



# **Mom Needs To Work!**

*Activities To Stimulate Your Child, Free Up Your Time  
AND Allow You To Work Your Business!*

## Kids' Independent Activities for Work-At-Home Moms!

By  
Liz Sanpietro

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## About the Author

Liz Sanpietro spent 17 years in the classroom as an elementary school teacher. During that time, she tried to instill a sense of self-sufficiency in her students by weaving independent activities into her district's curriculum and fostering an environment which encouraged exploration. She was lauded by her district for this and often called upon to mentor other teachers, as well.

Over the course of almost two decades, she's had the opportunity to study children's behavior patterns - how they communicate, what types of stimulus they respond to and the most effective ways of working with them to accomplish mutual goals. She's been able to make these observations in both the classroom setting, as well as more free-form environments, as an administrator of her district's after-school program.

Liz holds a Master's Degree in English, as well as three teaching certifications: pre-school, elementary and English K-12.

In 2004, Liz left her teaching position to work with her husband, John, to help grow Relieve and Achieve Coaching/Stamping Is My Business - their home-based business.

After living in New Jersey for over 30 years, Liz now calls the Adirondack Mountains home, and in 2007, became an official work-at-home mom with the birth of her son, John.

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## Introduction

When I was teaching elementary school, I would often hear complaints from both parents and students as a holiday or summer vacation was approaching. The kids complained that they would be bored, and the parents complained that they didn't know what to do with the kids. Parents who worked at home would be especially concerned, as they knew having the kids home would wreak havoc with their work schedule.

Needless to say, in September, parents and children alike would be excited and relieved when school started again.

This book is written for those parents... and those children!

During my teaching years, I implemented many activities that the kids actually enjoyed. I would share these ideas with parents to try with their children over the break. They would report back that the children experienced a sense of accomplishment after completing something on their own. And the parents expressed their surprise at just how much they were able to accomplish while their children were independently occupied.

I have compiled many of these ideas here for you to use in your home with your school-aged children. These activities work best for children in grades 2-5 and cover various subject areas and interests.

### How To Use This Book

This book is a guide for you and your family. Many of these activities can be used more than once. If your child enjoys a particular activity, offer it as a choice on another day.

The amount of free time you gain from each activity ranges from 10-45 minutes. You can't expect your child to sit and focus on one activity for much longer than that. So, you may want to give a 10 minute warm-up activity (such as everyday writing) and then follow with a longer activity. You may wish to

have a morning and an afternoon session. You can use these activities whenever you need them, but I believe you'll get the most use out of this book if you plan the activities at least a day in advance. Look over all of the activities and decide how you want to structure your child's time. Will you start each day with a Quick Write? Will you schedule DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) Time in your child's day? Etc. You may also want to set up a special space in the house and put supplies in plastic bins for easy access.

**IMPORTANT!** - The recommended age range for these activities is Grades 2 thru 7. However, we advise you to use your own judgment. As a parent, only you can determine whether or not the activity and use of related materials is appropriate for your particular child. If you don't feel completely confident that your child can safely complete the activity independently, you should not allow them to do it!

The book is broken down as follows:

Chapter One is "**Newspaper Activities.**" You will need newspapers to complete these activities. It doesn't need to be that day's paper. Any newspaper will do. If you wish to monitor the articles your child reads, you may want to choose them yourself or take out the ones you don't want him to read. One of the bonuses of these activities is that your child might become interested in reading the articles and forget about the activity for a little while. That's fine. Just let him go with it. It will broaden his understanding of current events and give you more free time.

Chapter Two is "**Math Activities.**" In this chapter, you will find seven activities which require your child to perform basic math operations as well as estimate, measure, and analyze data. She will become so wrapped up in these activities that she will forget she's doing math!

Chapter Three is "**Science Activities.**" This chapter contains five fun activities. Although, they may seem a bit messy, there are ways to contain the mess or avoid it completely. I did these activities with 30 children and never had a

disaster. Give your child limits. Tell him to work slowly and carefully, and take the precautions to minimize the mess. These activities review some very basic concepts, but allow your child to discover the concepts by manipulating the objects herself.

Chapter Four is "**Language Arts.**" In this chapter, you will find many activities to encourage your child to read and write independently. Although you probably know your child should read during the summer months, you shouldn't assume that your child must read difficult books. Reading a book one level below your child's reading level is actually encouraged for independent reading. This will ensure that she will not become frustrated and look to you for help reading. It gives your child a sense of accomplishment to finish something with ease. Kids in grades 2-5 should be able to spend between 10 and 30 minutes reading independently. It has been proven that only 15 minutes of independent reading every day will improve reading by one grade level each year!

The book activities in this section will provide your child with fun alternatives to book reports. However, to ensure that they're still accountable to you, I've set it up so some of these activities require your child to report to someone. This gives you an opportunity to check on your child to see how she is doing.

In addition to the book activities, there are several writing activities. Earlier, I stated that your child should read during the summer, but writing is equally important! Many kids feel "stuck" if asked to write something. These writing assignments will help your child overcome that "stuck" feeling and give her a creative outlet.

Chapter Five includes "**Miscellaneous Activities.**" These activities don't necessarily fit into a specific subject heading. Some may be considered "arts and crafts", but others are word and guessing activities. They are meant to tap your child's reasoning and observational skills.

## **How to Get in Touch With Me**

If you have any questions about the directions for these activities, please feel free to contact me for clarification. For some of them, it may be difficult to visualize the final product, and a little further explanation may clear everything up for you.

Also, please let me know which activities your child found to be enjoyable. My e-mail address is [liz@momneedstowork.com](mailto:liz@momneedstowork.com).

## **Legal Information**

"Mom Needs To Work" (and its parent company, Relieve and Achieve Coaching) welcomes the opportunity to keep your child busy while you tend to your business. In return, I ask that you give due appreciation to the fact that this service to you, although hopefully valuable, is easily misappropriated, purposefully or innocently.

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## **It's Time to Get Started**

I hope you and your child enjoy what these activities have to offer. This time should be rewarding for both you and your child. You gain time to work on your business, and your child has a rewarding learning experience.

Enjoy!

Liz

# SUPPLY LIST

The following is a compilation of all of the supplies used in the activities contained in this book. Please use your own judgment regarding your particular child's use of these supplies. If you are not completely confident in their ability to use a specific supply independently, DO NOT allow them to use it! Feel free to replace it with something you feel more comfortable with.

## ART SUPPLIES

- White drawing paper
- Child-safe Scissors
- Glue
- Cardboard or poster board
- Construction Paper
- Magnetic Tape
- Tissue Paper or Streamers
- Hole Punch

## OFFICE SUPPLIES

- Lined Paper
- Pencils/Pens
- Calculator
- File Folder
- Graph Paper
- Stapler
- Notebook

## FOOD/KITCHEN SUPPLIES

- Dry Kidney Beans
- Aluminum Foil
- Plastic Tub/Container
- Zip-Lock Baggies
- Clear Plastic Cups
- Raisins
- Water
- Clear Soda
- Foil Candy (Kisses, etc.)
- Fruit
- Paper Plates
- Jelly Beans
- Marshmallows
- Rice
- Sunflower Seeds

## READING MATERIAL

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Books

## MISCELLANEOUS

- Tissue Box
- Shoe Box
- Pennies
- Plastic Hanger
- Deck of Cards
- Pair of Dice
- Brown Paper Bag
- Wood Clothespins
- Sticky-Page Photo Album
- Coins
- Eye Dropper
- Marbles
- Plastic Eggs

# CHAPTER 1:

## NEWSPAPER ACTIVITIES



## Newspaper Activities - #1

### Newspaper Bingo

Synopsis: Using the newspaper, your child will search for items to complete the "Bingo Board". Your child will learn the parts of the newspaper and maybe read a few articles along the way. If you are concerned about the content of some articles, simply give your child the parts of the newspaper you feel are appropriate and tailor the items on the grid to meet the level of your child.

Materials Needed: newspaper, folded 8 ½" x 11" paper (into 8 or 9 boxes), child-safe scissors, glue

Prep Time Required By You: 5-10 minutes to fill in the sheet

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!): Depending on the age of your child, this can take 30 minutes or more because it involves searching, cutting, and gluing.

