

Daily Learning Planner

*Ideas families can use to help children
prepare for school*

Columbus City Schools
Division of Early Childhood Education



THE
PARENT
INSTITUTE®

December • January • February 2024-2025

December 2024

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Children Prepare for School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- ☐ 1. Teach your child a new song with a holiday or winter theme.
- ☐ 2. Read a poem aloud. Stop to let your child guess what the next rhyming word will be.
- ☐ 3. Let your preschooler see you finish a task you have been putting off. Help your child do the same.
- ☐ 4. Look in the newspaper or online for a list of festive events in your area. Plan to attend one with your child this month.
- ☐ 5. Give your child a piece of plain paper and a piece of sandpaper. Which is *smooth*? Which is *rough*?
- ☐ 6. Together, list animals your child loves. If your family could have any animal as a pet, which would your preschooler want to have? Why?
- ☐ 7. Mix up several pairs of socks in a pile. Have your child sort the socks into pairs.
- ☐ 8. Talk about your child's favorite winter activity. If possible, make plans to do it together.
- ☐ 9. At dinner, have family members try holding their noses while eating. Does it affect the taste of the food?
- ☐ 10. Create a costume box for your child. Add yard sale treasures such as purses, scarves and shoes.
- ☐ 11. When preschool friends come over, have your child greet them at the door and walk them out when they leave.
- ☐ 12. Help your child make musical instruments from things around your house. Have a concert.
- ☐ 13. Ask your child questions while shopping: "Why do we have to wait in line?" "Why can't we buy everything we want?"
- ☐ 14. Visit the library with your child and check out books about winter.
- ☐ 15. Help your child form letters out of cooled, cooked spaghetti.
- ☐ 16. Take turns telling a story. "There once was a family who lived in a ____." Your child fills in the blank.
- ☐ 17. Have your child dictate a letter to a family member, then decorate it. Mail it together.
- ☐ 18. Encourage your child to put on a puppet show for your family.
- ☐ 19. Say a word, such as *ball*. Then, ask your child to name another word that begins with the B sound.
- ☐ 20. Give your child a hug for no reason other than to show your love.
- ☐ 21. Talk with your child about how you divide food. "There are two of us and one apple. I'll cut the apple into *halves*."
- ☐ 22. Play catch with your child.
- ☐ 23. Help your child repurpose something old into something new today.
- ☐ 24. Have a family read-aloud before bedtime tonight.
- ☐ 25. Take a family photo. Give your child a copy.
- ☐ 26. Go for a walk with your child. Look for things you see only in December.
- ☐ 27. Have your child try to act out something instead of using words to tell you about it.
- ☐ 28. Expect your child to pick up toys after play time. Turn on some "clean up time" music!
- ☐ 29. On rainy or snowy days, get some indoor exercise with your child.
- ☐ 30. Hide five pennies in plain sight. Can your child find them all?
- ☐ 31. Help your child set a goal for 2025.

January 2025

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Children Prepare for School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- ☐ 1. Give your child a new responsibility, such as watering a plant or feeding a pet.
- ☐ 2. Ask your child to complete sentences like, "If I had one wish, it would be ..." or "I'm getting better at ...".
- ☐ 3. Have your child draw or paint a picture of the place where you live.
- ☐ 4. Find a kid-friendly recipe. Help your child make that dish today.
- ☐ 5. Ask your preschooler what kinds of work grown-ups do. See how many different jobs your child can name.
- ☐ 6. Plan an indoor campout. Make a tent from a blanket and eat s'mores while you share stories.
- ☐ 7. Show your preschooler a penny, a nickel, a dime and a quarter. Can your child identify each one? If not, review them together.
- ☐ 8. Help your child practice cutting using safety scissors. Show how to cut in a straight line and then in a curve.
- ☐ 9. Say something nice about your preschooler to someone else when your child can hear you.
- ☐ 10. Ask your child to jump like a frog, crawl like a turtle or slither like a snake.
- ☐ 11. Count how long your child can balance standing on one foot. Then, have your preschooler try the other foot.
- ☐ 12. Get two socks. Soak one in water and keep one dry. Let your child tell you which one is heavier. Ask why.
- ☐ 13. Let your child help you organize something, like toys on a shelf.
- ☐ 14. Have your child use blunt-nose tweezers to pick up small items such as pieces of cereal.
- ☐ 15. Teach your child to say "Hello, how are you?" and make eye contact.

