



Play, Learn, and Read at Home

Developmental Activities for Kid's Birth to Five

Story this month: The Apple Pie Tree by Zoe Hall

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
Problem-Solving Skills	Children around 8-10 months are able to problem solve by finding hidden objects. Knowing an object exists even though it is hidden is called object permanence. Spread two washcloths out on the floor next to each other. As your child watches, place an apple under one of the washcloths so it is completely hidden. Once you hide the apple prompt your child to find the apple. You may try to use three washcloths, once they master two.	By 15-19 months children are able to match objects by finding a toy from a group of three objects that match the one being displayed. Gather three objects such as an apple, plastic egg, and shoe and place them in a pile. Then have one of each of those objects for yourself. Show your child a certain object and ask your child to find that object from their pile. Other objects you may use are silk flowers, a bowl, socks, bananas, a teddy bear, etc.	Children at this age enjoy sorting different objects. By 36 months your child should be able to sort objects by color. Gather a variety of apples: red, yellow, and green and ask them to sort the apples into three piles by color. They should also be able to point to a color when named. After your child finishes sorting the apples, ask your child, "Can you point to the red pile?" Proceed in asking them to point to the other two colors.
Language/Communication Skills	Babies are continuously listening to the sound of your voice. They are also tuning into all the words you are saying. Take your child outdoors, and when you see a bird, point and say, "Bird." "Birds say 'tweet, tweet.'" Repeat this phrase each time you see a bird. After saying this, you may pause and allow your child to repeat the sounds you made. You may also point to the birds in the story and say the same phrase.	Children learn names of objects in their world when adults point them out. Point to a particular object and identify it by naming it. You may want to repeat the word and allow your child to imitate your action. Some of the objects you may point out are trees, airplanes, birds, flowers, snow, rain, fire trucks, mailbox, rock, grass and more. The more objects you are able to point out the more their vocabulary will grow.	The book highlights each of the four seasons. Talk with your child about the types of things that occur during each season (i.e. leaves growing, snow, etc.) After discussing them, make a season collage. Take a piece of construction paper and divide it into four squares, writing the name of a season in each one. Using new and old magazines look for pictures that correlate with the different seasons. Cut them out and place them on the paper. Hang the paper on the refrigerator and add the pictures as the season's change.
Small/Fine Motor Skills	Children love to unwrap things. Babies between 10.5-12 months are able to unwrap a loosely wrapped object using both hands. Wrap an apple using tissue paper or a paper towel with your child watching you. Sit the wrapped apple in front of your child and ask them to unwrap it. First give your child the chance to unwrap the apple without helping them. If they are not showing any interest with the apple in a few minutes you may encourage them by starting to peel the paper off. Keep doing this until they begin to do it on their own. You may repeat the activity using different objects and different textures to wrap the objects.	By 33 months and older, children should be able to string beads by pulling the string out through the other side of the bead after threading it. Sit down with your child and make a bird feeder using Cheerios and a pipe cleaner. Using a pipe cleaner makes it easier for your child to put the Cheerios on. Provide your child with a piece of pipe cleaner and a handful of Cheerios on the table or in a bowl. Have your child string the Cheerios on the pipe cleaner. You may need to help them at first, but after repeating this skill a few times, they should be able to do this on their own. Once they have put on their Cheerios, take them outside and hang it on a tree, by wrapping the pipe cleaner around a limb. They now have their very own bird feeder!	Sit down and make a bird feeder with your child. Give your child a corn cob or use a finished toilet paper roll. Also provide bird seed, peanut butter and a butter knife. Have your child spread peanut butter on the corn cob with the butter knife. You may want to hold the corn cob for them while they spread the peanut butter. After your child finishes spreading the peanut butter, put bird seed on a piece of wax paper and have them roll the corn cob in the bird seed. After your child is finished rolling, tie a piece of yarn around the end of the corn cob and take outside and hang it from a tree. Now that your child has their bird feeder, it will be fun to talk to them about what kinds of birds they see eating off the bird feeder.