Instructions: Fill in the "Bingo Board" with items for your child to find. Your child will search for the items on the sheet, cut them out, and glue them to the sheet. Some suggestions for the boxes: today's date, picture of a baseball player, today's temperature, a comic strip animal, etc. You can use this over and over again! Simply think of new items and create new Bingo grids each time!

## Newspaper Activities - #2

### Plan a Party

Synopsis: Your child will plan a party with a budget. If he runs out of money and hasn't yet purchased something he really wants, he will need to go back and prioritize so he can afford that item.

Materials Needed: local supermarket's sale circular, table on page 15, pencil, calculator

Prep Time Required By You: less than 5 minutes to give your child the supplies

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
30 minutes

Instructions: Provide your child with a supermarket's sale circular and a printed copy of the table on page 15. Then, give your child a dollar amount and the number of people who will attend the party. Tell your child that the budget must cover food, beverages, snacks, paper plates and utensils, and anything else your child wants to purchase. You may wish to limit the number of guests to a small number just to make it easier for your child to figure everything out... 10 guests should be a good amount.



## Newspaper Activities - #3

### Me Book

Synopsis: Using the newspaper, your child will search for pictures and words that help identify her interests and aspects of her personality

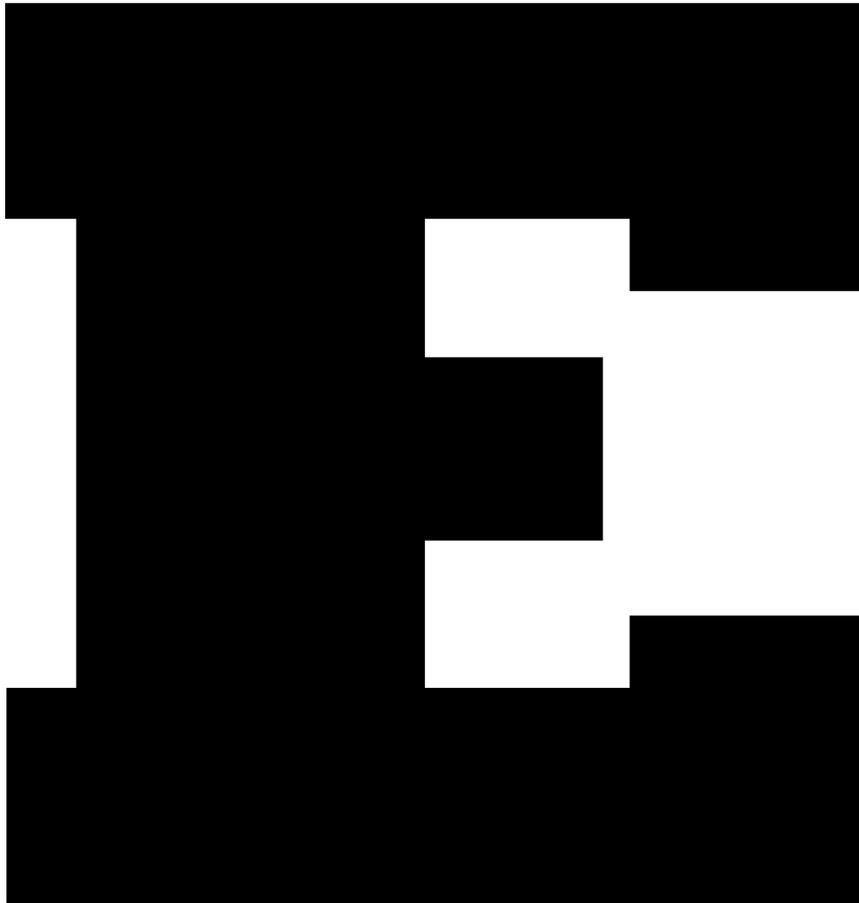
Materials Needed: newspaper, letters "M" and "E" on the following pages, child-safe scissors, glue, stapler

Prep Time Required By You: less than 5 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
20-30 minutes

Instructions: Print out the next two pages and give your child the letters "M" and "E." Each "ME" page should have a theme (sports interests, places she'd like to visit, favorite clothing styles, things that make her smile, words that describe her, her age...find the number 9 in as many forms as you can, written, number, on a uniform, etc.). When your child finds words or pictures that go with the theme, have her cut them out and glue them to that "ME" page, making a collage. Each page will be its own collage. When the pages are complete, staple them together and make a "ME" book. Or, if you're so inclined, turn the pages into a scrapbook!

**INM**



## Newspaper Activities - #4

### Current Events Album

Synopsis: This can be a recurring activity your child can do every day or once a week. You determine the frequency. The purpose of this activity is to stimulate your child's interest in current events and compel him to think about them.

Materials Needed: newspaper, photo album with sticky pages, child-safe scissors, lined paper, pen/pencil

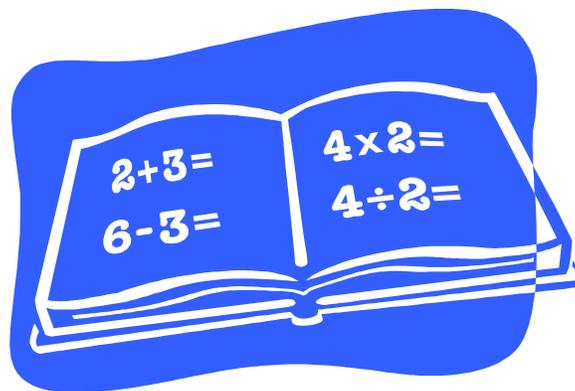
Prep Time Required By You: less than 5 minutes (A little longer if you choose the article)

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
20-30 minutes

Instructions: Give your child the sticky album and a newspaper. He will look through the newspaper and choose an article to read. Once he has read it, he will cut it out and place it in the photo album. Next, your child will write a response to this article. This response can be his opinion about the content of the article. Does your child agree or disagree with the article? If it's a sports piece, is your child excited/disappointed about the outcome of the game? For this activity, don't worry if your child always chooses the same type of article...sports, editorial, fashion etc. What's important is that he is reading an article, forming an opinion, and expressing it! If you see that your child chooses the same topic over and over again, you may wish to sometimes choose for him. Or, again, if you are concerned with the content of newspapers, you may wish to choose for that reason as well.

# CHAPTER 2:

## MATH ACTIVITIES



## Math Activities - #1

### Tangram Activities

Synopsis: First of all, a Tangram is a Chinese puzzle consisting of a square cut into five triangles, a square, and a rhomboid, to be reassembled into different figures. This Math activity inspires your child's creativity and reasoning. Using the Tangram template, your child will create various shapes.

Materials Needed: Tangram template, child-safe scissors, answer sheet

Prep Time Required By You: 1 minute to print out page 22

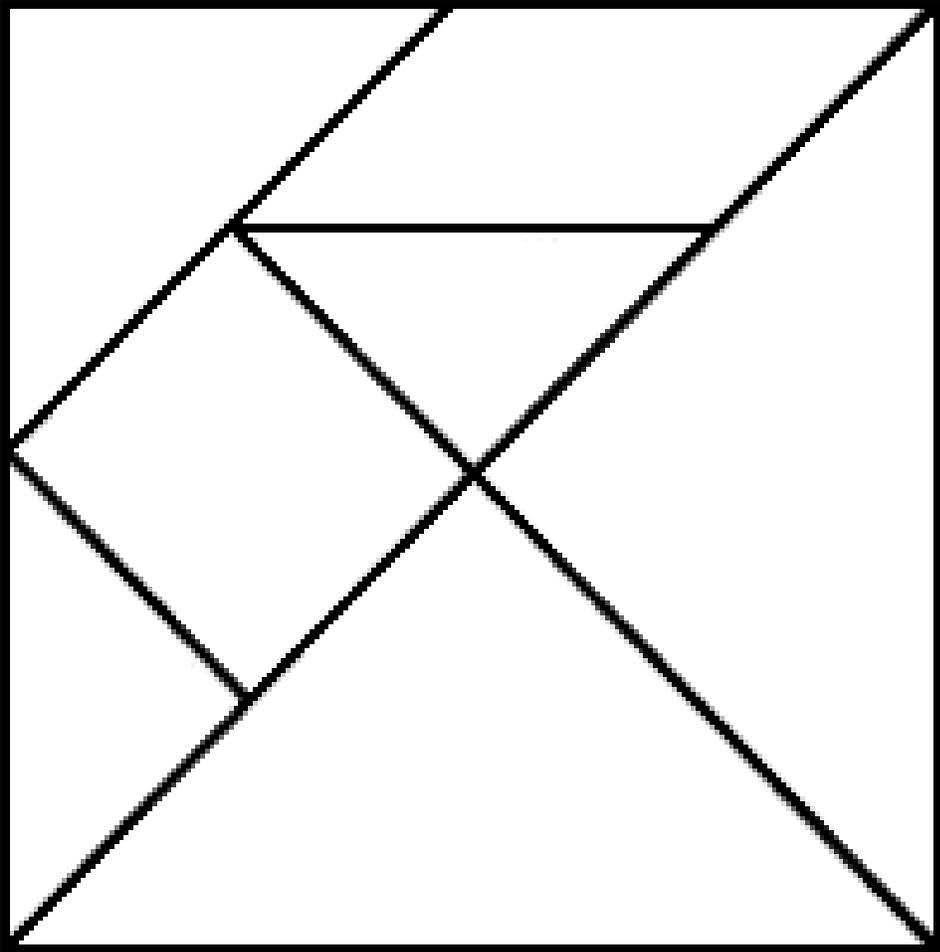
How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
It varies depending on how quickly your child solves the puzzles.

