

FAMILY TIME

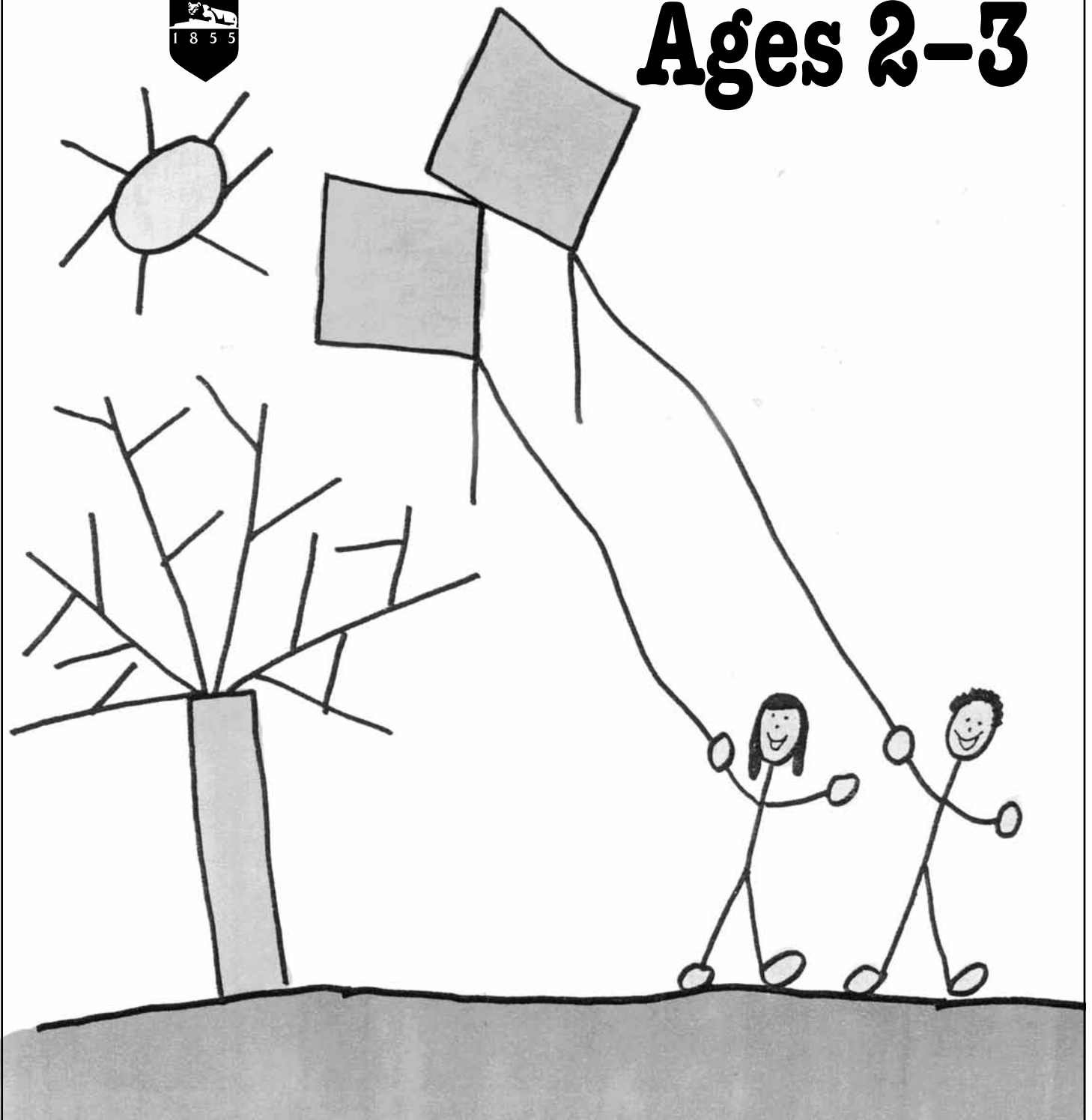
STRENGTHEN YOUR FAMILY

Fall

PENNSSTATE



Ages 2-3



Your Child from Age 2 to 3

- Wants to do things for himself.
- Is self-centered—the “me do” age.
- Talks more; uses more words; needs to be talked with.
- Is full of questions.
- Likes to be read to.
- Needs lots of fresh air and exercise.
- Enjoys lots of large muscle activities.
- Needs to be hugged and held a lot.
- Likes being with his parents.
- Likes to help.
- Is beginning to “make believe.”
- Expresses feelings openly.

To Do *Family Time* You Must

- Have a firm desire to help your family grow stronger.
- Make a strong commitment to do *Family Time* activities regularly.
- Set aside time to do the activities.
- Be determined to involve all family members.

To Get Started

- Pick an activity.
- Before the family gathers, be prepared by getting together any materials that you need to do what you have planned.
- Set aside some time each week when all family members can be together. Turn off the TV, radio, or other distractions.

A Word to Parents of Younger Children

Strong, healthy families don't just happen. They take planning and work by each member.

Strengthening your family means deepening the relationships or bonds the members have with one another. The effort required pays big dividends—the children and their parents (or parent in a single-parent family) grow closer, each feels good about himself and others in the family, and the family develops a sense of pride in itself.

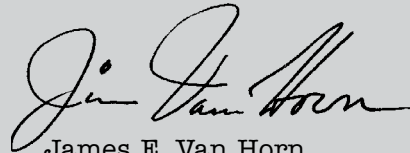
Family Time will help you strengthen your family. Families who do *Family Time* faithfully will grow close and will be laying the foundation for a healthy family in future years.

Every parent is busy. *Family Time* helps busy parents develop the habit of putting their families first by setting aside time to be together.

Parents in strong families plan or “make” the time they spend with their children. By repeatedly spending time with their children, parents send them a powerful message that they believe their family is important. The young child who is forming a belief system will learn to value his family.

The child sees his parents as persons who deeply care about him because they spend their valuable time and energy doing things with him. The child who grows up in a family that spends time together has a good feeling not only about his parents and his family but, very important, he feels better about himself.

You and your family will benefit from doing *Family Time*. Two-parent families as well as single-parent families can grow stronger. What is needed is your commitment and time to do the activities.



