



2-6 YEAR-OLDS

**SUNNY
IDEAS
FOR A
RAINY
DAY 3**






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How To Use These Books

There is a *Sunny Ideas for a Rainy Day* for each of these age groups: 2-6, 6-10, and 10-14. AND, there are multiple installments so that you can add a new age group or new activities to your collection. This is Volume 3.

What will you get?

- ♥ A few general developmental attributes of a typically developing child for each age year
- A new activity for each age group
- Instructions for each activity and a list of materials (supplies are easy to find)
- A parent key for:
 - Prep/set up time (1- 4 clocks) 
 - Messy /clean up (1- 4 sponges) 
 - Level of supervision (green, yellow, red)   
 - Why do this activity (besides fun, of course) ?
 - Ideas for extending or adding on +
- Templates for activities when needed
- A list of resources for further reading

Reading

Before becoming parents or teachers, few adults recognize the complexity of learning to read English. Unless we struggled with it, of course; then we remember the difficulty without necessarily feeling appreciation for the intricacy of the process.

I won't bore you with all the technical stuff, but it's important to realize that more than over 30 discrete skills, from the ability to sustain attention, recognize patterns and internalize the left to right orientation of our language, to mastering letter sound relationships when some letters have two or three different sounds must come together in order to decode. And, decoding is only one aspect – albeit a very important one - of learning to read.

I don't mean to overwhelm, only to marvel at our human capacities.

My father, a real estate guy, used to say that the three most important things to know when investing in real estate were, "location, location, and ...location."

So, as a parent and/or teacher investing in a very young child's literacy, remember, "*exposure, exposure... exposure.*"

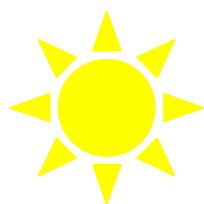
- Surround your child with language, be playful with it, and show your own enjoyment in communicating to him and to others.
- Read with your child: at night, in the morning, for no reason. The intimacy of reading with a loved one is invaluable.
- Treat books with reverence. Spend time in the library and in bookstores.
- Don't stop reading to your child when she begins to decode. It's tempting, but don't do it. Either, continue reading books that give him comfort (and your attention without pressure to perform), or pick books to read that she can't yet read.
- Read on your own, in front of your child.
- Limit screen time. Interacting with the world in all its 3D glory develops the sensory strengths and experiences essential for reading and writing.

Along with exposure, let's make sure there's fun and practice too. That's why there's *Sunny Ideas for a Rainy Day*! Enjoy,

Judy

Two – Three

- ♥ Can learn 2 new words per day!
- ♥ Mobile now and learning through their senses.
- ♥ Play happens *alongside* other children.
- ♥ Cause and effect is very interesting – filling and dumping.
- ♥ Wants both comfort and independence = frustration
- ♥ Growing sense of self (see above) – “mine,” emotions/feelings.
- ♥ Follows 1 and 2 step directions.
- ♥ Understands “after” but not “before.”



Activity: Here is My Book



You'll need:

1. 1 picture or drawing of the following items:

- Book
- Ball
- Umbrella
- Kitten

2. One of each real item:

- Book
- Ball
- Umbrella
- Kitten (stuffed?)

What to do:

1. Teach your child the following finger play:

Here is my book. I can open it wide
(palms together-open wide)
 To show the pictures that are inside;

Here is my ball so big and round
(fingers form ball)
 That I toss in the air or roll on the ground.

Here's my umbrella that keeps me dry
(above head)
 When the raindrops drop from the cloudy sky.
(wiggle fingers on both hands like rain falling)

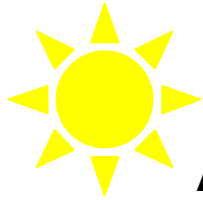
And here is my kitty-just hear her purr
(left hand is kitty and stroke with right)
 When I gently stroke her soft warm fur.

2. Lay out the pictures and items. Ask your child to match the picture to the item. You might need to do this at a separate time from the song.

? Finger plays help develop small motor control and language development. This activity also focuses on vocabulary and matching. Repetition is key.

Three - Four

- ♥ Can learn 6 new words per day!
- ♥ Exploring with senses and gross motor activities.
- ♥ Curiosity about how things work and why – lots of questions.
- ♥ Cooperative play – sharing materials with others, take turns.
- ♥ Awareness of other people's feelings.
- ♥ Ability to tell a story and interest in telling, "what happened."
- ♥ Follows 2 and 3 step directions.



Activity: Letter Balloon Toss



You'll need:

1. 26 Balloons of a light color
2. Permanent marker

What to do:

1. Decide which 2 letters you will focus on. Hint: pick one letter your child already recognizes, and one you hope to teach.
2. Blow up and tie off two balloons.
3. Explain that each letter shape has a name – just like you.
4. Write one letter clearly on each balloon (on several sides of each).
5. Start playing toss. Each time you get the balloon you have to say the letter you see on it.
6. Do only one balloon at a time.

? This activity re-enforces letter identification and provides the distinction between what a letter is called and the sound(s) associated with it – an important distinction.

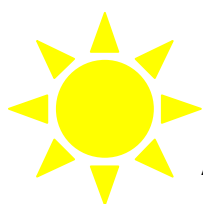
? The toss game is fun and helps gross motor coordination and hand/eye skills.

✚ Repeat the game with different letters. If your child can be trusted not to bite the balloon, he might enjoy saying the name of the letter into the balloon – it sounds funny and vibrates.

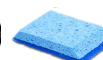
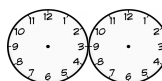
✚ If your child can handle it, try two balloons at once.

