

Daily Learning Planner

*Ideas families can use to help children
prepare for school*

Mesa Unified School District #4



THE
PARENT
INSTITUTE®

December • January • February 2022-2023

December 2022

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Children Prepare for School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- 1. Cut four shapes from various colors of paper. Make at least two of each shape. Have your child match them.
- 2. Many people celebrate holidays in December. What holidays can your child name? Talk about why they are special.
- 3. Hide a toy in a box. Let your child shake the box and guess what's in it.
- 4. Read a story to your child and use a different voice for each character.
- 5. Put out two groups of small toys. Ask your child to tell you which group has more toys in it. Then count the toys together.
- 6. Make sure your child knows your family's street address. Look at the house or building number together.
- 7. Make a simple bird feeder. Help your child spread peanut butter on a cardboard tube and roll it in birdseed. Hang it outside.
- 8. Write a number on a piece of paper. Have your child use play dough or clay to mold the shape of the number.
- 9. Talk about healthy food choices. Let your child pick a new fruit to try.
- 10. Let your child paint on paper with sponges. Use the finished design to wrap a gift for a loved one.
- 11. Help your child practice greeting people politely and saying hello.
- 12. Hide an object and give your child three easy clues to find it. Reward success with praise for following directions.
- 13. Let your child help prepare dinner, by tearing lettuce, for example.
- 14. Create an obstacle course. Your child can go *around* a chair, *under* a table or *through* a large box opened on both ends.
- 15. Help your child make a necklace by stringing different shapes of pasta in a pattern.
- 16. Give your child some extra bathtub time today. Together, play with some plastic containers, measuring spoons and funnels.
- 17. With your child, pretend to be snowflakes in the sky.
- 18. Have a "red" day. Wear red. Eat red foods. Look for red everywhere.
- 19. Show your love for your child with a hug.
- 20. Help your child use construction paper strips to make a chain. Remove one link every night to count down to a special day.
- 21. Spend some "floor time" with your child. Make a block tower.
- 22. Ask your child to name some animals with stripes and some with spots.
- 23. Ask what colors come to mind when your child thinks about December. Why those colors? Can your child think of some others?
- 24. Spend a half hour reading together today. Let your child pick the book you will read.
- 25. Go for a winter walk. Listen carefully with your child for winter sounds. How are they different from summer sounds?
- 26. Stretch a rope on the ground. Show your child how to jump over it from side to side.
- 27. With your child, wear different hats all day. Pretend to be someone new each time you change hats.
- 28. Have a counting day. Count stairs as you climb them, cars as they pass, stars as you spot them.
- 29. Together, bake a batch of cookies to share with neighbors and friends.
- 30. Let your child make a collage out of gift wrap or holiday cards.
- 31. Talk with your child about the best things that you each remember about the past year.

January 2023

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Children Prepare for School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- 1. This is the first day of the year. Explain to your child the meaning of *first*. Give examples: Breakfast is the *first* meal of the day.
- 2. Help your child set a goal and create a plan to achieve it this year.
- 3. Ask your child to think about things people do in the snow. Examples: build a snowman, wear boots and mittens, go sledding.
- 4. Describe a noise and ask your child to tell you if it's *loud* or *soft*.
- 5. Make music with your child using pots, pans and kitchen utensils.
- 6. Wash hands with your child before each meal. Talk about the importance of frequent hand washing.
- 7. Talk with your child about time. Explain there is a time to get up, a time for lunch, a time for bed.
- 8. Write a letter of the alphabet. Think of things that begin with that letter and have your child draw some of them.
- 9. What is your child's favorite winter activity? Plan to do it together.
- 10. Play the "opposites" game. Say a word and see if your child can tell you its opposite.
- 11. Model a healthy habit for your child today.
- 12. Help your child create an All About Me book. Include drawings, pictures and keepsakes.
- 13. Put a small pile of coins on the table. Name each type, and have your child sort them.
- 14. Let your child draw on paper towels with washable markers. Spray the towels with water. Watch the colors blend!
- 15. Teach your child the rules for crossing the street safely.
- 16. Play a game of charades with your child. Use hand gestures and motions to describe a word for your child to guess.

