



SCHOOL AGE

Learning Games!

Children Learn Through Play

As you know, children of all ages learn through play. Here are a variety of fun games to play with your child. Enjoy!

Writing and Mailing a Letter

Writing a letter (and then mailing it) is a lost art. Invite your child to write a letter to someone that lives far away. Maybe a grandparent? An aunt? A neighbor or friend that has moved to a different city?

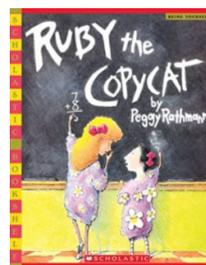
What to do: Because of this pandemic, now is a great time for your child to learn how to write a letter, mail it, and watch the mailbox for one to be returned. It is something that most people do not do on a regular basis, but it is a great way to feel connected to others. Help your child write a letter, draw a picture for a friend, or send a card. Hopefully, this is a fun experience for your child and he will want to do it again.

Silly Simon

Play a follow the leader game with the rule that you always do what you hear, not what you see. This gives your child practice focusing on verbal directions while not being distracted by other information.

What to do: Invite your child to join you in a new version of Simon Says. Explain the new rule—always do what you hear, not what you see. Tell him that sometimes you will say and do the same thing, but at other times you will say one thing and do another. Start slowly and pick up speed as the game progresses. Make your actions match the words until the third or fourth direction. As you say, “Simon Says stand on tip-toe”, bend over instead. Continue to play, giving directions that contain action and space words your child knows, “touch your nose, jump up and down, spin around,” etc.

Book Suggestion: *Ruby the Copycat*, by Peggy Rathman



Tricky Directions

Give directions to your child and some friends to make marks on a piece of paper that has been divided into four parts. Your child will gain experience in following directions working with materials he or she uses in school.

Please see below for some additional activities that you could try with your child.



What to do: Have your child divide a piece of paper up into four equal parts. You may need to bring out a ruler or fold the paper in four parts, whichever works best for your child. Number the squares on the folded paper one to four. Provide the following directions to the children:

- Put a colored square in each square.
- Write your name in square number 2
- Draw a picture of your favorite animal in square number 4.
- Draw a banana in square 1.
- Write your favorite sport in the square that only has a colored square in it.

Compare the pieces of paper and have each child explain their creation.

Tell Me How

Offer your child simple recipe cards so he can tell you or someone in your family how to prepare food. Your child's confidence will grow as he shows that he can follow the recipe cards and give directions.

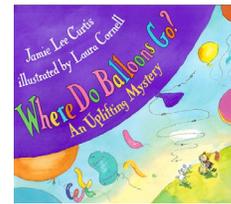
What to do: Following a recipe gives your child practice with sequence of directions. Do a simple recipe, such as making JELL-O or a peanut butter sandwich. The best part of the game is when the food has been prepared and it is ready to eat. ENJOY!

Let's Imagine

Choose quiet times to ask your child questions that encourage her to use her imagination. This gives your child the opportunity to think creatively by freely choosing and combining ideas in interesting ways.

What to do: Playing this pretend game with your child encourages her to imagine something without any props. Recall a character or situation from a story that you recently read together. Ask questions that encourage your child to extend the story, for example, "How did the beast feel when he was on the ice flow? If you had been there, how would you have felt?" Offer an imaginary scenario for her to think about. "If you were going to visit Red Fox, what would you pack in your bag? If you had an invitation to a dinosaur's birthday, what presents would you take?" Use her experiences to guide your questions. Consider meaningful books—maybe her favorites or a favorite event.

Book Suggestion: *Where do Balloons Go?*
by Jamie Lee Curtis



Five Strikes

Ask your child to come up with a handful of words that he wants to use to try to stump you while playing five strikes. Your child can use favorite words, sight words, rhyming words, or even small phrases.

What to do: Begin with a piece of paper and pencil for your child. Have your child think of a word and write a blank for every letter in the word. As the other player, you can guess a letter from the alphabet. If the letter is contained in the word or phrase, you take another turn guessing a letter. You continue to guess letters until a letter that you guessed is not part of the word or phrase. If you guess the word before you receive five strikes, you are the winner. Reverse the roles and have your child guess letters to fill in the blanks.