



United Way KinderClub At Home

Thank you for joining United Way KinderClub At Home!

You are leading the way on this new opportunity for you to learn and grow with your incoming kindergartener. You will be learning about all kinds of activities you can do with your soon-to-be kindergartener to continue their growth and development so they are ready to learn on the first day they start kindergarten.

United Way KinderClub At Home is arranged in five segments, or “lessons”. Each lesson is organized around a skill that would be helpful for your soon-to-be kindergartener to have started working on before the first day of kindergarten. Please keep in mind that children develop at different rates, so don’t be concerned if they do not do it perfectly the first time. Trying it out and making forward progress (no matter how small) is a victory! With each lesson, there are several activities and handouts. Most of the activities require common household items. What your incoming kindergartener will learn and the supply list are outlined at the beginning of each activity. We recommend that you read through the activity and collect all your supplies before you begin.

Enjoy this time together with your soon-to-be kindergartener. If you have questions or concerns, please email bobbie.cronk@stjosephunitedway.org or call United Way at (816) 364-2381.

We hope this experience ends with your incoming kindergartener ready to begin this chapter with excitement!



Lesson 1

Early Literacy

Start your United Way KinderClub At Home lesson by finding a comfortable place to sit and read a book together. Use this as a time to come together and start your lesson connected with each other.

Reading Aloud

Basic literacy skills are developed when you read aloud. Here are some things you can do while reading to encourage early literacy:

- o Point out the author and the illustrator.
- o Ask children to predict what will happen next.
- o Use voices to make the story come alive.
- o Talk about how to take care of books.
- o Point out that “words” are what authors use to write books and that “letters” are used to make words.
- o See *Growing a Great Reader* handout for more ideas about how to support early literacy development.
- o Read out loud every day.

Sentence Strip Activity

Have your incoming kindergartener first practice recognizing their name and assembling the letters, then have them practice writing it. Proper pencil grip for children depends on their fine motor development. Providing many fine motor opportunities (such as the *Play Dough Benefits for Your Child* activity you will do in Lesson 2) will help your child be ready for a correct pencil grip.



Growing a Great Reader

Pre-reading Skills

You are laying the groundwork for future reading success when you spend time reading aloud with your incoming kindergartener. Children will progress in their understanding of books at various rates. Here are some key concepts to encourage while you read aloud. Choose one or two concepts to discuss each time.

Can they point to the words while you read?

- They know the difference between the words and the pictures.
- They know that to make words, we put letters together.
- They know how to tell when a word is over.
- They know how to tell when a sentence is over.
- They can move their finger to each word as you say it.

Can they use the pictures to help tell the story?

- They can 'read' the story by 'reading' the pictures.
- They can read simple books and use the pictures to help them figure out tricky words.

Do they use their perspective while they are being read to?

- They think about things that he/she already knows while reading a story.
- They can make connections from things in the story to things that have happened in their own lives.
- They can make connections from things in the story to things that they remember from other stories.

Concepts of Print

In kindergarten, children will practice the following skills when learning to read. When you are reading aloud, begin to point out some of these things in your books. Beginning conversations about them now will set a solid foundation for future learning.

- Where are the front and back of the book?
- Where is the title?
- Where does the story start?
- Which way do you turn the pages of the story?
- Where are the words on the page?
- What is a question mark used for?
- What is a period used for?
- What is an exclamation point used for?
- What are quotation marks used for?



Sentence Strip Activity

What we are learning: We are learning about letter recognition by starting with meaningful letters-the ones in their name! They are learning what their name looks like in print. They are also learning about how to hold a pencil and how to write their name.

Supplies needed:

- Print out of next page (or make your own version using a straight edge and piece of paper)
- Pencil or marker

First Activity:

Remind your child that we use letters to make words and tell them that their name is a word.

- Do you know the letters of your name?
- Do you know that your name is a word?
- Do you know some of the letters in your name?

Show an example:

- Write your child's name twice on the sentence strip. Space the letters to allow easy cutting in the next step.
- With one of the names, cut each letter apart. The other can serve as a model.
- Encourage your child to put their name back together like a puzzle.
- They may or may not need the other copy of their name as a model.
- If your child is already able to do this activity with their first name, use their last name instead.

Second Activity:

- Very lightly print your child's name on a sentence strip.
- Ask your child to hold the pencil/marker and write over your tracing.
- Once they have mastered this activity, ask them to practice writing their name without tracing.



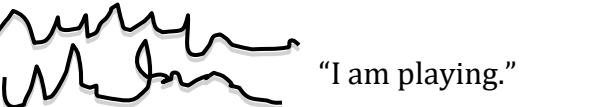
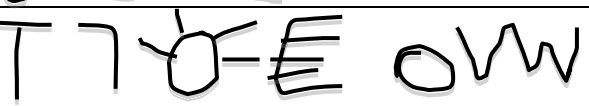
Note: Every child develops at a different pace. Do not worry if this is too difficult for your child right now. It will get easier as they develop fine motor skills and practice their "writing". Writing develops in stages and just as they can't walk before they crawl, they can't perfect their writing until they scribble. See *Developmental Stages of Writing* handout for the typical progression.



