

## **Best Practices and Learning Ideas**

### **Everyday Math**

Math is all around us. Look for opportunities to talk about math as a family and share math stories and games.

- Household activities and chores have built-in math opportunities.
  - Have your child help set and clear the table. They can count, multiply, subtract and divide items based on their age.
  - Folding and sorting laundry provides an opportunity to sort and categorize for young learners and to talk about geometry with older students.
  - Menu and meal planning is a great time to talk about the cost of items and estimation.
  - Cooking together is an opportunity to read, follow directions, and practice fractions. Have older children double or half a recipe and estimate how much they need to make to feed the family. Have younger children measure and estimate.
- When driving, on the bus, or on the train, talk about how far you are going, how much time it will take to get there, count things, skip count, or ask silly questions like “Would it take longer for us, a giraffe or a cheetah to get there?”
- Play card, dice, or board games.
- Create a scavenger hunt for various shapes.
- Use household objects to create math equations and puzzles.
- Work on a puzzle together.
- Use places like the grocery store to weigh, measure, compare prices, and more.
- Challenge each other by creating story problems and sharing how you would solve them.
- Tell math stories and include things your child is interested in.

### **Reading and Storytelling**

Find ways to make reading and storytelling an adventure. Make it something special and enjoyable.

- Have your child find special places to read. Make forts, read while having a snack, pretend you are in different countries, and read with a new accent.
- If your child is a beginning or early reader take turns reading with them with some of these strategies: **My Turn Your Turn** where you take turns reading a paragraph or page. **Choral Reading** where you read at the same time. **Echo Reading** where you read first and your child echoes the same sentence or paragraph you just read. **Act It Out** where you act out the story together or pretend to be characters in the story and read the lines.
- Tell stories together. They can be family stories, stories from when you or they were young, stories you heard when you were a child, build stories together by taking turns coming up with one word or one sentence and passing to the next person.
- Listen to stories or educational podcasts.
- Watch a family movie and talk about the characters, setting, plot. What made it a good story? Did anything in the story remind you of something in your family or life?

## Writing Together

Look for opportunities to write and draw together.

- Keep a family journal.
- Write a story together.
- Create a comic together.
- Write a thank you note.
- Create a play.
- Write a family story or family history after interviewing your family members.
- Create a book all about me and my family.
- Create a timeline about your family.
- Caption and label photographs or drawings.
- Write a poem for someone in your family.
- Create a persuasive presentation on something you care about and what to ask your family about it.
- Talk about your family values and make a family logo together.
- Talk about your Heroes. Draw a picture and tell the story about why they are a hero to you.

## Games to Play

Enjoy oral language and vocabulary games during downtime or while running errands.

- **I Spy** is a game where one person describes something they spy and the other person tries to guess what it is. Make the descriptions as vivid as possible.
- **I'm Thinking Of** is a similar game but the players can describe anything they are thinking or things in an agreed upon category like numbers. For example, "I'm thinking of a number that is bigger than 10 and smaller than 12" or "I'm thinking of a shape that looks like a snake."
- Take turns thinking of rhyming words. Trade off who picks the first word to rhyme, and see how many rhyming words you can come up with.
- Make a tongue twister out of your names like "Sweet **Sally Sue** Sat Sipping Cinnamon Soda."
- Look up prefixes and suffixes and take turns thinking of words that use them. For example, **aqua** makes **aquamarine**, **aqueduct**, **aquatic** or **-ing** makes **going**, **liking**, **feeling**, **tricking**, **tickling**.
- Think of favorite games from your childhood and play with with your child, such as Cat Catching Mice, Catch the Dragon's Tail, Loteria, Bingo, Memory, and more.
- Get moving: Do yoga together, play red light green light, simon says, freeze dance, make an obstacle course or play follow the leader.
- Design a new game together and play it.

## Enjoy the Arts Together

Take time to listen to music and enjoy art together.

- Listen to your favorite music and music you don't like. Talk about why. Try closing your eyes and see what images come to mind when a song is playing.
- Get moving by dancing together, playing freeze dance, or playing musical chairs.

- Write a song about your family together. Make it silly or poetic.
- Draw together.
- Create and build with recycled materials.
- Look up how to create something you are curious about like a paper airplane, magical creature house, etc.

### **Science Experiments**

- Talk about our senses and how they help us understand the world, how we use them to look for evidence, describe the world around us, make words come to life when we write, etc.
- Explore what you are curious about. How can you find information about it? What would you like to learn?
- Plan and try a scientific experiment together.