James E. Van Horn
Professor of Rural Sociology and Certified
Family Life Educator

Let's Explore...

Our Family

Happy Halloween and Thankful Thanksgiving

Halloween is an exciting holiday for children. If you plan to take your child trick or treating, be sure to go along. Only a few houses will be sufficient. Then let her help hand out treats to those who come to your house. Be reassuring if anyone comes with a scary costume.

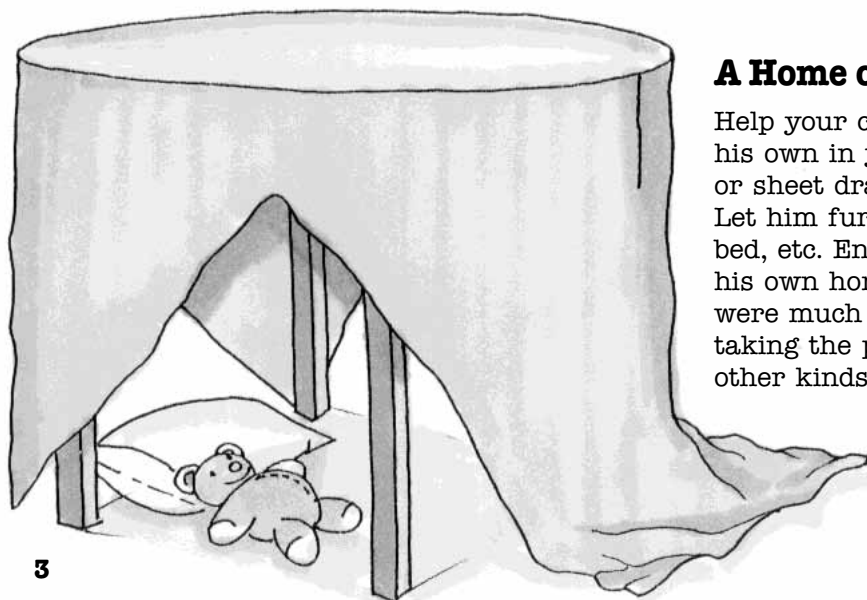
At Thanksgiving, include your child in the preparations. Let her help make a special recipe (See Let's Explore... The Foods We Eat for unbaked peanut crispy bars.) Let her help shop for the turkey and fixings, and let her help set the holiday table.



Pass Around a Hug/How Many Hugs

Take time to pass around a hug among family members. Have a contest to see how many people the hug can be passed on to within a day's time. See if you can better your record!

With your child's help, find out how many different ways you can hug one another. Give each kind of hug a special name. For example, the "sandwich" hug (at least three people), or the "rock a bye" hug (rocking your child in your arms).



A Home of Your Own

Help your child construct a home of his own in your house with a blanket or sheet draped over a table or chair. Let him furnish it with pillows for a bed, etc. Encourage him to pretend it is his own home. American Indian homes were much like these, with animal skins taking the place of blankets. Talk about other kinds of homes.

Bedtime Rituals

For your child, bedtime rituals are a source of comfort and reassurance. The stuffed animal nearby, the bedtime story, the last drink of water are all a part of this. Make bedtime a warm time for the whole family, not a time of tension and distress.

- Allow plenty of time. Don't be forced to rush or to wait until your child is overtired.
- Try some quiet finger plays or a favorite song or two.
- For many children, being carried up to bed on Daddy's or Mommy's shoulder becomes a tradition. Make a tradition of your own.

The Family Home

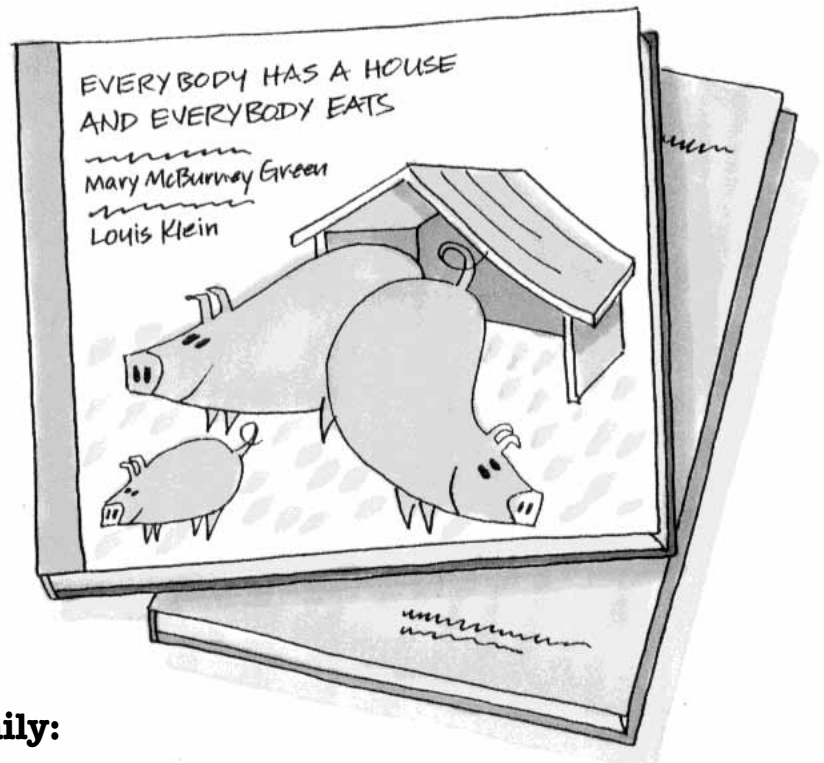
On a large sheet of posterboard, draw the frame and rooms of a home like yours with identifiable furniture such as beds, chairs, and tables. Help your child cut out and name paper doll figures he selects for the "family." Have him place the figures in the house doing whatever he wishes and encourage him to describe the scene.

Everybody Has a House

Read together some books about families. For example:

- *Everybody Has a House and Everybody Eats* by Mary McBundy Green
- *Homes* by Virginia Parsons
- *My World* by Margaret Wise Brown

When you have finished the book, talk with your child about families.