- 17. Help your child make a noisemaker. Put dried beans in an aluminum pan and staple another pan on top. Shake it in different rhythms.
- 18. Let your child see you keep your temper when you are upset. Instead of yelling, calmly talk about how you feel.
- 19. Give your child an ice cube to hold. Explain that ice is a form of water.
- 20. Teach your child to make paper snowflakes. Use some to decorate your windows.
- 21. Look at the stars tonight. Can your child find the Big Dipper?
- 22. Set aside some time to spend one-on-one with your child today.
- 23. Bounce a ball to help your child practice counting. Bounce once and say "one." Bounce twice and say "one, two."
- 24. Cut out shapes from paper (triangle, rectangle, square, circle). Have your child arrange them to form a boat or a house.
- 25. Gather some water-safe objects. Ask which your child thinks will float or sink in water. Supervise while your child tests to see.
- 26. Cut your preschooler's favorite sandwich into a puzzle. Have your child put the pieces together before eating it.
- 27. Use sock puppets to have a conversation with your child.
- 28. Ask your child to draw a picture, then make up a story about it and tell it to you.
- 29. Tell your child a riddle. "I bark and wag my tail. What am I?" (A dog.)
- 30. Talk with your child about how animals survive the cold winter months. What do bears do? How about birds?
- 31. Trace your child's shoe onto a sheet of paper. Then have your child use crayons or markers to turn it into a picture.

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February 2023

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Children Prepare for School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- 1. Ask your child, "What is your first name? What is your last name?" Talk about people it is safe to give this information to.
- 2. Start a "chain of hearts." Cut out small hearts. Each day, write a reason you love your child on one and attach it to the chain.
- 3. Stand facing your child. Have your preschooler pretend to be a mirror and imitate all your movements. Trade places.
- 4. Have an indoor picnic. Spread a blanket on the floor and play music. Let your child help choose the menu.
- 5. Encourage your child to use adjectives. Say, "Fire is" Supply the word *hot* if needed.
- 6. Help your child do something nice for someone else today.
- 7. Pretend together that you and your child are taking a trip. Where will you go? How will you get there? What will you bring?
- 8. Discuss the differences between *night* and *day*. Have your child draw a picture of the night and a picture of the day.
- 9. Cook along with a book! For example, read *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, then make a bowl of porridge.
- 10. Tap out a simple rhythm with a spoon on the table. See if your child can copy it.
- 11. Have your child pick a letter. Cut out lots of different uppercase and lowercase versions of the letter and have your child make a collage.
- 12. Set up a well-lit corner with pillows and favorite books. Encourage your child to get cozy with books.
- 13. After bedtime, leave a valentine where your child will see it first thing tomorrow morning.
- 14. Play a game of hide and seek with your child.

- 15. Set out different sizes of pots and pans. Ask your child to put the lids on the matching pots and pans.
- 16. Explain that even when things don't turn out right, people can learn and do better next time.
- 17. Ask for your child's opinion about a choice you are making. Should you wear short sleeves or long?
- 18. Read a story together. Later ask your child to retell it from memory.
- 19. Play musical water glasses. Fill glasses with different levels of water and let your child tap on them with a metal spoon.
- 20. Ask your child to help with a household chore. Say "Thank you for helping the family."
- 21. Spring begins next month. Talk with your child about changes you might see.
- 22. "I'd love to!" Use these words when your child asks you to play, read or do a puzzle together.
- 23. Explain to your child that reusing and recycling things helps our Earth.
- 24. Talk with your child about how it feels to apologize when you've done something wrong.
- 25. How many foods can your child think of that are orange? Green?
- 26. Set aside time today to work on a hobby with your child.
- 27. Watch a children's movie as a family. Talk about the characters and the choices they make. Would your child make the same ones?
- 28. Have a pattern day. Ask your child to notice patterns all around, such as a striped shirt or a flowered sheet.

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