Instructions: Print out and give your child the Tangram template on page 22. She will cut the Tangram into its shapes and assemble them to form the following:

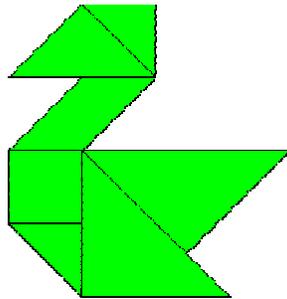
- as many squares as you can (you will not use all seven pieces each time)
- a swan
- a cat
- a rabbit

I have included the answers for you (on page 23). You can show them to your child when she completes the activities. Or, you can cut the answer sheet into three parts and write the animals' names on the backs of the papers. As your child completes each animal, she can self-check against the answers. For the squares, simply encourage your child to use as many combinations of the pieces as possible to create squares.

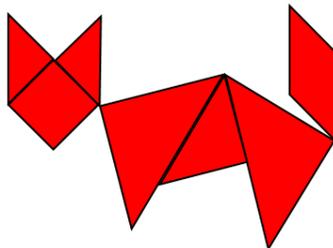
Tangram Template:



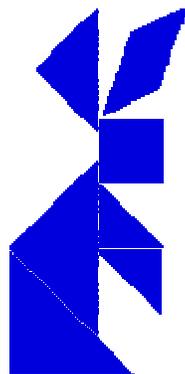
Swan



Cat



Rabbit



## Math Activities - #2

### Multiplication Bingo

Synopsis: Your child will review multiplication tables using a Bingo Board. This is another activity which can be used more than once if you vary the multiplication tables.

Materials Needed: Bingo Board, markers for board, multiplication problems written by you

Prep Time Required By You: 5 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
5-10 minutes per board

Instructions: Choose a range of multiplication tables (1-4, 3-7, 6-9, your choice). Ask your child to fill in each box with a product from that range of multiplication tables. For example, if your range is 3 thru 7, your child would choose numbers like 6, 16, 30, 18, 49, etc. Without looking at your child's choices, on a separate sheet of paper, write multiplication problems from the same range of multiplication tables. Continuing with the same example, you would write problems like  $3 \times 6$ ,  $4 \times 2$ ,  $5 \times 8$ ,  $6 \times 1$ ,  $7 \times 5$ , etc. When finished, give your child the paper. As your child goes through the problems, he should cover his answers with some sort of marker (coins, bingo chips, etc.). If there is a "Bingo", your child receives a previously discussed reward (for example, an extra 10 minutes of television or a later bedtime on a specific evening). If there is no "Bingo", you may want to write another set of problems so that your child can use the same sheet again.

# Multiplication Bingo


## Math Activities - #3

### Card Game 3.1: Close to Zero

Synopsis: Your child will practice subtraction and decision-making while trying to end the game with a number as close to zero as possible without going below zero.

Materials Needed: standard deck of cards with 10's, Jacks, Queens and Kings removed, a calculator, a piece of paper, a pencil

Prep Time Required By You: less than 5 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
That will be determined by the cards your child draws, but at least 15-20 minutes. This game can be played more than once; so, you can get some extra time by telling your child to try three times.

Instructions: Write 250 at the top of your paper. Draw 2 cards from the deck. Arrange those cards in any order (an Ace counts as 1). Subtract that number from 250. Draw another 2 cards and do the same thing until you reach 0 or as close as you can without going below. Get a number closer to zero each time you try the game. (Here's an example: Start with 250. If you draw a 2 and a 5 from the deck, you can subtract either 25 or 52 from 250. Let's say I chose 25. Your number is now 225. Next, you draw an 8 and an Ace. You have the choice to subtract either 81 or 18 from 225. Work your way down as low as you can without going below 0). For younger children who may not be ready for 3-digit subtraction, start with 100. Everything after the first problem will be 2-digit.

## Card Game 3.2: Baseball Card Math

Synopsis: Using baseball cards, your child will practice Math skills such as ordering numbers, solving for averages and adding numbers. If you choose to use a map, your child will also practice some Social Studies with this activity.

Materials Needed: a set of baseball cards (you can use a different sport if your child prefers a different sport or collects cards for that sport), a calculator, a piece of paper, pencil and (if you want) map of the U.S.

Prep Time Required By You: less than 5 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
20 minutes

Instructions: Give your child a set of baseball cards. Depending on your child's age, you may want to give her fewer cards. Give your child the following activities:

1. List the players in age order, starting with the oldest/youngest.
2. Find the average batting average.
3. Find the average age.
4. If kids are too young to understand averages, they can find the sum of all of the players' ages.
5. List players in order starting with the lowest ERA or batting average.
6. You can throw in some Social Studies by using a map of the U.S. and some stickers. Ask your child to place a star on the states in which the teams reside or the players' home states.

## Math Activities - #4

### Area

Synopsis: Your child will practice graphing area (a count of how many squares fit inside figure) on grid paper by creating polygons with an area of the number rolled on the dice. In case you need a review... a polygon is a closed figure with straight lines. Therefore, a circle is not a polygon. Polygons are triangles, squares, rectangles, pentagons, hexagons, octagons, etc. Squares and rectangles are the easiest to draw for this activity. Once you get into the triangles or "gons", your child will need to deal with half squares on the grid. If your child is older, say 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade, he may have covered this in school and may be able to handle figures other than the four sided ones.

Materials Needed: grid paper (graph paper), the worksheet on page 29, a pair of dice, a pencil, crayons

Prep Time Required By You: 5 minutes to print out page 29 and give your child the materials

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
20-30 minutes

Instructions: Your child will roll the dice and record the two numbers on the sheet. If he rolls a 5 and a 3, he will write that in the column labeled "Numbers Rolled". Next, he will add them together and record the number "8" in the columns labeled "Sum of Numbers" and "Area". Finally, your child will choose a crayon and, on the grid sheet, shade in a polygon with an area of 8 units. The challenge will be to try and figure out what shape each area result can accommodate. For example, you cannot draw a square with an area of 8. You have to draw a rectangle. Record the color of the polygon in the column labeled "Color". Try to fit as many polygons as possible on the paper.



## Math Activities - #5

### Estimation Station

Synopsis: Your child will practice estimating, reasoning, and evaluating. You can use this activity over and over by simply replacing the object to be estimated. Some people use candy kisses, jelly beans, gumballs, etc., but with food allergies and families' different eating habits, I chose to use non-food objects, like marbles. Feel free to replace the marbles with whatever you like. You can vary it also by using the same object and 2 different sized jars.

Materials Needed: 2 different sized jars, enough marbles (or whatever you'd like to use) to fill the larger jar (no more than 100...it just gets tedious), and the worksheet on page 31.