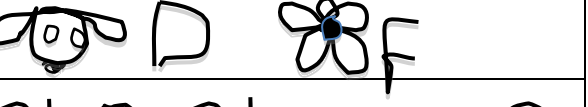

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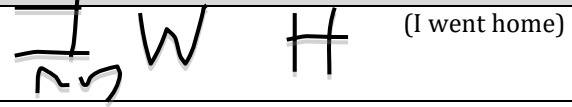
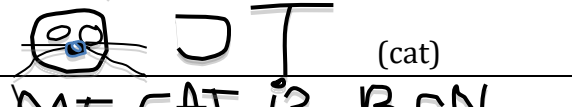
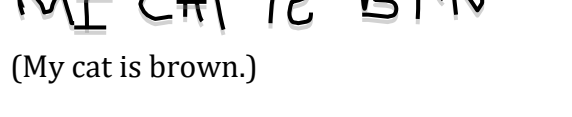
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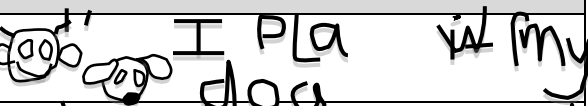
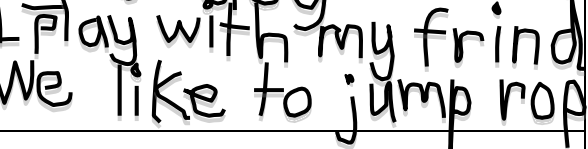
Parents: cut here to separate sentence strips

Developmental Stages of Writing

Pre-Literate	
Stage Description	Sample
Scribble Stage- starting point any place on page, resembles drawing large circular strokes and random marks that do not resemble print or communicate a message	
Symbolic Stage- starting point any place on page, pictures or random strokes/marks with an intended message	
Directional Scribble- scribble left to right direction, linear, intended as writing that communicates a meaningful message/idea	
Symbolic/Mock Letters- letter-like formations, may resemble letters but it isn't intentional, interspersed w/ numbers, spacing rarely present	

Emergent	
Strings of Letters- long strings of various letters in random order, may go left to right, uses letter sequence perhaps from name, usually uses capital letters, may write same letters in many ways,	
Groups of letters- groupings of letters with spaces in between to resemble words	
Labeling pictures- matching beginning sounds with the letter to label a picture	
Environmental Print- copies letters/words from environmental/classroom print, reversals common, uses a variety of resources to facilitate writing	

Transitional	
Letter/Word Representation- uses first letter sound of word to represent entire word, uses letter sound relationship,	
First/Last Letter Representation- word represented by first and last letter sound	
Medial Letter Sounds- words spelled phonetically using BME sounds, attempts medial vowels, uses some known words, more conventionally spelled words, one letter may represent one syllable, attempts to use word spacing, writing is readable	

Fluent	
Beginning Phrase Writing- using all of the above skills to construct phrases that convey a message connected to their illustration	
Sentence Writing- Construction of words into sentence formation, maybe multiple sentences, writing is readable, may use punctuation, known words spelled correctly, topic focused, BME with detail,	
Six Traits of Writing- Students use Six Traits of Writing (Conventions, Organization, Voice, Ideas, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency)	



Lesson 2

Rhyming & Fine Motor Skill Development

Start your United Way KinderClub At Home lesson by finding a comfortable place to sit and read a book together. Remember some of the reading tips you learned in the Early Literacy KinderClub lesson, but most of all, use this as a time to come together and start your lesson connected with each other.

Rhyming

Nursery rhymes help children develop language, reading and math skills, encourage connections with adults and creative expression. Children learn new words and practice pitch, volume and inflection and become comfortable with the basic structure of sentences. Nursery rhymes can help children understand that stories have a beginning, middle and end. Finally, the patterns and sequences of nursery rhymes help build foundation math skills and the stories and accompanying actions create a fun way for parents and children to engage in creative expression together.

- o Pick a few songs from *Fun and Games with Songs* handout to do with your child.
- o Are there other nursery rhymes that you grew up playing? Teach them to your child and share a story about when you played it as a child.

Fine Motor (small muscles)

Playing with modeling clay, cutting with scissors and scribbling with crayons all build fine motor skills.

- o Modeling Clay activity - In this activity, you will practice engaging with your soon-to-be kindergartener while they create whatever they would like to with Play-Doh or homemade play dough. (see *Play Dough Benefits for Your Child* handout) Ask your incoming kindergartener to describe what they are creating. Ask open-ended questions and listen to what they have to say! (see *Do You REALLY Talk to Your Child?* handout)
- o Cutting activity - Encouraging your soon-to-be kindergartener to practice cutting (while supervised) helps them build fine motor skills. (see *Cutting Shapes* handout)

Fun and Games with Songs

Here are some of kids' best-loved rhymes and songs. Learn the words, learn the motions and sing along with your child.

This Little Piggy

(can be done on fingers or toes)

This little piggy went to market.
This little piggy stayed home.
This little piggy had roast beef.
This little piggy had none.
And this little piggy cried,
"Wee, wee, wee!"
All the way home.

touch and wiggle thumb
touch and wiggle index finger
touch and wiggle middle finger
touch and wiggle ring finger

touch and wiggle pinky



The Itsy, Bitsy Spider

The itsy, bitsy spider
Went up the water spout.
Down came the rain
And washed the spider out.

