

Activities for Nursery School Children

Dear Parents,

A great variety of daily activities, part of everyday life and requiring only house equipment, are concrete and true learning opportunities for your children

A child never does « wrong ». He/she makes mistakes, tries again and practices. This is how one learn and succeed.

Your child needs a regular rhythm of life.

Aim at making him/her wake up, take a nap and go to bed every day at the same hour.

Try to have the same activities every day at the same hour. For instance: drawing in the morning, playing a board game in the afternoon and reading a story before bedtime.

If you do not speak French, practise the activities listed below in your own language.

Activities using maths

- Use everyday life to learn how to count. For instance: get 4 apples to make a cake, count Lego pieces or toy-cars, lay the table for 4 persons, are there more apples than pears on the table? Etc.
- Classify objects with your child. For instance: toy-cars from the smallest to the largest, or according their colours, put small boxes in bigger ones, etc.
- Help your child to situate herself/himself in time: for instance, asking her/him every day: "What is the day today? which month?"
- Play puzzles together.
- Ask your child questions using the name of the rooms, the name of pieces of furniture and words like aside, on, up, under, over. For instance, ask her/him « Where is teddy? » and guide her/him with words like « It is in, over, under, etc. »
- Play board games with her/him: cards, dominos, game of the goose, ludo, etc. It is difficult to accept to lose at this age : This is quite normal, it is a learning too.

Language activities

- Read or tell your child a story and ask him to tell it after you; you can ask questions if she/he finds it difficult.
- Ask your child to describe a picture of a book.
- Ask your child to tell a cartoon she/he just saw (to be consume in moderation, avoid before bedtime or first thing in the morning).

- Ask your child to describe a moment he lived. For instance, something she/he lived at school or during the day.
- Ask your child to rephrase something if her/his words were inaccurate.
- If your child cannot spell a word, ask him to look at your mouth, pronounce this word and ask her/him to repeat it
- Play games with your child, then ask her/him to explain the rules once he understood them.

Participate to daily activities

- Let your child help daily home tasks: lay and clear the table, tidy up, etc.
- Cook with your child, asking him to tell the name of ingredients. Show the different moments of the recipe so that she/he can repeat them.
- Tell your child to get dressed by herself/himself and ask her/him to tell you the name of clothes. Ask her/him to follow an order: pants, socks, t-shirt...
- Learn your child how to pass the laces through the holes of the shoes, and, if older, to lace her/his shoes.
- Let her/him take care of plants and pets with you if you have some at home.
- Hang the laundry with your child with pegs.
- Sort family socks with her/him: by sizes, colours...

Have manual or creative activities :

- Suggest your child to draw or paint what she/he feels like, or what she/he sees, or a moment of the day.
- Listen together some music, ask your child if it was pleasant, and why.
- Let your child model plasticine or salt dough: making balls, snakes, animals, etc.
- Dance together on a music your family like.
- Suggest your child move and mimic an animal: jumping like a frog, crawling like a snake, etc.
- Let your child manipulate objects in the kitchen while you're working in the kitchen yourself: spoons, spatula, funnel, pots... Let her/him pour water in a basin with these objects. She/he will help you to clean up afterwards.

- Sing nursery rhymes together.
- Let your child listen to noises outside and ask her/him to guess what it is.
- Alternatively draw something and let the other guess what it is.
- Play together with building games: Lego, Kapla or any ordinary things she/he can pile up: cups, yoghourts cups, etc.

Have physical activities

- Exercise together: jumps, balance, roll, etc. which do not require much room, or dance movements.
- Have your child walk on cushions without falling.
- Ask him to walk along a line keeping balance.
- Let her/him crawl under chairs.
- Let her/him throw socks in a basket on the floor or on a table.

Share scientific activities with your child :

- Sowing lentil, bean or marrow seeds in cotton wool, soil, etc. Ask your child to draw what happened, observe together how it grows and let her/him draw how it evolves once a week
- Let your child taste food and ask if it is salted or sweet. For the older, let them guess what it was.
- Have your child touch objects blindfolded and ask her/him to recognize and describe them: it is small, it is soft, etc.
- Go out or in a park as soon as it will be possible again. Meanwhile observe from the window and let your child describe: is it cool or warm? dry? wet? is it windy? what about the sky, clouds, flowers colours

ACTIVITIES for ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

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If you do not speak French, practise the activities listed below in your own language.

