Activity Cards

Ideas for adults and children to play and learn together wherever you go
Sing and Dance With Your Family

Words to know:
- dance, song,
- clap, sister, brother, elder, young-
er, middle, older

Activity: learn the songs and dances from your family's culture

- Teach your child to clap to the music, then move to the music.
- You can also play a CD or cassette of music to practice the song.
- Sing the song when you are in the car, as your child is putting away toys, or before bedtime.
- Sing the song several times until your child is familiar with it.
- Slowly, first, speak the words so your child can hear them, then sing then.
- Reach your child some songs that you sang as a child.
- You can record singing the song together and then listen to your voice.
At the Grocery Store or Farmers Market

Words to know: colors, fruit, vegetable, names of different fruits and vegetables

Activity: find fruits and vegetables that are the same or different colors

- Point out and name the different fruits and vegetables at the market.
- Ask your child what color they are.
- Then ask, “A banana is yellow, what other fruit is also yellow?” or “An apple is red, what other fruit is also red?”
- Have your child choose a fruit or vegetable by saying “Pick a green vegetable you want to eat tonight.”
- At home, have your child help you sort the fruits and vegetables by color before putting them away.
Fill two large bowls with water, one with hot water and one with cold water. Put the bowls on a tray or folded towel. Put some ice cubes into each bowl.

Activity:
- Let your child play with the ice cubes in the water. Can she pick up the ice with a spoon? Show how the ice cubes float in the water.
- Ask your child, “Which water melts the ice faster, hot or cold?”
- When the ice cubes are all melted, ask, “How does the water feel?”
- Later, let your child play with cups and spoons in the water.

Words to know: water, hot, ice, warm, cold, ice cube, melt, frozen, float, wet, dry.
Shapes at the Store or Market

Words to know: square, circle, rectangle, triangle, shape, same, different

Activity: find shapes at the store or market

As you choose items, name the shape. For example, “This box of cereal is in the shape of a rectangle.” Give it to your child to place in the shopping cart.

As you continue choosing items, ask your child to name the shape. “What is the shape of this?”

As you shop, help your child to point out the shapes he recognizes.

Look for things made up of different shapes:
- Round pizza in a square box
- Round cap on a rectangle shaped carton of juice
- Square sandwich cut into triangles
Have your child draw a picture of the food you prepared together. There are ingredients, stir the pot, break the eggs or roll out the dough. Show your child how you prepare the food. Have him help add the ingredients. Let your child smell or taste the spices you use.

While you prepare the food, talk with your child about how you ate this food when you were young. While you prepare the food, ask your child about how you ate this food when you were young.

* When cooking a meal or special food, ask your child to help you.

**Words to Know:**

- names of foods
- Activity: learn about the foods your family eats
- your family eats

**Cooking Together**

- yellow
- purple
- white
- black
- orange
- blue
- green
- red
- brown

- Activity: Learn about the foods your family eats
- Words to Know: names of foods
Colors at the Store or Market

Words to know: red, blue, black, yellow, green, white, orange, purple, brown

Activity: find colors at the store or market

- Each time you go to the store, look for three colors. For example, say “Today we’re going to look for things that are red, yellow or blue.”
- As you choose items, tell your child what color it is. “This is a red apple.” “This banana is yellow.” “This box of cookies is blue.”
- As you shop, ask your child to point out other items of those colors.
- Ask your child to show you five different things that are the same color. Red things: apple, salsa, tomato, ketchup, beans.
Playing at Home

Words to know: tent, sheet, blanket, house, yurt, home, pretend, home, boat

Activity: make a pretend house and play in it together

- Move two or three chairs near each other. Drape a sheet or blanket over the chairs, making a tent or "pretend house."
- Have your child bring pillows, toys, and books into his "house" and play. Crawl in and spend time with your child.
- Talk about how people live in different kinds of homes: houses, tents, yurts, apartments, trailers, boats, adobe, etc.
- Have your child pretend to be living in different kinds of homes: What would it be like to live in a tent, a boat, or a trailer?
In the Car or Bus

Words to know: stop, go, walk, yield, parking, hospital, stop light, enter, exit

Activity: find and understand traffic signs

- As you drive or ride, point out the traffic signs as you see them.
- As you slow or stop for a light, explain to your child why you are stopping. “See the stop sign? That means we must stop.” “See the yield sign? That means we must slow down and let other cars go first.”
- When your child is familiar with the signs, ask her to look for the signs and point them out by name when she sees them.
- Ask your child what color the signs are.
- Ask your child what shape the signs are.
Walking Through Your Neighborhood

**Words to know:**
- shadow, sun, sky, cloud, long, short, tall, arms, legs

**Activity:** looking for shadows, making shadows, seeing how the sun moves during the day

- Go outside again at a later time of the day and see if your shadows look the same. Can you see shadows when it’s cloudy?