Other Activities About Our Family:

Let's Explore...

Our Community

Adopt a Grandparent

Many families live far away from their grandparents. Many older citizens live far away from their grandchildren.

Find an older person or persons in your neighborhood to adopt. Remember them with cards, gifts, and visits. Don't forget to check at holidays to see if they are alone and would appreciate some special holiday cheer.

Going to the Butcher Shop

Take your child to the butcher shop so that she can see the butcher cutting up meat. Have some bologna or cheese sliced so that she can watch the slicer working. Perhaps you can have a sample of meat or cheese cut and give her a taste.

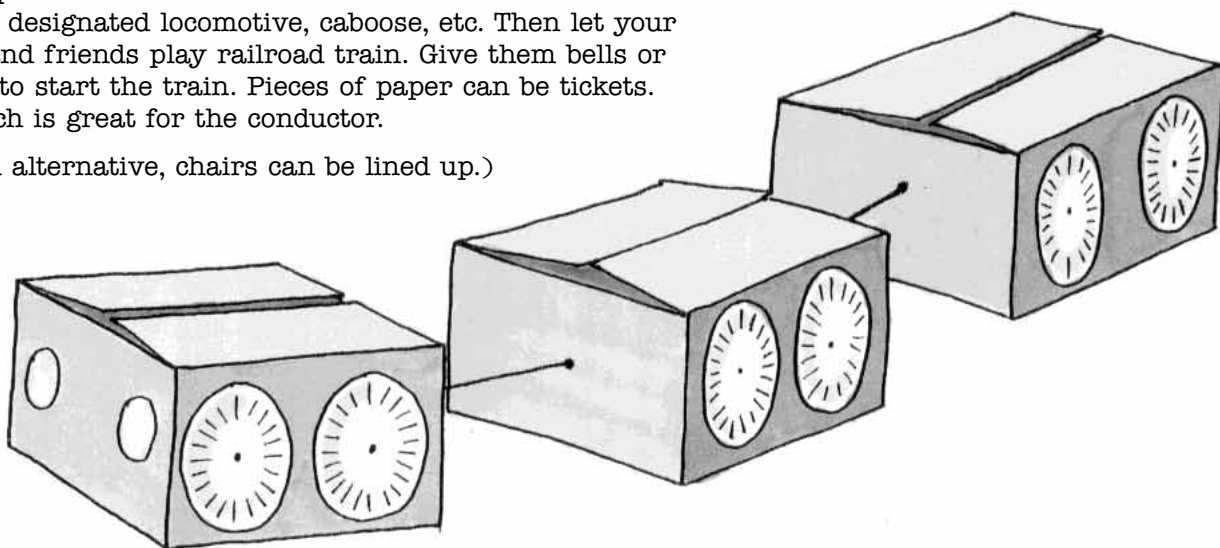
See if the butcher can grind some meat so she can see how the texture of the meat changes from chunks to ground-up pieces. Does he make sausage? Can you see that process?

Railroad Train

First, try reading them *The Little Engine That Could* by Watt Piper or *The Little Train* by Lois Lenski, or if there is a train station nearby, visit it and watch the trains.

Line up cardboard boxes one behind the other. The boxes can be designated locomotive, caboose, etc. Then let your child and friends play railroad train. Give them bells or horns to start the train. Pieces of paper can be tickets. A punch is great for the conductor.

(As an alternative, chairs can be lined up.)



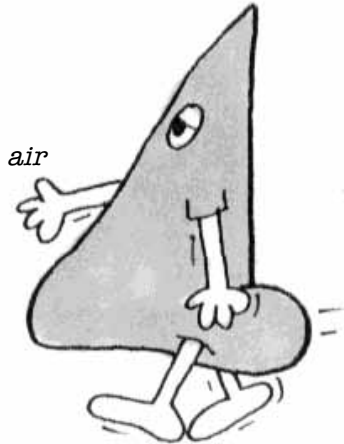
Use Your Nose as You Walk Around Your Community

Smelling can be an important part of a child's creative, intellectual, and educational experience. Take your child on a discovery smell walk around your community.

Visit the:

Smell:

doctor or dentist's office	<i>medicine, disinfectants</i>
gas station	<i>gas, oil, dirt</i>
grocery store.....	<i>meats, fruits, vegetables</i>
delicatessen.....	<i>meats, cheeses, spices, pizza</i>
bakery	<i>bread, pastries</i>
beauty/barber shop	<i>shampoo, hairspray</i>
florist.....	<i>flowers, soil</i>
laundromat	<i>clean and dirty clothes, hot moist air</i>
pet store	<i>animal odors</i>
hardware store.....	<i>metals</i>
lumber yard	<i>freshly cut wood</i>
plant nursery	<i>fertilizers, plants, trees</i>
dry cleaners.....	<i>steam presses, chemicals</i>