Out came the sun
And dried up all the rain,
And the itsy, bitsy spider
Went up the spout again.

put finger to opposite thumb and pretend to crawl up
wiggle fingers from top of "spout" down to lap
move hands/arms across lap; ie, motion of safe in a
baseball game
move hands in large circles to show sun coming out

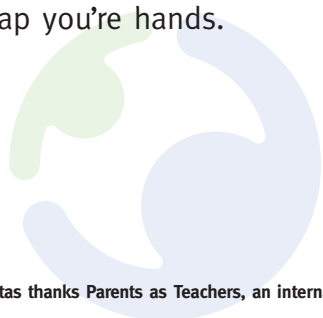
show spider again going up

If You're Happy and You Know It

If you're happy and you know it,
Clap your hands.
If you're happy and you know it,
Clap your hands.
If you're happy and you know it
Then you're face will surely show it,
If you're happy and you know it
Clap you're hands.

Suggestions for other verses:

stamp your feet
pat your legs
wiggle your ears



Fun and Games with Songs, page 2

Teapot

I'm a little teapot short and stout.
Here is my handle, here is my spout.

*bend knees
put hand on hip with elbow out,
the other hand should go out to be a spout*

When I get all steamed up,
Hear me shout
Tip me over and pour me out.

pretend to tip over

Where is Thumbkin?

Where is thumbkin?
Where is thumbkin?
Here I am. Here I am.
How are you today, sir?
Very well, thank you.
Run away, run away.

*Hands behind back

Bring right hand out from behind back with thumb
Move right thumb as if it's talking
Move left thumb as if it's responding
Clap*

Where is pointer?
Where is tall man?
Where is ring man?
Where is little man?

Motions are repeated for each of the five fingers

Baa Baa Black Sheep

Baa baa black sheep,
Have you any wool?
Yes sir, yes sir,
Three bags full;
One for the master,
One for the dame,
And one for the little boy
Who lives down the lane.
Baa baa black sheep,
Have you any wool?
Yes sir, yes sir,
Three bags full.



Fun and Games with Songs, page 3

The Wheels On The Bus

The wheels on the bus go
round and round,
Round and round, round and round.
The wheels on the bus go
round and round,
All through the town.

bend your arms and make them go around like wheels

The people on the bus go
up and down,
Up and down, up and down.
The people on the bus go
up and down,
All through the town

sit up and down



Other verses:

The wipers on the bus go
swish, swish, swish.

use your hands as wipers back and forth

The horn on the bus goes
beep, beep, beep.

pretend to beep a horn

The money on the bus goes
clink, clink, clink.

pretend to put money in

The driver on the bus says
“move on back.”

hand motion your thumb over your shoulder to move on back

The baby on the bus goes
waa, waa, waa.

rub your eyes as a child would when crying

Born Learning™ is a public engagement and material distribution campaign that provides important information about what young children need every day to ensure quality early learning. Designed to support you in your critical role as a child's first teacher, Born Learning materials are made available through the efforts of United Way, United Way Success By 6 and Civitas. For more information, visit us online at bornlearning.org.

Civitas thanks Parents as Teachers, an international early childhood parent education and family support program, for their ongoing support.





Play Dough Benefits for Your Child:

Develops fine motor skills – Play dough allows children to manipulate dough by squashing it, squeezing it, patting and rolling it; this helps build strength in their hand muscles, making them ready to develop further skills such as scissor and pencil control.

Develops your child's imagination and creativity – Play dough can be made into absolutely anything. Adding a variety of items can help develop children's imaginations as they begin to think about what they can make. For example by introducing cupcake paper, children's play will lead into birthdays and blowing the candles out on the cake. Additional materials such as pipe cleaners, glitter, straws, etc. can be added with the play dough to extend your child's play.

Develops language skills – This provides a time to engage in meaningful conversations with children related to the play that is happening. The conversations could include open-ended questions such as:

- o Tell me about what you are creating.
- o What will you do next with your play dough?
- o How can you roll a longer piece?
- o How can you roll a shorter piece?
- o What will happen if...?
- o I wonder what will happen if we...

Discussions can be held about the play dough's color and feel. This will help build children's vocabulary knowledge to support reading skills later. Descriptive words, such as smooth, bumpy, solid, light, blue or rough can be used with your child as they play.

Develops self-esteem – The open-ended value of children using play dough allows them to experience success when they are playing with it. There is no right or wrong way to create with it.

Develops math skills – Play dough is great for supporting children's math thinking. He/she can create both two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, compare lengths and thickness of their play dough and count the number of pieces or shapes they have created.

Develops your child's sensory awareness – Play dough is a simple sensory activity that children can play with for hours. It can be easily extended by making different types of it such as slimy play dough or scented play dough.

Play Dough Recipe

- 2 ½ cups of flour (add more if needed)
- ½ cup salt
- 1 tablespoon alum (found with spices)
- 1 ¾ cups of boiling water
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- Food coloring if desired

Mixing Directions

- Mix flour and salt in a large bowl.
- In a glass measuring cup, mix alum, water, oil, and color and add to the flour/salt mixture. Stir until slightly cool.
- Knead well, adding additional flour until it stops sticking to your hands.
- Keep in an airtight container when not using.



Do You REALLY Talk to Your Child?

How can you support oral language?

What: Oral language is the ability to have conversations and interpret conversations.

