AT-HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES YOUR CHILD WILL WANT TO DO
FIRST GRADE – THIRD GRADE
### Family Scavenger Hunt

**Activity**
Got fruit? Hide a few oranges or apples in this classic game.

Begin with five to ten fruits and hide them around the house or in one room. You can write clues on cards or just announce them to your child (e.g., “go to the soft place where we watch TV”). Have your child try to find all the fruit. Next, switch up the game and have your child hide the fruit. When you are done, make a yummy fruit salad.

**Learning Skills**
Vocabulary, listening, cognitive flexibility

**Materials**
Fruit, paper and pen for clues

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### The Giant Jam Sandwich

**Activity**
Read *The Giant Jam Sandwich* together. It took a village to solve a problem. Talk with your child about all the things people did to save their town. If you don’t have the book, you can talk about ways to help people in your family and community when they can’t solve a problem on their own.

**Build a Sandwich**
Get out the bread and be creative. Work with your child to build a delicious sandwich. List the ingredients, talk about how it might taste, etc. To extend the activity, have your child poll family members on what they want in their sandwiches. Is there a family favorite?

**Learning Skills**
Creative expression, collaboration, communication

**Materials**
Suggested Book: *The Giant Jam Sandwich* by John Vernon Lord and Janet Burroway

Bread or lettuce and sandwich fixings
**ROLL THE DICE**

**ACTIVITY**
Dice are a great way to practice math. Roll the dice and count the dots or add two dice together. Another fun game is to look for items in the room (the kitchen works best) that match the number on the dice to the number of items in the room (e.g., four forks, six pans). Ask your child to invent games to play with the dice (e.g., roll the dice and that is how many times you must hop). You can play one game with the dice each day. Add more dice to make it more challenging.

**LEARNING SKILLS**
Mathematical computation (addition, subtraction), creativity, problem-solving

**MATERIALS**
Several sets of dice

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**JOURNALING AT HOME**

**ACTIVITY**
Ask your child to record activities of each day you are at home. The journal can include drawings, photos and writings. Encourage your child to write about something funny, the best thing that happened that day, etc. If you have a printer, have your child take photos throughout the day and glue them in the journal. Your child could do this on a tablet using an app like Book Creator, too! Read the journal each day. Perhaps you can add something as well!

**LEARNING SKILLS**
Language and vocabulary, self-expression, creativity

**MATERIALS**
Paper, art materials, smartphone or tablet and printer
**DANCE CRAZE**

**ACTIVITY**
Turn on the music and dance before dinner or in the dull time in the afternoon. Make up silly moves and record a video of the fun! Let your child choose the music and guide you in the steps. Play back the video and be ready for lots of laughs. Extend the fun: Become mirror images of one another. Practice working together when you dance and mimic each other’s dance moves. Take turns being the lead dancer and the mirror.

**LEARNING SKILLS**
Gross motor, healthy habits, listening

**MATERIALS**
Smartphone or tablet, access to music and playlists

**THE WAY THINGS WORK**

**ACTIVITY**
Look at the book *The Way Things Work*. Is your child interested in any of the topics? Talk about your favorites together. If you do not have this book, you can look up the way anything that your child show interest in, to find out how it works.

**Seek Out the Answers** - Spend some online time together for fun. Believe it or not, this is a great way to connect with your child. Ask about your child’s interests: how a computer works, how airplanes fly, how to design clothes or how to build a robot. You can search together and watch videos from great resources such as National Geographics Kids, NASA Kids Club or LEGO Kids Games. You could also use a safe search engine such as SweetSearch, which was built by librarians. You may find a project you would like to do together!

**LEARNING SKILLS**
Engineering, science, technology

**MATERIALS**
Suggested Book: *The Way Things Work* by David Macaulay and Neil Ardley

Computer or tablet with browser and internet connection
VIRTUAL TOURING

ACTIVITY

Read the book *Down by the Station* with younger children. Explore the amazing ride. Who was your child’s favorite animal to visit? For older children, read *Journey*. Have them tell the story as it unfolds in the picture book. If you don’t have either book, decide together where you would like to go on an adventure.

**Time to Go** - Tell your child you are going on a virtual tour. Let your child choose where to go. Younger children can be somewhere in the community and older children can be in another country.

1. Show them on a map where it is. Point out the symbols on the map (e.g. water, directions, land, borders of countries).

2. Ask your child what the best way to go is, and the best way to get to where they want to go (e.g. plane, car, train, boat). Work together with items in the in the house to “build” the train, plane, etc.

3. Act out going on the trip avoiding natural obstacles along the way (e.g. river, mountain) to the destination.

4. Extend the fun by acting out the modes of transportation (e.g. move like a boat waving arms like splashing water, line up like a train). Take turns selecting a new mode and creating the moves.

5. Another great variation is taking them into Google Earth on your computer to see the location. (Zoom in SLOWLY for an awesome experience.)

LEARNING SKILLS

Geography, critical thinking, engineering, gross motor

MATERIALS

Suggested Book: *Down by the Station* by Will Hillenbrand or *Journey* by Aaron Becker

Smartphone, tablet or map, household items
### BUTTERFLY GARDEN

**ACTIVITY**
To get some fresh air, set up a butterfly garden – children love the whimsy of butterflies. Set up an area with water, sand, small rocks, leaves and flowers (if you have any). Ask your child to help create a garden for butterflies. They need the rock to rest, water to drink and leaves to eat. Have your child add flowers, twigs and leaves. Take a photograph of the garden and share it with family and friends or add it to your child’s journal. Take your child to The American Academy of Natural History’s website to see videos and pictures of their butterfly conservatory. Watch for the butterflies this spring.