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Large/Gross Motor Skills	By allowing your baby floor time you are helping them strengthen their muscles which will aid them in performing many skills. By 2-4 months, your baby should be able to hold their chest up off the floor by placing weight on their forearms. Place your baby on their stomach on the floor. Hold a stuffed animal, such as a teddy bear or a toy that rattles in front of your child. Slowly move the toy up so your baby will move with the toy and raise their chest. You may want to jiggle the toy so they are more interested. Also, try this activity to encourage your baby to roll over from stomach to back, then back to stomach.	Children at this age enjoy doing activities that encourage them to move. Place a pile of apples on the ground then place an empty basket about 5 to 10 steps away from the pile of apples. Encourage your child to bend down and pick up an apple, then walk over to the basket and put the apple in. Around 13-15 months children should be able to reach down by bending their knees then return to the standing position. Other items you may use are leaves, balls, rocks, etc. You may also use a bucket or box to place the items in if you are not able to find a basket.	Get your child to practice jumping. This skill takes a lot of coordination, balance, and muscle strength to perform. Children between 3 1/2 to 4 years should be able to jump forward 2 feet, with their two feet together. Place a pile of leaves on the ground and encourage your child to jump into them. Ask them to jump by putting their two feet together. You may want to imitate this skill for them. Other items your child may jump over are a pile of apples, a sprinkler (like the girl in the story), or a long piece of tape you stick to the ground.
Self-Help Skills	Between 9-12 months you should introduce your child to a spoon. By doing this you are preparing them for self-feeding. Place your child in their high chair and put a couple of spoonfuls of applesauce on their tray. Give your child a spoon to explore. They may treat the spoon as a toy by holding it, banging it on the tray, or putting it in their mouth. Encourage your child to move the spoon in the applesauce by demonstrating. While exploring, they may get some of the applesauce in their mouth.	Between 30-36 months your child should start to use a fork independently. For a special treat, give your child a piece of apple pie that is cut into pieces. Allow them to feed themselves by using a fork. Show your child how to feed themselves by placing the fork into the pieces of pie. At this age, they usually pierce the food with the fork opposed to scooping it.	Around 4 1/2 years children are able to use a knife to spread things. Cut up some apple slices for your child. Put the apple slices and peanut butter on a plate and then give them a butter knife. Encourage your child to spread the peanut butter on the apple slices using their butter knife. Your child may need a little assistance by you by either demonstrating how to spread the peanut butter or just guiding them as they do it. Once they have mastered spreading on the apple you may have them try to spread on a softer food such as a cracker or bread. Other items they may spread are cream cheese, jelly, frosting, etc.
Social-Emotional Skills	Sing this song with your baby: <u>The Apple</u> Up in the apple tree, High off the ground, (arms high in the air) I see an apple So big and round. (make a circle by putting your hands together) I climb up the tree, (climb up a ladder) And hold on tight. (squeeze fists together) I pick that apple (pretend to pick an apple) And take a bite! (pretend to eat an apple)	Throughout the story the little blonde girl carries a teddy bear from place to place. When a child has an object that they use to comfort themselves it is referred to as a transitional object. This is important to your child's development because this object becomes a partial substitute in the child's mind for the parent. This type of behavior happens around 10-13 months. Surround your child with a variety of items such as stuffed animals, a blanket, and soft toys. Your child needs to choose the object on their own before it can qualify as a transitional object.	Go through the story and talk to your child about how the birds take care of their family just like you, as the parent, take care of your family. Point out to your child how the mommy and daddy birds are building a nest for their family, just like your mommy and daddy provided a home for you. Then point out on the other page how the mommy and daddy birds sit and watch over their babies (eggs), just like mommy and daddy watch over you. You may also point out how the mommy and daddy birds feed the babies worms. Ask them if you feed them worms or talk about the food you do feed them.

Additional activities your child may enjoy doing:

- Go to an apple orchard with your child. Have your child pick apples and place them in a bucket or bag. You can talk about the different kinds of apples they pick.
- Bake an apple pie together. Encourage your child to scoop, pour, measure, name ingredients, stir, etc. After you bake the pie, sit down and eat!

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