Watching Food Fixers

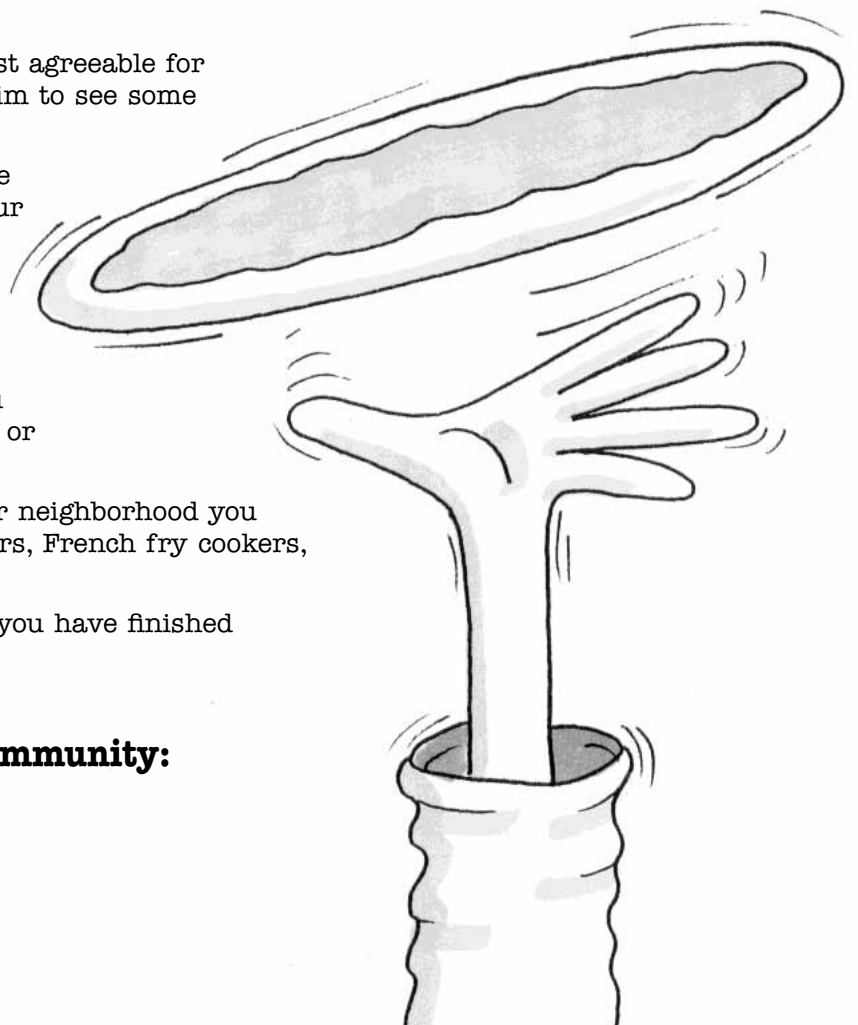
Short trips with the family are most agreeable for your two- to three-year-old. Take him to see some food fixers in your community.

- Do you have a hoagie shop where hoagies are assembled before your eyes?
- Do you have a pizza shop where the pizzas are twirled in the air?
- Do you have a bakery where you can watch cakes being decorated or donuts being cooked?

Think of other "food fixers" in your neighborhood you could watch, like funnel cake makers, French fry cookers, ice cream sundae fixers.

Sample what has been made after you have finished watching.

Other Things to Do in the Community:



Let's Explore...

The Foods We Eat

Unbaked Peanut Rice Krispy Bars

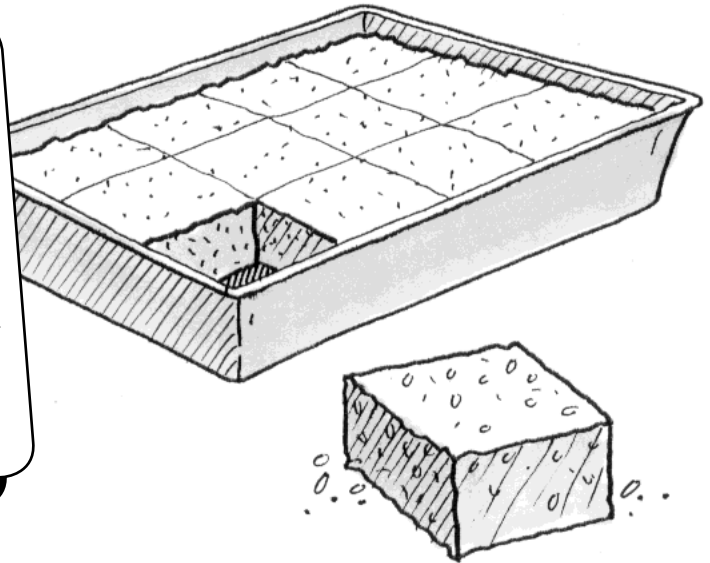
Ingredients

6 cups Rice Krispies
2 cups peanut butter
2 cups powdered sugar
½ cup melted margarine

Directions

Mix all ingredients well with hands.
(Your child can do the mixing. You can melt the butter.)

Spread into two greased 8-inch-square pans. Chill. Cut into bars.



Colored Milk

Add a few drops of vanilla and a teaspoonful of honey to each glass of milk. Let your child select the food coloring of his choice to stir in.

Do not use honey in beverages and uncooked foods for infants under the age of one year. Honey may contain botulism toxins.

Making Peanut Butter

Materials

peanuts, unshelled
corn oil
food grinder or blender
bowl
spoon
crackers

Directions

Shell peanuts, leaving on the brown skins. Place the shelled peanuts in food grinder and grind them into a bowl. Add enough oil to moisten the mixture to a spreadable consistency. Peanut butter is good to eat on crackers or on bananas, celery, bread, etc.



Making Finger Gelatin

Children are fascinated by the changes from crystals to liquid to solid in the process of making gelatin (Jell-O). Your child can help stir the gelatin and dissolve the crystals if you pour the hot water. Be sure he is in a safe place. When the gelatin cools, let him taste the smooth liquid, and then help pour it into some molds.

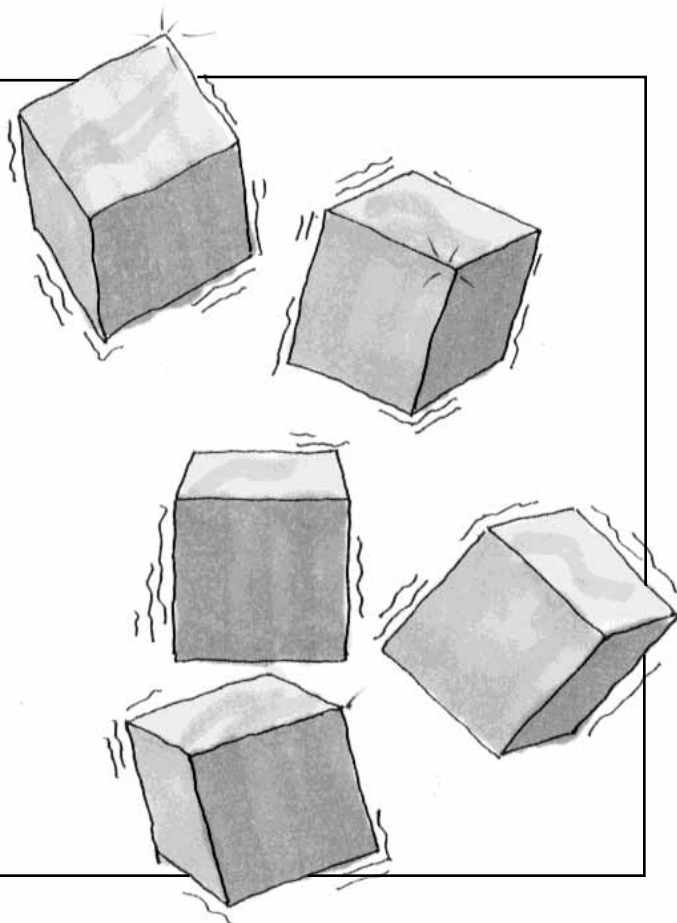
Gelatin won't melt at room temperature and is good finger food.

