

# Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

SEPTEMBER 2009

## READING Alphabet Fun

Your youngster can create a collage while learning letters and their sounds.

**Ingredients:** paper, pencil, old catalogs or magazines, scissors, glue, markers

Have your child write the alphabet on a piece of paper. Next, give her catalogs or magazines, and see if she can cut out one picture for each letter. For example, she might find a stuffed zebra for the letter Z and a jacket for J. She can cross off each letter of the alphabet as she finds a picture for it.

Let her glue all the pictures onto a piece of paper to make an alphabet collage. When it dries, she can use markers to label each picture with its letter.

## MATH Simon Says Math

Turn math practice into a game with this version of Simon Says.

**Ingredients:** 20 small objects (coins, buttons)

Start by placing the objects on a table. Ask your child to add or subtract by giving him commands such as "Simon says add  $2 + 5$ " or "Simon says subtract  $10 - 8$ ." Your youngster can count the objects to come up with the answers. **Variation:** Give older children harder problems (multiplication, division, or fractions), and let them use pencil and paper to solve them.

Try to trick your child sometimes by giving him a command without saying, "Simon says." When he gives you a wrong answer—or if he does a problem when you don't say, "Simon says"—his turn is over. Then, he can be Simon and make up problems for you to solve!

## Refrigerator Poster

Just hang your *Recipes* poster on the refrigerator and sneak in an activity when you have a few minutes. These fun activities will help develop school success and positive behavior. Check off each box as you complete the "recipe."

## WRITING Family Movie Guide

Make a guide to your family's favorite movies. Your children will get practice writing and expressing their opinions.

**Ingredients:** paper, pencils, binder

Start by asking each person to write a brief summary of three favorite movies. They can tell what happened and describe the main characters. Then, have them write a few lines saying what they liked about each movie and why. Finally, ask everyone to make award nominations, such as best actor, actress, movie, or song.

Put the reviews into a binder titled "Family Movie Guide." Pass it around, discuss your reviews, and vote on the nominees. As you watch new movies, review them and add them to your guide.

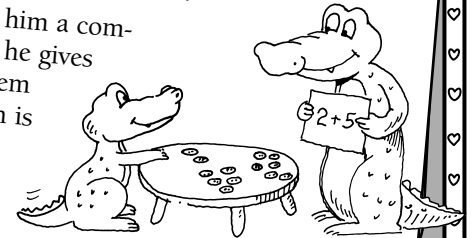
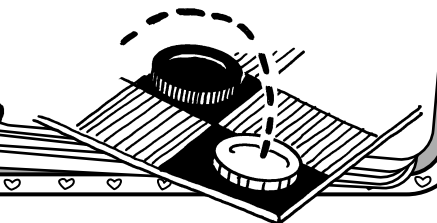
## MULTIPLICATION

Here's a tip to help your child learn multiplication facts. Suggest that she choose a problem ( $8 \times 8 = 64$ ) and find a word that rhymes with the answer (floor). Then, she can combine them into a rhyming sentence: "8 x 8 tiles on the floor, 8 x 8 is 64."



## THINKING

Try this idea to build your youngster's critical-thinking skills. Challenge him to a game of checkers in which the rules are reversed. Instead of trying to capture your pieces, he tries to get you to capture his. The winner is the first player to lose all his checkers.



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## Character Corner

### SCIENCE Ketchup Diver

Make it sink! Make it float! Give your child a science lesson with this fun experiment.

**Ingredients:** condiment packets (ketchup, mustard, soy sauce), bowl, water, one-liter bottle with cap (clean and empty)

Place several packets in a bowl of water, and choose one that floats. Have your child fill the bottle up to the top with water, drop in the packet, and close the cap tightly. Then ask him to squeeze the bottle.

What happens? The packet will sink. That's because squeezing the bottle compresses the small air bubble inside the packet, making the packet smaller and denser. When the displaced water (the

water moved out of the way by an object) weighs less than the packet, the packet sinks.

When your youngster stops squeezing the bottle, the packet expands (displacing more water), and it floats again.

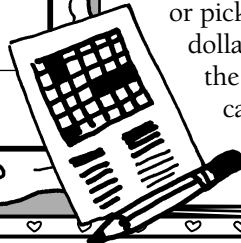


### Congratulations!

We finished \_\_\_\_\_ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)



### WRITING

What would your youngster do if he were invisible? Ask him to make up a story that begins with the sentence, "Today when I woke up, I was invisible."

He can write about his adventure and read the tale aloud to you. ("My sister ran into me in the hall. One of my friends sat on me on the bus.")



### MATH

Before your next shopping trip, let your child calculate how much you can save with the coupons you have collected. She can add all the coupons together to get a total. For extra math practice, let her figure out how much each one would be worth if the store doubled it.

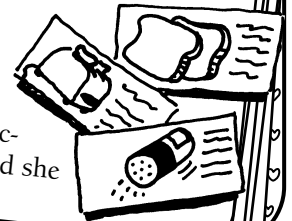


### VOCABULARY

Build your youngster's vocabulary by doing crossword puzzles as a family. Find one in your newspaper, or pick up a book of puzzles at a dollar store. Have your child read the clues aloud, and see who can answer him. He can look up unfamiliar words in a dictionary.

### SEQUENCING

On a piece of paper, write and illustrate instructions telling your child how to do a simple task, like making cinnamon toast. Cut the steps into strips, mix them up, and ask her to put them in order. She can check her work by following the directions to make the toast. Did she get the order correct?



### FRIENDSHIP

Your youngster can tell friends how special they are with homemade cards. Have her fold a piece of paper in half and draw a picture on the front. Inside, she can write "What I like about you" and add something that makes the person special ("You make me laugh").



### TEAMWORK

Show your children how teamwork helps the whole family. For example, have everyone carry their dishes to the sink after dinner and put their clean laundry away. Your youngster will learn that working together makes chores easier—and faster.

### KINDNESS

Ask your child to think of three activities he does well and ways he can use his talents to help others. For instance, he could read a story to his younger sister, teach a friend how to skate, or help a classmate with his homework.

