

Ready to Homeschool — Six Month Countdown

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WEEK 2: REDUCING TECHNOLOGY AND EXPANDING ATTENTION

Limits on screen time — any type of screen?

Distinguish between technology being used as a tool and as a distraction

Healthy to find other ways to occupy time

As a parent, guide your child(ren) to develop longer attention spans

Educational psychology describes something called “flow” — those instances when a person is so involved in the task at hand that they lose sense of time and just want to persist in what they are working on.

You can read more by looking for the following article:

Nakamura, J., and Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2002). The concept of flow. *Handbook of positive psychology*, 89-105.

Charlotte Mason philosophy — “habit of attention”

“It is impossible to overstate the importance of this habit of attention. It is, to quote words of weight, ‘within the reach of every one, and should be made the primary object of all mental discipline’; for whatever the natural gifts of the child, it is only so far as the habit of attention is cultivated in him that he is able to make use of them.”

Home Education, p. 146

You can read more at the following website

<https://simplycharlottesmason.com/blog/attention-core-values-of-charlotte-mason/>

NOTE: During Week 5, we will discuss *Shepherding a Child's Heart* by Tedd Tripp. Consider now how to locate a copy and read it before, during, or after Week 5.

Activities for Preschoolers
SSBC Women's Retreat
October 2000

The Idea....

You want to create positive memories for your children by spending time together, building a foundation for later family-togetherness. It is especially easy at this point considering that preschoolers generally adore their parents and WANT to be with them, and that usually they HAVE to be with you anyway. Preschoolers are easily entertained because (almost) everything is brand new to them; but be mindful of their short attention spans -- keep things simple, fun and BRIEF. Be prepared with creative ideas, but keep your expectations low since preschoolers are unpredictable. (What you thought would be fun could be scary, too challenging, or boring.) Try to involve everyone: if you have varying age levels, ADAPT for the younger or older as possible. Integrate your faith, if the activity leads into it. You can refer to a related Bible verse or tell a corresponding story from your own life that illustrates a Biblical principle. Most importantly, be there... ALL THERE. Focus your attention on your kids and the activity at hand, and say "no" to distractions or interruptions. These activities will also build an "experience base" that will serve them well as they enter more formal education.

Suggested Resources

- www.preschoolrainbow.org/preschoolers.htm
- www.family.go.com (Click on CraftFinder)
- www.totcity.com
- *Family Fun* magazine, (800)289-4849 or www.familyfun.com
- *Pack-O-Fun* magazine, PO Box 420975/Palm Coast, FL 32142-0975
- *Little Hands Big Fun Craft Book*, by Judy Press, (800)234-8791
- *Before Five in a Row*, by Jane Claire Lambert, 14901 Pineview Dr./Grandview, MO 64030
- *Feed Me, I'm Yours*, by Vicki Lansky, (800)338-2232
- *Pretend Soup*, by Mollie Katzen and Ann Henderson (Tricycle Press, Berkeley, CA)
- *The Bible in Pictures for Little Eyes*, by Kenneth N. Taylor (Moody Press, Chicago)
- Lights, Camera, Interaction! puzzles, (800)284-3948

Planning Ahead

- **Family Nights** -- We set aside a weekly time (about 20 minutes long) to intentionally do a fun activity as a family. These were activities that I'd always envisioned our family doing together, but just never seemed to happen spontaneously. :-)
- **Emergency List (or even kits)** -- Keep a list handy for those times when you need something fun for your child to do FAST! You can also make up kits with all the necessary materials, and just dig out one of those at the appropriate time.

Activity List

It is helpful to brainstorm ahead of time. To jog your memory and creativity, I have listed 60 activities on the back. Add to it.... Draw from your experiences and your interests. What do you (or did you) like to do? Can these be adapted to include kids? (Purchasing equipment to involve kids is not wasteful! It's an investment.)