Why: Helping children to expand their oral language will assist them in making a positive transition into reading and writing.

How: Engage them in meaningful conversations! It may sound simple, but talk with them, not at them. Look at them face-to-face. Pay close attention to what they are saying. Show understanding and empathy and invite them to say more.

"Tell me more about that!"

Repeat their sentences: Restate what they say and expand by adding new or different words.

Ex: Child: "Look! A doggy!"

You: "Yes, look there is a cute brown puppy!"

Use pictures to tell a story: Have them use a book to tell their own story by looking at the pictures. Revisit the same book over and over, each time prompting them to notice new things in the pictures or expand on their ideas.

Have them tell you about their artwork: There is so much in their art that often isn't expressed, because we don't ask. Have them tell you about their artwork by asking about the materials they are using. "I noticed you used red crayons, tell me about part of your art." You can even write their words for them and emphasize that the spoken word can be written using letters and words.

Talk about TV: Develop meaningful conversations about what you are watching or just simply share your own thoughts. Can they make a connection to their own lives?

Ask about their day: Ask specific open-ended questions when asking for information.

"What did you have for snack today?"

"What made you laugh today?"

"What activity did you enjoy today?"



Cutting Shapes

What we are learning: Your soon-to-be kindergartener is practicing their fine motor skills and learning how to follow directions.

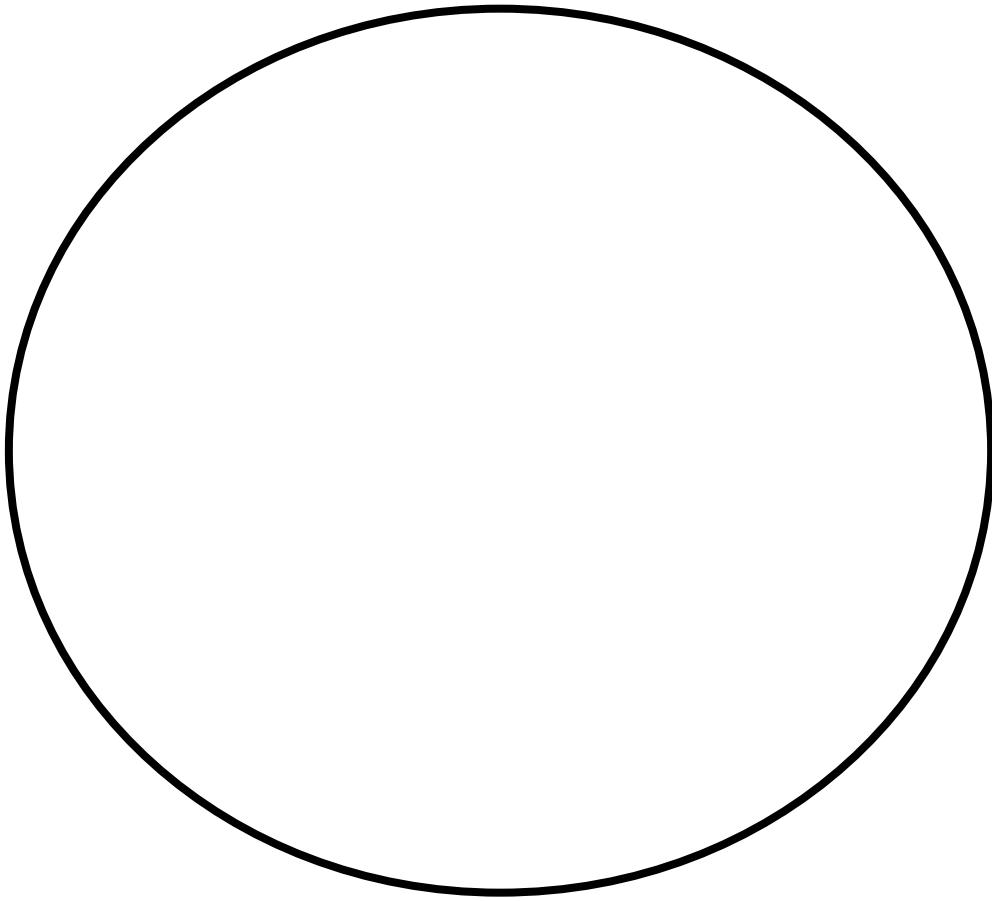
Supplies needed:

