



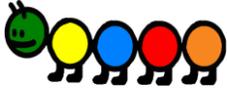
Play, Learn, and Read at Home

Developmental Activities for kid's birth to five

Story this month: Ten Little Caterpillars by Bill Martin Jr.

Focus Skills for parents: Paired Reading: before you turn each page, let your child guess which number comes next.

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
Problem-Solving Skills	Between the ages of 6 and 9 months your infant will develop a skill called object permanence. Simply stated, a child learns that an object continues to exist even when they can not see it. Use a stuffed animal, butterfly, caterpillar or glowworm and hide it under a blanket. Let your child watch you hide it and then encourage him/her to pull away the blanket to find the toy.	Counting is a skill that toddlers become interested in. Counting by rote means reciting the numbers in order. Around 2 ½ to 3 years of age a child begins to count to three then progresses to five and between ages 4 and 5 counts to 10. Count the objects as they appear on the page (i.e. leaves, flowers, fruit). Count other things up to 10 such as spoons, cups etc.	Preschool age children are beginning be able to retell stories and explain events. Highlight for your child the basis steps of becoming a butterfly: egg, caterpillar, cocoon, and butterfly. Go to the library and check out other books about the life cycle of a butterfly to view actual pictures. If you are really adventurous, plan a trip to the Meijer Gardens to visit the butterfly exhibit.
Language/Communication Skills	Use an old sock and draw some eyes on to make your own caterpillar puppet. Pick up a few plastic fruits for your child to “feed” the puppet. Between 7 and 12 months your infant should be interested in responding to the “give me” command when provided with a visual cue such as an outstretched hand. Extend your hand with the sock puppet and encourage your child to pick up any item and release it into the puppets mouth. Praise your child and provide simple language such as, “Eat apple, yum, yum.” 	Let’s go shopping!! For this activity you will need to cut out pictures of fruits from the weekly store flyer and paste them on index cards. Take your child to the store, place them in the cart and give them one of the index cards. Go to the fruit section and look for the item. When you find it point and model, “I see an apple,” and encourage your child to imitate it. If you choose to buy some, remember to count how many you put in the bag. 	As your child gets older (4 or 5) they will need to use language items that they have stored in their brains to solve problems and answer questions. List out loud all of the different things the caterpillars did during the story. What animals did they meet? Then close the book and with no visual cues, ask your child to name as many foods that they like to eat. Practice this skill with other categories, such as things you wear, things you ride on, names of animals, things in your kitchen, etc. 

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
Small/Fine Motor Skills	<p>Transferring an object from one hand to another is a skill most infants develop between 5 ½ to 7 months. Use a small rattle and hold it out to one side for the baby to grasp. See if he/she will transfer it to the other hand. Try it both right to left and left to right. Play this game while the baby lies on his/her back and while in supported sitting.</p> 	<p>Many children at this age are mastering self-feeding, using eating utensils, and even practicing with writing utensils. Make a caterpillar by using puff balls or cotton balls and glue them onto a piece of paper. You can even use small circle stickers. Try having children make a pattern or use tweezers to pick up the materials. Help them to strengthen hand muscles by squeezing the glue bottle or dipping the puff balls into a small bowl of glue.</p>	<p>By three years of age your child should be able to copy a circle when given a model. Give your child a model to copy several circles in a row to make their own caterpillar. Have them color it, cut it out and place on a large piece of paper. Use store ads to have your child rip around food pictures for the caterpillar to eat and paste those on the collage.</p> 
Large/Gross Motor Skills	<p>Between 8 and 9 months most babies are interested in crawling forward. This may be a “combat” crawl with their belly on the ground. Between 9-11 months, your child will progress to crawling using his hands and knees. Use a favorite toy to entice your child to crawl to get it.</p> 	<p>Become a butterfly with your child. Toddlers enjoy imitating actions. Get ribbons or streamers and walk quickly around waving your arms up and down with the streamers pretending to be a butterfly.</p> 	<p>Have your child act out the life cycle of a butterfly. Curl up like a ball and become the egg lying on a leaf. Turn into a caterpillar and crawl around and then crawl into a sleeping bag for the “cocoon”. Next pop out of the cocoon and give your child ribbons or streamers to fly around moving their arms up and down like a butterfly.</p>
Self-Help Skills	<p>Around the ages of 8 to 13 months your child should have an interest in feeding themselves simple finger foods. Cut up small pieces of bananas or slightly cooked apples for your child to feed themselves.</p>	<p>Make ants on a log snack together. Cut a banana in half down the middle and then in half again to make 4 pieces. Have your toddler spread peanut butter on it with a small table knife. Next allow the child to place small raisins on the banana.</p>	<p>Make a fruit salad together using as many of the fruits in the story as possible. Allow your child to cut pieces of apple and different melons. Encourage your child to scoop out some salad with a spoon to serve others.</p>
Social-Emotional Skills	<p>Caterpillar There was a little caterpillar crawling all about. He worked and he worked without a doubt. (Index finger wiggling) Wrapping himself in a snug cocoon. Waiting and waiting, will it be soon? (Cover index finger with other hand.) Look, he’s coming out, my oh my! For now he’s become a beautiful butterfly. (Cross thumbs and let fingers be butterfly wings).</p>	<p>Fuzzy Wuzzy Caterpillar Fuzzy Wuzzy Caterpillar Into a corner will creep (make fingers creep) He’ll spin himself a blanket And then go fast asleep (Rest head on hands. Close eyes.) Wakes up by and by. (Children wake-up) To find he has wings of beauty changed to a butterfly. **Try these finger plays with your child. You should do it and they will anxiously anticipate the emergence of the butterfly.</p>	<p>Get out your child’s baby book when they were an infant and toddler. Talk about what they looked like and were able to do then and as compared to what they look like and are able to do now. Talk about the difference, how much they changed and what a beautiful butterfly they are becoming.</p> 
Outside Activities	<p>Children’s sensory awareness is developing leaps and bounds at this age. Take your child on walks often to let them observe colors, feel the breeze on their body and changes in the temperature. Talk about the colors and objects that you observe out loud.</p>	<p>Take your child outside and pretend to be different animals. Fly like a butterfly, crawl like a caterpillar. Pretend to be other animals like a grasshopper or a bird.</p> 	<p>As children are introduced to nature, they become more curious about the world around them and their creativity and imagination flourish. While outside, use scavenger hunt clues to help notice different characteristics. Tell them to find something green, something soft, or something that is a living thing.</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