



Play, Learn, and Read at Home

Developmental Activities for Kid's Birth to Five

Story this week: Tiptoe Joe by Ginger Foglesong Gibson

Focus Skills for parents: Tiptoe Joe offers great opportunities for picture to word and story correspondence. Help your child to develop the skill by pointing at the picture of the animal when you are about to say the word in the story. See if your child can say the name and show them that they are reading with you!

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
Problem-Solving Skills	<p>Explore sounds like Joe! Hide a toy or some item that makes noise, such as a bell or set of measuring spoons, under a blanket while your baby watches. Reach under the blanket and make the sound. Let him try to find it. Now hide the toy to the side, then behind your baby. Let him look around, then “help” him find it!</p>	<p>Go on a neighborhood walk, collecting things such as rocks and leaves in a small pail or plastic tub. At home, try to put things together into different groups. For example, help your child sort big and little rocks, rocks from leaves, or black rocks from white rocks. Your child will learn about grouping things.</p> 	<p>Encourage your child to tell you about things that happened in the past. You can start with this phrase: “Remember what happened when...(You suggest the event)?” Follow up with questions. “What did you like the best? What happened next? And then what happened?”</p> 
Language/Communication Skills	<p>When you move away from your baby to do other things, keep in touch with your baby through your words. Tell her what you are doing as she follows with her eyes: “I’m over here. I’m picking up the clothes. I’ll be right back.” Now and then step out of sight but continue to talk until you return: “Did you miss me?”</p>	<p>Tiptoe Joe runs into many animal friends on his way. Teach your toddler the sounds that animals make. Read books about baby animals, and play with your toddler by making the baby animal sounds. Later, pretend you are the animal’s parent and your toddler is the baby animal. Call each other with animal sounds. This game can be a lot of silly fun.</p>	<p>There is lots of rhyming in the story Tiptoe Joe. Try this rhyming game. Say a word, such as bake. Ask your child to say a word that rhymes, such as cake. Now it’s your turn: say rake. Help your child if she can’t think of a word: “How about take?” When you run out of rhyming words, try another: “How about cat?” Sometimes you can put two words together: “Fat cat!”</p>
Small/Fine Motor Skills	<p>As soon as your baby can sit alone, she can sit on the floor and play some dropping games. Use a plastic container and a small ball, block, or toy. Let your baby drop the ball into the container. You may need to help her at first. Now dump it out. She will want to try again and again!</p>	<p>Let your little one play with small wooden cubes or blocks. Little plastic containers can be washed out and stacked, too. Show her how to stack one on top of another. Build a tower. Count aloud as you stack the blocks so that she begins to hear the sound of numbers. She’ll love knocking down the tower.</p>	<p>Make a batch of playdough: 2 cups of flour, 1 cup salt, 1 teaspoon oil, 1 cup water. Squish it all up with clean hands. Give your child a flat cookie sheet or placemat with a bit of flour on it to keep dough from sticking. Your child will enjoy pinching, pounding, rolling, and squeezing the dough. Add popsicle sticks or a cookie cutter for more fun!</p>

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Large/Gross Motor Skills	<p>As your baby begins to be more mobile through crawling and walking, she'll want to explore the whole house: "What's under the table? What's behind the chair?" Make sure the areas where she can explore are safe and clean. What good exercise for both of you!</p> 	<p>Take a walk like Joe! With a strip of tape or with chalk, make a line on the floor or outside on the sidewalk. Show your child how to walk along the tape, placing one foot in the front of the other. Encourage your child's new skill. Tell him "You are learning how to balance!" When ready, try tiptoeing like Joe!</p> 	<p>When your child can jump and land with two feet at the same time, show him how to jump over something with a little height of about inches. Start with a book or blocks. See if your child can still keep two feet together: "You jumped high!"</p> 
Self-Help Skills	<p>Encourage your baby to pick up and eat safe foods, such as crackers or cereal bits. You may also give baby her own spoon to hold while you feed her with another spoon. Try taking turns-you pretend to eat a little and then offer a bite to your baby. Baby will understand that feeding herself is the way to go!</p>	<p>Spending time together during mealtimes is incredibly beneficial in so many ways for both parents and children. When the family is at the table for meals, encourage your toddler to eat with his own utensils. He may need a booster seat to reach the table. He can begin to drink from a small plastic cup starting with a small amount. Say "You did it!"</p>	<p>Tell your child he is your special helper. Let him help you wash the clothes, cook, feed pets, sweep, and wash dishes. He can help in some small way with almost everything. Be sure to allow extra time since young helpers may need it. This helping may become part of your child's family chores. Be sure to give a lot of encouragement and keep it fun.</p>
Social-Emotional Skills	<p>Joe was very proud of his new cubs! Rock, walk, or dance and whisper sweet words in your baby's ear. Whispering to your baby helps him to calm down and provides another way to talk in a quiet, loving voice.</p> 	<p>This is a good time to make a routine of reading stories every night before bed. After getting ready for bed, cuddle up to enjoy a favorite book. It is especially good to read with the television turned off. Your child will hear the words and the expression in your voice. This also might be a special time for another member of the family to read with your toddler.</p>	<p>Provide a variety of clothes to play with-nothing fancy, just oversized shirts, scarves, hats, skirts, shoes, or even loose fabric. Choose a theme, such as going to the beach or getting ready for a party. Have your child search for objects or props. Pick out your own outfit once your child has selected hers. Children love to imitate adults in their family.</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. Sources include Ages and Stages and Teaching Strategies Gold. For more information on your child's development visit: www.GreatStartMontcalm.org