Prep Time Required By You: 10 minutes to count the items before your child completes the activity

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
20 minutes

Instructions: Place the two jars side by side. Hand your child a bag with the marbles in it. Your child will look at the bag and determine how many marbles will fit in the larger jar. Then, she will count them out to see how many actually fit in the larger jar. Next, using the information learned from the larger jar, your child will estimate how many of the same object will fit in the smaller jar. Simply follow the questions on the sheet.

## ESTIMATION STATION

Materials: 2 Jars of different sizes  
Bag of marbles

Take a look at the bag of marbles and the larger jar. How many marbles do you *think* will fit in the larger jar? \_\_\_\_\_

Fill the larger jar by counting the marbles. How many *actually* fit in the larger jar? \_\_\_\_\_

Take a look at the smaller jar. Based on the number of marbles that fit in the larger jar, how many marbles do you *think* will fit in the smaller jar?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Fill the smaller jar by counting the marbles. How many *actually* fit in the smaller jar? \_\_\_\_\_

Was your estimation closer to the actual number when you guessed the number that would fit in the smaller jar? \_\_\_\_\_

## Math Activities - #6

### Counting Seeds

Synopsis: Your child will practice estimation and multiplication using the seeds inside of a piece of fruit. This is an activity that your child can complete over a series of days. You can choose one day of each week as the day to do this activity. Or, you can choose a few pieces of fruit and make this a one-time activity. If you choose the second, you may end up wasting fruit if your child doesn't consume the pieces that you cut (plus, it may be very messy to have all of that fruit cut). If you save the record sheet and do this one day each week, when the activity is over, your child has a snack at the end of each activity.

Materials Needed: several fruits, paper plate, knife (for you), toothpick (or, if you don't feel comfortable with your child using a toothpick, a spoon), record sheet on page 33 and 34, pen/pencil

Prep Time Required By You: less than 5 minutes to cut the fruit if you choose to do this one day each week. 15 minutes if you choose to complete this activity all at once

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
5-10 minutes per day with option 1. 20-30 with option 2.

Instructions: After you cut your child's fruit into two or four sections, your child will use a toothpick to count the number of seeds in ONE section of fruit. Using that information, she will determine approximately how many seeds are in the entire fruit. Finally, she will count the actual number of seeds and compare it to her findings. Have her write her findings on a printed copy of the chart of page 33 and 34.

## COUNTING SEEDS

If you have  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the fruit, multiply your number of seeds by 2.

If you have  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the fruit, multiply your number of seeds by 4.

Fruit	Estimated Number of Seeds in Whole Fruit	Size of Piece: $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$	Number of Seeds	Times 2 or 4?	Total Seeds for Whole Fruit (After counting them)

Before cutting the fruit, record the number of seeds you think will be inside. After your parent cuts the fruit in half or into quarters, use a toothpick to remove the seeds and count them. Record that number in the "Number of Seeds" column. Do the appropriate multiplication and record that number in the "Times 2 or 4" column (write the multiplication sentence. Ex:  $3 \times 4 = 12$ ). Finally, count the entire piece of fruit and record the number of seeds in the "Total Seeds for Whole Fruit" column. Once you have recorded all of the information, enjoy your treat!

Which fruit contained the most seeds?

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Which fruit contained the fewest seeds?

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Did the sizes of the fruits determine the number of seeds contained in each fruit?

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Were you surprised by the number of seeds any of the fruits contained? Which one? Why were you surprised?

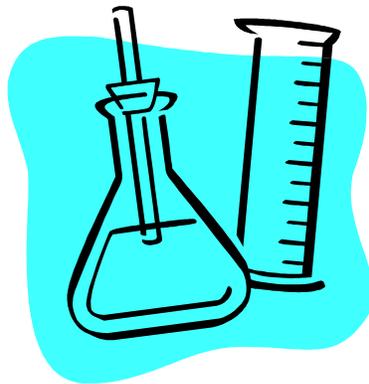
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# CHAPTER 3:

## SCIENCE ACTIVITIES



## Science Activities - #1

### Aluminum Boat

Synopsis: Your child will design an aluminum boat and determine how many pennies it will hold before sinking. Again, this is an activity that can be used more than once. Your child can use a different sized piece of aluminum foil, a different coin, or a completely different object.

Materials Needed: a container of water, newspaper to put underneath container, a piece of aluminum foil, some pennies, worksheet on page 37.

Prep Time Required By You: 5 minutes to fill container, lay down newspaper, cut piece of aluminum foil, give child pennies

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
20-30 minutes

Instructions: Have your child take a piece of aluminum foil and fold it into the shape of a boat. Ask him to decide if the bottom of your boat will be flat or v-shaped. Will float if he places pennies in it. How many pennies can he place in your boat before sinking it? Have him complete the worksheet on page 37.

## ALUMINUM BOAT

My boat will have a \_\_\_flat bottom \_\_\_v-shaped bottom.

I predict my boat will hold\_\_\_\_\_ pennies before it sinks.

My boat actually held \_\_\_\_\_ pennies before sinking.

I think I can design a boat that will hold more pennies if I...

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With my new design, I predict my boat will hold \_\_\_\_\_ pennies before it sinks.

My new boat held \_\_\_\_\_ pennies before sinking.

Describe what happened in your experiment. Which boat held more? Why do you think this happened? Was it the shape of the boat? The size? The shape of the bottom of the boat?

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## Science Activities - #2

### Dancing Raisins

Synopsis: Your child will record observations and draw conclusions.

Materials Needed: 2 clear plastic cups at least 8 oz. in size, water, clear carbonated beverage such as seltzer, 7UP, Sprite, or Sierra Mist, raisins, worksheet

Prep Time Required By You: It depends on the age of your child. If you trust her to pour liquid into cups, you will simply need to give her the materials. If you need to pour the water, less than 5 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
10-20 minutes

Instructions: This requires the raisins to be placed in the cup of water approximately 30-60 minutes prior to completing the activity. Before placing the raisins in the second cup containing the carbonated liquid, your child should record her observations of the first cup containing the water and raisins using a printed copy of the Observation Sheet on pages 39 and 40. Then, she will record what she sees in the second cup and complete the section where she writes her conclusions. The procedure is detailed on the activity sheet. Your child should conclude that the bubbles in the soda cause the raisins to "dance". The raisins should sink to the bottom, "ride" a bubble to the top, and then sink when the bubble pops at the top of the cup. All of the raisins should be doing this at different times, giving the illusion of dancing.

## DANCING RAISINS

Materials: 10-20 raisins  
2 clear plastic cups at least 8 oz in size  
water  
clear, carbonated soda

Fill one of your cups with water, leaving some room at the top.

Place several (approx. 5-10) raisins in this cup.

What happened to the raisins in the water? (Did they sink, float, change color, etc?)

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Put that cup aside and wait approximately 30-60 minutes.

Examine your raisins again.

Look at your cup of water with the raisins in it. Has anything changed since you put them aside? (Did they sink, float, change color or size?)

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Fill your second cup with the clear soda.

Place several raisins (approx. 5-10) in the soda.

What happened to the raisins in the soda? (Did they sink, float, change color or size?)

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What conclusions can you draw from what happened in these two cups? Compare the two.

If the same thing happened in the two cups, what do you think caused it? If something different happened, what do you think caused this to happen?

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## Science Activities - #3

### Plant Beans

Synopsis: Your child will watch the bean open and grow into a plant. He will record observations

Materials Needed: 3-4 dry kidney beans, small zip-lock baggie, paper towels, worksheet

Prep Time Required By You: 5-10 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
This will probably give you 15 minutes on each day that your child checks his bean's progress,

Instructions: The directions on the activity sheet (page 42) will instruct your child to create an environment in which the plant will thrive. Depending upon your child's age, you may want to encourage her to set up a second baggie and put it in a dark place or eliminate the water. This way, there can be a comparison between two separate environments, and your child can draw comparisons and conclusions about what plants need in order to grow. Your child will record her observations using printed copies of the Observation Sheets on pages 43-46.

## PLANT A BEAN

Materials: kidney beans  
zip lock baggie  
water  
paper towels

This activity happens over a period of several days. You will complete the preparation work on Day 1 and then check your project and record what you see.

