

15 low prep & easy activities for kids at home

These activities are best suited for EYFS & KS1 children.

Turn things around your house into musical instruments. By using words with different syllables you can make many different rhythms and then play them on your pots, pans, baskets or even your bodies! For example: Cat-er-pill-ar, glow-worm, butt-er-fly, bee! Cat-er-pill-ar, glow-worm, butt-er-fly, bee! Cat-er-pill-ar, glow-worm, butt-er-fly, bee! (You get the idea...)

Make a viewfinder (a small square piece of paper with a smaller square cut out of the middle) or binoculars (two toilet roll tubes!) then look around the house for different numbers, letters, shapes or colours.

Older children could make a tally of what they find, or use the viewfinder to focus on something when drawing.

Role play!

Role play is crucial in the development of literacy skills. Take on the role of different favourite characters and make a short play as a family.

Include the family pets! Why not!

Sort or rearrange the cutlery drawer. Mix up the cutlery and ask your child to rearrange the tray, telling you why they have grouped everything as they did.

You could do the same thing with your shoes!

Play I Spy!

Children will race through vocabulary in their minds as they try to figure out the object. You could add to the game by showing the letter.

Alternate between spying with a sound and the letter.

For example, I spy with my little eye something beginning with c (c), or I spy with my little eye something beginning with C (/see/).

Have a singing competition! Whack up the music channel or YouTube karaoke and together sing your hearts out. Not only will it tire them out, they will develop co-ordination and strength through dancing.

Sprinkle flour on the kitchen counter and use a dry paintbrush (or a finger if a paintbrush is not available!) to practice writing numbers and letters correctly.

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Write letters for the teachers or friends back at school to hand out when the children see them. Alternatively, you could keep them in a container and hide in the loft as a time capsule to look back on in years to come.

Become a songwriter.
Use a nursery rhyme or any favourite song and change the lyrics to recreate a new version. Don't forget to make a stage and perform to the audience!

Play sentence building games. Take turns saying one sentence to build a silly story. The next sentence must follow on from the previous.

To make it harder (and more interesting!) limit the number of words allowed to be spoken – you could limit the words to 5, or even 3!

Play the game as above but this time write down the sentence or limited words – check that the letters are written correctly for bonus points!

Learn to tie shoelaces! This doesn't seem like a big deal but it really is. It's a life skill and really by the end of Year 1, children should be able to tie their own laces.

Play Number Games such as Killer 12. This is for 2+ players. Take turns saying up to three numbers. The person who says 12 is out of the game!
Beware, this game could cause competitiveness and tension! But it's all in the name of fun!

For example:

Ben says 1, 2, 3. Tara says 4, 5. Jim says 6, 7, 8. Dan says 9, 10, 11.
Unfortunately it's back to Ben and he would say 12, so he's out!

Take a black felt tip line 'for a walk'. Draw one continuous line on a sheet of paper that loops, wiggles and winds around the page then colour in the spaces.
Get creative!

Make a marble run using different tubes and or rolls of paper.

Can you make a marble run that goes from upstairs to downstairs?