

## Preschool

### More ideas for learning at home

#### Read with me...

- Innovate the stories you know well - change the names of the characters, the setting of the story, or make the 'bad' characters do something kind instead! What would happen if Goldilocks left a birthday card for Baby Bear instead of eating his porridge and breaking his chair?
- Get everyone at home to think of a different character, object or place and write or draw this on a piece of paper. The challenge is to make your own story using all of these ideas. Share your stories - you can tell them, draw them, write them, or do all three.
- Children in Preschool love to share their songs, stories and news at circle time - do the same at home. Turn off any background TV or music and listen to each other for a few minutes - share your favourite song, joke or story. At Preschool the person sharing can stand up in the middle of the circle if they like - at home, you could have a special sharing cushion or chair to sit on and take turns to be heard!
- Play nonsense rhymes. Get your child to add in silly rhyming words - it can be a real word or a made-up one. Some ideas to get you started..."I went to the shop to buy a [blop, chop, mop, clop]", "At the park I met a [bark, yark, shark, mark]"
- Get help from your child to write a shopping list or a list of the jobs you need to get done during the day - they can draw, write any letter sounds they know, or make marks to show what they mean and you help by making the marks you understand.
- Set up your own puppet show. You can use toys, cut out pictures, or even use socks to make your puppets. What will they say to each other in your story? Can you make your puppet move in different ways depending on how the character is feeling? What happens when they are happy? What do they move like when they are sad? Draw pictures to make your background...are your characters in the garden? Inside a castle? Are they in space? You might want to make tickets for your show and sell them to the audience.
- Can you make a message for everyone to see? On paper use marks, pictures, letters, words, anything you like to show everyone your message - you could put it in your window for other people to see. Don't forget to add your name!

#### Exercise your maths brain...

- Dr Helen J. Williams makes some great suggestions for simple maths games you can play at home using 'found' items...
- Task one: How many inside?**

What is the rule about counting? We count everything once and we stop when we have done so. The last number we say tells us how many we have (the quantity).

- You will need a tin or cup and a collection of small toys, buttons or stones.
- Drop 4 stones into the tin one at a time, while the child listens carefully. Ask how many they think are inside the tin? Why do they think that? How sure are they? Tip the tin out and check. This game can be varied by dropping irregularly, or by using quieter objects.
- Later when they get good at this, ask “How many is that so far inside?” and then dropping two more on top of the original amount, supporting the child in counting on from a small amount: “Four.... Five, six.” The important idea is to draw their attention to the last number we say telling us how many there are.

### **Task two: Make it the same**

You will need a book to act as a screen between the two of you and two identical sets of bricks or blocks (not too many) and perhaps a toy car and a play person. Share these out between the two of you to make sure you each have the same collection.

- One person builds a small scene with their bricks and toys, secretly, behind the screen. When they are ready, they tell the other person how to make one exactly the same as theirs. Only they are allowed to look over the screen to see how the builder is doing (and correct them if necessary). You can only touch your own bricks.
- When they think it is the same, remove the screen. Examine what is different – or not. Then swap roles!

### **Task three: Pairs**

You will need 6 identical cups, and a collection of identical counting tokens (you could use coins, beans, LEGO bricks, or whatever else you have handy). This works like the card game ‘Pairs’, where you have to find a matching pair, this time we find a matching amount. Place 1 penny under each of two of the cups, under another two cups place 2 pennies, under another two cups place 3 pennies. Then, mix the cups up.

- Take it in turns to turn over two cups. If the amount of pennies underneath is the same, the player keeps the pennies, if not, they replace the cups. You can, of course, extend this to include matching two groups of 4, when you have enough cups.

- ❑ Playing any kind of board, card or dice game is great for supporting children's mathematical thinking, and it also helps develop turn-taking and sharing skills. <http://www.mathwire.com/templates/spinners.pdf> These simple 'spinner' templates are brilliant - you can create your own using the blank ones or use the ready-made versions. Try adding dots or marks so that children can count and link quantity with the matching numeral. Just push a pencil or cocktail stick through the centre and you are ready to go! Spin a number then find that number of stones/paperclips/coins. Can you hop/clap/jump that number of times? Draw a 'track' on some paper - move a pebble/small toy/coin along the track the right number of spaces each time you spin. How many spins will it take you to reach the end? Endless possibilities!
- ❑ **The Numberblocks series** on CBeebies is a fantastic resource to use to support children as they get to grips with our tricky number system. Check out the episodes available on iPlayer here...<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/numberblocks>

Move with me...

- ❑ Play 'Copy Me Do' - take turns to choose a 'move' (a star jump, marching on the spot, tapping your shoulders - anything), and everyone at home has to copy it for the count of 10.
- ❑ Sing action songs like 'Ring-a-Roses' together...make sure you wait for the 'all jump up' bit!
- ❑ How quickly can you get dressed? Ask a grown-up to time you - they could count out loud while you put all of your clothes on by yourself - even the ones with zips or buttons. You can do it! Keep practicing every day to see if you can get quicker.
- ❑ P.E. with Joe Wicks is a great way to start each day - all of the moves are easy for the whole family to copy and he does 'Fancy Dress Friday' for added fun. All of his half hour P.E. workouts are available on YouTube [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLyCLOpd4VxBtWi7RnRLz6qHgOqWiB\\_LrH](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLyCLOpd4VxBtWi7RnRLz6qHgOqWiB_LrH) and they are great for adults too (you may have difficulty on the stairs afterwards!)
- ❑ Have a pegging race. Share out your clothes pegs equally between players - who can be first to clip all of their clothes pegs onto a piece of string or along the edge of a tea-towel? Is it easier to do with your left hand or your right hand? This is a great way to strengthen muscles in the hands.
- ❑ Have a go at household tasks that help to strengthen shoulder, arm, wrist, and hand muscles. Things like sweeping up, carrying bags or boxes, reaching up to put things on a shelf or peg, using cutlery, and washing up are really good for this! [Tidying up at the end of the day is a great way to use all of your muscles - see how quickly you can help put everything back in the right place!](#)

- ❑ It is worth remembering that the most difficult physical skill to master for 3-4 year-olds, is being still! Here are some calming sounds that might help...<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/radio/calming-sounds#playlist>