

Blankner K8



**Suggested Summer Activities for
Rising Kindergarteners**

Literacy

Before school starts, please work with your child on:

- Saying his/her first AND last name; and writing his/her first name with only the first letter uppercase and all the others lowercase.
- Recognizing and naming the letters in his/her own name.
- Singing or reciting nursery rhymes; and talking about the rhyming words and the rhythm and repetition heard.
- Singing AND saying the alphabet.

Ideas for Home

- Please read, read, and read some more to your children. Reading aloud to them builds so many language skills: comprehension, rhyme, concepts of print, vocabulary building, etc. Read often to them, and allow them to pretend read to you.
- Visit the library often to read or hear a storyteller. Check out books with classic tales, as well as new titles. Ask your librarian for help choosing quality literature.
- Don't neglect the power of children's own names! Young children naturally like to see their names in print and have a great desire to know the letters in their names.
- Also, use the beginning sounds in their names as a foundation for building sound knowledge. For example, if the name starts with P, find other items that start with /p/ like popcorn, puzzle, pillow, etc.
- For writing names (first letter uppercase and all the others lowercase), let children practice in sand, a small tray of rice, shaving cream, finger paint, or pudding (yum!); use glitter crayons, write it big with sidewalk chalk, shape playdough into the letters, etc.
- Print is all around young children for them to notice and make literacy connections. Some print is already meaningful to your children such as names of favorite cereals, restaurants, toys, stores, and more! Letters and words are everywhere in your home, on the street, in the store, etc. Make it a fun learning game to play "I Spy" - I spy with my little eye something that starts with the letter M or /m/ (the sound of m), depending on the developmental of your child.
- Place magnetic letters on the refrigerator at the children's eye level so they can manipulate the letter to form their names, group like letters together, etc.
- Create a letter scrapbook with your children. For each page, write the upper and lowercase letter. Have children hunt for small objects, environmental print, magazine pictures, etc. that begin with a certain letter. Make sure to include photos of their friends, too!
- Let your children see you writing: letters, checks to pay bills, the grocery list, anything! Give them their own paper, letting them write out their own lists using kid writing. It's all right if you cannot read it at this point, you are modeling for them uses and reasons for writing and reading, which is must more important at this stage.
- Create a writing toolbox to store fun writing utensils, different types of paper, envelopes, stickers, etc. for your children to have their own writing materials, to encourage writing.
- Read, recite, and act out nursery rhymes.
- Do a lot of language play: jump rope rhymes, silly songs, finger plays, and riddles. Talk about rhyming words and the rhythm and repetition you hear.

Mathematics

Before school starts, please work with your child on:

- Focusing attention to the colors, shapes, and numbers seen all around them: read the numerals on signs, point out the shapes of items in the grocery store, find colors inside and outside, etc.
- Counting to 10 (and then higher as skill increases).
- Practice counting objects around your home: books, shoes, cotton balls, toys, pens, etc. Have your child touch and move each item forward as he/she is counting.

Ideas for Home:

- Let your young chefs assist you in the kitchen. Let them help pour, mix, measure, roll, etc.
- For numeral practice, make two flash cards of each numeral: 0-5 to start and then adding higher numerals as skill increases (6-10, 11-15, 16-20). Play games (Go Fish, Memory, Bingo, etc.), sort and match the numerals, go around the house and place the numeral card next to sets of that many objects. You can create similar games for the shapes and colors.
- Refer to the calendar frequently: talk about the days of the week, the date, the month; count the number of days left until an upcoming event.
- Play dominoes and board games in which children have to roll a die and count how many spaces they get to move.
- Practice making shapes and numbers with playdough, shaving cream, toothpicks, salt or sand, etc.
- Encourage the practice of sorting skills (shape, color, size, etc.) while folding laundry, putting away toys, playing with colored blocks, eating their favorite candies such as M&Ms, etc.
- Sing Number songs - "5 Little Monkeys," "Ten in Bed," "One Potato, Two Potato," etc.
- Use body movements to create patterns, such as "clap, stomp, clap, stomp,..." and see how many versions you can create.
- Use "math vocabulary" when describing things: tall, short, round, straight, large, heavy, light, above, below, over, under, less than, more than, before, after, etc.
- Practice making set of numbers with household materials (cotton balls, Q-tips, paper clips, toys, snacks, etc.). After making one set, make a matching set with a different materials.
- Allow your children to see you use math tools: measuring cups, measuring tape, kitchen scale, varying sizes of containers, etc. Talk about why you're using a specific material and its purpose. Allow your children to help when possible.