Four – Five

- ♥ Active, on the go, busy, collisions common.
- ♥ Pretend play is imaginative and sustained.
- ♥ Interested in how things move & work – transportation, digestion, and elimination.
- ♥ Ideas for problem solving are unusual & creative.
- ♥ Cooperative play – some will collaborate (build off others' ideas).
- ♥ Follows multi-step directions.
- ♥ Rhyming, beginning sounds, alphabet recognition, number recognition 1 - 5.
- ♥ Understands basic sequence of events.
- ♥ Nightmares common.



Activity: Fishing for My Name



You'll need:

1. These [printables](#)
2. A stick or something to use for fishing pole (tightly rolled newspaper will do)
3. Round magnet
4. Paper clips
5. String or twine
6. Tape
7. Optional: blue paint and large paper

What to do:

1. Choose a stick for a fishing pole. Optional – have your child choose her own, paint it or decorate it.
2. Attach the magnet to one end of the string and the free end to the stick.
3. Download the fish [printables](#).
4. Have your child cut them out and color them (hint - use light colors).
5. Write one letter from your child's first name on each fish in very easy to read letters.
6. Attach a paper clip to each fish (you might tape it on one side).
7. Optional: use paper to draw and/or paint water.
8. Place the “fish” in the “water.” Ask your child to fish for the letters of her name.

? This activity builds letter recognition and for some, name recognition.

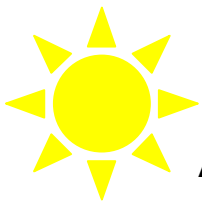
? This activity also builds hand-eye coordination. In addition to the small motor practice of cutting and painting, if you have your child roll and unroll the string around the pole, he will develop wrist strength and small motor control.

+ Some children will need to see their name (written on a card) in order to do this. Some children will pick the letters out of order, and some will be ready to sequence the letters.

+ You can do this for any name or word. Try a different theme around something or someone your child likes.

Five – Six

- ♥ Can learn 6-9 new words per day!
- ♥ Persists in long term projects and can return to an activity after being interrupted.
- ♥ Plays collaboratively now (builds off of others' ideas).
- ♥ Can tell a story with important events and details using complex sentences.
- ♥ Has the concept of “word” separated from another “word.”
- ♥ Can work with numbers 1-10, e.g. which is less 5 or 6? What number comes before 8? And, addition to make 10.
- ♥ Needs permission from adults, asks “Can I?”
- ♥ Compares objects for similarities and differences (people too).
- ♥ Can recognize the “unit” (e.g. blue, orange) of a repeating pattern.
- ♥ Skips, walks backwards + more complex activities (bike, swim).
- ♥ Clear “handedness.”
- ♥ Pride and self-esteem from learning new skills.
- ♥ Can use clear language to express feelings and causes.
- ♥ Thrives on repetition, consistency and guidelines.



Activity: Spider Web Words



You'll need:

1. 8.5 x 11 white paper
2. Markers or crayons and a highlighter (or yellow marker)
3. Fake spider – plastic?

What to do:

1. Pick an area that interests your child (cars, construction, human body, pirates, horses, golf, etc.) and pick a word that is commonly used, e.g. if the theme is “pirates” the word could be: pirate, ship, ocean, or, use words your child needs to learn for school. Start with a word your child knows well to build confidence. Keep it simple!
2. Write the letters of the word in random order on the paper in a bold color. Make web-like lines connecting all the letters to each other in different ways.
3. Write the word on the bottom of the page or on a separate piece. Instruct your child to use the highlighter (with spider on top) to trace the route from each letter of the word to the next letter in the sequence.

? This activity can meet a child at various levels of ability: a child just learning letters can just search and find the letters, while another will be learning a word, recognize it by sight and another might internalize the spelling.

? Tracing helps small motor skills.

+ To make it more difficult, put letters on the page that aren't in the word.

+ Or, have your child make some for you too.

Additional Resources

(See *Sunny Ideas For A Rainy Day 2-6 Volumes 1 and 2* for more)

Websites for Child Development

<http://www.healthychildren.org>

Resources and articles for ages 2-5

<http://www.search-institute.org/developmental-assets>

Developmental assets: what kids need to succeed in life

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/childdevelopment>

Developmental guidelines for young children by age and category

Good Books for Parents to Read

The Learning Child: Guidelines for Parents and Teachers by Dorothy Cohen

Raising Lifelong Learners: A Parent's Guide by Lucy Caulkins

Read to Me: Raising Kids Who Love to Read by Bernice Cullinan

Straight Talk About Reading: How Parents Can Make a Difference During the Early Years by Moats and Hall

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The information in this book is culled from years of experience in the classroom, from readings (see Resources), attending conferences and working in collaboration with inventive, interesting and extraordinary teachers. I cannot name them all, but a few contributed so much to my understanding of children, child development, teaching and creating curriculum that I must name them.

So thank you to:

Karen Biddulph, Director of the Mead School, whose faith in me, friendship, and consistent guidance in the social and emotional development of children, taught me more than I can say.

Joy Lenters, teacher extraordinaire, whose years as my teaching partner (and friend) inspired my quest for depth and meaning in curriculum and is still inspiring me outside of the classroom.

Barbara Allen, who taught me “Make Ten” (See *Sunny Ideas: Volume I* for 6-10 year-olds), so much about mathematics and about the brain.

Marcia Zimmerman, who thought up the original “Block Recipes” (See *Sunny Ideas: Volume I* for 2-6 year-olds) and whose compelling and inventive activities supported the learning of so many Pre-K and Kindergarten students over the years.

Chris Mutolo, whose passion for reaching every child and skills at breaking down complicated procedures into small steps helped me learn to do the same.

Unfortunately, I can’t identify where some of the activities in this book actually come from. It was probably a combination of camp counselors, teachers, mommy groups, and my imagination.

Thank you.

Judy