Ingredients

One 6-oz and one 3-oz package regular gelatin
4 packages unflavored gelatin
4 cups boiling water

Directions

Mix all ingredients together in a large bowl. Pour into a large, flat pan or dish and cut in cubes when thoroughly cooled.



Other Recipes to Cook Together:

French Toast

Ingredients

2 eggs
½ cup milk
¼ tsp salt
4-6 slices bread
3 Tbsp shortening

Directions

Show your child how to crack eggs into a bowl. Let her beat with a rotary beater until the eggs are fluffy and blended, then stir in the milk and salt. Have the child pour the egg mixture into a shallow pan and dip the bread slices, making sure both sides are coated with egg. Heat shortening in skillet, then brown bread on both sides in the shortening.

Your child can sprinkle powdered sugar on the toast, or butter it and serve with syrup.

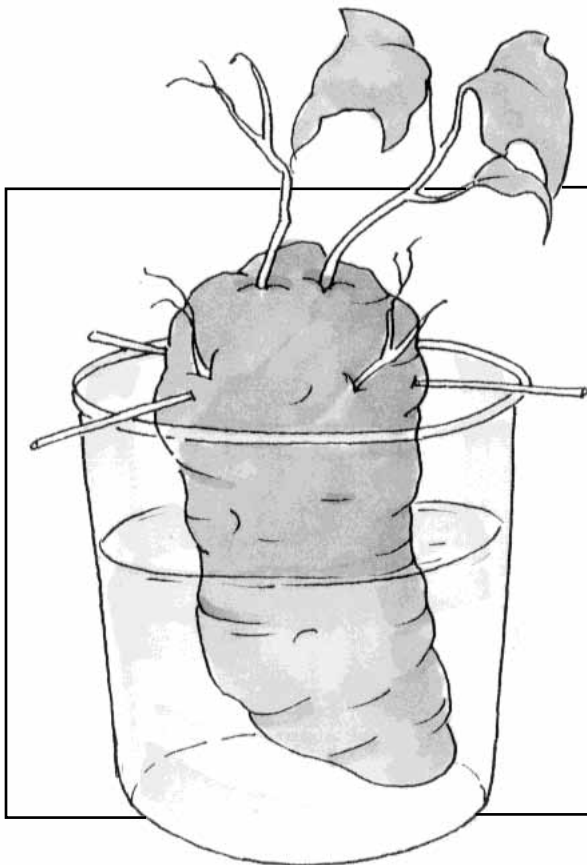
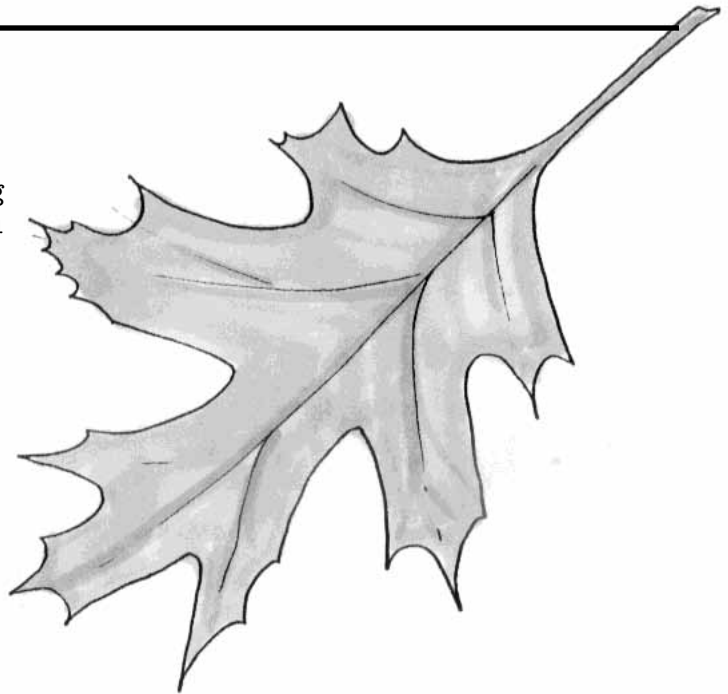
Let's Explore...

Plants and Animals

Fall Nature Walk

Fall is a good time for a family walk. If you live where you can walk in the woods or fields, you can gather dried weeds, interesting pods, and pieces of bark. Even in the city you can find differently shaped leaves, acorns, etc. Bring your treasures home and let your child set up an arrangement to enjoy.

Take along baskets or bags to collect interesting things. Be on the lookout for possible hazards such as poison ivy, hidden rocks, or stumps. Look at the different kinds of seeds and the way they are carried from place to place by the wind, on people's clothes, etc. You might be lucky enough to see a squirrel hiding nuts for the winter, too.



Grow a Sweet Potato Vine

A sweet potato can make a graceful plant that is fun to grow.

Find a glass jar, milk bottle, or bowl. Fill it with water up to about an inch from the top. Choose a sweet potato that has little, purplish buds near the top. Set the potato in the jar so that at least a third is in the water. (Hold with toothpicks if necessary.) Place jar in the light. Add a little fresh lukewarm water as needed.

After a month or so, when roots and leaves are nicely grown, plant in a pot filled with topsoil.

Visit the Farmer's Market

Take your child to a roadside stand or farmer's market to see what kinds of things are found there in the fall. Your trip can include picking out the Halloween or Thanksgiving pumpkin or buying some crunchy apples. Look for Indian corn and cider.