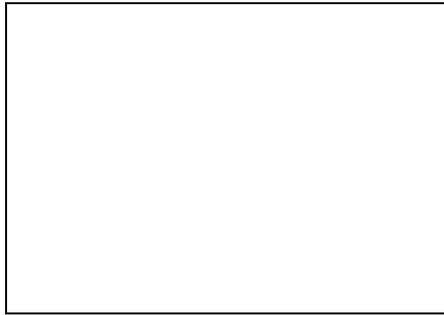
Take 3-4 of the beans and place them in a zip lock baggie.

Wet a paper towel and place it in the bag with the beans.

Place your baggie someplace where it will receive plenty of light. Taping it to the window is best, but check with your parents before doing this. If taping your baggie to a window is not possible, simply place in on a window sill where it will not be disturbed.

If you like, you can make a second baggie and place it in a dark place such as a closet. Or you can eliminate the water and place it next to your first baggie. If you are going to work with more than one baggie, it would be a good idea to label them with a permanent marker so that you can keep track of them more easily.

Day 1



I see

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Day \_\_\_\_

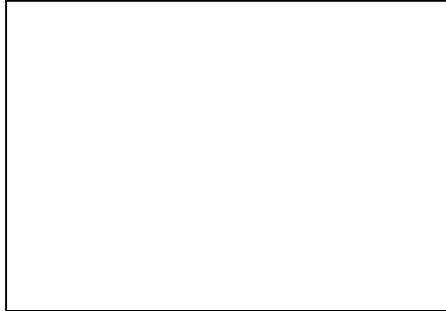


I see

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Day \_\_\_\_\_



I see

---

---

Day \_\_\_\_\_



I see

---

---

Day \_\_\_\_\_



I see

---

---

Day \_\_\_\_\_



I see

---

---

Describe what happened to your beans.

---

---

What do you think you need in order to create a healthy plant environment?

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If you like, you can take your healthy plants and plant them in some dirt in a flower pot. Make sure to give them everything you learned a plant needs to survive.

## Science Activities - #4

### Rolling Ice Cubes

Synopsis: Your child will record observations and draw conclusions.

Materials Needed: clear glass or plastic cup, ice cube, warm tap water, worksheet on page 48

Prep Time Required By You: less than 5 minutes to put hot water in a cup if you think your child can't do that on her own.

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
20-30 minutes

Instructions: Fill a glass with warm water from the tap. Place an ice cube in the warm water. Your child will follow the directions and answer the questions on a printed copy of the Observation Sheet on page 48. When she writes her observations, simply writing that the ice cube rolls over and over isn't enough. You want your child to think critically and come up with a reason. Even if the reason is incorrect, it's okay as long as your child can back it up with the observations in the glass. Once the activity is over, you can tell your child what happened. The warm water underneath the ice cube melts the bottom and causes the ice cube to become unstable because it is top heavy. It rolls over so that the heavy part is underneath again. Then the bottom melts again, and the cube rolls again. You may want to challenge the older child to come up practical use for this knowledge. The practical use is in ship building. Engineers design ships with weight at the bottom of the ship so that it doesn't roll over.

## ROLLING ICE CUBES

Materials: glass or plastic cup  
ice cube  
hot tap water

Procedure: Fill cup with hot water from the tap (not scalding, just on the hot side of warm)

Place ice cube in cup and observe what happens.

Observations: (What do I see?)

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Hypothesis: (Why do I think this is happening)

---

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## Science Activities - #5

### Floating and Sinking

Synopsis: Your child will make and test predictions.

Materials Needed: printed copy of worksheet on page 50, a variety of objects to test, such as a cork, paper clip, wooden cube, button, pebble, poker or bingo chip, ping pong ball, golf ball, cap from a water or soda bottle, washers, or anything else you have around the house. You will also need a plastic tub filled with water (place on a towel on the table) and two smaller containers labeled "float" and "sink".

Prep Time Required By You: 10 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
20 minutes

Instructions: Your child should make a list of all of the objects and predict whether each will float or sink. Then, he will take each one and test his predictions in the larger tub. If it floats, he will place the object in the container marked "float". If it sinks, he will place it in the container marked "sink". Also, he will record the outcomes on his sheet.

## FLOATING AND SINKING

Materials: objects to test for floating and sinking  
large container filled with water  
two smaller containers, one labeled "float" and one labeled "sink"  
towel

OBJECT	PREDICTION (FLOAT OR SINK)	OUTCOME

# CHAPTER 4:

## LANGUAGE ARTS ACTIVITIES



## Language Arts Activities - #1

### Poems 1.1-Acrostic Poems

Synopsis: Your child will compose an acrostic poem. An acrostic poem is a poem in which the first letter of each line, when read in order, spell a name. The most popular acrostics are written using a person's name. A very simple poem would be one word which begins with each letter. A little more difficult would be a phrase. Even more difficult would be a phrase that connects with the next line. For example, if I were to write a simple acrostic it might read:

L  
I  
Z

ikeable  
ntelligent  
any

If I were to write one with linking phrases, it might read:

L  
I  
Z

oves to be  
n the woods  
ipping down trails.

Materials Needed: paper, pen/pencil

Prep Time Required By You: 5-10 minutes to explain and show the examples.

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):

That depends on the length of your child's name. You could always ask your child to illustrate the poem to add more time.

Instructions: Tell your child to begin writing an acrostic poem using her name. If you have a younger child, you may want to start with a simple one using one word per line. You can use this activity over again using the name of a family pet, a place you have visited, the seasons, a favorite object, etc.

## Poems 1.2-Windsock Poems

Synopsis: Your child will compose a poem about the wind and mount it on a windsock. These are fun to make and they look great!

Materials Needed: construction paper, tissue paper or streamers, glue, hole punch, stapler, 18" of yarn or string (to make windsock), paper and pen/pencil (to write poem)

Prep Time Required By You: 5-10 minutes to give out supplies and written directions.

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
30 minutes

Instructions: Ask your child to write a poem about the wind. Once finished, have him glue the wind-inspired poem onto the construction paper. When the glue is dry, roll the construction paper into a cylinder. Tape and staple the construction paper to keep it in place (tape on the center of the seam and staple at the edge of the seam). Use the hole punch to punch two holes across from each other at about 2" down from the edge. Thread a piece of yarn or string through the holes and tie the ends together at the top. Simply tie a knot in the end. You want the string to be long so that you can tie it to something and blow in the wind. Use tape to secure tissue paper or streamers inside the cylinder (6-8 pieces should cover).

## Poems 1.3-Haiku

Synopsis: Your child will compose Haiku poetry. A Haiku is a three-lined poem consisting of a total of 17 syllables. The first line is five syllables, the second line is seven, and the last line is five syllables. These are nice poems to write in the summer because traditional Haiku poetry is inspired by nature. Examples of Haiku poetry can be found on page 55.

Materials Needed: paper, pen/pencil

Prep Time Required By You: 5 minutes to give supplies and samples

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!): 20 minutes (more if you require more than one poem and ask your child to illustrate it).

Instructions: This poem assumes that your child knows how to count syllables in words. Explain the syllable count and show your child the examples. Next, your child should choose a topic. Before your child begins writing, ask him to write a list of phrases and words related to the chosen topic. Encourage him to think using his senses. It will help him with his list. Notice in the examples that a Haiku can be one continuous sentence or two sentences. Writing three separate sentences is also acceptable, but with the syllable limit, your child may have difficulty writing three such short sentences.

## HAIKU POEMS

*Graceful butterfly  
fluttering above my head  
rests on my finger.*

If your child is having trouble, it may help him to use the following guidelines: the first line tells where the event takes place, the second tells what is happening and the third tells when it occurs. This format is not required, but may give your child some focus if his thoughts aren't coming together. Look at the following example:

*On a sandy beach  
waves crash on the shore  
both morning and night.*

## Poems 1.4 -Cinquain

Synopsis: This is another type of poem where your child will need to count syllables. This time the poem contains five lines and the syllable count is 2, 4, 6, 8, 2 (examples on page 57).

Materials Needed: paper, pen/pencil

Prep Time Required By You: 5 minutes to give supplies and samples

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!): 20 minutes (more if you require more than one poem and ask your child to illustrate it).

