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## **Preschool Activities**

**By Leilani Mairet**

Preschool activities are for children between the ages of two and five years of age, pre-kindergarten. Preschoolers should have a variety of different activities to encourage proper mental and physical development. Emphasis needs to be placed in the focus areas of both fine and gross motor development, dramatic play, pre-reading skills, pre-writing skills, critical thinking skills, and social skills, as well as others.

Fine motor skills should be incorporated into preschool activities. Fine motor skills are working with the small muscle groups and are the most forgotten. This will help define your child's writing skills, cutting skills, etc. in the future. Fine motor skills activities can include, sand and water play, cutting activities, placing objects into small containers and areas, hand puppet plays with songs and many others.

Gross motor skills should be incorporated into preschool activities. Gross motor skills are working with the large motor areas and are most often worked on. These activities can be achieved by playing on the playground, throwing and kicking a ball, jumping, skipping, hopping, and any activity that requires the use of your large muscle groups.

Dramatic play incorporated into your child's preschool activities will help nurture your child's development. Dramatic play encourages your child to be creative, think, and reenact situations and scenarios on their own intelligence level. Children should be given props and toys to help them reenact different events for their learning skills.

Pre-reading and pre-writing skills should be incorporated into your child's preschool activities. Some examples of these skills include reading to your child, reciting the ABC's, cutting with scissors, tracing lines with a pencil or crayon, and drawing and creating projects without lines. These pre-reading, pre-writing skills will help your preschooler develop the proper background for future life school skills.

Critical thinking skills should be incorporated into your child's curriculum. Critical thinking skills will help your child become a problem solver in the future. This will help in the areas of both math and science as well as other areas. Let your preschooler figure out different options and strategies to get to the same result. Let them think about the consequences and actions of their decisions.

Social skills are one of the most overlooked strategies in the areas of preschool activities. social skills

include playing with other children, however, the proper way to interact with children and other people should actually be taught. Appropriate behaviors need to be modeled and taught, how to share, how to take turns, how to say please and thank you, how to interact in a group, how to wait for their turn, how to be a gracious loser and a good winner, as well as many others.

In summation, preschool activities are a very important part of your child's growth and educational process. Proper planning and instruction as well as modeling will prepare your child for their educational accomplishments to come. Please choose preschool activities appropriately.

For more information about preschool activities please visit <http://preschool-activities.blogspot.com>

## Is Your Child Ready For Preschool

By Jonathon Hardcastle

Parents know that children do not always follow the experts when it comes to physical and intellectual development. As the closest observers of their individual child's temperament and abilities, parents are the best judges on whether a child is ready for an academic preschool program.

An academic preschool program differs from a daycare program in that it focuses on early learning skills, pre-reading readiness and linguistic development. While there is time for free play, preschool is a learning rather than care giving environment. In past times, preschool programs were designed for children who stayed home with a parent. Children attended preschool two or three mornings a week, spending the rest of the time at home. Today, because so many parents work, preschools have been restructured to full-day programs.

However, many children in the two to three year old age group may not be emotionally mature enough for a full-day academic experience. Younger children frequently get tired and upset after too much stimulation and many still need an afternoon nap. In this case, parents should seek a program that offers academic experiences in the morning and play time, naptime and other, less structured, activities for the rest of the day.

At three, the age most children begin preschool, children have developed the ability to speak in short sentences. At this age, adults can understand about three quarters of the words children say. A functional level of verbal ability can help a child more easily navigate preschool as he or she can ask for help, to use the toilet, or whatever else they may need.

Most schools require that children attending preschool be toilet trained. The consistent ability to use the bathroom during the day is an important part of preschool readiness. While teachers are accepting of accidents, they are teachers and not daycare providers and can't be expected to change diapers. Additionally, children should know how to pull down and pull up their undergarments and to wash and dry their own hands.

Children should also have mastered basic life skills before beginning preschool. Snacks are definitely served at preschool and often lunch is served as well. Your child should be able to manage finger foods and use a regular cup without a spout in order to manage preschool meals. Also, they should be able to put on their own shoes and coat although teachers at this level fully expect to help with buttons and zippers.

Jonathon Hardcastle writes articles for <http://4-edu.net/> - In addition, Jonathon also writes articles for <http://worldof-science.com/> and <http://loveofthearts.com/>

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