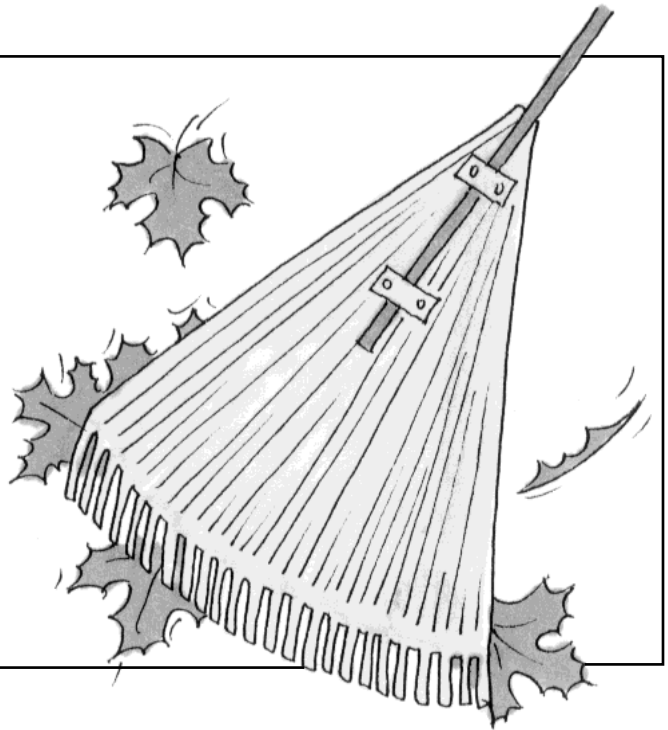
Talk about the changes in the seasons and the harvest time. Look at all the fall vegetables being brought in for the winter. What other signs of fall do you see there?

Fall Yard and Garden Cleanup

Your child can help pull up dried-out garden vegetables and flower plants. He can help save seeds from the flowers for next year's garden. Marigold seeds are easy to remove and to save in a bag for next year's garden.

Give him a shovel and he can help turn over the garden for next year. Don't forget his help when you harvest fall vegetables like turnips, carrots, or cabbages.

Your child will love to help rake leaves—and jump in them, too!

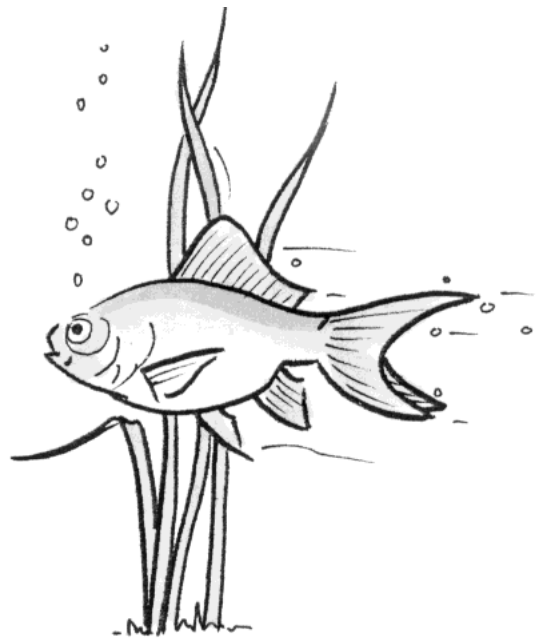


Goldfish

Pets can be a great way for children to learn about animals. Small desert animals make good pets, as do dogs and cats that grow up with the family. Children this age enjoy just watching animals, so goldfish make great pets for them, too. Watching a goldfish play is an experience in learning.

The main problem with goldfish is keeping them alive. Many perish from overfeeding. Show your child how much to feed, let him sprinkle the feed over the water, and then you put the food away. You will need to watch your child with his pet as he learns to care for it.

Take your child with you to the pet shop when you pick out your goldfish. When the fish dies, don't ignore the death or throw the fish in the trash can. Treat it with dignity and talk to your child about what has happened.



Other Activities with Plants and Animals:

Let's Explore...

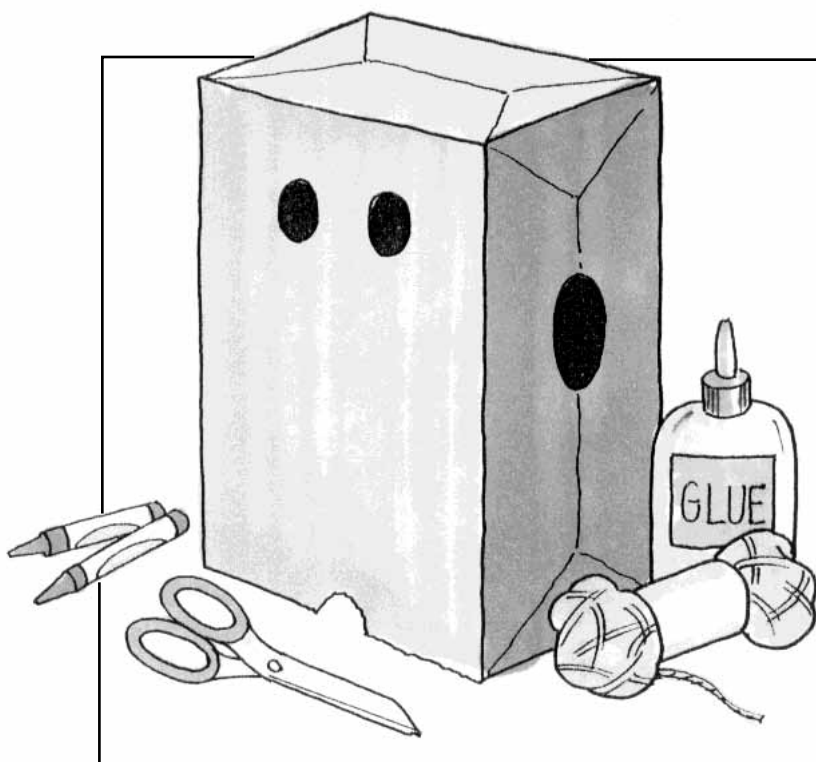
The World of Crafts

Let Me Do It

If you want to keep your child interested in dressing herself when she can't quite manage it yet, talk to her as you help her dress. Let her help when she can. You might say something like this:

"Underwear first. Put this foot in this hole and then the other foot goes in this place. Then we pull up the pants. Next comes your shirt."

