

“Play is our brain’s favorite way of learning.” -Diane Ackerman

During this time that you have with your children at home remember that play is the work of childhood. This play will look different depending on the age of your child and the concepts that you help facilitate for them. Each teacher has put together resources and concepts that we were planning on teaching in the next few weeks, please utilize these plans as best you can. Learning in the early childhood years looks so different than it does in elementary school. The lessons that our teachers put together require you to get down on the floor and play with your child while introducing them to the concepts you plan. This can be as easy as reviewing colors while playing with Legos, which also teaches math, engineering, fine motor development, shapes, spatial awareness and hand-eye coordination. Play really covers every aspect of learning that we could ever hope for.

Your child’s attention span is probably another aspect that you are becoming more aware of during all this time at home. It might be totally normal for your 4-year-old girl to sit and color in a coloring book for hours on end, but this is not true for every child. At school, all classrooms plan for 15 to 20 minute blocks of time, and we are hopeful to hold the children’s attention for that time. This is all up to the kids though! Sometimes, activities hold the children’s attention and the activity might span for an extra 10-15 minutes, and sometimes they are over it within the first 5. Flexibility is key during this time. Our goal is to develop a love for learning; therefore, we take direction from the kids and have other activities ready to go when they are done with the previous one. Take every day 15 minutes at a time!

The internet is a wealth of knowledge and there are so many blogs and websites out there with all sorts of activities and suggestions. The sheer quantity can be overwhelming! If you are searching online for activities to do with your child use the following key words to narrow down your searches:

- For art activities use the words **Process Art for (age group)**
 - There are a ton of “Product” art projects that produce a paper plate snowman etc. This type of art doesn’t encourage you child to explore the art process and instead focuses on the product that they are creating.
- For science activities use the words **Safe Science Experiments for (age group)**
 - These activities should (in theory) all use child safe materials so that the kids can participate fully. Other experiments using unsafe materials are fine if your child is just watching. Make sure only the adult handles dangerous chemicals or utensils.
- For literacy activities use the words **Sensory Literacy activities for (age group)**
 - Pinterest has a vast amount of literacy activities that include sensory play, which adds a whole other element to learning and helps the brain connect pathways on multiple levels!
- For math activities use the words **Gross Motor Math Activities for (age group)**
 - Combining gross motor into any learning concepts will keep your child engaged and again help the brain connect pathways on more than one level.

These are just a few suggestions to get you started! It is so important to remember that your child will remember this time fondly because of all the time that you get to spend with them on the floor playing or reading books together. Use a mixture of parent facilitated play/learning and free play. During free play if you are seeing behaviors that you need to mitigate, step in and direct the play to something that

is more appropriate and then step back and let their imagination go. Free play is how the child processes what was just experienced. We like to plan for lessons and then free play, in that order, to give the kids time to act out or play the concepts we just taught. Please do whatever works for your child and household. And remember that play should be a majority of the day!

Age appropriate Activities by age:

<https://www.learning4kids.net/play-activities-by-age/>

Khan Academy- online learning by age

<https://khanacademy.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360040167432-How-can-Khan-Academy-be-used-for-remote-learning-during-school-closures->

Article- What is Play Based Learning

<https://www.goodstart.org.au/news-and-advice/october-2016/what-is%C2%A0play-based-learning>

10 ways to facilitate play based learning from home

<https://parentingfromtheheartblog.com/facilitate-play-based-learning-at-home/>