Instructions: This poem assumes that your child knows how to count syllables in words. Explain the syllable count and show your child the examples. Next, your child should choose a topic. Before your child begins writing, ask him to write a list of phrases and words related to the chosen topic. Encourage him to think using his senses. It will help her with his list. In addition to counting syllables, for Cinquain poetry, your child will also need to choose specific words to compose each line. The poem should be written using one of the following guidelines:

Line 1 - two syllables (title)  
Line 2 - four syllables (describe the title)  
Line 3 - six syllables (describe the action)  
Line 4 - eight syllables (describe a feeling)  
Line 5 - two syllables (refers back to the title)

OR

Line 1 - one word (title)  
Line 2 - two words (describe the title)  
Line 3 - three words (describe the action)  
Line 4 - four words (describe a feeling)  
Line 5 - one word (refers back to the title)

## CINQUAIN POEMS

Hopefully these examples will show you that this is much simpler than it sounds. Remember to ask your child to brainstorm a list of words/phrases he would use to describe the topic of his poem. Here are a few examples:

*Kitten (title)*  
*Fluffy baby (describes title)*  
*Yawning and turning, (describes action)*  
*Warm, snuggly little bed (describes a feeling)*  
*Sleepy (refers back to title)*

*Dolphins*  
*Graceful creatures*  
*Leaping through air,*  
*Freedom from the water*  
*Amazing*

## Language Arts Activities - #2

### Flip Book

Synopsis: This project can be used for your child to do a book report, create a story of his/her own, re-tell a moment from summer vacation, etc. Since it has a variety of situations where it can be used, it can be used more than once.

Materials Needed: This works better with a larger piece of paper (11" x 17"), but you can use ordinary 8 ½" x 11" paper (you will simply have a smaller book), child-safe scissors, white paper, glue, pencil, crayons

Prep Time Required By You: Depending on the age of your child, you may need to help her with the folding and/or cutting of the paper. If your child can take the directions and go, you simply need to give her the supplies. You will need more time if you have to explain to her to do it for her.

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
20-30 minutes.

Instructions: Fold a piece of construction paper lengthwise so that it makes a skinny rectangle. Unfold the paper and hold it horizontally (so the fold runs left to right). Cut two slits in the paper from the bottom edge to the fold without cutting through the folded line. Refold the paper so that you have flip the flaps up. This will give you three boxes. On pieces of white paper, you child should write and/or draw on pieces of white or lined paper that will fit inside the boxes. These pieces of paper should tell the story. Once they are complete, glue them inside the flaps. Then, she should draw on pieces of paper that will be glued to the outside of the flaps.

To see an example of the Flip Book template, please visit  
[www.momneedstowork.com/flipbook.htm](http://www.momneedstowork.com/flipbook.htm)

## Language Arts Activities - #3

### Pick a Letter

Synopsis: Pick a letter for the day and ask your child to complete two, three, four, or five of the activities. This activity can actually be repeated 26 times since there are 26 letters in the alphabet. You decide based on your child's age and if you have any other activities to be completed that day. Each activity will be completed with the chosen letter in mind.

Materials Needed: Varies according to activity. Most activities require only paper and a pen/pencil. Other activities require magazines, glue, child-safe scissors, research materials (computer, etc.)

Prep Time Required By You: less than five minutes to maybe 10 if you have to set your child up on the computer

**NOTE - If you don't feel comfortable leaving your child on the computer unattended, you can substitute with other research material.**

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!): Varies depending upon which activities you choose and how many of them you choose.

Instructions: Choose a letter for the day and the activities to be completed. The choices are:

- Create a tongue twister using your letter.
- Create a collage based on your letter.
- Research a famous person whose name begins with your letter.
- Find ten new words that begin with your letter.
- Research an animal that begins with your letter.
- Find 10 cities that begin with your letter.
- Create a new superhero based on your letter.

## Language Arts Activities - #4

### Friendship Recipe

Synopsis: Your child will write a recipe using friendship as the topic.

Materials Needed: paper, pen/pencil, recipe book (to show examples)

Prep Time Required By You: 5 minutes (assumes your child is somewhat familiar with the format of a recipe)

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
20 minutes, more if you ask him to illustrate.

Instructions: Show your child an actual recipe from a recipe book so that he can see the format (ingredients, procedure). Next, ask your child to write a recipe for a good friend using attributes as the ingredients...honesty, kindness, caring, etc. Encourage the use of recipe words such as add, stir, mix, blend, knead, sprinkle, etc. Your child will write a recipe for a good friend using these words.

## Language Arts Activities - #5

### Quick Writing Activities

(This activity requires prior preparation.)

Synopsis: Writing every day is a good practice for your child to have. You can always use a "free write" day, and allow your child to choose his/her own topic. It may be excruciating at first when a topic doesn't immediately flow, but let your child know that there is still a time limit. Don't allow it to become a 45-minute ordeal. If you do, writing time will become something your child dreads. If you're stuck for ideas, use authentic topics of your own. For example, a new baby being born to a family member or a friend moving away. Some of the topics may even become a bridge for you and your child to have a conversation.

Materials Needed: Quick Write Topic Box (previously prepared), pen/pencil, writing notebook or piece of paper.

Prep Time Required By You: The time required ahead of time to prepare the box. After that, just hand your child a pen/pencil and tell her to go. You can even cut out this prep time if you allow your child to make the box!!

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
10-20 minutes per topic

Instructions: Use a tissue box to store the ideas on the next page on individual strips of paper or index cards. Have your child decorate the box with construction paper and design it as she pleases. When you want to use a 10-20 minute writing activity, ask your child to reach into the box and choose a topic. You may want your child to keep all of the writing in one notebook so that you can see the progress over the course of the summer.

## Quick Writing Activity Ideas

- Describe how you would handle a difficult 5-year old whom you are babysitting.
- What would happen during the perfect summer weekend?
- A movie studio is making a cartoon movie about you. What adventures will the cartoon include?
- Describe what you would do if you could stay up all night.
- What is the best vacation you have ever been on?
- Make up a story about an exciting camping trip.
- Is it better for children to play indoors or outdoors?
- Write a description of what would happen in your classroom if your teacher were absent for the day and no substitute was assigned to your class.
- What do you like to do on a rainy day?
- What is the hardest thing you've ever had to do? How did you feel at the start of the task? At the end?
- Describe a time when you were new to something or some place. What was it like? Did anyone help you?
- What is the nicest thing anyone has ever said about you? To you?
- Describe the qualities that make a good friend? Which is the most important quality?
- If you could be given invisibility for one day, would you accept it? What would you do while you are invisible?
- Can you remember your happiest day? Describe it. What did you do? Did you spend it with anyone special?
- If you had to choose between being happy or rich, which would you choose? Why?
- Describe the best gift you've ever received.
- If you could be transported to another time in history, when would it be? Why?
- If you won a lot of money in the lottery, would you keep it all for yourself or would you share it? Who would you share it with?
- If you were the principal of your school, what is the first thing you would change?

## Language Arts Activities - #6

### Design Your Own

Synopsis: Your child will design and describe the perfect playground and the perfect school.

Materials Needed: drawing paper, lined paper, pen/pencil, crayons or markers

Prep Time Required By You: Just enough time to hand out supplies

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
30-45 minutes

Instructions: First tell, your child to draw the perfect playground/school. It should have all of the elements he thinks will make it great. Also, it should include any elements he thinks his playground/school is lacking. Next, he will label the different areas. Finally, he will write a paragraph or two describing it.

## Language Arts Activities - #7

### Create a Product

Synopsis: Your child will create a brand new snack food that she thinks will be a big seller. She will create (by describing it, not physically creating it) the product, the wrapper, and a commercial to try to create mass appeal for the snack.

Materials Needed: drawing paper, construction paper, crayons/markers, writing paper (for commercial)

Prep Time Required By You: 5 minutes to explain and give out materials

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain:  
30-45 minutes

Instructions : Once your child has all of her materials, tell her to create the perfect healthy snack food for kids. It must be delicious and nutritious. Describe your snack, give it a name, and design the wrapper. Remember, it must appeal to kids because it tastes good and parents because it's healthy. The wrapper must catch the eye of a child and let the parents know it's healthy. Write a commercial to try to sell this new product

## Language Arts Activities - #8

### Rebus Stories

Synopsis: Your child will write Rebus stories. A quick definition of a Rebus story is a kind of word puzzle which uses pictures to represent words or parts of words.