It's almost like a story about her.



Grocery Bag Puppets

Materials

brown paper bag
scissors
crayons or markers
yarn, scraps of material, etc.
glue

Directions

Using a large paper grocery bag, mark where your child's eyes and arms are in relation to the bag. After cutting out the eye and arm holes, let your child create a character for the puppet. Encourage your child's ideas about what the puppet can be. Then let the child decorate it.

Pasting

Children usually don't paste very well until they are three or older, but the younger ones love to mess with it. Try this homemade, no-cook flour paste for your little one.

Flour Paste Ingredients

flour
water

Directions

Take a handful of flour and add water a little at a time, until gooey. The paste should be quite thick so it won't run all over the paper. Add a pinch of salt.

This paste is not as sticky as boiled paste, but it holds scraps of paper together pretty well. Although the paste doesn't taste good, it won't hurt if your child puts it in his mouth. Your child may be happy smearing it on a cookie sheet. Or he may like to try sticking scraps of paper together. Any scraps will do. They should be about the size of birthday cards.

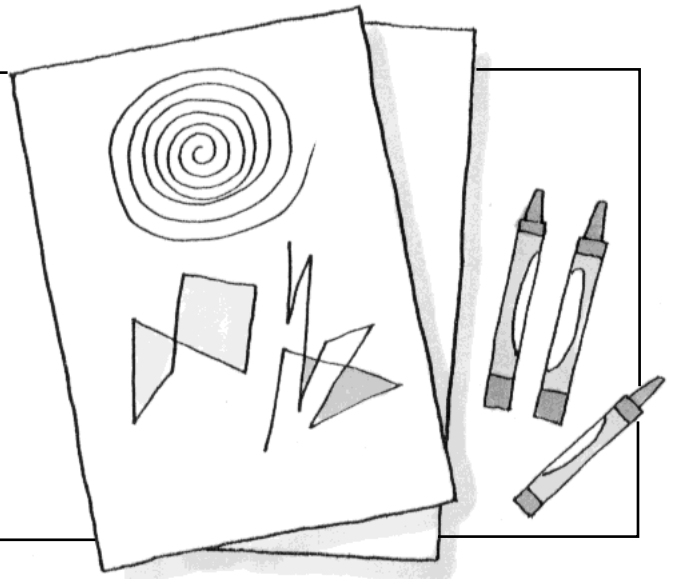
Tear a Mural

Have your family and child tear pictures or bits of colored paper to make a mural. Glue on a larger piece of paper. (See flour paste recipe on previous page.)

Starter Pictures

Paste or draw a shape or line on a piece of paper. Give your child crayons, markers, etc., and let him finish the picture anyway he wants.

Many children simply enjoy drawing over and around the shape or lines. Some older children may actually incorporate the shape into their drawing.



Stringing Objects

Children from two through school age enjoy stringing small objects. Find interesting objects of the proper size for the ability of your child. Place beads and other materials in flat containers such as pie pans so they can be picked up easily.

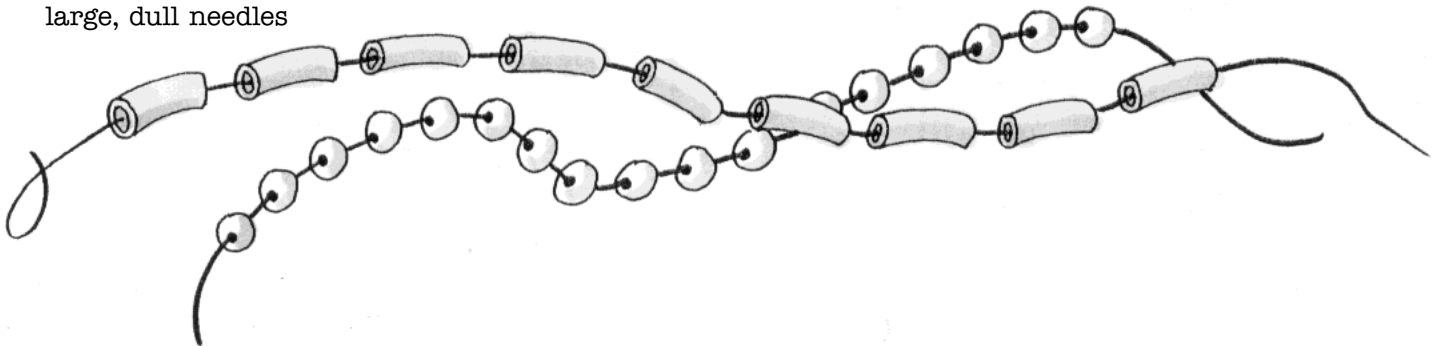
Materials

large or medium-sized wooden beads with strings or plastic lacing

plastic beads, short pieces of plastic drinking straws, macaroni (with holes) of various sizes

plastic lacing or yarn

large, dull needles



Other Crafts to Do:

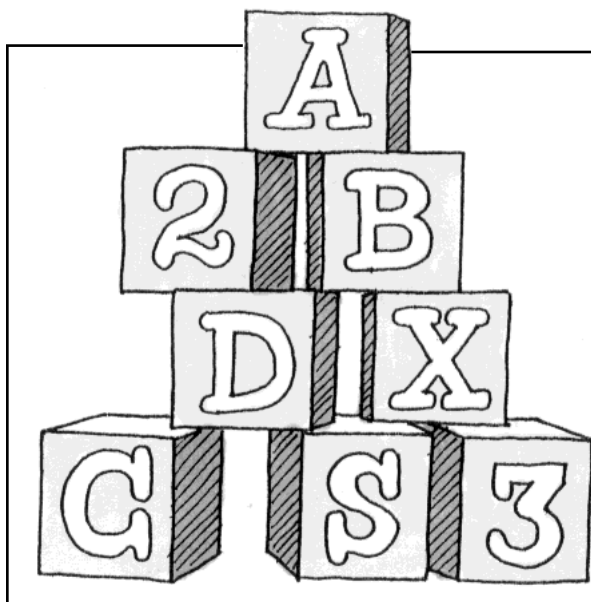
Let's Explore...