**SKILL DEVELOPED**
Science (nature), creativity, responsibility

**MATERIALS**
Outdoor items (rock, sand, water, leaves, twigs, etc.), smartphone or camera

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### FUNNY PHOTOS

**ACTIVITY**
Create captions for family photos, old magazine pictures, etc. You and your child can take turns inspiring each other with funny captions, e.g., “He ate the whole thing” for a picture of someone eating.

Record your captions on paper. You can cut out the magazine photos and glue them on the paper. Make a book of these to share with family and friends, and ask them to make up their own captions. Keep adding to the book – it is fun to go back and review!

**SKILL DEVELOPED**
Language, written expression, understanding emotions

**MATERIALS**
Old magazines, photos, paper, markers or pens, stapler
Remember the classic games that were fun and easy to play? Here are four games you can use when boredom strikes again.

1. **Which cup? (Which cup has the bean?)** – As your child watches, place one bean or bead under one of three cups. Move the cups around. Can your child guess where the bean is? Take turns moving the cups and being the guesser.

2. **I packed my suitcase.** – It’s a sequencing and memory game. The first player says what he or she “packed” in the suitcase. Then, each person takes a turn adding an “item” to the suitcase and repeats all the previous items that were already named. Can you remember all of them? This game is fun at lunchtime.

3. **Twenty questions** – One player thinks of an object and other players ask questions that can be answered only with the words yes or no. Hopefully, someone will remember all of the hints and guess what the object is before you get to 20 questions. This is a great one to do around the dinner table!

4. **Charades** – Act out key items around the house or anything your child loves. A nice variation for younger children is to have them help you create the “cards” you’ll pick from. Draw a tree, or write the word tree, on an index card, and create a stack of 20 things. Add more as they get better at the game!

**LEARNING SKILLS**

Listening, working memory, communication, vocabulary

**MATERIALS**

Plastic cup and a bead or bean
### Play Ball!

**Activity**
How many ways can you play ball? Get creative and go outside.

Throwing, catching, rolling, bouncing — invent new games to practice throwing and catching a ball. Any size will do! Take it up a notch by creating a catch routine. Bounce, roll, throw — what other combinations of moves can you and your child practice? How many moves in a row can you and your child remember?

**Learning Skills**
Gross motor, hand-eye coordination, collaboration

**Materials**
One or more balls

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### Code Me!

**Activity**
Can you “code” your mom? Using direction words and numbers, “program” each other from one area of the room to the other, such as, “Take two steps forward, then take one step to your right.” You can build your child’s understanding of how attribute words (adjectives) help make things clearer by taking two BIG steps one time and two very small steps the next. Talk about the differences with him or her.

You can also help your child see the importance of clearly explaining steps. Computers only do exactly what they’re programmed to do; the more specific, the better the program! As a variation, you can have your child make this into a game by having him or her create symbols on index cards as part of your programming language. Make sure you agree on what the symbols mean! One of you might think the symbol says “go forward” while the other interprets it to mean “jump up.” Have fun coding each other to dance and act out other scenes as your child’s readiness allows.

**Learning Skills**
Gross motor, collaboration, vocabulary, cognitive flexibility, computer science, listening

**Materials**
Index cards, markers or crayons
## Creativity with Cool Stuff

**Activity**  
Pull out paint, crayons, markers, rice, beans, beads, cotton balls, cotton swabs, glue and blank paper. (Really, you can use anything consumable) Then have your child create and design something. This can be abstract (not meant to be anything specific) or concrete (they have a particular item they’re creating).

Start with two items to design something and add a third item another day. How can the design change when you add something else? (You might want to put an old shower curtain or vinyl tablecloth down before getting started.)

**Learning Skills**  
Creative expression, fine motor, self-expression

**Materials**  
Paper, crayons, markers, old vinyl tablecloth and anything consumable you (or your child) can find!

## Word Fun

**Activity**  
List a bunch of letters at the top of a page. (Start with eight to ten, or more for new readers.) Have children write as many words as he or she can think of using only those letters. Now, make sure you take your turn; have your child list letters for you, too!

Keep track of how many words you can create when you use certain letters. Are there some that make it easier? Why does your child think so? A fun variation is using a timer after a few times of playing without it first.

**Learning Skills**  
Vocabulary, fine motor, cognitive flexibility

**Materials**  
Paper, pencil, marker or crayon, timer
# Daily Reflection

**Activity**

A great way to help your child focus on self-awareness and mindfulness is reflecting on your day together. Ask, “What was your sunny moment?” and share them with each other. Then share your “cloudy” moments. Use this time to connect and discuss a plan for how he or she might change his or her reactions or behaviors next time. Finally, end with a “What’s next over your rainbow?” moment. What does your child plan to do tomorrow? Keep these daily memories in a journal, or for older children, do a weekly recap and have them pick their most memorable moments from the week - you’ll love looking them over together in later years.

**Learning Skills**

Self-awareness and self-expression, social-emotional growth, listening

**Materials**

Optional: journal and writing utensils