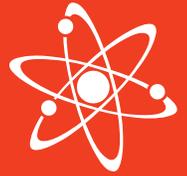


# At-Home Activities



## “My Summer Journal”

Support your child's storytelling skills in this **language and literacy** activity that comes with a bonus: a wonderful record of your family's summertime fun.

### What You Will Need:

Construction paper	Writing and drawing tools, a variety, such as pencils, pens,
Plain paper	fine-tip markers, regular markers,
Stapler	colored pencils, and crayons

### How to Prepare:

Gather the items listed. Have your child help you create a journal. Begin by folding together several sheets of plain paper. Create a front and back cover by folding a piece of construction paper around the sheets of plain paper. Staple the paper together along the fold three or four times to bind the cover and pages together.

### What to Do:

Invite your child to keep track of some of the events and experiences of his or her summer by creating a summer journal. First, encourage your child to think of a title for the journal, which might be as simple as “My Summer Journal.” If your child is able to write letters, he or she can write the title on the front cover either by copying words you have written or by writing the words as you spell them. The pages in the journal can contain written descriptions of events (either written by your child or dictated by your child then written by you), drawings, photographs, or other mementos such as ticket stubs or pressed flowers. Consider writing dates on the pages as well.

Keep the journal, and writing and drawing tools where they are accessible throughout the summer. As the summer progresses, encourage your child to add to the journal. Add more pages as needed or create another journal. Then, at the end of summer, spend time with your child reading and reflecting on the pages in the journal. After your child is familiar with the journal, invite him or her to “read” the journal to you.

## Summer Still-Life Drawings

Encourage your child's **creative expression** with an activity that puts the spotlight on the colors and shapes of fruits and vegetables.

### What You Will Need:

Drawing paper  
Drawing tools such as crayons or pastels  
Seasonal fruit and vegetables, fresh

### How to Prepare:

Show your child the fruit and vegetables you have collected. Tell your child the two of you will create still-life drawings of fruit and vegetables. Explain that still lifes are drawings or paintings of things that have been arranged in purposeful and interesting ways. They are called “still lifes” because the things selected cannot move on their own—they are still. Then work with your child to arrange the food in interesting ways on a flat surface such as a tabletop.

### What to Do:

Sit close (but not too close) to your arrangement of fruit and vegetables. Then use the paper and drawing tools to create still-life drawings. While your child draws, ask him or her about the fruit and vegetables you are drawing. For example, ask, “What color are the tomatoes?...What other foods do you see here that are also red?... What shape are the tomatoes?”

When your child is finished drawing, encourage him or her to sign the drawings, just like real artists do. Then mount the drawings on sheets of colored construction paper and display them.

## Outdoor BINGO

Help your child discover the sights of summer in this fun activity that builds **math and science skills**.

### What You Will Need:

Clipboards (optional)	Ruler
Paper	Writing and drawing tools

### How to Prepare:

In advance, work with your child to create your own BINGO cards on paper. First, use the ruler to draw two vertical lines on each sheet of paper. Then draw two horizontal lines that intersect with the two vertical lines to create a nine-squared card. Write “FREE” in the middle square. Then fill in each card you create with the numerals 1 – 10 in random order, so that each card has different numerals in different squares.

### What to Do:

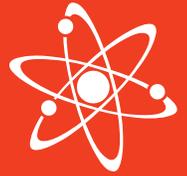
Go outdoors with your child and look for natural things or items. Bring paper, and writing and drawing tools. Make a list of the things you see, such as trees, birds, bird nests, rocks, leaves, bugs, and squirrels. Then write those things on your BINGO cards in the squares with the numerals. For

example, in the square with the numeral 1, write “squirrel,” and in the square with the numeral 8, write “leaves.” If desired, you could also draw pictures in the squares, such as a picture of one squirrel and a picture of eight leaves.

After you have completed the cards, have your child select a card and you select a card. Each of you should also have a writing tool. Then walk around the area and try to find the things on your cards. Each time you find something that matches your card, draw an “X” through the square. The first one to have a row of X's either diagonally, horizontally, or vertically should call out “BINGO!” Then review the winner's card and discuss what was seen. For example, you might say, “Let's talk about the things you saw and where you saw them. Here are the two rocks you saw by the fence—one, two rocks.”

Consider playing Outdoor BINGO during different times of the year and talking about how things in the natural world change with the seasons. You might not see any flowers during the wintertime, but you might see other things such as icicles or tracks in the snow that you could write on your winter BINGO cards.

# At-Home Activities



## Slime Time

Slippery textures and bright colors will grab your child's attention in this activity designed to stimulate **the senses**.

### What You Will Need:

#### Slime Recipe #1

Ingredients (makes one batch):

- 3 teaspoons Borax soap
- 2 cups white glue
- 1½ cups and 1⅓ cups water
- Food coloring

### Directions:

Mix 1½ cups of water and 2 cups of glue in a large bowl. Mix 1⅓ cups water, 3 teaspoons of Borax soap, and a desired amount of food coloring in a small bowl. Stir until dissolved. Slowly add all but 1 tablespoon of the Borax solution to the glue solution in the large bowl. Mix well.

Gently remove the slime and work it between your hands until it is no longer sticky. If it remains sticky, return it to the large bowl and knead with the remaining Borax solution. Store in a resealable container. When finished using the slime, dispose of the slime in a trash can; do not put the slime down a drain.

#### Slime Recipe #2

Ingredients (makes one batch):

- 1 16-oz box cornstarch
- 1½ cups water
- Food coloring

### Directions:

Pour the entire box of cornstarch into a large bowl. Add 1½ cups of water and a desired amount of food coloring. Mix until the cornstarch has dissolved in the water. After it settles, the cornstarch mixture will feel solid; when handled, the cornstarch mixture will turn to liquid. When finished using the slime, dispose of the slime in a trash can; do not put the slime down a drain.

### How to Prepare:

Determine which slime recipe you will make (or make both recipes). Gather all of the ingredients listed.

### What to Do:

Have your child help you prepare one or both of the slime recipes by measuring the ingredients and placing them in the bowls specified. Invite your child to explore the slime with his or her hands. As your child explores the slime, ask questions that encourage further exploration as well as language development. For example, you might ask, "What does the slime do when you hold it above the bowl then release it?" "What does the slime feel like on your hands?"

For fun, place small plastic toys in the slime, such as small plastic insects and spiders. If you made both types of slime, ask your child whether the toys sink in the slime. Do they sink in one type of slime but not in the other? Why or why not?

## Outdoor Obstacle Course

Watch your child fine-tune large-muscle skills in this activity focused on **physical development**.

### What You Will Need:

- Sturdy items to create an obstacle course, such as outdoor tables and chairs, empty boxes, and playground cones
- One or two soccer balls

### How to Prepare:

Use your knowledge of your child's physical skills to create an obstacle course outdoors. Keep in mind that your child will be dribbling (gently kicking) a soccer ball through the obstacle course from Start to Finish. See the diagram below for an example of how you might set up the obstacle course.

### What to Do:

Invite your child to complete an obstacle course while dribbling a soccer ball. If needed, first demonstrate how to gently kick the soccer ball around the various obstacles. Then invite your child to give it a try.

After your child has successfully completed the obstacle course a few times, invite him or her to help you set up a different obstacle course using the same or different items. Or consider timing your child while he or she completes the course. See whether your child can improve his or her time with practice.