- Print outs of the following pages
- Blunt tip scissors

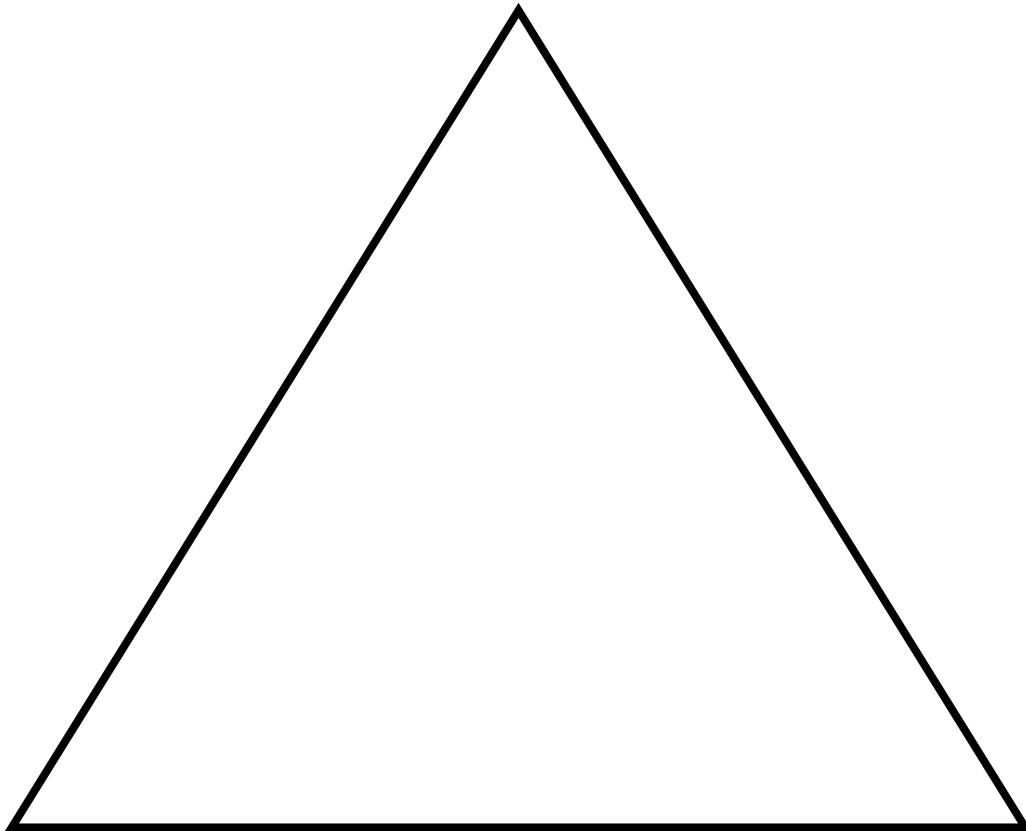
Directions:

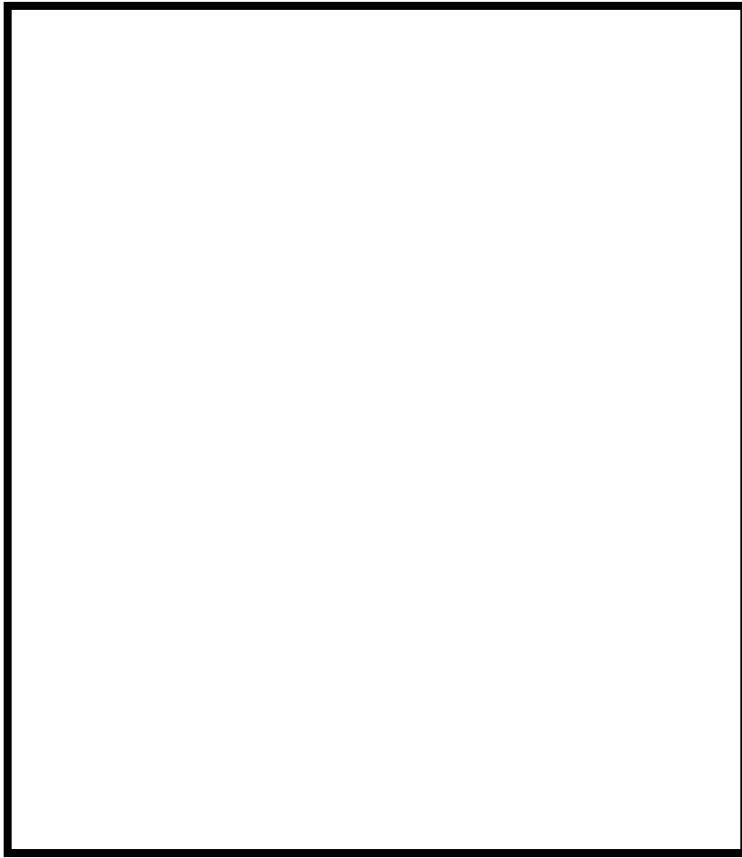
1. Print out the following sheets and cut along small dotted lines to create practice sheets for your incoming kindergartener.
2. Give them a pair of blunt tip scissors and ask them to practice cutting out shapes and cutting along the various lines.
3. If this is their first experience using scissors, they can practice cutting on paper without lines and then move to cutting on the lines. They can also practice cutting tissues, straws or other items of different thicknesses.
4. As always, make sure children are supervised to prevent experimenting on treasured family objects!

Have Fun!



