



Play, Learn, and Read At Home

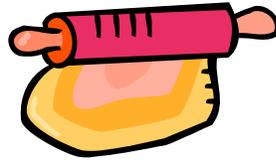
Developmental Activities for Kid's Birth to Five.

Story this month: The Gingerbread Man

Focus Skill: Use the Paired Reading strategy while reading this book with your child. After you have read the book several times, pause and let your child read with you or “read” by themselves the phrase, “Run, run as fast as you can. You can’t catch me. I’m the Gingerbread man.”

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
<p>Problem-Solving Skills</p>	<p>Babies enjoy taking objects in and out of containers. Between 9-11 months they begin to take objects out by either dumping or taking out the object one by one. Between 12-13 months they are able to put three or more objects in a container. Go outside and have your baby put flowers in and out of a basket or bucket. They will enjoy the process of filling the basket with flowers then emptying it!</p> 	<p>Toddlers between 18-24 months will spontaneously rotate a familiar picture upright, when it is presented upside down. Hand your child the <u>Gingerbread Man</u> book upside down. Point out to your child that the gingerbread man is upside down and his head and other body parts are in the wrong spot as well. See if your child attempts to rotate the book. If he doesn't, help him turn it the right way. Eventually your child will rotate a picture of himself or family members.</p>	<p>In the story, the ginger-bread man runs faster than everyone else. This is a great opportunity to teach your child about the concepts fast/slow and fast/faster. Gather objects from around the house such as different balls, toy cars, blocks, etc. Go outside and have your child roll two objects down a slide at the same time. Describe what happened, “The car was fast but the truck was faster.” or “The cow as slow but the car was fast.”</p>
<p>Language/Communication Skills</p>	<p>Babies begin to understand simple requests between 7-12 months. Help develop your child’s understanding of simple commands by pairing your verbal request with a gesture. For example ask your child to “Come here” while holding out your arms. You may also ask your child to “Give me a kiss” while leaning your cheek near your child or asking them to “throw something away” while pointing to the trash.</p> 	<p>At this age your child is becoming more aware of their body. Children between 15-19 months should be able to identify one body part, between 19-22 months identify three body parts, and between 22-24 months identify six body parts. As you are reading the story to your child, label and point to each body part on the Gingerbread man. Help your child to identify the parts on their own body.</p> 	<p>In the story the little boy is using his senses by seeing, listening, and smelling the gingerbread. Play a game with your child where you identify what senses you use to learn about something (ie. can you see it, hear it, touch it, smell it, and taste it?) You may use objects, pictures, or natural experiences. For example, you may smell something burning but not see it; you may hear and see an airplane flying over; you may use all your senses as you share an orange.</p>

<p>Small/Fine Motor Skills</p>	<p>Make some edible playdough for your child. As they are exploring, encourage them to make holes in the playdough by poking with their index finger. Children between 9-12 months should be able to poke objects with their index finger. By doing this activity your child will be isolating their index finger from their other fingers which will lead them to developing the skill of pointing.</p>	<p>Allow your child to experience playdough by using a variety of tools. Provide a child's butter knife and popsicle sticks to practice cutting; cookie cutters for making shapes; spoons and rolling pins for scooping and flattening the playdough.</p>	<p>Have your child "bake" cookies by using playdough. Set up a cooking area with playdough, cookie cutters, cookie sheets, spatulas, cooling racks and a kid's oven or a box that you can use as an oven. Encourage your child to make "cookies" using the cookie cutters, then place them on the cookie sheet, then in the oven. After the cookies are baked, have your child use a spatula to move the "cookies" from the cookie sheet to the cooling rack.</p>
<p>Large/Gross Motor Skills</p>	<p>You may start to notice your child pulling him/herself up to stand around 6-10 months. This will be a sign that she is close to taking his first steps. Before walking independently she will cruise around holding onto furniture. Walking typically develops between 9-13 months.</p>	<p>The gingerbread man is being chased by all of the characters. Play a game of "chase" with your toddler by trying to catch him. Children between 12-18 months are able to run doing a hurried walk, between 18-24 months they can run fairly well, and between 24-30 months can run and stop to avoid obstacles without holding on to anything.</p>	<p>Make an obstacle course for your child to act out the story. Make a path using painters tape for your child to follow. Include props from the story such as a box for the oven and places for the characters to sit alongside the path. You may also include clothing items to fit the characters of the story. Have your child retell the story as you take turns running, crawling, and sitting.</p>
<p>Self-Help Skills</p>	<p>Babies between 9-12 months should be able to hold a spoon. They may treat the spoon as a toy by banging it, holding it, or mouthing it. After 12 months of age your child should bring a spoon to his mouth with food on it. As you feed your baby, allow them to hold onto their own spoon to explore getting the spoon to their mouth. Provide your baby with bowls, measuring cups, large spoons, spatulas, etc. to explore while you're baking.</p>	<p>Spending time in the kitchen with your 2-3 year old will be a highlight of their day! After you have baked cookies and they have cooled down on the cookie sheet, give your child a spatula to move the cookies from the cookie sheet to the cooling rack. This task may initially require your support but eventually your child will be able to do this independently. Don't be worried about how the cookies look when they are done. They will still taste great!</p>	<p>Have fun baking gingerbread cookies with your child! Purchase a gingerbread mix at the store and allow your child to add the ingredients the recipe asks for. Do this, by following the pictures on the back of the box (2 eggs, ½ cup water, etc.) Allow them to do as much as they can on their own. Sometimes this can be very difficult as it requires a lot of patience but this is a necessary step to your child becoming independent with their self-care skills.</p>
<p>Social-Emotional Skills</p>	<p>The gingerbread man runs into many different strangers during the story. Many babies between 5-8 months begin to show stranger anxiety. This is actually a positive sign in which your baby is discriminating her primary caregiver from others in her world. If your baby demonstrates stranger anxiety, it is important to slowly expose them to new people. Relax and be happy around new people as your baby will take their cues from you. If you become tense so will they.</p>	<p>The gingerbread man is chased by many large animals. Between 24-30 months your child may develop a sudden fear of large animals. This can be a normal part of social development. As a parent it is important to recognize that this is a real fear for your child and that it will pass. Make efforts to minimize the anxiety by reducing exposure to animals if your child is afraid and demonstrate thru your behavior (ie. petting) that you are not fearful.</p>	<p>Your preschool age child will be thrilled with his emerging independence. This is a gradual process and will take your patience and support. Celebrate with your child all the special things he can do by himself, by making "I Can" buttons to put on the refrigerator. Take pictures of your child dressing, brushing his teeth, putting on his shoes, sleeping overnight at Grandma's, etc. to put on the buttons.</p>



The Play, Learn and Read at Home activities are brought to you by the Ionia County Intermediate School District's Great Parents Great Start program. Children move thru predictable stages of development. The activities provided above are meant to be a guide. If you have concerns about your child's development please call Start Smart at 616-527-4900 ext. 1461 or 1-888-742-4491. For more information check us out at www.migreatparents.org or email us at cgranzo@ioniaisd.org.