Other Fun Things

It's My Turn Now

Giving your child daily household tasks is important. It is one way a child can feel part of the family. A family becomes stronger when its members work and have fun together. A child learns how to share by watching others. When parents are good models, their children grow up to be good models for their own children.

With your child, think up some jobs he can do, some he can do alone, and some with which he needs your help. Make up a list. You could draw a chart with a picture of the activity to be done. Stars could be placed by the picture after he has done his job.



Blocks

Blocks present a hundred puzzling questions to your child but do not dictate an answer.

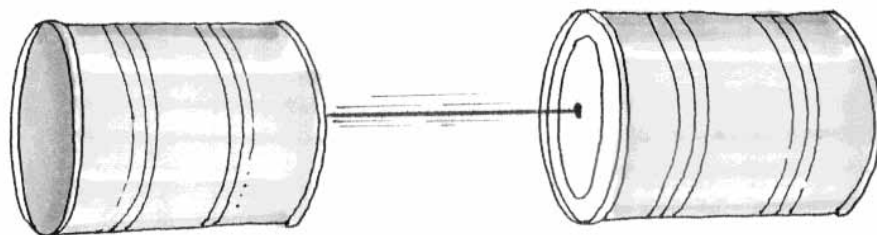
Provide your child with lots of blocks. If you are handy with tools, let your child help you make some. She can help sand them after you have cut them to size.

- ◆ She can make roads, bridges, tunnels, and houses.
- ◆ Blocks can be used for counting, matching, and problem solving.

String-a-Ling

Materials

2 empty cans or paper cups
nail
hammer
15–20 feet of string



Directions

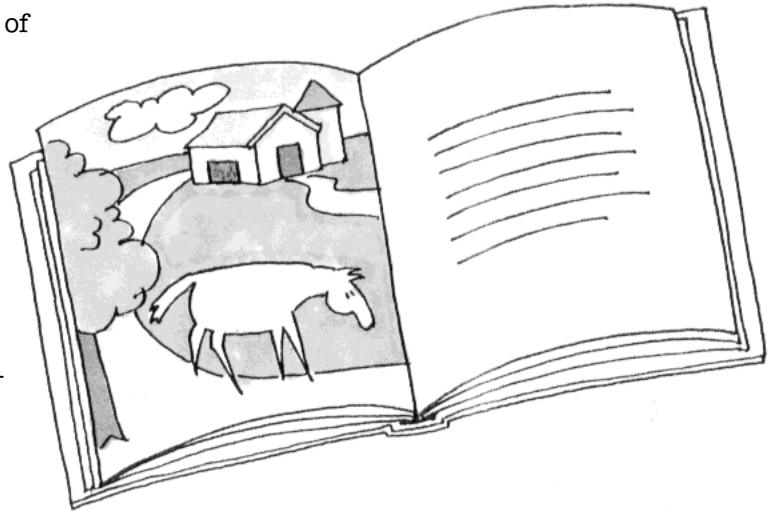
With hammer and nail, poke a hole in the bottom of each can. Thread the string through the bottom of each can so that the open ends are facing out. Tie a knot at each end of the string.

Two people are needed to use the string-a-ling. Each person takes a can and walks away from the other until the string is taut. Then each takes turns holding his can to his ear to hear or to his mouth to talk while his partner does the opposite.

Reading Aloud

The sound of your voice and the intimacy of sharing bring pleasure to your child even before she understands all the words.

- ✦ Sit in a comfortable area away from distractions. Read slowly. Reading should be slower than regular conversation. Stories should be short. Change voices for different characters. Hold the book so she can see the pictures.
- ✦ Read a story with enthusiasm. This creates positive attitudes toward reading.
- ✦ Two- to three-year-olds are interested in stories about people, actions, and activities. They like to hear stories about familiar ideas and animals.
- ✦ Sometimes, as you read to your child from a book with an exciting or pleasing character, substitute the name of your child for that character in the storybook.



Is Everyone Getting Involved?

Movement Challenges

Have fun with your child. See what he can do with his body in response to the following challenges.

Ask him: "Can you..."

- ✦ Walk quickly or quietly?
- ✦ Keep hands low while walking? Or high while walking?
- ✦ Walk as though you are happy? Angry? Afraid?
- ✦ Walk as though you are tall? Or short?
- ✦ Touch your head, knees, elbow, ankle, waist? Put your elbow on your knee?
- ✦ Jump across a line? Walk on a line?
- ✦ Toss a ball? Walk backward?

Try to think up some of your own. Your child may come up with some, too.

Other Fun Things to Do:

Here is a listing of activities for you to do. Tape this sheet to your refrigerator and check off the activities you do together as a record of your good times. Consider starting a notebook or scrapbook of your *Family Time* together. Include some artwork, stories, or photographs of your family.

Let's Explore...Our Family

- Happy Halloween and Thankful Thanksgiving
- Pass Around a Hug/How Many Hugs
- A Home of Your Own
- Bedtime Rituals
- The Family Home
- Everybody Has a House

Let's Explore...Our Community

- Adopt a Grandparent
- Going to the Butcher Shop
- Railroad Train
- Use Your Nose as You Walk Around Your Community
- Watching Food Fixers

Let's Explore...The Foods We Eat

- Unbaked Peanut Rice Krispy Bars
- Colored Milk
- Making Peanut Butter
- Making Finger Gelatin
- French Toast

Let's Explore...Plants and Animals

- Fall Nature Walk
- Grow a Sweet Potato Vine
- Visit the Farmer's Market
- Fall Yard and Garden Cleanup
- Goldfish

Let's Explore...The World of Crafts

- Let Me Do It
- Grocery Bag Puppets
- Pasting
- Tear a Mural
- Starter Pictures
- Stringing Objects

Let's Explore...Other Fun Things

- It's My Turn Now
- Blocks
- String-a-Ling
- Reading Aloud
- Movement Challenges

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