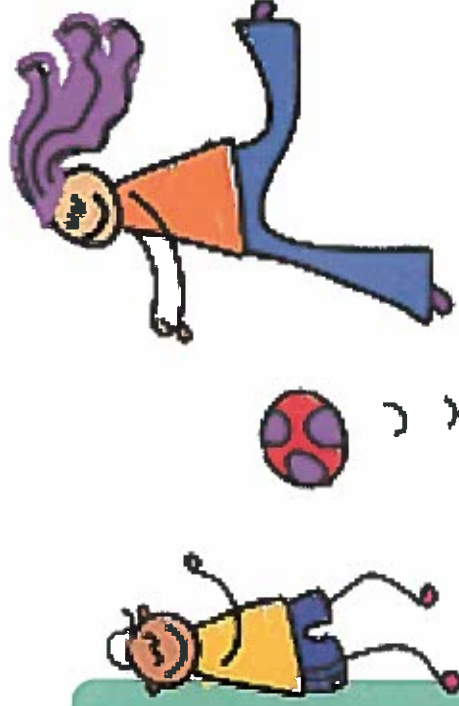
**step 1:** Ask your child to join you in a game of toss and catch.

**step 2:** Roll a piece of paper into a ball. You can make a small ball or a large ball. It is best if you can secure the ball with masking tape, but this step is not necessary.

**step 3:** Stand a few feet apart from one another. Just prior to tossing the ball to your child say: *"It's your turn."* Then toss the ball to your child. When your child has control of the ball, say, *"It's my turn"* and encourage your child to toss the ball back to you. Continue until your child tires of the game.

### Tips and Tricks:

This activity can be done indoors as well, instead of throwing and catching the ball, try rolling it to one another.



### Taking it further:

Play toss with more than two people by standing in a circle. Say the name of the person who will be catching the ball prior to throwing the ball. For example, say, *"Susie, your turn."* Be sure everyone gets a turn to catch and throw.

## PA Learning Standards for Early

### Childhood Connection:

6.3.3 Share with others

25.2.2 Take turns and wait for a turn

**Check your local library for books related to taking turns and sharing:**  
*Share and Take Turns (Learning to Get Along, Book 1)* by Cheri J. Meiners (Mar 15, 2003)

*"Patience will achieve more than force."*

— Edmund Burke



## What to do:

**step 1:** Say *I can move like a* (insert something from list provided). Imitate what this movement might look like. Then say, *Can you?*

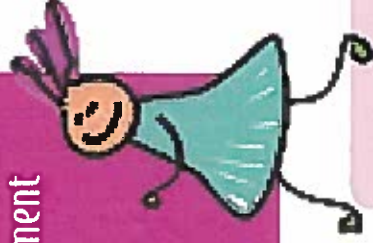
**step 2:** Encourage your child to imitate your motion or try one of his/her own.



## Tips and Tricks:

Observe your child's skill level with more difficult movements (hopping on one foot, walking backwards). Never force a child to do a movement he/she is not yet comfortable performing.

**Note:** Skipping is a difficult movement for children younger than six or seven years old.



Check your local library for books and CDs on movement:

*From Head to Toe Big Book* by Eric Carle (May 29, 2007)

*Kids in Motion* by Greg & Steve (Audio CD - 1997)

## Move like a....



## Ideas for Movements

Hopping on two feet: kangaroo, bunny rabbit

Crawling: cat, dog

Slower movements: turtle, snail

Flowing movements: airplane, kite

Walking on tip toe: ballet dancer

Arm Circles: wind mill

Standing on one foot: flamingo

Waddling: penguin, duck

## PA Learning Standards for Early

### Childhood Connection:

10.4.1 Exhibit coordination and control of various body movements



## Self-Help Skills

### What to do:

- step 1:** Model self-help skills for your child. Show how to snap, zipper, and button clothing. Talk your child through each step as you do it.
- step 2:** Encourage your child to complete these tasks independently. Give ample time and lots of practice. Offer verbal instructions when needed.
- step 3:** Offer encouragement for trying, offer specific praise for accomplishments. For example, **Encouragement:** *I see that you are trying to get that zipper to work. Keep trying. You are on the right track.* **Specific Praise:** *You did it! You buttoned that button all by yourself!*

### Tips and Tricks:

Plan extra time for the practice of self-help skills. Rushing your child will only cause frustration, and, most likely, you will end up completing the task for your child.



### PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood Connection:

- 10.5.1 Practices manual self-help skills
- 15.2.2 Breaks task into simple steps and completes each step one at a time
- 25.1.3 Shows pride in own accomplishments

### Taking it further:

- Other self-help skills include selecting his/her own clothing, pouring liquids, serving foods, toileting skills (don't forget to teach proper bathroom hygiene skills including wiping and hand washing), brushing teeth. Some household chores that your child may begin to help with include wiping off the table, taking out the garbage, feeding a pet, etc.
- Create a chart of the self-help skills and helpful chores your child does on a regular basis.

### Check your local library for books promoting independence:

*I Need a Little Help (Rookie Readers)* by Kathy Schulz and Ann Iosa (Mar 2004); *Froggy Gets Dressed* – Paperback (Aug. 1, 1994) by Jonathan London and Frank Remkiewicz



## What to do:

**Step 1:** Place a household object inside a dark pillow case or into a box.

**Step 2:** Think of five clues that describe the object. Give these clues one at a time to your child and challenge your child to guess what the object is.

*Example:* Place a spoon into the pillow case. Tell your child that you have a mystery object. Tell your child the object is made of metal. Then tell your child it has one long end. Then tell your child it has one round end. Then tell your child it is used when eating. Then tell your child it is used for eating soup.

## Tips and Tricks:

You can remind your child of previously given clues. You can also ask questions to help your child process the clues, such as “The object is round. What types of things are round? The object grows on a tree. Remember it is round AND it grows on a tree.”

## Taking it further:

Instead of giving clues about the mystery object, you can challenge your child to ask you questions about the object. Say, “I wonder how you could find out what was in this bag? Do you think you could ask me some questions?” Preschool children will need reminders about what answers were already given. For example if your child asks “is it brown” and you answer “yes,” your child might ask “is it red?” next. You can remind your child that you said it was brown, so it is not red.

**Listen to the clues, use the senses ... uncover the mystery!**

Check your local library for books that challenge your child to solve problems:

*Math-terpieces* by Greg Tang and Greg Paprocki (Jul 1, 2003)

## Mystery Bag/Box

### PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood Connection:

2.5.1 Use both familiar and new strategies for solving problems

15.2.4 Attempt to accomplish a difficult task on own







## Rhyme Time

### What to do:

- Step 1:** Start with your child's name. Say your child's name out loud, and then change the first sound of your child's name creating silly rhyming words. For example, Billy, Silly, Dilly, Pilly, Willy, Nilly...
- Step 2:** Ask your child to say the silly rhyme along with you.
- Step 3:** Challenge your child to make silly rhymes using other words that your child chooses.

### Taking it Further:

- Say a familiar verse of a song or a nursery rhyme. Have your child pick a letter of the alphabet (if you have a set of magnetic letters you could have your child choose a letter from out of a hat). Create a silly rhyme by changing the first letter of each word in the rhyme to the chosen letter sound.



### Tips and Tricks:

In Kindergarten, this type of activity is labeled as learning “word families.”

Word families help children become skilled readers by teaching them to recognize patterns in words rather than sounding out a word letter by letter.

### PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood Connection:

- 1.1.2 Continue initiated word patterns
- 1.1.5 Recite rhymes

**Check your local library for a selection of rhyming books:**

*I Knew Two Who Said Moo: A Counting and Rhyming Book* by Judi Barrett and Daniel Moreton