



Kindergarten Readiness

Home Activity Series

September 2020 Activities

ACTIVITY #1: Explore counting and sets with yummy snacks

Go to www.smfpl.org/kindergarten to watch a demonstration of this activity.

Parents:

- Gather 20 small snack items that your child likes to eat, such as M&Ms (provided in your kit), or goldfish crackers, raisins, chocolate chips, cereal pieces, mini marshmallows, etc. Place the items on a clean, flat surface. After you wash your child's hands, have them count the items to be sure there are exactly 20.
- Tell your child that they are going to play with the snack a bit before eating it. Ask your child if they can divide the pieces into TWO sets so that the number of things is the SAME in each group. Don't tell your child HOW to do this – let them experiment. Some children will scoop some items into a separate group that visually looks about the same as the remainder. That's fine! Then ask your child how they can be sure each of their two groups has the same number of items. Yes – count the number of items in each group! If the number in each group is not the same, ask your child what can be done to fix that. See if they can figure it out on their own. Praise them when they succeed.
- Some children will sort the items by adding one to each group at a time: "one for here, one for there, one for here, one for there..." Great system! Just remind your child that when they are finished, the items in each group need to be counted to make sure they are the same. Praise them when they succeed.
- Now put all the pieces back together again. Ask your child if they can divide the pieces into THREE groups so the number is the same in each group, using ALL the pieces. Let them experiment and see if they discover on their own that they cannot. If they do make three groups of equal pieces, how many pieces are left?
- Now put all the pieces back together again. Try dividing them evenly into FOUR groups, and then FIVE groups. Can it be done?
- When you are done, eat your counting pieces.



Why we do this:

Being able to identify numerals and understand that they represent a specific number of objects or amounts, and being able to divide those objects/numbers into subsets, are foundational math skills.



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ACTIVITY #2: Dinosaur scissor practice worksheet

Go to www.smfpl.org/kindergarten to watch our video with tips for learning to use scissors.

Parents:

- Make sure you take the time to show your child how to hold the scissors – always with the thumb up and in the smallest hole, the other fingers in the larger hole, and using an open-shut motion between the thumb and fingers.
- To make this easier for your child, feel free to cut the dinosaur “pathways” apart into four strips. Then have your child cut along the dotted lines on each paper strip. It is okay to cut through the dinosaurs. Tell your child to pretend the scissors are the dinosaurs’ feet stomping down the path to get to the delicious trees at the end. The zig-zag line will be the hardest one to cut. Remember that turning the paper rather than the scissors will make the cutting easier. Some children will try to cut the paper while it’s lying flat on the work surface, but that makes it much harder. Help them practice holding the paper up in their non-dominant hand while cutting with the scissors in their dominant hand, and tracking the movement of the scissors and paper with their eyes.

Why We Do This:

Cutting helps develop hand-eye coordination, and the opening and closing motion of cutting with scissors helps children develop the small muscles in their hands. These muscles are crucial for holding a pencil or crayons and gripping and manipulating objects.

Being able to use scissors is an important skill. Teachers have noticed that some kindergarteners begin school with little or no experience in cutting with scissors.



ACTIVITY #3: Shape practice worksheet

Parents:

- There are four different shapes on the worksheet. Ask your child if they can name each shape.
- Then have your child trace the outline of each shape with either a pencil or a crayon. Remind them to work slowly, keeping the point of the writing tool on the outline of each shape as closely as possible.
- Lastly, direct your child to color the shapes in any fashion they choose. Allow your child to decide how to complete this task – outline one row of shapes, color in that row, then outline the next row, OR outline all the shapes and then color in all the shapes. Encourage your child to select a wide variety of colors and to name each color as it’s used.

Why We Do This:

It is expected that children will be able to recognize and name basic shapes and colors, and hold and use a crayon and/or pencil before beginning kindergarten.

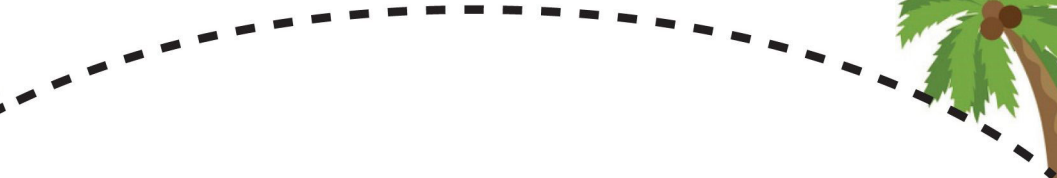
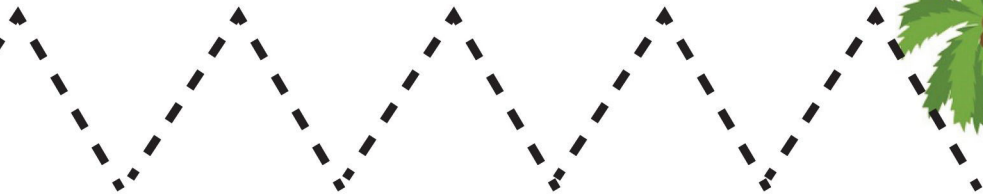
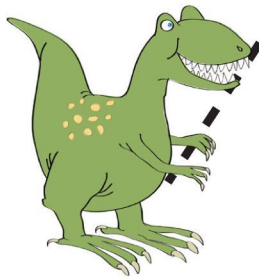
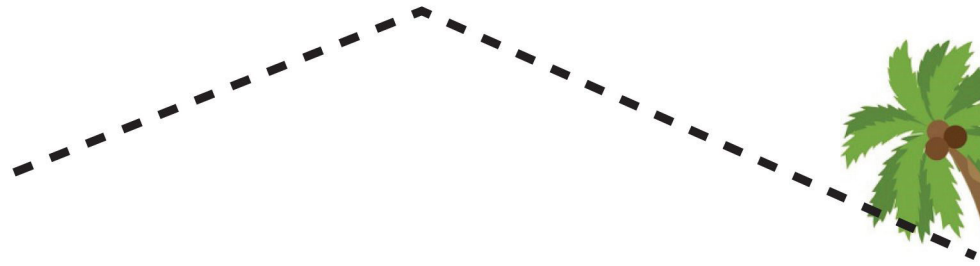
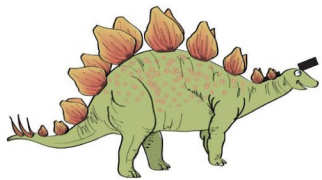
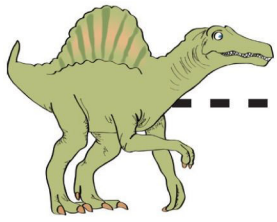
Tracing is an important pre-writing skill. It helps develop both the fine motor control and hand-eye coordination required for writing.

This is the time to begin working on helping your child use the correct hand position for holding a writing tool.

Visit www.smfpl.org/kindergarten for a helpful video.



Visit www.smfpl.org/kindergarten every month for additional stories, songs, and video tips.



Shapes!

Practice tracing the shapes. Then color them all in.