- ☐ 16. Talk about how animals survive the winter months. What do bears do? How about birds?
- ☐ 17. Think of a task you have always helped your child with. Give your preschooler a chance to try doing it independently.
- ☐ 18. How do the trees look today? Talk with your child about how things look different when the trees have no leaves.
- ☐ 19. Ask your child, "What are the three best things about you?"
- ☐ 20. Play an age-appropriate board game with your child.
- ☐ 21. If possible, eat all three meals together as a family today.
- ☐ 22. Trace your child's hand on paper. Together, think of ways to be a helping hand. Write your child's ideas on the drawing.
- ☐ 23. Look through a calendar together and point out special days, such as your child's birthday.
- ☐ 24. Cut straws into different lengths. Encourage your child to line them up *shortest* to *longest*.
- ☐ 25. Ask your child a question that encourages problem solving: "If we were outside and got cold, what could we do?"
- ☐ 26. Have your child draw a picture of the weather during the morning and another during the afternoon.
- ☐ 27. Visit the library together and check out some books about friendship.
- ☐ 28. Walk together in different ways to different kinds of music—slowly, quickly, lightly, heavily, on tiptoes, etc.
- ☐ 29. Open a fruit that has seeds. Explain that fruit grows from seeds.
- ☐ 30. Offer lots of opportunities for your child choose between two options.
- ☐ 31. With your child, draw and color a picture of birds.

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February 2025

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Children Prepare for School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- ☐ 1. Encourage your preschooler to describe a song on the radio. Is it fast or slow? Happy or sad? What instruments can your child hear?
- ☐ 2. Talk with your child about families. Who is in your family? What do families do?
- ☐ 3. This is the third of the month. With your child, look everywhere for the number 3 today.
- ☐ 4. Teach your child to be a good sport when playing games—win or lose.
- ☐ 5. Ask your child to name five foods that help people grow and two foods that taste good but are not healthy to eat every day.
- ☐ 6. When you read aloud, pause often to talk about the story. Encourage your child to ask questions.
- ☐ 7. Will your child start kindergarten in the fall? Check with the elementary school to find out how and when to register.
- ☐ 8. Have your preschooler draw a window picture. Your child can draw the window and what is visible through it.
- ☐ 9. Ask your child unusual questions: "What if your hair were made of spaghetti?"
- ☐ 10. Help your child do something nice for someone else today.
- ☐ 11. Cut part of a picture out of a magazine. Paste it on a blank sheet of paper. Ask your child to complete the picture.
- ☐ 12. Together, count your child's fingers and toes.
- ☐ 13. Ask your child to look in a mirror and name facial features (eyes, nose, ears, etc.).
- ☐ 14. Have family members take turns naming one thing they love about each person in your family.

- ☐ 15. Point out a police car, fire truck or ambulance. Explain to your child that people who drive these vehicles are going to help someone.
- ☐ 16. Spring begins next month. Talk about the changes your child will see.
- ☐ 17. Allow your child to invite one or two friends over. Ask each child to bring one book. Read each book to the children.
- ☐ 18. Have a pattern day. Ask your child to notice patterns all around, such as a striped shirt or a flowered sheet.
- ☐ 19. Put uncooked rice or paper clips into plastic containers. Cover tightly. Let your child shake them. Do different items make different sounds?
- ☐ 20. Show your child a picture of a rainbow. Can your child name the colors?
- ☐ 21. Have your child count to five. If this is easy, keep going to 10 or 20.
- ☐ 22. When you do errands together, give your child responsibility for carrying something into the house.
- ☐ 23. Show your child how to "sew" by stringing yarn through holes punched in cardboard.
- ☐ 24. Discuss the meaning of *today*, *yesterday* and *tomorrow* with your child.
- ☐ 25. Read three poems or rhymes with your child today.
- ☐ 26. As you read a story, say, "This is the beginning." "This is the middle." And, "This is the end."
- ☐ 27. Model polite table manners for your child. Say "Please pass the ..." and "Thank you very much."
- ☐ 28. Ask your child to give you a news report about today's activities. What's the lead story?

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