



May Newsletter!

It's May and we are sending out our eleventh Activities Newsletter! Here you will find activities in each of the 6 important types of play: reading play, construction play, STEM play, creative arts play, active play and music & dance play that will allow you to continue the learning fun at home! To find out more about the benefits of play, visit the Day of Play website!



See some highlights on the Day of Play website!



Reading Play

1. Play My Side of the Road in the car, on a bus, or even walking down the sidewalk! Name a letter and have your child look on the right side of the road for things that begins with that letter. You look on the left. For the letter 'B' players might find a billboard, bird, and so on. After a few minutes, try a different letter and see who can find the most objects.

2. Make a Paper Plate Rhyme Puzzle! Have your child write two words that rhyme next to each other on a paper plate. Above each word, either draw or find and paste pictures of the two rhyming objects. Repeat this process for six rhyming pairs. Cut the paper plates in half with different patterns so that your child can try to find rhyming pairs and put the puzzles together.

3. Play I-Spy Alphabet Letters! You start as the caller, and say to your child "I-spy with my little eye the letter ...". Then have your child look for letters. Letters can be found on reading materials, appliances and inside your cupboards. Go outside to look for letters in the yard as well. Go on a walk to see if you can find letters around town, at the playground, etc. You'll find letters on street signs, buildings and license plates, etc. If they find the letter you asked for but not the one you were looking at, either move on to another letter or guide them until they find the one you originally spotted!



Construction Play

1. Make a Parachute! Lay out a plastic bag with the sealed edge at the top. Fold a triangle from the top left corner. The top right corner will be the top of the parachute. Measure down about a foot from that corner and draw a c-shape curving towards it for the bottom of the parachute. Cut along that line, cutting both the top and bottom half of the bag at the same time. Now you have your parachute! Decorate it however you like. Then cut four foot-long lengths of ribbon or string. Cut a hole into your parachute about an inch away from the edges of each bottom corner. Thread a ribbon through each hole and tie a knot to secure them. Take all four of the ribbons by their free ends and join them together with a knot. Make sure they're all the same length before you do this. Attach a clothes pin or paper clip to the knotted end of your ribbon. To try out the parachute, grab it by the top and throw it up into the air!



2. Make a Bug Castle Hotel! Remove the label from an oatmeal container and cut windows and a door/drawbridge from the container. When cutting the door make sure not to cut the bottom! And cut a large panel out of the back. Then cut the tops of paper towel tubes to look like turrets and glue them to the sides of the oatmeal container. When it's dry, paint the castle gray and draw on bricks or any other details! Tape twine to the drawbridge. Now your castle is ready, you can keep it inside or put some grass and dirt in it, leave it outside for a while and see if any bugs come in to stay!



3. Make a Homemade Lava Lamp! Grab an old clean jar with a lid and fill it 1/3 of the way up with vegetable oil. Then add glitter for some sparkle! Next, fill the rest of the jar with water. Add about 10 drops of food coloring in the color(s) of their choice. Note that the food coloring only tints the water, not the oil. Screw the lid back on tightly and decorate the jar, making sure you can still see what is going on inside! Flip the jar upside down, over and over again and watch the colors of the lamp flow.



STEM Play (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)

1. Play Number Dash! You need at least 2 children, but the more the merrier! Help the kids write large numbers in various spots on the sidewalk or paved area. Be sure that there is one of each number for each child and spread them out so the kids won't collide. When they're ready you will call out a number at random and when they hear it, they'll dash to one of those numbers and stand on it, remaining there until you call out the next one. Keep shouting numbers and encourage children to help out their friends. Watch to see which numbers cause them to hesitate a bit, then work those until they're all second nature. You can vary the game by swapping in shapes, colors, or letters.



