

# Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

FEBRUARY 2021

## READING Book previewer

Help your youngster choose library books she'll love with this idea.

**Ingredients:** paper, books, pencil

Have your child put a blank strip of paper in each book that looks interesting. One by one, she can read the description on the inside jacket or back cover, leaf through any pictures, scan the table of contents (if there is one), and read the first few pages.

After previewing a book, your youngster could mark the paper with ☺, ☹, or ⊕ and add notes. *Examples:* "The character is my age," "Realistic photos of horses," "Loved this author's last book." Then she can choose the best books to check out.

*Variation:* To preview e-books, help your child read samples online and type her comments in a file.

## FITNESS

How many different body parts can you and your child use to keep a balloon from hitting the ground? Toss a balloon, and take turns bumping it with elbows, knees, feet, or other body parts. If it hits the floor or you use the same body part twice in a row, you're out!

## CULTURES

On February 12, celebrate Chinese New Year with your youngster by searching online for traditional greetings in Mandarin. He might learn to say "gong xi fa cai" (*gong she fa tsai*), which means "Wishing you great happiness and prosperity." And "xin nian hao" (*shin nee-an how*) translates to "Happy Chinese New Year."

## MATH You've got mail!

On which days of the week do you tend to get more mail? Your child can make a *line graph* to find out.

**Ingredients:** paper, colored pencils, mail

Up the left side of a sheet of paper, your youngster should draw a line with tick marks (0–10). Across the bottom, he could draw a line labeled with the days mail comes (Monday–Saturday). Each week, let him choose a different-color pencil to plot data. He can count the mail each day, mark a dot where that day and the number of pieces intersect (say, Tuesday and 3), and connect the dots. Have him include a key that tells which color pencil he used for week 1, week 2, and so on. After a few weeks, ask what trends he notices. ("We usually get the most mail on Mondays!")

## 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."

## HISTORY Explore inventions

What would your youngster's life be like without modern conveniences? Inspire her to peek into history with this activity.

**Ingredients:** pencil, paper, books or internet access

For one day, have your child make a list of inventions she uses. She'll need to monitor how she gets things done. For instance, she might heat up food in a microwave, talk to her grandmother on a cell phone, and turn on a lamp to do homework.

To see how inventions have evolved, your youngster can look up older versions of those inventions in books or online. She could make an illustrated history of an invention by drawing all the versions (*example:* candlestick phone, rotary phone, touch-tone phone, cordless phone, flip phone, smartphone).

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## Character Corner

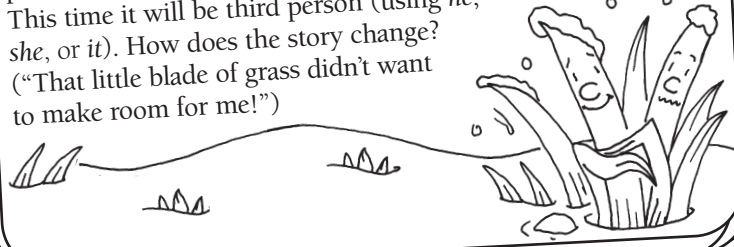
### WRITING Tinker with point of view

What is life like for a blade of grass? A sidewalk? This creative writing activity helps your child pay attention to point of view, or who is telling a story.

**Ingredients:** paper, pencil

Ask your youngster to pick an object and write its “autobiography” from the first-person point of view (using *I*). For a blade of grass, he might write, “I first poked through the ground in spring 2020. I was bright green and basking in the sun. Now I’m covered with snow.”

Next, have him write a “biography” from a different point of view—perhaps that of a dandelion. This time it will be third person (using *he*, *she*, or *it*). How does the story change? (“That little blade of grass didn’t want to make room for me!”)



### SEQUENCING

Have your youngster choose five random household objects and line them up in order based on a “rule” he chooses. Maybe he’ll arrange them from lightest to darkest, from tallest to shortest, or in alphabetical order. Can you figure out his sequencing rule?



### FRACTIONS

Let your child cut construction paper into same-size squares, then draw lines to divide them into halves, thirds, and fourths. Have her label each part with the correct fraction and cut the squares apart. Now she can arrange the parts to make pictures (house, tree) and add the fractions in each to see how much it’s “worth.”



### GRAMMAR

Conjunctions like *and*, *or*, and *but* join shorter sentences together. Have each family member write two short sentences on two separate strips of paper.

Now see how many you can combine using a conjunction. (“It’s cold outside, but peanut butter is sticky!”) Can you create any sentences that make sense?



## Congratulations!

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

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)

### COURAGE

Encourage your child to take small steps to gradually boost her courage. To practice for a chorus concert, she could sing in front of a parent or pet. Then, she might perform for an audience of several relatives.



### FLEXIBILITY

When things don’t go your youngster’s way, he can ask himself, “What could I do instead?” This will teach him to be flexible. Say his older brother isn’t available to hang out. Maybe he’ll play a card game with you or work on his karate moves instead.



### SELF-MOTIVATION

Suggest that your child look for ways to stay motivated while doing chores. If she doesn’t feel like cleaning her room, perhaps she’ll play “basketball” and toss clothes into the hamper. Or she could see how many items she can pick up in 1 minute.



### SCIENCE

Gather items with different textures and temperatures (examples: nail file, damp napkin). Ask your youngster to close his eyes, and hand him one item at a time. What does his sense of touch tell him about each object? The nail file may be hard and rough. And the napkin might feel cold and soft.