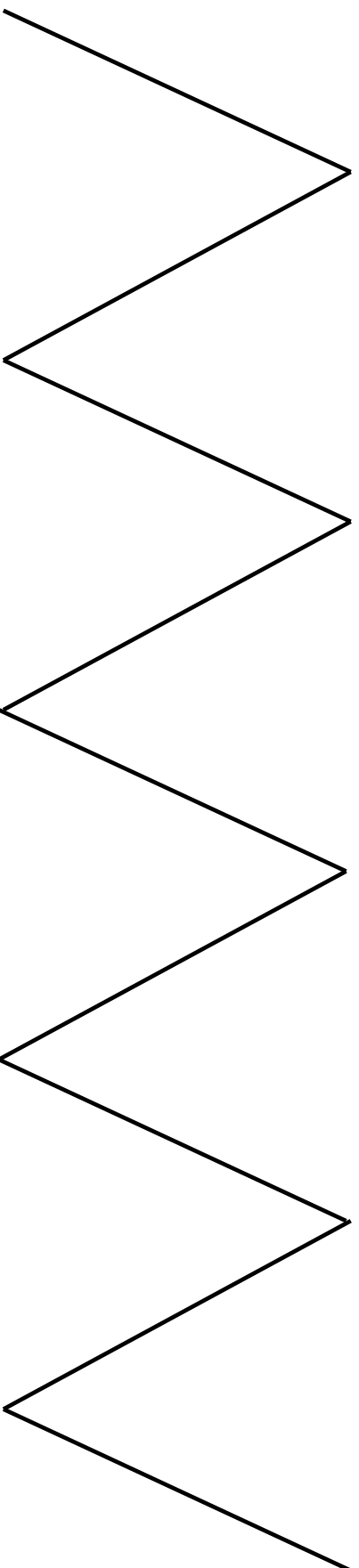
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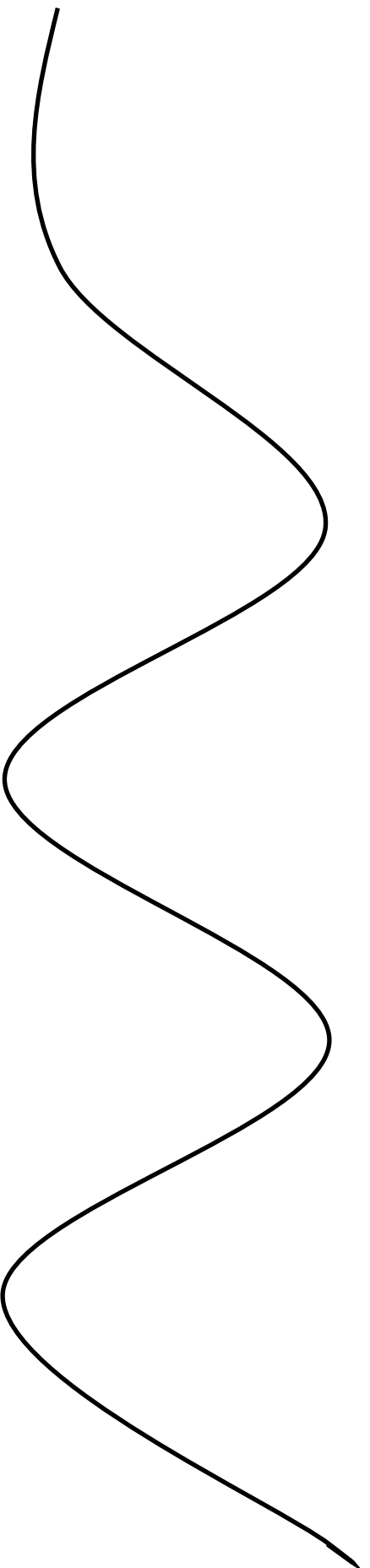


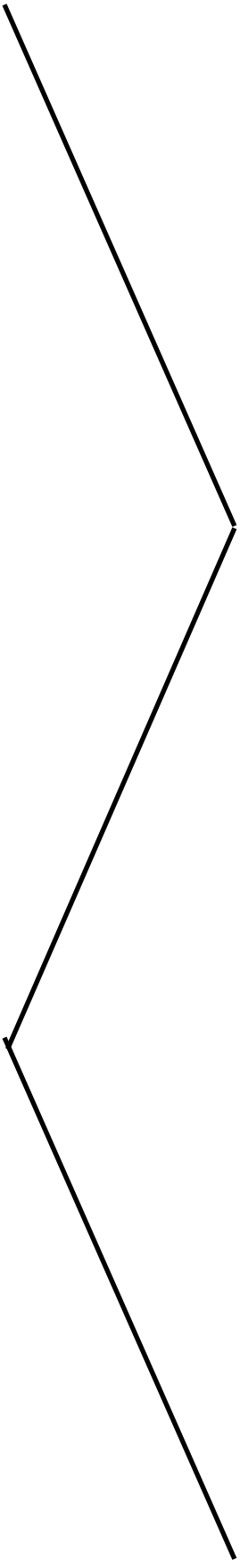
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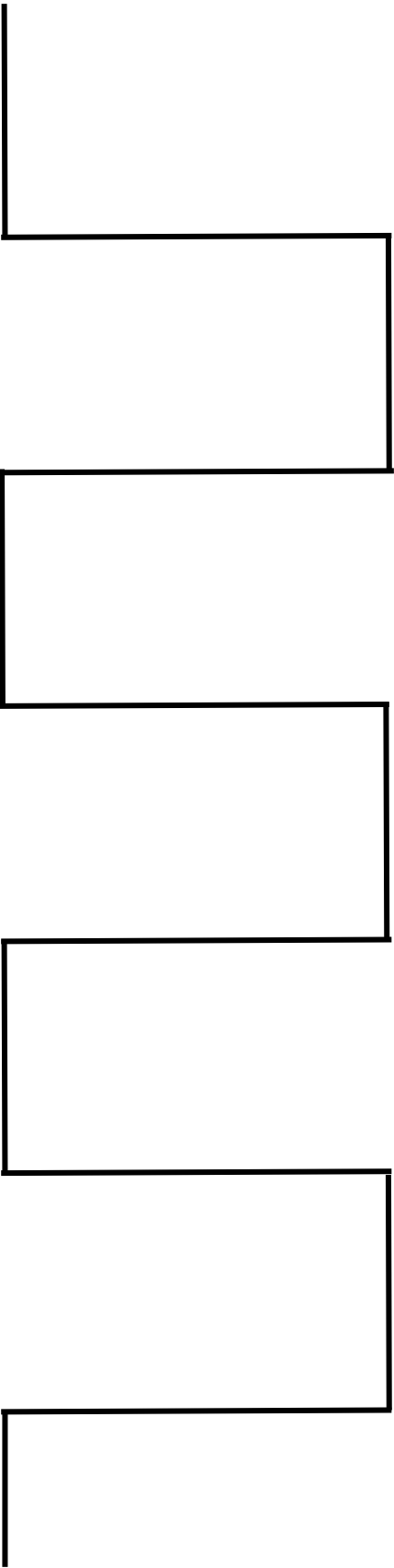




