

Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

FEBRUARY 2009

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."



READING

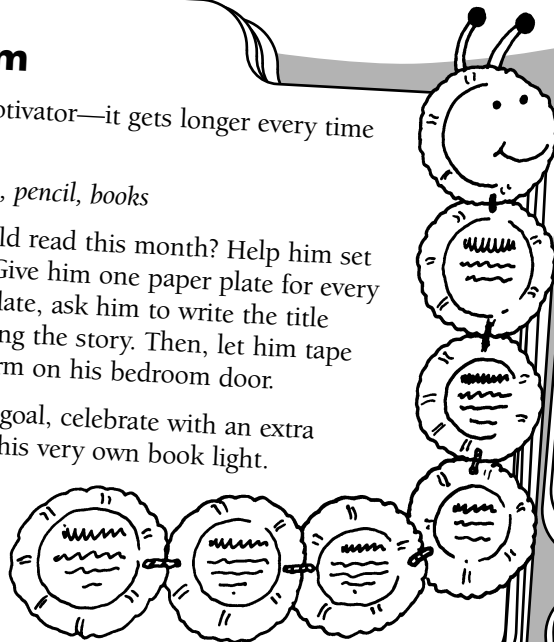
Grow a Bookworm

This clever worm is a great motivator—it gets longer every time your youngster reads a book.

Ingredients: small paper plates, pencil, books

How many books can your child read this month? Help him set a goal and track his progress. Give him one paper plate for every book he completes. On each plate, ask him to write the title and three sentences summarizing the story. Then, let him tape the plates in the shape of a worm on his bedroom door.

When he meets his goal, celebrate with an extra bedtime story or his very own book light.



ADDITION

Heart Hunt

Your child will look forward to practicing addition with this game.

Ingredients: construction paper, scissors, pencil

Cut 10 hearts from red or pink paper. Write a number on each. Use single-digit numbers (0–9) for a younger child and double-digit numbers (10–99) for an older one.

Have your youngster leave the room while you hide the numbered hearts. Give her one minute to find as many as she can. When time's up, she adds the numbers she found and writes down her score. Then, she hides the hearts for you to hunt and add. The player with the highest score wins.

SPELLING

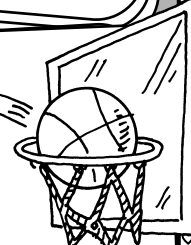
Basketball Bee

B-A-S-K-E-T-B-A-L-L spells fun—especially when your youngster uses it to learn spelling words.

Ingredients: basketball and hoop, spelling list

Play basketball with your child. When he makes a basket, he spells a word from his list. If he spells it right, he chooses where to stand and takes another shot. When he misspells a word, keep playing, and let him try again when he gets his next basket. Play until he has spelled all the words on his list correctly.

Variation: Play indoors with a small ball and trash can. Use tape to mark several distances from the trash can.



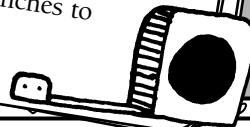
MUSIC

Long ago, people made instruments from different kinds of materials. Have your child make his own music using items from the recycling bin. He might create a coffee-can drum or add beans to juice bottles for maracas. When he's ready, let him play for you.



MEASUREMENT

A polar bear on its hind legs can stand 9 feet tall. Help your child figure out how many inches that equals ($9 \times 12 = 108$). Then, have her measure the height of various things around the house (a table, the fish tank) with a measuring tape. How much taller is a polar bear? She can subtract each measurement from 108 inches to find out.



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Character Corner

SOCIAL STUDIES Family Bill of Rights

Teach your child about the Bill of Rights by making one for your family.

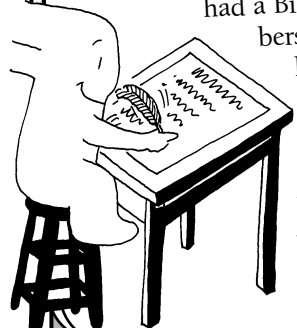
Ingredients: copy of the Bill of Rights (from your child's history book or at <http://history-resources.com/fd/us-bill-of-rights.htm>), paper grocery bag, black marker

Together, look over the Bill of Rights. Explain that it describes the basic rights of Americans (freedom of the press, for example).

Next, ask everyone what would be included if your family had a Bill of Rights. Take notes as family members share ideas (right to privacy, right to help choose family activities).

Finally, cut one large panel from a grocery bag to look like a piece of old-fashioned parchment paper.

Let your child use your notes to write your family's Bill of Rights on it.



WRITING

Give your child's writing skills and imagination a workout with this activity.

Each of you chooses a photograph of two or more people from a catalog or magazine. Draw word balloons, like those used in comics, above the people to create a pretend conversation. Take turns reading the dialogue to each other.



STORYTELLING

Ask your youngster to tell a different version of a favorite book. For instance, Judith Viorst's *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* could become *Alexander and the Wonderful, Splendid, Amazing, Very Good Day*. Or she could turn Margaret Wise Brown's *Goodnight Moon* into *Good Morning Sun*.



CITIZENSHIP

As a family, look through the newspaper for community projects to participate in.

Examples: trash cleanup day, food drive.

Have everyone jot their ideas down on index cards, and keep them in a small box. Once a month, pull one out and do it together.



RESPECT

Show your child that listening quietly when a classmate is answering the teacher's question is respectful. Ask everyone in the family a question ("What did you eat for lunch?"). On the count of three, have them answer all at once. Ask your youngster how many answers he heard and whether he thinks anyone listened to his answer.



MOTIVATION

Encourage your child to collect reminders of her accomplishments. They'll help when she needs to stick with a tough task. For instance, she might frame a paper with a good grade or hang a picture of her neat bedroom on a bulletin board. She can look at them for motivation when she's studying or cleaning.



WORD PROBLEMS

Let your child write math stories based on everyday activities. After brushing his teeth, for example, he could write, "I brushed the top for 30 seconds and the bottom for 30 seconds. How long did I brush my teeth?" Have him translate the questions into an equation to solve ($30 + 30 = 60$).



Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)

THINKING

Challenge your child to think "outside the box." For instance, ask him what he could use to keep himself dry in the rain if umbrellas were never invented (news-paper). Or have him think of ways to stay cool without electricity (make a fan out of paper).

