

12 Important Skills that are Helpful for Children Entering Kindergarten

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1. Cutting with scissors

Provide your child with safety scissors and supervise some cutting activities. Try cutting on straight lines and curved lines. Next, try cutting out shapes or just cutting out pictures in magazines.

2. Sorting and grouping

Ask your child to sort things into groups by different characteristics. Start with color, and then try shapes, textures, and sizes. You can use buttons, toys, forks, knives, spoons or whatever group of objects you have.

3. Drawing shapes

Children can trace shapes with writing or drawing instruments. Then they can draw on top of dotted lines until they get the hang of drawing simple shapes like circles, squares, rectangles and triangles. They can make the shapes in sand, salt, and play dough.

4. Writing name

Writing is a very development skill for children and occurs a different rate for all children. Demonstrate to your child how to use a capital letter for the first letter of the first and last name ONLY. It is better to start on unlined paper. They can even draw in sand or salt with their finger. Next have them trace over dotted lines that you have drawn to complete their name. Reversals and shaky letters are very common.

5. Knowing shapes and colors

Children can work toward recognizing most common shapes such as circles, squares, rectangles, and triangles. They should also be able to recognize the basic colors of red, yellow, green, blue, purple, black, brown, white, and pink. Just pointing out common objects and naming the color and shape of the objects can help accomplish this. You can use toys as well as other common household objects. Sorting objects by color and shape will help with this activity.

6. Putting puzzles together

Start with simple shape puzzles with large pieces. This promotes logical thinking as well as shape recognition. Gradually, move to harder puzzles after simple shaped puzzles are mastered. Teach children the process for putting the edges in place first, like colors together, and looking for pieces that might fit together. Puzzles teach children to sit still and think.

7. Listening and literacy skills

Read to your child every night and any other time they will listen. Ask questions about the story as you read. Ask questions about what is happening in the pictures. What will happen next?

8. Environmental print

Early reading includes identifying environmental print. This is the print that is everywhere in our environment-magazines, newspapers, food containers, signs etc. Your child already recognizes many of these symbols and words. Build on this learning, by pointing out print everywhere that is meaningful to your child. The fast food restaurant signs, the name on the cereal box, the cookie box, candy wrappers, and street signs are just a few things to consider. You can cut these out and make collages, art work or just let your child play with them.

9. Reading Readiness

Point out letters and help your child with the name of the letters. They may already recognize these. They do not have to know the sound each letter makes, but that is the next step. **Saying and reading nursery rhymes is VERY helpful in the reading process for children. Read, read, and read with your child everyday!**

10. Math

Grouping and sorting objects, as with the shapes is a great activity. Let the child count groups of objects. They may need to touch each one as they count. Pre-k counts objects 1-10, and verbally 1-30.

11. Learn how to share with others

Allow your child to play with other children and observe them as they do this. Do they snatch and grab toys away? Do they understand what it means to share? Can they play side by side with another child without causing a disturbance? If not, you have some work to do as a parent getting your child ready to work, share, and play with others.

12. Teach your child respect for adults

Please teach your child that a teacher is someone one that is worthy of respect, and that you expect them to listen and obey the teacher. Emphasize that you respect the teacher also. This will go a long way toward helping your child and their attitude about school. We need your help and cooperation to make your child's education a success!

WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN!