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Lesson 3

Math

Start your United Way KinderClub At Home lesson by finding a comfortable place to sit and read a book together. Remember some of the reading tips you learned in the Early Literacy KinderClub lesson, but most of all, use this as a time to come together and start your lesson connected with each other.

Children learn through play. Board games can help a child learn social skills such as turn-taking, sharing and patience while they wait for their turn. They also learn the social emotional skill of managing upset and disappointment when they don't win. Finally, they learn foundational math skills. (see *Mathematical Development Concepts* handout if you would like to learn more about the various types of math skills)

- Make *Monkey Tug of War* and play. (see handout)
- Make and play *Ice Cream All Gone*. (see handout)
- What other games can you think of that require counting? Could you make up a version of Simon Says where all of the instructions involve numbers (for example, "Simon says, clap three times")?



Mathematical Development Concepts

Strategies		
Concept	Definition	Example
Rote Counting	Reciting the names of the numerals in order or sequence.	"1,2,3,4,5..."
Tagging	Linking a single number name with one object, and only one, at a time. Student may still not recite the names of numerals in order.	
Synchronic Counting	Counting, saying one number for each object	

Big Ideas		
One-to-One Correspondence	Matching objects from one set to objects of an equal set.	
Magnitude	Knowing which one has more.	
Cardinality	Attaching a number name to a series of objects; to understand that the number spoken when tagging or touching the last object also identifies the total number in the group.	
Conservation	Recognizing equivalent collections of items despite appearances.	
Hierarchical Inclusion	The idea that numbers build by exactly one each time and that they nest within each other by this amount.	
Unitizing	Standard grouping of a specified number used to represent quantities. Underlies the understanding of place value; ten objects become one ten.	
Subitizing	Understanding that objects can be seen as a whole. Children can perceive the amount without needing to count.	

Adapted from information found in Young Mathematicians At Work by Cathy Twomey Fosnot



Monkey Tug of War

What we are learning: Your soon-to-be kindergartener is practicing basic math skills by counting aloud with numbers in order and tagging one dot with each number while counting.

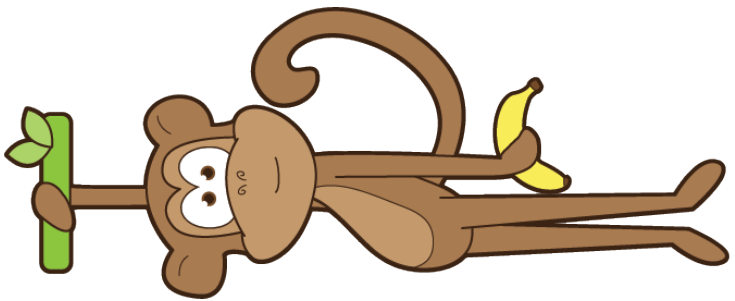
First, gather up the supplies and create the game together.

Supplies needed:

- Pencil or marker
- Print out of game board on next page
- One die
- One game marker, anything will do, but some ideas are: a rock, coin, bean

Game instructions:

1. Players position themselves at opposite ends of the game board.
2. Place the game marker on the monkey in the middle of the game board.
3. Players take turns rolling the die and moving the marker toward their end of the game board. Move the game marker one spot for as many dots rolled on the die.
4. The first player to move the marker off their end of the game board wins.





Ice Cream All Gone

What we are learning: Your soon-to-be kindergartener is practicing their fine motor skills while cutting and drawing, learning basic math skills and turn-taking skills while playing the game. Good sportsmanship and how to delay gratification (by waiting to eat the candy) are also being practiced.

First, gather up the supplies and create the game together.

Supplies needed:

- Two copies of ice cream shape (you can print out or draw your own)
- Cardstock or construction paper
- Glue or glue stick
- Pencils or markers
- 24 candy pieces or other game markers
- A die

Instructions:

1. Print out 2 copies of the ice cream shape or draw your own.
2. You and your incoming kindergartner each cut out your own ice cream shape.
3. Draw 12 dots on each ice cream scoop.
4. Glue ice cream shapes to cardstock or construction paper.

Then play the game together!