- Point out how other objects make shadows.
- Move your arms, hands, fingers, legs, and see how the shadows change.
- You can run away from your shadow.
- Move around, making your shadow get longer, taller, shorter. See if you can run away from your shadow.
- Point out how you both make shadows as you walk.
- On a sunny day, take a walk with a child through the neighborhood.

**On a sunny day, take a walk with a child through the neighborhood.**

(make drawings of children making shadows and looking for them)
At the Clinic, Dentist or Doctor’s Office

Words to know: chair, door, sink, desk, table, window, book, nurse, doctor, dentist, mirror, scale, x-ray, drill, thermometer, lamp, bandage

Activity: talk about what you see in the waiting room and exam rooms

- While waiting in the lobby, ask your child to tell you what he sees.
- Ask your child to count how many chairs, lamps or books are in the lobby.
- In the exam room, ask your child to tell you what she sees in the room. Help her name the items that are new.
- When the dentist, doctor, or nurse comes in, ask them to name the things they use during the appointment: thermometer, mirror, drill, light, x-ray, sink, bandage, scale.
Going Shopping

Words to know: T-shirt, doll, cup, pillow, lamp, match, colors, bowl, shoes, basket, scarf, toy blanket

Activity: Find things of different colors

Basket, a yellow cup or a pink blanket?
Things that can be found in the store. Can your child see a brown

As you find these items, ask your child to name the color of other

Then ask your child to help you find something. Ask him to help you

Practice naming the colors until your child knows a few.

Show your child a shirt and ask, “What color is this?”

When you visit a shop, ask your child what different colors she sees

When you visit a shop, ask your child to help you find a blue T-shirt, a red scarf or green shoes.
At the Laundromat

Words to know: pair, socks, pants, shirt, clothes, washer, dryer, clean, wet, dry, fold, size

Activity: sort and match the same and different kinds of clothes

- Explain to your child that you need help sorting the laundry from the dryer.
- Give your child a pile of socks. Ask her to match the same kind, color and size of socks together.
- Then ask your child to put all the T-shirts together by size.
- Ask your child to find the clothes that are his. Show him how to fold them. Don’t worry if your child doesn’t fold the clothes “right.” With practice, he will learn how to do this.
Exploring your Neighborhood

Words to know:
above, on top of, below, under, beside, next to, behind, near, far, of, below, under, beside, next to, above, on top

Activity: describe the world around you

As you both get better at guessing, try some silly descriptions too: „I see something bigger than a car that eats trash.“ (a garbage truck).

Guess what it is.

Let your child try to describe something she sees and see if you can guess what it is.

Once your child guesses, try something harder to see.

Start with something easy, like a large object such as a car or house. Can you guess what it is?

Tell your child, „I am going to describe something I see. Tell me if you can guess what it is. Once your child guesses, try something harder to see.

Tell your child, „I am going to describe something I see. Tell me if you can guess what it is.

Take a walk with your child around your neighborhood. As you walk, let your child try to describe something she sees and see if you can guess what it is.

As you both get better at guessing, try some silly descriptions too: „I see something bigger than a car that eats trash. A garbage truck.“
Listen to Different Things

Words to know: listen, hear, sound, bird, dog, cat, car, truck, wind, rain, noise

Activity: as you are driving, riding, or walking, talk about what you can hear around you

- Listen for birds, dogs, cats. Tell your child what you are hearing and ask him if he can hear it also.
- “Do you hear the wind or rain?”
- Describe or make the sounds you hear. “The wind goes whoosh.” “The dog is barking.” “The cars go beep, beep, vroom.”
Making Choices

Things to know: When children begin school, they will often be asked to make choices. If they have practice with this at home, they will find it easier at school.

Activity: Choose between doing two things.

- While getting dressed, ask “Will you button your jacket by yourself, or do you want me to help you?”
- Before reading together, ask “Which book will we look at first?”
- Have your child choose a song for you to sing together.
- At bedtime, ask “Which will you do first, wash your face or brush your teeth?”
What Will Happen Next

Words to know:  what, will, happen, next, going, store, doctor, friend, relative, home

Activity:  talk about what you do and where you go

- When you go out together, tell your child where you are going and what you will be doing.
- Ask your child what will happen next when you,
  ...go shopping at a store, “What do you think we will buy?”
  ...go to the doctor or clinic, “What will happen first when we get there?
  ...visit friends or family, “When we visit Grandma, what will she do?”
  ...are back at home, “When we get home, then what happens?”
Talking About Your Day

Activity: Remember and talk

Ask your child to describe her favorite part of the day. "What did you like doing today?" Ask your child to add details. "I sat in the back seat." "At the store I saw my friend." "The bananas were green." "I went down the slide at the playground." Tell the story of your day. "First we got in the car, then we went to the store, then we bought bananas, then we went to the playground." Ask your child to tell what you did. "I went down the slide at the playground." After you come home from shopping, work, school, or a visit to a friend or relative, talk with your child about what you did. 

Words to Know: Remember, talk, first, then, did, story, describe, day, favorite, like