

Daily Learning Planner

*Ideas families can use to help children
prepare for school*

Columbus City Schools
Division of Early Childhood Education



THE
PARENT
INSTITUTE®

March • April • May 2026

March 2026

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Children Prepare for School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

1. Visit a nearby park or running trail. Everyone run like the March wind!
2. Make a piece of art that stands up. Have your child draw a picture on paper. Roll the paper into a cylinder and tape the ends.
3. Choose several things with different scents, such as cinnamon, a flower and lotion. With eyes closed, can your child identify each scent?
4. With your child, make letters with your bodies. Can you spell your names?
5. Talk about things you are thankful for. List your child first!
6. Ask your child to arrange a collection of small objects into *equal* rows.
7. Go to the library and help your child check out books about spring.
8. Ask your child to supply sound effects when you read aloud. What does the train in the book sound like?
9. Turn a potted plant into a "letter tree." Hang new letters on the tree as your child learns them.
10. Eat dinner tonight by flashlight.
11. Think of special ways to send your child the message "I love you."
12. Have your child practice counting to five. If this is easy, have your preschooler count to 10 or 20.
13. Tell your child a story about when *you* were little.
14. Put together a kitchen band. How many kitchen objects can your child use to make music?
15. Declare today a Mixed-Up Meal Day. Eat dinner for breakfast and breakfast for dinner.
16. List four adjectives, such as *soft*, *small*, *heavy* and *round*. Can your child find items that match each of these descriptions?
17. With your child, count all the green vehicles you see today.
18. Create an art gallery. Make paper frames for your child's artwork. Rotate the work on display frequently.
19. Help your child make a card for a friend or relative.
20. Make your child laugh! Tell a joke, read a funny story or poem, sing a silly song or draw a cartoon.
21. Bake a cake together and allow your child to decorate it.
22. Get two rags and let your child help you dust.
23. Crush cereal in a bag. Write your child's name with glue on paper. Pour the cereal on it. When dry, let your preschooler feel each letter.
24. Make up new words to a song. You and your child might turn "If You're Happy and You Know It" into "If You're Silly and You Know It."
25. Look through a magazine or catalog. Ask your child to find different categories of things, such as blue things and things with wheels.
26. Do body arithmetic. Help your child figure out how much 10 fingers, 2 knees, 10 toes and 1 nose add up to.
27. Start a made-up story. "A dog went down the road and met a" Let your child finish the story.
28. Talk about something your child did that was responsible. Be specific, so your child will know what to do again the next time.
29. Open a fruit that has seeds inside. Explain to your child that fruit grows from seeds.
30. Combine two different shapes of uncooked pasta in a bowl. Get two containers, and ask your child to sort the pasta by shape.
31. Play a game of hide and seek with your child.

April 2026

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1. Ask your child to tell you a story from an animal's point of view.
2. Send your child a message through the mail.
3. Tell your child about using *inside* and *outside* voices. Inside voices are quiet. Outside voices can be louder.
4. Let your child press items into clay or play dough to make impressions.
5. Look at the public library's calendar of events and choose one to attend.
6. With your child, take turns naming things you love about each other.
7. Challenge your child to toss rolled-up socks into a basket. Say, "In!" when a sock lands inside.
8. Encourage your child to try two motor tasks at the same time—for example, waving hands while jumping.
9. Read a favorite book as many times as your child wants.
10. When April brings showers, teach your child some rainy day words, such as *drizzle* and *umbrella*.
11. Have a spring clean-up day. Choose a room and have your child help you clean it.
12. Help your child make a telescope out of paper towel tubes taped together. What does your preschooler notice when looking through it?
13. Let your child practice buttoning a shirt or zipping a zipper.
14. Encourage your child to think of an imaginary land. Together, name it and make up a story about it.
15. Ask your child to paint a picture of a favorite holiday.
16. Talk about the differences between night and day. Have your child draw a night picture and a day picture.
17. Go outside and blow bubbles. See if your child can catch one without breaking it.
18. Read a book to your child. Explain the meanings of three unfamiliar words. Together, try to use the words today as many times as you can.
19. Encourage your child to try a new self-care skill today—putting on shoes independently, for example.
20. Play the I Spy game. Say "I spy something yellow." Let your child guess what it is. Then it's your child's turn to spy something.
21. Take a tour of your neighborhood with your child. Discuss the landmarks you see.
22. With your child, learn to say hello in two other languages.
23. Ask your child, "What happens when we drop something?" (*it falls*) Explain that the Earth pulls things to itself with a force called *gravity*.
24. Have a pretend phone conversation with your child about what you did yesterday and things you will do tomorrow.
25. Use sidewalk chalk to draw pictures and letters outside with your child.
26. Take turns choosing a big word, like *thunderstorm*. Together, clap once for each syllable (*thun-der-storm*). Ask, "How many times did we clap?"
27. Take a walk together. Instead of walking, skip, hop, jump and run.
28. Put pillows on the floor and get cozy and read with your child.
29. Talk together about things that are associated with spring, such as flowers, picnics and sunshine.
30. After a bath, let your child make wet footprints on colored construction paper. What do they look like?

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May 2026

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Children Prepare for School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

1. Use a timer to help your child experience different lengths of time—one minute, five minutes, etc.
2. Have a treasure hunt. Decorate a shoebox to make a treasure chest. Fill it with small treats. Hide it and give your child clues to find it.
3. Encourage your child to bounce a ball and try to catch it.
4. Name people you know. Talk about the job each person does.
5. Review safety rules for car and bus trips with your child, such as keeping arms inside the vehicle.
6. Tell your child that people learn when they try new things. Today, try a new food or take a new route home.
7. Ask your preschooler to help you create a recipe for a tasty snack. Your child can name the ingredients and steps as you write them down.
8. Listen to a new type of music together. Discuss how it makes you feel.
9. With your child, name as many kinds of homes as possible, such as apartments and birds' nests.
10. Cover one of your child's drawings with clear contact paper. Your preschooler can use it as a place mat.
11. Show your child a few coins. Name them. Let your preschooler hold them and repeat the names back.
12. Put as many shoes as you can find into a pile. Mix them up. Ask your child to sort them into pairs.
13. Look at your shadows at different times today. Explain that shadows change length depending on where the sun appears in the sky.
14. Grab a handful of blocks. Ask your child to divide them up so you each get half of the blocks.
15. Have your child draw a picture that represents a mood.
16. Take a family trip to the library. At home, have your child help you mark the books' due date on a calendar.
17. Cut sponges into many shapes. Let your child dip them into different colors of paint, then press them on paper to make designs.
18. Tap out a very simple rhythm with household instruments, such as spoons. See if your child can copy it.
19. Let your child use cold, cooked spaghetti to form letters and numbers.
20. As you read a story, say, "This is the beginning," "This is the middle," and "This is the end."
21. Ask your child, "What would you do if you were in charge today?"
22. Show your child how you keep your temper when you are upset. Instead of yelling, calmly talk about how you feel.
23. With your child, look for people who are laughing today.
24. Help your child count items around your home. How many doors, light switches or pillows are there?
25. Enjoy a daytime camping adventure with your child. Drape a sheet over some chairs to create a tent.
26. Have a Pattern Day. Ask your child to find patterns all around, such as a striped shirt or a flowered sheet.
27. Take your child on a walk to look for birds.
28. Ask your child to tell you about activities and things that happened today. What did your preschooler enjoy most?
29. Practice naming the days of the week with your child.
30. Help your child do something nice for someone else today.
31. Offer your child a choice between two outfits to wear.

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