Science/Inquiry Skills

Before school starts, please work with your child on:

- Reading non-fiction books according to your child's interests. Use other resources for non-fiction, as well, such as magazines, internet, and appropriate television shows.

Ideas for Home:

- Spend lots of time outside! Observe different things in your neighborhood, like plants, insects, and critters. Talk about each of these you observe.
- Keep a science journal. Draw the things you see during your outside adventures. Draw as many details as possible.
- Allow your children to help with cooking. Talk about what happens when you cool/heat ingredients and mix materials.
- Plant a window garden or a seed in a cup. Talk about what care is needed and observe it daily.

- Talk about different animals and compare the way they look, where they live, what they eat, etc.
- Ask open ended questions, which cannot be answered with a simple yes or no, such as, "How do you think that happened?" "What do you think caused...?" "What if...?" "What do you notice?" etc.
- Look at different plants and flowers. Talk about their different parts and compare/contrast.
- Observe the weather. What can you do on a windy, sunny, or rainy day? Talk about why weather is different in different areas.

Social Studies Skills

Before school starts, please work with your child on:

- Learning the different adults in the school: principal, assistant principal, cafeteria workers, nurse, librarian/media specialist, front desk staff, etc.

Ideas for Home:

- Talk about your family. Look at childhood pictures together and share stories of family happenings and heritage.
- Talk about the jobs of each member of your family and how each person contributes both at home and at school/work.
- Read and talk about community helpers and their different responsibilities. Discuss how they help or serve people.
- Read and talk about different holidays people observe and the ways they celebrate.
- Look at a map or globe and locate where you live. Read or talk about the people who live near and far away.
- Talk about the resources that people need and where they come from. Discuss different jobs and their responsibilities and rewards.

Fine Motor Skills

Before school starts, please work with your child on:

- Using scissors and glue.
- Tying, buckling, buttoning and snapping, zipping, etc.

Ideas for Home:

- Provide crayons, markers, pencils, scissors, glue, paints, etc. for your children to use and to express their creativity.
- String beads or cereals (Fruit Loops, Cheerios, etc.) to make necklaces.
- Roll and shape playdough into snakes and other interesting creatures.
- Pick up small objects with tweezers and tongs.
- Put together puzzles.
- Play with Legos, Tinker Toys, Bristle Blocks, and other small building toys.
- Use a Lite-Brite to form pictures and designs.
- Tear various color of paper and glue together to make a picture.
- Use scissors to cut straight lines, wavy lines, zig zags, and to make fringe along the edge of paper to create a grass like look.

Safety and Self Help Competence

Before school starts, please work with your child on:

- Orally stating his/her first AND last name, along with a parent's phone number and name, in the case of emergencies.
- Knowing his/her teacher's name.
- Telling an adult if something is wrong.
- Telling an adult if help is needed.
- Taking care of basic needs: using restrooms and tissues, washing hands, tying, snapping, buttoning, and zipping clothing, etc.

Ideas for Home:

- When going for walks, practice looking both ways before crossing the street and walking on the sidewalk.
- Let children tie, snap, button, and zip their own clothing. This a great fine motor skill accomplishment too.
- Model and encourage the practice of good hygiene - washing hands, covering mouth when coughing, covering nose when sneezing, brushing teeth, combing hair, wiping thoroughly after restroom use, etc.
- Have children get into the habit of always putting their toys away after playing and cleaning up after themselves.

Social and Character Building Skills

Before school starts, please work with your child on:

- Sharing and taking turns.
- Following two step directions.

Ideas for Home:

- Provide opportunities for your children to spend time with other children playing and talking.
- Give small chores or jobs to your children so that they may experience responsibility and a sense of accomplishment.
- Get into a daily routine now so that the transition of those early school days will go smoother. Model and practice routines. Draw pictures or use real photographs to illustrate each step.
- Talk and model how to express feelings appropriately and with self-control.
- Remind children to listen when others talk. Model looking into the speaker's eyes, and waiting their turns to speak.