

How Children Learn from the Activities

When you visit your child's classroom, you see a room full of children playing. Like most parents, you probably wonder what your child is learning. To answer your questions, we have made an activities chart. On the left side we've listed typical things children do when they play in each area of the classroom. On the right we've listed the concepts and skills children actually develop from this play.

When Children Do This:

Put blocks in trucks and dump them out

Use blocks and wooden animals to create a zoo

Balance one large block on top of another

Put on dress-up clothes

Pretend to be grown-ups

Separate cups and plates at Clean-up time

Put pegs in a pegboard

Finish a puzzle

Sort pictures that are the same
Make play dough

Gather paper, scissors, and glue for a project

Draw a picture of a person

They Are Learning to:

Understand size, weight, and number concepts (math, science)

Recreate the world around them (geography, social skills)

Control and coordinate muscles (physical coordination)

Use their small muscle skills (self-help) (writing)

Understand their experiences better (abstract thinking)

Group objects in categories (math)

Coordinate the actions of their eyes and hands (reading/writing readiness)

Complete a task (study habits) (self-esteem)

Match and classify (math)
Recognize how materials change (science)

Plan and carry out a task (study habits) (independence)

Use symbols (reading/writing readiness)

When Children Do This:

They Are Learning to:

Make boats sink

Recognize cause and effect
(science, logical thinking)

Play beside other children

Get along with others (social skills)

Pour without spilling

Use their small muscle skills
(physical coordination)

Turn pages of a book from
beginning to end

Read a book from left to right
(reading/writing readiness)

Scribble on paper

Use writing as a means of
communication

Listen to a story and talk
about what happened

Love books, remember details, and
express ideas (language dev.)

Watch bread dough rise or melt butter

Understand that foods can change
their physical states (science)

Follow directions in a recipe that
calls for adding ingredients by
teaspoons, cups, etc.

Understand measurement
(math skills)

Make a salad for the family dinner
or bake muffins for breakfast

Take pride in their accomplishments
(self-esteem)

Create different sounds by putting
more or fewer beans in cans and
shaking them

Explore cause and effect
(science, logical thinking)

Sing or do a finger play with the
other children and the teacher

Participate cooperatively in a group
(social skills)

Find ways of moving across the rug
without their feet touching it

Think creatively to solve problem
(problem solving)

Catch and throw balls

Coordinate eye and hand movements
(physical development)

Talk about changes in plants, people,
and things outside as seasons change

Sharpen observation skills
(science)

Climb on outdoor equipment

Use their bodies in challenging tasks
(self-esteem, reading/writing readiness)