Materials Needed: rubber stamps, paper, pen/pencil

Prep Time Required By You: 5-10 minutes to give your child his supplies and explain the assignment.

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain):  
20-30 minutes

Instructions : Give your child a set of stamps and ask her to write a story inserting the stamped picture in place of the word. For example, to write the word "hear," your child may write the letter "h" and then stamp a picture of an ear. This wouldn't be used for every word in the story, but sporadically throughout. Repeat this activity as often as you like by giving your child a different set of stamps.

## Language Activities - #9

### Book Projects

Your child should be reading during the summer months. Studies have shown that if a child reads at least 15 minutes per day, she will improve by approximately one grade level per year!

Here are some activities she can do after reading those books. They are more fun than book reports. Some of them require your child to share the project with you (an added bonus). You can decide if you want your child to read a book per week or every other week. You and your child determine the amount of time necessary to complete the book (15-20 minutes of reading per day can be part of the assignment). You can choose the Book Project your child will do after each book, or allow your child to decide which project best suits the book she has read.

## Language Activities - #9

### Book Project 9.1-Mobile

Synopsis: Your child will use objects to represent the book she has read.

Materials Needed: a plastic hanger (for safety's sake, do not use a wire hanger), some string/yarn, paper, crayons/markers, child-safe scissors, glue/tape, and a hole punch

Prep Time Required By You: 5 minutes to give her supplies.

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
30 minutes

Instructions: Your child can make objects that are important to the book (or find pictures in a magazine or use a combination). Punch a hole at the top of the picture and put a piece of yarn through it. Tie the other end to the hanger. Making the strings different lengths will give a nice effect. Later, she can tell you why those objects were chosen.

## Language Activities - #9

### Book Project 9.2-Postcard

Synopsis: Your child can write a postcard pretending to be one of the characters in the book.

Materials Needed: postcard template below, crayons/markers, pen/pencil

Prep Time Required By You: 5 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
20 minutes

Instructions: Give your child the postcard template. Tell him to decorate the front with a picture that represents an important place/event in the story. Then, address the postcard to someone he knows. Finally, your child will write a postcard as if he is a character in the story.

The back of your postcard should look like this:

<p>Write your message on this side.</p>	<p>Write the address on this side.</p>
---	--

## Language Activities - #9

### Book Project 9.3-Book Cube

Synopsis: Your child will illustrate scenes from the book.

Materials Needed: tissue box, construction paper, crayons, child-safe scissors, glue

Prep Time Required By You: 5 minutes to give her the materials

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!):  
20-30 minutes

Instructions: Using a tissue box, your child covers the four sides and the top with white or construction paper. On each side, illustrate an important scene from the book. On the top, write the name and author of the book. Your child can tell you why the scenes are important and what is happening in them.

## Language Activities - #9

### Book Project 9.4-Board Game

Synopsis: Your child will design a board game based on the book. This includes designing the game board, writing the questions and rules, creating rewards and consequences for answering questions, or landing on a certain square. This is a complicated activity and probably shouldn't be given to someone younger than 9 or 10. If you have a younger child and the activity interests you, make it a family activity instead of an independent one.

Materials Needed: file folder or piece of cardboard, crayons/markers, glue, child-safe scissors, pen/pencil, paper or index cards

Prep Time Required By You: It could take as long as 15-20 minutes to make sure your child understands the directions.

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain!): It could take your child from an hour to several hours or more to complete everything. You may want to break this activity into smaller segments and give your child 30 minutes each day. If your child has the attention span to work on something for 60 minutes, allow him to do it.

Instructions: Your child should think about the way board games are designed and model the game after them. Will there be a spinner or dice? Will there be cards with questions, or will there be questions on the game board itself? Will he make pawns to match characters or items in the book or simply use pawns from a game? What will the rewards (move ahead 2 spaces, take an extra turn, etc.) be? What will the consequences (lose a turn, go back 3 spaces, etc.) be?

It would be fun if one or more of his friends reads the same book and they get together to play it at some point.

I used this in the classroom, and it took days to complete it, but it was worth it. The kids were so creative and they enjoyed playing games they created and those created by their classmates.

## Language Activities - #9

### Book Project 9.5-Collage

Synopsis: Your child can make a collage based on a character, place, or chapter in the book.

Materials Needed: magazines, child-safe scissors, paper, glue

Prep Time Required By You: less than 5 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain?):  
20 minutes

Instructions: Your child will search for pictures, words, or images that relate to the topic (her book). She may choose a single character or a chapter in the book as her focus. She may even want to cut the paper into a specific shape (a person, a car, a house, etc.) before gluing the pictures to it. Remind your child that in a collage, the pictures overlap; so, it's okay to cover part of one picture with another one.

## Language Activities - #9

### Book Project 9.6-Story Walk Through

Synopsis: Your child will recreate a scene from the story and retell the story as the characters "walk through" your child's scene.

Materials Needed: drawing paper, poster board or cardboard, crayons/markers, popsicle stick or straw, child-safe scissors, pencil, glue

Prep Time Required By You: 5-10 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain?):  
20-30 minutes

Instructions: Draw two or three different scenes from the story. On a piece of cardboard, draw the main character so that he would fit into the scenes drawn on the other sheet of paper. Color the character and the scenes. Draw a line to show where the character will travel. Cut along this line (do not cut through the edges of the paper). Glue or tape the popsicle stick or straw to the character. Put the character through the slit in the paper and tell the story.

## Language Activities - #9

### Book Project 9.7-Book Jacket

Synopsis: Your child will make a new book jacket for the book she has read.

Materials Needed: construction paper, lined paper, pen/pencil, crayons/markers

Prep Time Required By You: less than 5 minutes to hand your child the supplies

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain?):  
20 minutes

Instructions: Fold a piece of construction paper in half the short way so that it looks like a book. On each end, measure a 3" margin and fold along those lines so that the piece of construction paper will stand on its own. On the outside of the construction paper, design a new cover for the book. On lined paper, write a summary or critique of the book. Glue the lined paper to the inside flap so that when the new jacket is opened, a reader can learn something about the book.

# CHAPTER 5:

## MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES



## Miscellaneous Activities-#1

### Diorama

Synopsis: Your child will create a 3D scene of whatever he is working on. It can be a chapter of a book, something that is interesting is science, history, or current events. If you take a family vacation, attend a family wedding or reunion, or have a family day out, your child can make a diorama of that event.

Materials Needed: shoebox, crayons, construction paper, child-safe scissors, glue, and materials your child thinks is necessary to complete the diorama

Prep Time Required By You: 5 minutes to hand out supplies

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain?):  
30-45 minutes

Instructions: Use a shoe box as the background for the project. Using construction paper and/or any other supplies, to make characters, scenery and objects, your child will create a scene which reflects the topic the two of you have chosen.

## Miscellaneous Activities-#2

### Collage

Synopsis: Your child will create a collage based on the topic you choose- rocks, electricity, sports, weather, the family vacation, etc.

Materials Needed: magazines, child-safe scissors, paper, glue

Prep Time Required By You: less than 5 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain?):  
20-30 minutes

Instructions: Your child will search for pictures, words, or images that relate to the topic you have chosen. He may even want to cut the paper into a specific shape related to that topic. Remind your child that in a collage, the pictures overlap; so, it's okay to cover part of one picture with another one.

## Miscellaneous Activities-#3

### Mystery Shopping Bag

Synopsis: Using what your child knows about a particular person, she will create clues for people to guess that person.

Materials Needed: brown grocery bag (if you can find one), markers, crayons, glue, magazines, and anything else (within reason) that your child needs.

Prep Time Required By You: 5 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain?):  
30-40 minutes before your child is ready for you to guess the mystery person

Instructions: Ask your child to think of a person. On the outside of the bag, she will draw clues that lead to the person (it could even be the name of a store where your child thinks this person shops). On the inside of the shopping bag, your child will place items this person may purchase on a shopping trip. You will guess the mystery person.

## Miscellaneous Activities-#4

### Refrigerator Memo Clip

Synopsis: Your child can make a clip for everyone in the house using family photos. Or, he can make clips using pictures from magazines which reflect the interests of family members. Magnets can be made using old postcards, or your child's own designs using construction paper. Suggestions may include: clips for shopping lists, school work, photos, or anything else your child may want to post on the refrigerator. Just warn your child that the decoration cannot be too heavy or it won't hold a memo on the refrigerator.

