Early Childhood

Daily Learning Planner

Ideas families can use to help children prepare for school

Columbus City Schools
Division of Early Childhood Education

THE PARENT INSTITUTE®

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

1. Make a paper chain with your child with one ring for each day of the month. At bedtime each day, have your preschooler remove a ring.
2. Cut out pictures of people showing various emotions. Ask your child to identify the feelings with words (*happy*, *sad*, *mad*, etc.).
3. As the weather gets colder, people light more fires. Discuss fire safety with your child. Practice what to do in case of fire.
4. Ask your preschooler questions about categories of things. Examples: What cries? (*Babies*, *sad people*.) What swims? (*Fish*, *people*.)
5. Look at the weather forecast together today. Compare where you live to the rest of the country.
6. "Catch" your child behaving well today. Praise the specific behavior so your child knows what to do again.
7. Encourage imagination with silly questions: "Do cars need sleep?"
8. Drink apple cider with your child. If you drink it warm, stir it with a cinnamon stick. Talk about how cider is made.
9. Give your child time to say goodbye to favorite things before going out.
10. Have your child practice saying full name, address and phone number. Discuss who it is appropriate to give this information to.
11. Cover one of your child's drawings with clear contact paper or packing tape to make a place mat.
12. Discourage dawdling by setting a timer to go off when it's time for your child to pick up toys today.
13. Have your child draw on white paper with a white candle. The picture will magically appear when your preschooler paints over it with watercolors.
14. Give your child a new responsibility, such as setting the table, watering a plant or feeding a pet.
15. Go on a walk and notice street signs. How many different shapes can you and your child see?
16. Hide 10 small objects around the house. Give your child hints for finding them.
17. Ask your child to help make a salad for dinner by tearing lettuce.
18. Help your child make a collage out of pictures of things you do as a family, such as eating.
19. Ask your child to name things that are *noisy* and things that are *quiet*.
20. Read a story aloud. Then, ask your child to draw a picture of what happened *first* and another one of what happened ***last***.
21. Put dried beans into a plastic water bottle to make a *maraca*.
22. Teach your child to treat others the way your child would like to be treated.
23. Float a plastic container in water. How many plastic toy animals can your child put into the "boat" before it sinks?
24. Ask your child to describe a happy family memory.
25. Together, search for things that are purple today—clothes, foods, toys, etc.
26. Talk about things you are thankful for. Put your child at the top of the list.
27. Challenge your child to stand on one foot. Count how long your preschooler can balance.
28. What is your child's favorite vegetable? Talk about different ways to prepare it. Cook one together.
29. Make up a song featuring your child's name.
30. Put objects starting with S into a bag—spoon, soap, sock. Let your child reach in and guess what each is.

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