

Math Tips For Parents

FOR YOUR 4-YEAR-OLD'S LEARNING

Parents are children's first and most important teachers and are critical to their children's success in school. Parents and other family members can work with children to promote early number and math skills through simple, everyday learning experiences as they go about their daily activities.

Here are some ideas for you to use with your four-year-old that will support the development of the math skill he or she needs before starting kindergarten.

Discuss the sequence of events:

"What happened yesterday?" "Where are we going today?" "What will we do tomorrow?"

Ask your child to guess how many cups of water it will take to fill a pitcher.

Together fill the pitcher and talk about estimating and checking guesses.

Make a calendar together and have your child mark off the days until his birthday or the trip to see Grandma and Grandpa.

Provide opportunities for your child to develop an understanding of space -

Filling and emptying containers, building with blocks, and observing objects from different viewpoints. Talk about spatial concepts such as "full" and "empty," "long" and "short," and "high" and "low" as you do this.

Look for shapes on signs, buildings, and other objects as you ride in the car or bus together. Talk about similarities and differences among the shapes.

Use positional words to ask your child to find something or put something away: "Look in the bottom drawer," "Find it under the box," or "Put it beside your bed."

Together count out the number of plates, bowls, forks, or spoons needed for a family meal.

Sort blocks or other objects by color, length, shape, or size.

Math Tips For Parents

FOR YOUR 5-YEAR-OLD'S LEARNING

Parents can continue to support their children's learning and development while they are in kindergarten.

Here are some tips for everyday activities for you to do with your five-year-old that will support his or her success with Minnesota's new Kindergarten Academic Standards in Mathematics.

Collect groups of objects such as buttons, stones, or bottle caps and sort them by size, color, or other characteristics. Encourage your child to arrange his collections into groupings, making up rules together.

Create a pattern with blocks, pegs, or beads and ask your child to copy or continue the pattern.

As you prepare for a snack with playmates, ask your child, "How many crackers do we need so that you and your friends can each have two?"

Talk about measurement words - teaspoons, tablespoons, one cup, a half-cup – as you cook together.

Play counting games in the car or as you walk down the street. "Let's count how many dogs we will see between home and school." "Let's count how many trucks we can see on the way to the store."

Play board or card games together that involve counting, moving a certain number of spaces, or matching numbers.

Start a growth chart of your child's height and weight that your child can check frequently, and discuss changes as he or she grows.

Count as you do daily activities with your child – the number of steps to the basement laundry, the number of letters or catalogs that come in the mail, the plates or bowls you will need for setting the table for a family meal.

For additional information, visit the MDE Web site at: <http://education.state.mn.us> or the Ready4K Web site at: www.ready4k.org



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Language Tips For Parents

FOR YOUR 4-YEAR-OLD'S LEARNING

Parents are children's first and most important teachers and are critical to their children's success in school. Parents and other family members can work with children to promote early language skills through simple, everyday learning experiences as they go about their daily activities.

Here are some ideas for you to use with your four-year-old that will support the development of the language skills he or she needs before starting kindergarten.

Make book reading and storytelling time special. Set aside time for reading or storytelling each day. Pick a special spot in your home where both you and your child can see the book's words and pictures.

Use rhymes and songs to increase her interest in language. Play rhyming games. Read poetry.

Listen carefully to your child when he is talking. Show that you are interested in what he has to say.

Engage your child in simple tasks that require a two- or three-step action or response: "Please pick out your breakfast cereal and pour it in your bowl. Then you can add the milk." or "Please pick up the toys and then put on your jacket before we go outside."

When you read or tell stories together with your child, pause to discuss new words. Talk about what the words mean and make a game of using the new words in other sentences.

Provide writing materials for your child such as paper, pencils, crayons, and markers. Put them in an easy-to-access place in your home and encourage her to use them.

Point out the names of things and signs and labels as you ride in the car or bus or walk to the store.

Help your child recognize the letters in his name and encourage him to practice writing letters.

Language Tips For Parents

FOR YOUR 5-YEAR-OLD'S LEARNING

Parents can continue to support their children's learning and development while they are in kindergarten.

Here are some tips for everyday activities for you to do with your five-year-old that will support his or her success with Minnesota's new Kindergarten Academic Standards in the Language Arts.

Play guessing games - "I'm thinking of . . ." or "In my bag I have a . . ." - and take turns with your child trying to discover the answers. Be sure to give simple clues and ask probing questions.

Involve your child in conversation and discussion taking turns listening and talking.

Ask your child to tell family members or friends about what you did at the park or saw on your drive or walk to school. Encourage your child to recall and describe details.

Sing songs and read poems and rhyming books together. Emphasize the sounds and rhythm of the words.

Make a list or card file of words your child can read. Add to it as he learns a new word and point out that the list or file is increasing.

Encourage your child to make and send letters, thank you notes, and greeting cards to friends and relatives. Have a special place for paper, glue, stickers, and other materials.

Use books as resources with your child when she has a question you can't answer: "Let's see if we can find an answer to that question."

While waiting in the doctor's office or in line at the store, keep your child occupied by asking questions about the surroundings: "Can you find something that starts with the 'B' sound?"

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