



# Play, Learn, and Read at Home

Developmental Activities for kid's birth to five.

**Stories this month:** Dinosaur Roar by Paul and Henrietta Strickland

Focus Skills for parents: This is a great book to teach about opposite concepts.

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
<b>Problem-Solving Skills</b>	Young infants learn about objects in their world through play. Between 8-10 months a young child will be able to solve problems in their world using objects. Place an interesting toy on a blanket and tug on the blanket a little to move the toy closer to your baby. See if your baby will pull the blanket toward them to get the toy. They should be more interested in the toy than the blanket.	By age 2, your child should begin to use size words to describe objects. Use the words, "big" and "little" to describe objects. Get laundry baskets and sort objects into each basket according to size. Have the child compare two items. (Daddy's boots to baby's shoes.) Use the words "big shoe" and "little shoe" to describe the objects.	By this age, children are developing an understanding that some things are long and some are short. Teach your child about quantity by using a measuring tape. Measure in inches how long a car is and compare to a tricycle. Use inches as your measurements so your child begins to understand the longer the tape the bigger the number. Chart different measurements on a poster and compare.
<b>Language/Communication Skills</b>	From about 4 months of age your child should be vocalizing vowel sounds called cooing. Vocalize /ah/ like a dinosaur and then WAIT to see if your infant will repeat it back. Don't make it too scary!	Toddlers begin to develop and understand opposites. For example, if you say "stop" they may want to go. Play games with dinosaurs going in and out, up and down, on and off things to teach your child these concepts.	This book offers wonderfully rich vocabulary. When you read the book with your child, talk about what the words mean and give other words that are more commonly used. For example, sweet might mean nice and grumpy could mean mad. In normal daily activities, try to incorporate the higher level language terms from the book into your normal conversations.
<b>Small/Fine Motor Skills</b>	Make your own dinosaur egg shakers. Use plastic Easter eggs and fill with rice or beans. Secure tightly with duct tape. A child about 5 months will try to reach out and grab the shakers. By nine months, it will be great fun to bang the dinosaur eggs together.	Buy a dozen eggs, wait a week or two and then boil them. Waiting will help the eggs peel better! Let your child decorate the eggs by painting and/or coloring them. After they have dried, let your child crack the dinosaur eggs open. Allow them to feel the hard shell and cold, slimy surface of the egg.	Be a paleontologist, this is someone who studies dinosaurs. Fill a plastic tub with sand and bury dog bones, rocks, ferns and plastic dinosaurs. Give your child a paint brush and have them brush away the sand to discover the treasures beneath.

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
<b>Large/Gross Motor Skills</b>	Around 8 months, your infant should be crawling forward. Get down on your hands and knees and crawl with your child. Make your /ah/ or roar sound like a dinosaur.	Toddlers love to imitate movements. To make dinosaur shoes, take two small cereal boxes and glue craft foam to the backside of the box. Allow your child to paint or color the boxes. Lay the box down flat and cut an oval size hole in the top. Cut out white triangle shapes and glue to the end of the box for claws. Have your child put on his dinosaur shoes and stomp to music.	Create your own dinosaur world obstacle course. Put a blanket over a table to make a cave. Pile high pillows or cushions to create a big rock to climb. Place two sticks on the floor and have your child jump over the deep crevices. Use a silk plant on the table and stretch up to pretend to eat the leaves. If you're brave, fill a small tub with water on a fluffy towel to make a swamp to go through! Go fast through the obstacle course, then go slow!
<b>Self-Help Skills</b>	A child between 5.5-9 months should be interested in holding their own bottle. Cover your baby's bottle with a piece of cloth to give it a more interesting texture. Use different textures such as a sock, silk, or velvet. Hold your baby and encourage him to put their hands on yours while you hold the bottle. Gradually, move your hand away and place your baby's hand on the bottle.	Show your child the big teeth of some of the dinosaurs in the story. Talk about the BIG brush they must need to clean their teeth. Have your child find their own teeth and practice brushing them. By 24 months, a child should be able to brush their teeth if an adult puts on the tooth paste.	Invite some friends over for a dinosaur picnic. Talk to your child about how some dinosaurs are meat eaters and some eat fruits and vegetables. Have a variety of "greens" (broccoli, celery, pea pods, peppers etc.) and dips to choose from. Also, cut up strips of chicken, ham or turkey. Have your child say, "I am a meat or vegetable eating dinosaur before they choose something for their plate."
<b>Social-Emotional Skills</b>	Babies love to look at other babies, including themselves. Between 5 ½-8 ½ months, your baby will enjoy looking at himself in a mirror. Between 15-16 months your baby should be able to point to themselves in the mirror image. Make your roar sound while you and your baby are looking in the mirror. Play a game and say, "Where's Johnnyasurus?" (child's name and point to the baby in the mirror.	Make a dinosaur hat with your child out of a brown paper bag. Cut out triangles and help your child glue them on. Take a picture of your child and show her the photograph and give your child a dinosaur name such as "Meganasaurus"! A child approximately 19-24 months should be able to recognize themselves in a photograph. Take a dinosaur family portrait!	Get a big piece of paper and trace an outline of your child. Give your child a big dinosaur tail. Have your child complete their picture by making their eyes, nose, clothes etc. Write at the top of the picture, your child's dinosaur name, "Tylerasaurus".

## Try these finger plays and songs by Jean Warren:

### BABY DINOSAUR SONG

(Pop Goes the Weasel)

All around the swamp one day, the mother dinosaur sat.  
She was sitting on her egg, wanting it to hatch.

She had sat for many days, keeping it safe and warm  
Crack! Crack! Crack! Out it popped, Her baby Dino was born!

### FOUR LITTLE DINOSAURS

**Four** little dinosaurs munching leaves on a tree  
One ran off and then there were three.

**Three** little dinosaurs standing in some goo  
One ran off, then there were two.

**Two** little dinosaurs out in the sun  
One ran off, then there was one.

**One** little dinosaur now all alone  
She got lonesome, so she went back home.

**The Play, Learn and Read at Home** activities are brought to you by the Montcalm County Great Start Collaborative Great Parents Great Start program. Children move thru predictable stages of development. The activities provided above are meant to be a guide. For more information on your child's development visit: [www.GreatStartMontcalm.org](http://www.GreatStartMontcalm.org)

