

Keeping Our Kids Sharp!

This school year is starting in an unusual way given the current labour dispute. This leaves many parents wondering how they can engage their kids in ongoing school related activities. So at RLE, we came up with a list of fun and educational activities to do with your kids, and great websites to visit. Please remember that one of the best things you can be doing right now with your children is to start building in routines (bed times, and study times) to help them strengthen their focusing and self-discipline skills, two very important attributes in achieving success at learning!

Read, read, read!

Help your child keep their reading at grade level by reading for at least 30 minutes a day. Trips to the library are great to stock up on new material. Keep reading fun by taking that book outside to the hammock, down to the beach, or under a shady tree!

Practice Practical Math Skills – When out shopping with your kids, get them to pay attention to the prices of the items being purchased and try to determine how much money you will need to buy them. Teach children how to tell time with their own watch. Practice counting, addition, subtraction and multiplication skills using real money at home – what kid doesn't love money!

Paint a picture – Kids learn much more than just painting with this simple skill – young kids develop fine motor skills, while older kids can express themselves through a positive outlet.

Write a story together – take turns writing each sentence of the story and see what adventures you can go on together! This fun activity encourages team building skills, but the kids will have so much fun they won't even notice.

Go for a nature hike –

This is a fun way for kids of all ages to keep up with both physical education and natural science. It is important for children to get at least an hour a day of physical activity to stay healthy and ready to learn. For younger kids, point out different kinds of plants and wildlife you spy along the way. Older kids can learn scientific identification skills with the assistance of plant and animal identification guides. Keep a look out for different insects, nests, life stages, etc. You can also try a Scavenger Hunt, visit <http://www.pinterest.com/pin/306526318360775497/>

Kids in the kitchen.

Cooking with children offers them a great chance to practice their math skills. Have your children help prepare their meals and snacks. Measuring ingredients, reading recipes, cutting with safe tools, dividing mixes into bowls/pans and other cooking skills offer kids many chances to learn much more than they could on a worksheet page.

Find a friend!

Take advantage of group playtime to make a learning opportunity more fun and engaging. Perhaps your children's friends' parents excel in a certain area and can teach your child a new skill. Offer to swap off hosting play dates that include a fun learning lesson.

Prepare for vacation.

Heading off to a new vacation destination? Have your child do some advance research on the area you are heading. What is the area known for? Any special, "must see" stops? Be sure to respect their time and research, and follow through with some of their suggestions!

Car time is learning time, too!

Driving a long distance for vacation? Take advantage of the time your child is stuck in the car to sneak in some learning. Have your child brush up on their geography by having them read the map or keep track of all the license plates from various places.

Just play!

Just "playing" presents many opportunities for children to learn! Help your children find the educational lessons in their day-to-day activities. Take advantage of the little opportunities to research the new bug they find in the backyard, or see how they used math to play that board game.