Materials Needed: wooden clothes pins, magnetic tape, old file folders or other cardboard, child-safe scissors, glue, photos, pictures from magazines, postcards or construction paper

Prep Time Required By You: 5 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain?):  
20-30 minutes (depending on how many he makes)

Instructions: Your child will choose the picture to decorate the clothespin and glue it to one side. On the opposite side, he will stick the magnetic tape. If you are not using self-stick magnets, he will need to glue it to the clothespin.

## Miscellaneous Activities-#5

### Surface Tension

Synopsis: Your child will predict how many drops of water a coin can hold.

Materials Needed: eye dropper, water, a coin, dish detergent, worksheet on page 80

Prep Time Required By You: less than 5 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain?): 20-30 minutes. You can gain more time if you require your child to test more than one coin.

Instructions: Using a printed copy of the worksheet on page 80, ask your child to estimate how many drops of water will fit on a penny, dime, nickel, etc. Then, your child will attempt to drop water onto the coin and see how the prediction compares to the actual activity. Next, put a few drops of dish detergent in the water. Again, your child will predict how many drops of water will fit on the same coin. Will it be more, less, or the same as the plain water. Once the prediction is made, your child will repeat the activity with the soapy water. Record the results and comment on what happened. Why were the results different or the same? What does your child think is happening? The answer is surface tension. The soap breaks the surface tension and does not allow for as many drops of water to collect on the coin.

## SURFACE TENSION

Materials: coin  
cup of water  
eye dropper  
dish detergent

How many drops of water do you think will fit on your coin?

\_\_\_\_\_

How many drops of water actually fit on your coin? \_\_\_\_\_

Now, dry your coin or use a new coin of the same denomination. Put a few drops of dish detergent into the cup of water. You will now repeat the activity.

How many drops of water do you think will fit on your coin?

\_\_\_\_\_

How many drops of water actually fit on your coin?

\_\_\_\_\_

Were the results the same or different? Did the dish detergent make a difference in the number of drops of water that fit on the coin? Why do you think your results were the same/different?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Miscellaneous Activities-#6

### Bookmark

Synopsis: Making a bookmark is a very simple activity that you can ask your child to do at the beginning of the summer.

Materials Needed: cardboard, poster board, or construction paper, child-safe scissors

Prep Time Required By You: less than 5 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain?):  
20 minutes

Instructions: Cut a rectangle that will fit inside your book. Ask your child to decorate it and use it all summer long. Or, use a popsicle stick and a piece of construction paper.

## Miscellaneous Activities-#7

### Name Something That Begins With...

Synopsis: This is an exercise you can ask your child to do as a written activity while you work (using the worksheet on page 83). Or you can do this orally when you need the distraction (for example, on a long car trip. You will simply change the categories that your child has to name,

Materials Needed: worksheet on page 83, pen/pencil

Prep Time Required By You: less than 5 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain?):  
20-30 minutes.

#### Instructions:

**-Name Something That Begins With...:** Using the worksheet on page 83, ask your child to name something that begins with the letter in the left-hand column according to the categories at the top of the chart. You can repeat this activity as often as you like by changing the word in the left-hand column and/or the categories I have used on the chart. Here are some other sample categories ...

- Something to eat or drink
- A boy's name
- A flower
- An object in space
- A noun (naming word)
- A verb (action word)
- An animal
- Something you find in the house

You may want to give your child a dictionary. It may be possible that your child doesn't know something that begins with the letter... depending on his age. Simply tell your child that if he can't think of a word and can't find one in the dictionary, it's okay to leave it blank. If you have time later on, maybe you can give him a hint or tell him something to fill in the blank.

## Name Something That Begins With...

	Piece of clothing	City, state, or country	Something you can buy in a store	A girl's name	An adjective (describing word)
<i>Example: P</i>	<i>pants</i>	<i>Peru</i>	<i>potatoes</i>	<i>Patricia</i>	<i>pretty</i>
<b>S</b>					
<b>U</b>					
<b>M</b>					
<b>M</b>					
<b>E</b>					
<b>R</b>					

You can download a blank version of this chart at  
[www.momneedstowork.com/page83.htm](http://www.momneedstowork.com/page83.htm).

## Miscellaneous Activities-#8

### What's Inside

Synopsis: This is an exercise in sorting and interpreting. Once your child completes this activity, you might want to give it to her again so that she can check her answers.

Materials Needed: record sheet on page 85, 10 plastic eggs (or an appropriate substitute) and some items to fill them, such as:

- pennies
- marbles
- sunflower seeds
- raisins
- jelly beans
- small marshmallows
- dice
- rice (uncooked)
- sugar
- small wrapped chocolate (like Hershey's Kisses)

Prep Time Required By You: 10-20 minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain?):  
20-40 (depends on how you choose to use this activity)

Instructions: Fill each egg with one of the items listed above (or a substitute). Glue the egg shut and secure the crack with tape. Number the egg (1-10) and record what you placed inside the egg (This is your record so that your child can check her work when she's through. So, hide it for now.). Give your child a printed copy of the record sheet on page 85. She will shake each egg and determine what is inside by writing the number of the egg next to the corresponding item. If you would like to make it more difficult for an older child, you can use 20 eggs and place the same item in two different eggs. This way, you can see if your child can find the two matching eggs. Or, you can do it blindly by having your child guess the objects by writing them next to the numbers (I have given you record sheets for either activity).

# WHAT'S INSIDE

Objects	Egg Number
pennies	
marbles	
sunflower seeds	
raisins	
jelly beans	
marshmallows	
dice	
rice	
sugar	
wrapped chocolate	

# WHAT'S INSIDE

Number of Eggs	Objects
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

This is your alternative sheet if you choose to do a blind test and have your child guess what is in each egg. Or, you can use this as a second activity and fill other eggs with 10 different items.

## Miscellaneous Activities-#9

### Free Play

Synopsis: Free Play is exactly what it sounds like...let your child's imagination dictate how the time is used. You still have some control, but allow your child's creativity to shine through. Your child's age may have an influence on his enthusiasm about free play. Most kids older than 8 think they are too old for such things. But, free play and free thinking are two things that are missing from many kids' agendas.

Materials Needed: Give your child blocks, animals, toy vehicles, popsicle sticks, drinking straws, clay, Legos, Lincoln Logs, a few art supplies or whatever you want.

Prep Time Required By You: almost no time at all

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain?):  
It depends on your child, but my guess is at least 30 minutes.

Instructions: Let your child use his imagination to create something, act out a scene, or write a script based on the objects. Do this every so often, perhaps once each week. This allows him to work on something of interest to him. You will be pleasantly surprised to see where your child's imagination will take him. You may even want to allow him to invite a friend.

## Miscellaneous Activities-#10

### Box Activity

Synopsis: Your child will evaluate the packages of various foods.

Materials Needed: a box of food such as cereal, a rice mix, or anything else you have, the question sheet on page 89, pen/pencil

Prep Time Required By You: less than five minutes

How Much Time It Should Take To Complete (How Much Free Time You Gain?):  
5 minutes

Instructions: Give your child the materials and allow her to answer the questions. Since this is a very short activity; you, may want to use this as the ice breaker to start the day and get your child in the mindset of working and then give her one of the other activities.

## BOX ACTIVITY

Materials: Box of food with nutritional information, pen or pencil

How many servings are in this package? \_\_\_\_\_

How much does this package weigh? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the fat content per serving? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the fiber content per serving? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the protein content per serving? \_\_\_\_\_

What shapes do you see on this package? \_\_\_\_\_

What vitamins does this food have?

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## Conclusion

I hope you find these activities beneficial and that they allow you to keep a schedule that allows you to get your job done!

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

And of course, please feel free to share any of the following:

- Stories of how you're using the activities to keep you on schedule
- Stories of how your children are enjoying the activities
- Pictures and/or examples of any of the projects your children made using the activities.

Over the next several months, we'll be building up the website and would love to include any samples or testimonials you'd like to share!

I can be reached at [liz@MomNeedsToWork.com](mailto:liz@MomNeedsToWork.com)

Good luck!