



Play, Learn, and Read At Home

Developmental Activities for Kid's Birth to Five.

Story this month: The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats

Focus Skill: Use the Questioning Strategy to get your child to talk about the book. Try not to use only factual questions but also questions about how the character might feel or questions about their own experiences. Try to make questioning naturally flow about the story, every page does not necessarily need to have a question posed to your child.

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
Problem-Solving Skills	<p>Your 7-9 month old child is learning that objects exist even if they are out of sight. Use a small snowman (stuffed/ wooden ornament) and a small shoebox. Place the snowman under the box and ask, "Where's the snowman?" Your child should be interested in turning the box over to find the snowman. Some younger children may need to see a small part of the snowman under the box. Older infants may enjoy the game with two or three boxes.</p>	<p>Children as young as 18 months begin to understand the concept of matching objects. Take two laundry baskets and place a different sock in each basket. Give the child one of the mates and ask him, "Find the one that looks like this one." Two to three year old children could do this activity with more choices or all the socks in one basket.</p> 	<p>Children at this age begin to sort and classify. Take a large piece of paper and divide it into four sections. Use old magazines, photos, etc., to put items (boot, seeds, leaves, flowers, etc.) that would correlate with that season. Write the name of the season in each section.</p> 
Language/Communication Skills	<p>Hearing words spoken over and over is how children learn what words mean; use natural opportunities that mother nature provides to teach your child the word snow. Take your baby to the window to watch the snow while it's falling and say "SNOW!!" Move to another window and do the same. Encourage your child to point too; this is an early communication skill.</p>	<p>Snowmen offer a great opportunity to reinforce and teach body parts. Make a snowman outside. Make sure your snowman has a head, eyes, nose, mouth, and arms. If you want, add a hat for his head, coal for buttons and boots for his feet!</p> 	<p>When your child says that they want to go outside and play in the snow, ask them what they will need to wear outside. The idea is to get your child to generate a list of clothing items from his memory. This is a higher level thinking skill that requires your child to use his/her knowledge of past experiences to come up with the answers. If your child tells you a few items, then stops, you can prompt by saying for example, "What will you wear on your hands?"</p>
Small/Fine Motor Skills	<p>Even children as young as six months enjoy exploring in the snow. Bring snow inside in a small pan and let your baby explore. You may want to put on your mittens! Make a snowball for your baby to hold or two small snowballs to bang together. Cups or spoons are fun to use as well.</p>	<p>Make your own blizzard using black construction paper and white paint. Allow your child to paint with a variety of different items such as a brush, a Q- tip, and a stick.</p> 	<p>Crossing the center of the body is a skill that is important for reading. This pretend activity will help your child develop this skill. Place a pile of cotton balls on one side of your child. Give him/her a pair of plastic tongs and have them pick up the snowball and move it the other side of him/her.</p>

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Large/Gross Motor Skills	<p>A 6-12 month will enjoy sitting/laying and being pushed or pulled in a sled. Many sleds for very young children have sides to prevent them from falling out of the sled.</p> 	<p>Two to three year old children enjoy throwing things. Use rolled up socks to have an indoor snowball fight.</p> 	<p>Preschool age children will enjoy making tracks in the snow. After fresh snow has fallen go outside. Take large steps, small steps, run, roll, and make angels in the snow. Look and see what type of patterns they make. Look around for patterns left by animals.</p> 
Self-Help Skills	<p>Winter presents itself with many opportunities to develop skills in the dressing area. Here are some developmental skills/ages in the area of dressing you may wish to encourage your child to try.</p>		
	<p>A 10-12 month old should cooperate with dressing by extending their arms and legs to get clothes on/off.</p> 	<p>At 15-18 months your child should show an interest in taking their socks off. A 2 ½ --3 year old should be able to pull up their pants with some assistance</p> 	<p>A 3-5 year old child should be able to complete most dressing tasks but still will need some supervision (zippers, buttons etc.)</p> 
Social-Emotional Skills	<p>Babies love to be sung to. Sing this song with your infant: <u>I Love Snow</u> (tune of Three Blind Mice) I love snow, I love snow Soft, white snow; Soft, white snow, Sometimes it falls all through the night, Did you ever see such a beautiful sight, as soft white snow?</p> 	<p>Cold winter weather is a great time to snuggle together and read books about SNOW. In addition to reading the <u>Snowy Day</u> try these as well: <u>The Mitten</u> by Jan Brett; <u>The Snowman</u> by Raymond Briggs; <u>Dream Snow</u> by Eric Carle; <u>The Big Snow</u> by Berta Hader.</p> 	<p>After a time of playing out in the snow coming inside to have hot cocoa and marshmallows warms the heart!!</p> 

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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.ioniaisd.org or email us at cgranzo@ioniaisd.org