

Daily Learning Planner

*Ideas parents can use to help children
prepare for school.*

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THE
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December • January • February 2015–2016

December 2015

- 1. Cut four shapes from various colors of paper. Make at least two of each shape. Have your child match them.
- 2. Ask your child to tell you what colors come to mind when she thinks about December. Why those colors?
- 3. Hide a toy in a box. Let your child shake the box and guess what's in it.
- 4. Play seasonal music and sing along with your child.
- 5. Put out two groups of toys. Ask your child to tell you which group has more toys in it. Then count the toys together.
- 6. Bake a big batch of cookies with your child. Together, deliver them to neighbors and friends.
- 7. Make a simple bird feeder together. Spread peanut butter on a cardboard tube and roll it in birdseed. Hang it outside.
- 8. Help your child make a necklace by stringing different shapes of pasta in a pattern.
- 9. Talk about healthy food choices. Let your child pick a new fruit to buy.
- 10. With your child, pretend that you are both snowmen.
- 11. Allow your child to invite a friend over. Help him practice greeting his friend at the door and saying hello.
- 12. Ask your child to draw or paint a winter scene on a piece of paper.
- 13. Let your child help prepare dinner. For example, she can tear lettuce.
- 14. Spend some "floor time" with your child. Make a block tower.
- 15. Hide a toy and give your child clues for finding it. For example, say, "Your toy is in the room where we cook and eat."
- 16. Find materials to use with your child to make seasonal decorations.
- 17. Have a "red" day. Wear red. Eat red foods. Look for red everywhere.

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Parents Can Use to Help Children Prepare for School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- 18. Ask your child what he would like to make an annual tradition. Then start it!
- 19. Hug your child—just because you love her.
- 20. Buy plain white wrapping paper and ask your child to decorate it.
- 21. Go for a winter walk. Listen carefully with your child for winter sounds. How are they different from summer sounds?
- 22. Offer your child a new drink. Substitute pineapple for orange juice.
- 23. Have your child roll and bend things.
- 24. Give your child play dough, a rolling pin and some cookie cutters. Let him cut out "cookies."
- 25. On days when the weather doesn't permit outdoor play, encourage indoor exercise.
- 26. Help your child make a collage out of gift wrap or holiday cards.
- 27. With your child, wear different hats all day. Pretend to be someone new each time you change hats.
- 28. Let your child cross each day off a calendar as she goes to bed.
- 29. Suggest that your child try a new self-care skill. Example: Putting on his own shoes.
- 30. Children are often willing to try new foods if they can "dip." Give your child carrots to dip in salad dressing.
- 31. Talk with your child about the best things that you each remember about the past year.



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January 2016

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- 1. This is the first day of the year. Explain to your child the meaning of *first*. For example, breakfast is the first meal of the day.
- 2. Together, think about something nice to do for someone—and do it!
- 3. Ask your child to think about things people do in the snow. Examples: build a snowman, ice skate, wear mittens, go sledding.
- 4. Ask your child to “interview” one of her stuffed animals. Record it or write it down for her.
- 5. Make music with your child using pots, pans and kitchen utensils.
- 6. Serve “backwards” meals today. Have pizza for breakfast and pancakes for dinner.
- 7. Talk with your child about time. Explain there is a time to get up, a time for lunch, a time for bed.
- 8. Let your child see you reading today. Mention to him how much you are enjoying it.
- 9. Talk about *happy*, *sad*, and *angry* feelings. Can your child make a happy face? What could she say if she were angry?
- 10. What is your child’s favorite winter activity? Plan to do it together.
- 11. Model a healthy habit for your child today.
- 12. Play your child’s favorite songs and move to the music together.
- 13. Set out a small pile of coins and, as you supervise, let your child sort them. Name the coins for him.
- 14. Show your child where the address, return address and stamp go on an envelope.
- 15. Review with your child the rules for crossing the street.
- 16. Practice *leading* and *following*. Take turns being the leader.



- 17. Help your child make a noisemaker. Put dried beans in an aluminum pan and staple another pan on top.
- 18. Read together in an unusual place—under the table, on the stairs.
- 19. Let your child hold an ice cube. Explain that ice is a form of water.
- 20. Challenge your child to identify whether statements are *true* or *silly*. Example: “I wear a coat to go swimming.” (Silly.)
- 21. Look at the stars tonight. Can your child find the Big Dipper?
- 22. Give your child three reasons why being with him makes you happy. Ask him to give you three reasons he likes to be with you.
- 23. Bounce a ball to teach counting. Bounce once and say “one.” Bounce twice and say “one, two.”
- 24. Help your child follow a simple recipe.
- 25. Gather some water-safe objects. Ask your child which she thinks will float or sink in water. Supervise while she tests her theories.
- 26. Have a “No TV” day. Read or play games instead.
- 27. With your child, use sock puppets to have a conversation.
- 28. Practice the names of the days of the week with your child.
- 29. Tell your child a riddle. “I bark and wag my tail. What am I?” (A dog.)
- 30. Have a make-believe snowball-throwing contest inside! Try tossing rolled up socks.
- 31. Trace your child’s shoe onto construction paper. Let her use crayons or markers to turn it into a picture.

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February 2016

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Parents Can Use to Help Children Prepare for School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- 1. Make sure your child can tell you his first and last name.
- 2. Teach your child a song that was your favorite when you were her age.
- 3. Form a two-person band today. Let your child use cardboard tubes and tissue boxes to create sounds.
- 4. Make a big fort with your child out of sofa cushions.
- 5. Encourage your child to use adjectives. Say, “Fire is” Supply the word *hot* if needed.
- 6. Visit the post office with your child and mail valentines today.
- 7. Pretend you and your child are taking a trip together. How would you get there? What would you bring?
- 8. Help your child make a list of things that are special to him.
- 9. Make a paper crown and let your child play “Ruler” for a day. What laws would she make?
- 10. Plan to visit a farm or business with your child before spring.
- 11. Teach your child about uppercase and lowercase letters. Show him how each letter can be written differently.
- 12. Help your child make a family collage. Find pictures of things you do as a family, such as eat meals. Glue them on paper.
- 13. Visit your local library today. Sit in a cozy chair and read a few books with your child. Then check some out to take home.
- 14. Tell and show family members that you love them today.
- 15. Create a “me” book together. Your child can include drawings, pictures and keepsakes.
- 16. Read an age-appropriate joke book with your child today.

- 17. Plan a “No TV” night. Do a puzzle or sing songs together.
- 18. Play musical water glasses. Fill glasses with different levels of water and let your child tap on them with a metal spoon.
- 19. Find several boxes of different sizes. Have your child line them up from *smallest* to *largest*.
- 20. Spring begins in less than a month. Talk about changes you’ll see.
- 21. Cook with a book! For example, read *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, then make a bowl of porridge.
- 22. Have your child copy the way you clap your hands. Make the rhythms more complicated each time.
- 23. Explain to your child that reusing things helps our Earth. Take recyclables to the appropriate location.
- 24. Praise your child when she gives her best effort. Talk about how praise makes people feel.
- 25. How many foods can your child think of that are red? Green?
- 26. Talk with your child about how it feels to apologize when you’ve done something wrong.
- 27. Watch a children’s movie as a family. Talk about the characters.
- 28. Give your child a new vegetable or fruit to try today!
- 29. Play a game of hide and seek with your child.



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