2. Experiment with See Through Egg Science! Place 2 eggs (not hard boiled) into a clear glass jar. Be very careful not to break or crack them. Cover both eggs with vinegar. Watch the eggs to see the bubbles form on the outside of the shell. Let the eggs sit in the vinegar for two nights. Remove the eggs from the jar and put under slow running water. Gently rub the shell with your fingers. If the shell doesn't come off easily or completely, then return the eggs back to the vinegar for another night. Once the shell is fully removed, you and your child can observe what the egg looks like on the inside by holding it up to the light. Watch the yolk rise and sink by carefully flipping the egg upside-down.



3. Now with the two shell-free eggs from the last experiment, try the Shell-Free Egg Size Test! Grab 2 clear glass jars, and fill one halfway with water and the other with corn syrup. Record the size of both eggs. Then place one shell-free egg into the corn syrup and the other into the water and let them sit for three days. Remove and rinse the eggs. Reexamine the size difference of the eggs, what did you find?



Creative Arts Play

1. Make your own puzzle! Your child can draw a picture or cut one from a magazine and glue it onto a piece of cardboard and trim it so it fits the picture exactly. Draw puzzle pieces on the back of the panel and cut them out. The smaller the pieces, the more challenging the puzzle. When you finish cutting the pieces, mix it up and give it to your child to solve. Good luck!

2. Create Plastic Lid Ladybugs! Collect plastic milk and juice jug caps. When they are clean and dry paint or draw a black semi circle on one edge for the ladybug's head. Then make spots on the rest of its body, some larger than others. Let it dry, then you can add goggle eyes or paste on circular pieces of white paper with black dots in the center. Play with them or place them in the garden for as cute decorations!

3. Make a Paper Plate Owl! To start paint 2 paper plates brown and let dry (or color them with marker). For the eyes trace out 2 large circles in yellow, 2 medium circles in white and 2 small circles in black construction paper. Glue the white circle to the center of the yellow circle and the black circle to the center of the white circle and repeat. Then cut out an orange triangle for the beak and glue that under the eyes. Cut the paper plate without eyes in half for the wings and glue them to the back of the paper plate with the face. If you want you can trim the top of the paper plate and create ears for your owl too!



Active Play

1. Have all the fun without the mess with Stuck in the Mud! This game is for 4 or more players and should be played in an open area. To play, pick someone to be "it." When "it" tags someone, they are stuck in the mud and can't move. To get unstuck, someone else has to crawl through their legs. To make it harder, you can add this twist. If a player touches the stuck player's legs when crawling through them, then they are stuck too. If everybody gets tagged, the game is over. The last person to be tagged is "it" in the next round.



2. Play 'Add On Movement Fun!' Start by doing one movement, then the next person does that movement but adds on one more, and the third person does your first movement, the second person's movement and then adds on theirs. See how many movements you can do in a row!

3. Play Sleeping Giants! Explain to the children that they are going to pretend to be giants who like to jump. But, once you say "sleeping giants" they stop jumping and lie very still on the floor. When you say "waking giants" the children will jump up and down until you call out "sleeping giants" again. Continue the game and substitute other actions like walking, skipping, marching or galloping. Allow children to take turns being the caller. Play outside in the nice weather.



Music & Dance Play

1. Start a game of Hot Potato! Have kids stand around in a circle, close together. Play music and have the children dance to the beat, while passing the potato (or bean bag or another soft object) around the circle until the music stops. The person with the object in their hand when the music stops is out, but they can keep dancing!



2. Do the Balloon Dance! Separate the kids into groups of two. Give each pair a balloon. Tell them they must dance to the music while balancing the balloon between their foreheads. If they drop or pop the balloon while the music is playing they are out. You can play different types of music to add humor to this game. Slow songs are easier to dance to with the balloon between their foreheads. Speed up the game by playing fast songs. The couple that is the last one dancing with the balloon intact wins. This game will have all the kids giggling.



3. Make a Microphone! Grab a toilet paper roll and decorate it with markers, paint, beads and any other art supplies you have on hand! Then wad a large piece of aluminum foil into a ball to sit on the end of the tube. Tape or glue the ball onto the microphone handle to secure it. When it is dry you are ready to rock!

