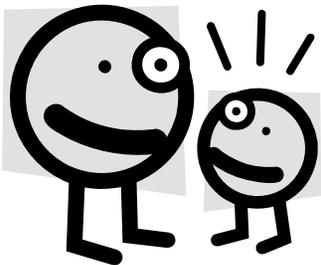
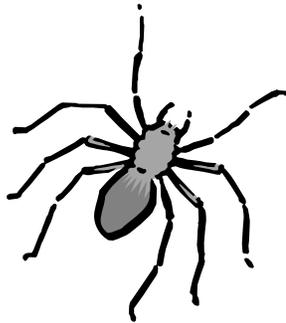


Greetings!

This is the third in a series of four bulletins designed to help parents get their children (ages 3–6) ready to succeed in school. As a parent, you can help your children build the skills they need to do well in math, science, reading, and other school subjects. This third bulletin focuses on building science skills. As in past bulletins, we offer some tips on how to work on science with your child. We also give you a fun scientific experiment to try at home.

You can create a science-friendly home by doing a few simple things:

- Encourage your children to think about objects according to their size or color. Ask your child questions like “Which is bigger?” and “Which two of these are the same?” whenever you can. When you take a walk, ask your child to observe leaves or insects and group the ones that are similar.



- Encourage your child to notice the constant changes in the natural world. Ask your child questions like, “What happens to breakfast cereal when we pour milk on it?” and “Once water is turned into ice cubes, can it be turned back into water? If an apple is cut into slices, can the slices be changed back into the whole apple?”



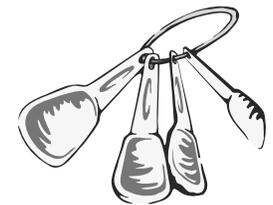
- When your child asks you questions like, “Where do rainbows come from?” “What are clouds made of?” or “Why do the leaves change color?” ask him/her what he/she thinks the answer is. This will make your child comfortable with trying out new ideas. Once you've talked about your answers to the question, try to look up the answer with your child in a book.



- If you have a scientific hobby, such as keeping fish in an aquarium or working on cars, share your hobby with your child. Let your child help you when you work on your hobby. Talk to with your child about what you're doing.

Here are some simple things you can do every day to help your child build science skills:

- Put up a birdfeeder, and watch to see which birds come to eat. Make a list of all the different kinds of birds you see.
- Take your child to visit oceans, swamps, parks, airports, etc., and talk about what you find there. All these places can be a great chance to learn about science.
- Cooking can be a great time to introduce your child to scientific ideas. Let your child help you in the kitchen. Kids of all ages love to help measure and mix. Help your children learn to read measurements as the ingredients are added to the recipe. As you cook, talk about how the ingredients change—from liquid to solid, from dry to wet, from small to big, and so on.



Try this fun activity to work on observation—an important science skill!

Magnifying Glass Magic Activity¹

Looking at things up close is an important scientific skill. A magnifying glass can help us see things we wouldn't have even known were there. A magnifying glass can also help us see how objects are the same and how they are different.

Materials you need:

- A magnifying glass
- A notebook



What to do together: Use your magnifying glass to see:



- What's hidden in soil or under leaves and rocks.
- What's on both sides of leaves.
- Different patterns of snowflakes or insect wings.
- How many different kinds of bugs you can find in the soil.



Encourage your child to draw pictures of what you see in the notebook. Help your child to write descriptions, as well.

¹ This activity was adapted from: Office of Educational Research and Improvement Programs for the Improvement of Practice (1991). *Helping your child learn science*. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://www.2think.org/hycls.shtml>

Ready, Set, Go ...:

Ready, Set, Go ... Getting Children Ready for School is a series of four educational bulletins about school readiness for parents of children aged three to six. The purpose of the bulletins is to help parents prepare their young child to enter school. The bulletins focus on four areas: language/reading, math, science, and art. The bulletins offer general advice on how parents can help their child develop skills in these important areas through fun activities.

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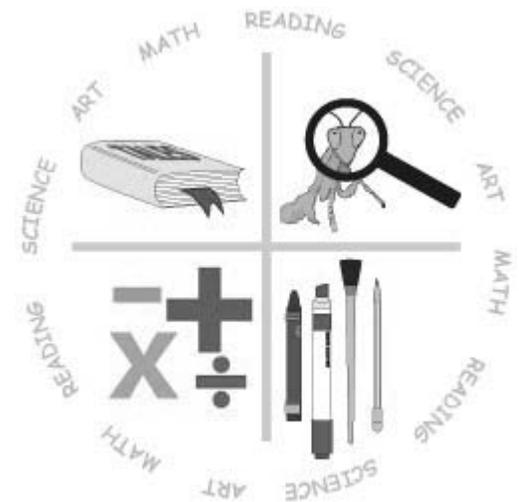
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Ready, Set, Go ...

Getting Children Ready for School



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