Game instructions:

1. Place 12 candy pieces, or other game markers, on the dots on each ice cream scoop.
2. Choose which player will go first.
3. Roll the die.
4. Count the number of dots on the die.
5. Count and then remove and eat that many pieces of candy.
6. The first person to empty their cone wins!





Lesson 4

Gross Motor Development

Start your United Way KinderClub At Home lesson by finding a comfortable place to sit and read a book together. Remember some of the reading tips you learned in the Early Literacy KinderClub lesson, but most of all, use this as a time to come together and start your lesson connected with each other.

Games that include gross motor (big muscle) play help children understand how their bodies move, learn positional words (on top, under, over, beside), and experience the value of "crossing the midline." Crossing the midline is an important activity needed for many everyday tasks such as writing, reaching towards your foot to put on a shoe and sock with both hands and hitting a ball with a bat.

There are many books and songs that lend themselves to gross motor play.

- o Acting out Going on a Bear Hunt rhyme results in a fun parade around your home, walking around chairs, crawling under tables, and climbing over pillows.
- o Pretending you are monkeys jumping on the bed by laying a sheet on the middle of the floor and having everyone stand on top. Then recite the 5 Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed rhyme until everyone is off. Try it again with everyone under the sheet!



Lesson 5

Social/Emotional Readiness & School Readiness

Start your United Way KinderClub At Home lesson by finding a comfortable place to sit and read a book together. Remember some of the reading tips you learned in the Early Literacy KinderClub lesson, but most of all, use this as a time to come together and start your lesson connected with each other.

Some key readiness skills have been identified. (see *Key Readiness Skills* handout) Please remember that children develop at different rates, so you might not see some of these yet. In addition to the other skills covered in this experience, behavior is also an important skill for your child to learn.

Identifying emotions is the first step to self-regulation. While reading with your child, discuss what the characters are feeling. Use your facial expressions or draw faces to show basic emotions like happy, sad, angry and scared.

Help your child manage their emotions by learning deep breathing exercises. Help for this can be found at consciousdiscipline.com in the handout Safe Place Breathing Icons. Practice the exercises when your child is calm. Practice will lead to a learned behavior for those rough times. Use calm times to build problem solving skills as well. For example, have them use their words by letting you know what they need or letting you know when you do something they don't like. Taking turns is another great skill to practice. Model taking turns at home when you are playing with your child.

If you are concerned about your child's development, talk about it with their pediatrician and/or your local school district's Parents as Teachers or Special Services department.

**This is an exciting chapter in the life of your family.
Cherish every moment!**



Key Readiness Skills

Listed below are some helpful skills for children to have when starting kindergarten. Your soon-to-be kindergartener may or may not be ready to master all of these before the first day of school. Every child is an individual and develops these skills at different times. Rest assured that they are ready for kindergarten.

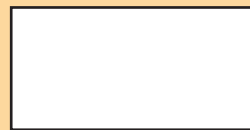
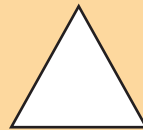
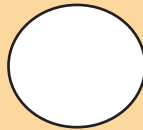
More importantly, their kindergarten will be ready for him or her! If you are concerned about their development, contact your child's doctor or your school district's Special Services Department.

Self Help

- Take care of toilet needs without help
- Hang up sweater, coat or jacket without help
- Zip zipper on jacket (after it is started)
- Tie own shoes

Concepts

- Name the colors: red, blue, green, yellow, purple, orange, black, white, brown (ask child what color an item is)
- Name all the shapes:
- Count 10 objects



Language

- State their first and last name
- State their age
- Speak in sentences with more than four to five words in acceptable sentence structure
- Speak so as to be understandable to strangers
- Use words to describe objects
- Sing some songs
- Identify the letters in their name
- Remember facts of a simple story

Behavior

- Be away from parents for a few hours without obvious fear
- Listen quietly while an adult reads
- Follow a series of three directions in order (stop, pick up the cup and bring it here)
- Play cooperatively with others

Motor Skills

- Catch a ball when bounced
- Hop on one foot
- Alternate feet when walking down stairs
- Cut on a line with scissors
- Put together a 6-8 piece puzzle
- Hold a pencil correctly



KinderClub At Home

Lesson Checklist

☐ Lesson 1

- ☐ Read *Growing a Great Reader*
- ☐ Practice *Sentence Strip Activity*
- ☐ Read *Developmental Stages of Writing*

☐ Lesson 2

- ☐ Play *Fun & Games With Songs*
- ☐ Read *Play Dough Benefits for Your Child*
- ☐ Read *Do You REALLY Talk to Your Child?*
- ☐ Practice *Cutting Shapes*
- ☐ Play with Play Dough

☐ Lesson 3

- ☐ Read *Mathematical Developmental Concepts*
- ☐ Play *Monkey Tug of War*
- ☐ Play *Ice Cream All Gone*

☐ Lesson 4

- ☐ Act out *Going On A Bear Hunt* rhyme
- ☐ Act out *Five Little Monkeys Jumping On the Bed* rhyme

☐ Lesson 5

- ☐ Read *Key Readiness Skills*

Congratulations! You did it!

You completed all of your KinderClub At Home activities.

Remember to read, sing and play every day to continue to build your child's brain!

Thank you to Ronda Chesney, Tammy Flowers, United Way Success By 6 School Readiness Team and to all the early educators who have presented United Way KinderClub and helped inform its continual improvement.