








## Play, Learn, and Read at Home

### Developmental Activities for kid's birth to five

Story this week: Goodnight Gorilla by Peggy Rathmann

Focus Skills for parents: Look at each page of the book and encourage your child to talk about what is happening in the picture. If your child does not have the language to do this, you can make comments about the pictures.

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
<b>Problem-Solving Skills</b>	Your baby at 7-9 months will be learning that things exist even though they cannot see them. Start by partially hiding a toy under a small towel or blanket. Your baby will learn that although they can only see part of the toy, it still exists. By 10 months, your child should look for the toy when it is completely covered. Continue to support this idea by playing peek-a-boo with your baby!	Blow up five or more balloons and hide them around the house. Cut out squares of paper that match each color of the balloons and put them in a hat or bowl. Then, have your child draw a color and then find the balloon that matches. If he finds other colored balloons that do not match the color he is looking for just leave them until the color is drawn. Always supervise your child around balloons.	Children love to explore with flashlights. When it starts to get dark, play a scavenger hunt game inside. Draw a map of your house with each of the rooms labeled and mark. Give a clue to something they can find in each room. Such as, "Find an object that rhymes with boat? Coat" You can also look for objects of a certain color in each room or search for zoo animals hidden in every room!
<b>Language/ Communication Skills</b>	Your baby will learn what comes next by developing a consistent bedtime routine. Incorporate saying "Night-night" to each family member and pet in the house like the zookeeper who visited each animal at the zoo. Include saying "Night-night" to pictures of family members that do not live in the home like Grandma, Grandpa, Aunts, Uncles, and/or cousins. Your baby will learn that "Night-night" means bedtime!	At bedtime, recreate your own story of Goodnight Gorilla with your child's favorite stuffed animals. With your child, create cages using various boxes or by draping blankets over tables. Place animals in their cages and allow your child to tell the story. As your child says "Goodnight rabbit" let them out of their cage one by one until everyone ends up in bed! Retelling the story will encourage your child to use their imagination and expand their ideas!	After reading the story a few times, make a list of the animals. Talk about what they eat, how they move, where they live and what they look like. How are they different from animals you would see on a farm? Visit your local library and check out books on the animals your child wants to learn more about or do some research online. If you have visited the zoo with your child, they may remember seeing some of these animals!
<b>Small/Fine Motor Skills</b>	A simple rattle can build your child's fine motor skills. Place a rattle in your baby's hand so they can feel and sense the object. Lightly shake the rattle and move it from the right side of your baby to the left so his eyes can follow it. By 3-5 months he should be reaching for the rattle and be able to grasp it by 6 months.	Using a funnel, fill regular sized balloons (two each) with different materials such as: coffee grounds, rice, sand, baby powder, play-doh, dried beans, sugar, marbles, cornstarch, salt, slime or gel and/or sand. While your child squeezes and touches each balloon, have them match the balloons with the same materials inside. *Never leave your child alone with balloons.	Make this lion craft together! Have your child find a cyclinder that they can trace to make the outline of the face. Next, give them orange paint on a plate and a plastic fork. Have them dip the fork in the paint and make the mane of the lion! Use a marker for the face. 

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<b>Large/Gross Motor Skills</b>	<p>Like the Gorilla, your infant may find swinging to be soothing. You can swing your baby in your arms or use a motorized swing. Just be sure that the seat is fully reclined and limit swinging to an hour or less a day. If your baby soothes themselves to sleep, turn off the swing and always supervise your baby while in the swing.</p> 	<p>On the front of the book the zookeeper is tiptoeing. Play follow the leader as you imitate the movements of each of the animals in the story. You can start by tiptoeing like the zookeeper. By 24-30 months your child should be able to imitate you walking on tiptoe. For added fun try the following movements! (Elephant: hands together and swing arms like the trunk of elephant/Lion: prowl on all 4's/Mouse: scurry fast on your feet) Be creative and create your own movements with your child.</p>	 <p>Try different animal yoga poses like the giraffe above! Yoga helps refine coordination and balance and develops focus and concentration. Alternate between still yoga poses of each animal and animals on the move. For example, after the giraffe yoga pose you can both gallop like a giraffe.</p>
<b>Self-Help Skills</b>	<p>The armadillo has a bottle in his enclosure. Your baby will have the skills necessary for holding their own bottle by 6 months. However, even though your baby can hold her own bottle, don't be tempted to prop the bottle. Propped bottles can lead to over eating, possible choking, tooth decay and increases the risk of ear infections. Instead, use feeding time to cuddle and bond so she feels safe and secure.</p>	<p>Around the age of 2, your child will enjoy his independence of opening doors by turning the knob. To practice, wash out empty peanut butter and/or mayonnaise containers and the lids. Give your child a variety of sizes to practice turning the lids on and off. The smaller lids will be a better fit for his hand. You may have to show him how. Make it more interesting by hiding a special treat inside!</p>	<p>Your preschooler will enjoy making their own breakfast. Make these "bear" pieces of toast by allowing your child to spread peanut butter on toast. He will also enjoy slicing the banana with a plastic knife. Use raisins for the eyes and nose!</p> 
<b>Social-Emotional Skills</b>	<p>Reading aloud to your baby is a wonderful shared activity that can begin at birth. Reading aloud forms a connection between the love you share with your baby and a love for books. For young infants, choose books that have contrasting colors and vivid pictures. For older infants, choose books that have lift-the-flap pictures and different textures. Every day, create a love of reading while you bond with your baby by sharing books!</p>	<p>Use the filled balloons from the matching activity in the fine motor section as a calming tool while reading a book or traveling in the car. Have your child choose their favorite texture. Squeezing and/or stretching the balloons may help relieve anxiety or stress in your child. *Never leave your child alone with balloons.</p> 	<p>Is your child waking up in the middle of the night? Some children will wake when they transition through the different sleep cycles. Try this...after your child has been sleeping for a while, go in her room and give her a kiss on the cheek, rub her back, or cover her up. DON'T wake her but just rouse her a little. This brings them out of their sleep slightly, which is just enough to make them fall back into a deep sleep and hopefully sleep through the night.</p>

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)