Activities using maths

- Use everyday life to let your child learn how to count: for instance, if you cook, ask your child to double the proportion in order to turn a recipe for 2 persons into a recipe for 4 persons, or make it even harder: from 6 to 8.
- Together, weigh and measure different things which are in your home, ask her/him to compare their weight or to compare an object with her/his own weight or size. For instance, how many cushions to be as high as Samia?
- Help your child to situate her/himself in time: for instance, ask your child "What is the day today? What time is it?" or saying "It will be possible in half an hour", "Tell me when it is time", "How long did it take to make this cake?"
- Play games together: cards, chess, checkers, yahtzee, tangram, mikado, dominoes... Let your child say who won and why.
- Make her/him draw the room where she/he sleeps, your flat, the building or the neighbourhood.
- Point out East (where the sun rises) and West (when the sun sets), North and South.
- Watch every day at what time the sun rises, and what time the sun sets.

- Suggest each day a word or a sentence is written on the calendar: like an activity, a memory, a challenge taken, someone called, a joke, a feeling.

Have language activities :

- Read a story (or let your child read with you) and then ask your child to tell it. If necessary, help asking questions
- Ask your child to explain a cartoon he just watched (to be consumed in moderation, avoid before bedtime or first thing in the morning), suggest your child draw the cartoon, write the dialogues, the next episode or suggest that she/he changes the end of the story.
- Ask your child to describe a moment she/he lived. For instance, something about school or during the day.
- Ask your child to reformulate something if her/his words were inaccurate.
- Suggest your child to read for fun: magazines, comics, novel, manga, etc.
- Let your child write what she/he feels like: summing up a comics, a book, what happened during the day, something for friends, for school mates, etc.
- Suggest your child to write a letter for the family by e-mail or post.
- Suggest your child to read loudly, for someone in the family – big or young. The idea is to share the dialogues, to speak one after the other, to modify voices etc.
- Play board games with your child and ask her/him to explain the rules once they are understood.
- Draw, have your child guess what is drawn, draw different expressions, draw the opposite of a word, play the hangman game, etc.

Participate to daily activities

- Let your child to help with domestic activities: lay and clear the table, tidy up, clean, etc.
- Cook together, asking the name of the ingredients you use. For the eldest, ask to apply alone the recipe, following the instructions, including the quantities.
- Ask your child to take care of plants and pets if there are any at home
- Suggest your child to draw animals or plants at home.

Have manual and creative activities :

- Suggest your child to draw or paint whatever she/he likes, she/he sees or look at, in order to describe a moment of the day.
- Suggest your child to draw or paint while listening to music.
- Stick coloured or cut off papers out of magazines to make a mosaic, an abstract picture, a portrait, etc.
- Suggest your child to build a sculpture out of whatever material you have at home: cardboard, plasticine, salt doughs, wires, wooden cubes...
- Listen to music together and ask your child if he enjoyed it, and why?
- Suggest your child to model animals, monsters... with plasticine or salt doughs.
- Mark the beat together from the beginning to the end of some piece of music.
- Sing songs together.
- Ask your child to move like an animal: jumping like a frog, crawling like a snake etc.
- Draw and let the other guess what it is.
- Play building games together: Lego, Kapla... with a challenge: for example, who will build the highest.
- Build up a standing dominoes circuit and then push it down, make a course to have a ball or glass marble roll.
- Ask your child to read or tell loudly her/his best poems and share them with the family. Suggest your child to use different ways to tell them: whispering, being cross, laughing...
- Suggest your child to start or end draws illustrating poems, songs, shows... in notebooks.
- Suggest your child to disguise her/himself, in order not to be recognized, and take a photo.
- Build up with your child the highest tower possible with what is available in your apartment, and think about how to measure it.

Practice physical activities :

- Organise warm-up exercises and stretching for the whole family, like before sport and dance.
- Have sport not requiring much space (balance, jumps, rolls ...).
- Dance together with a music which the family enjoys.

Scientific activities :

- Sowing lentil, beans, marrow seeds in cotton wool, soil... Ask your child to draw what happened, and how it evolves once a week.
- Observe your pet (if you have any) with your child. Let her/him ask her/himself questions and try to answer them by observing the pet.
- Make up objects to take a challenge. For instance, each one builds up a parachute from recycled products. The winner is the one whose parachute is the last to touch down the ground.
- When it will be possible again, go together in parks, observe plants, look for animals etc.

For the eldest children in the family, share the activities for nursery and elementary school children with their youngest brothers and sisters.