The "Basics"

- Play-dough and accessories
- Bubbles (small and giant)
- A medium-sized ball (12 in. diameter)
- Sidewalk Chalk
- Paint with Water books
- Treasure Hunts (use pictures)
- Indoor "tent" over the table
- Harmonica

Celebrations and Traditions

- A play nativity set
- Cinco de Mayo festival
- Cemetery for Memorial Day
- Sparklers for July 4th
- Thankfulness tree
- Jack-o-Lantern carving
- Make cards for Grandparent's Day

The Great Outdoors

- Hiking
- Star-gazing/Cloud-watching
- Stroller/wagon rides
- Sports equipment
- Picnic on the lawn
- Wading in a creek
- Fly kites

Chores and Life Skills

- Bake cookies
- Make a piggybank/count money
- Washing the car
- "Manner Games"
- Set the table
- Dress a teddy bear

Learning Readiness

- READ...READ...READ...READ
- Magnifying glass
- Magnets
- Measuring cups with water/sand
- Computer game (*Jumpstart Toddler*)
- Sandpaper ABC's
- Large map or globe
- "School"

Arts and Crafts

- Variety of materials (foil, string, sticks)
- Fabric Transfer Crayons
- Potato Stamping
- Symmetrical-paint butterflies
- Paper-clip-fish & magnetic fishing poles
- Stencils

The Bible

- Act out a Bible Story
- Flannelgraph
- Teach an "Action Bible" song
- Memorize Bible verses
- Involve them in service
- "Devotions" -- Bible story and pray

Puzzles and Games

- Make a puzzle from a magazine picture
- 24-pc. puzzles are a good goal
- Uno (modified)
- Chutes and Ladders
- Candyland
- Memory
- Croquet

Special Outings

- Tulsa Zoo or Gentry Safari
- Camping
- Canoeing (with life jackets!)
- Football game
- Bowling (use the bumpers!)
- Mini golf
- Fun City in Springdale
- Silver Dollar City in Branson
- Natural Falls State Park (OK)

Extended activities

- Plant a garden
- Hatch a caterpillar/butterfly
- Ant Colony
- Remodel :-)
- Child's magazine subscription
- Get a small pet

The "Basics"

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Arts and Crafts

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Celebrations and Traditions

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The Bible

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The Great Outdoors

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Puzzles and Games

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Chores and Life Skills

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Special Outings

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Learning Readiness

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Extended projects

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Let's Play

(Ideas of fun activities to do with your children)

by Laura Rodgers

1. Playdough
2. Gak
3. Lincoln logs/Legos
4. Build tents with blankets
5. Make crafts
6. Simply color with them
7. Play house
8. Paint/finger paint
9. Inside picnic
10. Play board games
11. Roast hot dogs/marshmallows in the fireplace
12. Declare "Pajama Day"
13. Write letters to Grandma
14. Family (hand) tree
15. Family movie night
16. Blessing Box/Thank you tree
17. Go play in the rain (of course in the summer w/o thunder and lightning!)
18. Take a nature walk. Collect rocks, leaves, etc and make a centerpiece for the kitchen table.
19. Find a construction site and watch the trucks and tractors.
20. Finger paint with shaving cream.
21. Make mud pies.
22. Create a collage by gluing different kinds of beans, rice, cereal, etc. on the paper.
23. Make musical instruments. Put dry rice between two paper plates and tape them together as a shaker. Make a horn out of a paper roll.
24. Let your kids do dishes while you cook. (They will also mop the floor for you in the process!)
25. When snowing put a piece of black construction paper outside to get cold. Then catch snowflakes on the paper and look at them with a magnifying glass. Marvel at how God created each one differently.
26. Paint rocks.
27. Put cornmeal in the bottom of a large cardboard box. Play with blocks, cars, plastic people in it.
28. Play dress up. (Yes, you too mom!)
29. Play with a magnet.
30. Teach your children hopscotch or how to jump rope.
31. Create a mosaic by cutting construction paper into a million pieces and then gluing it onto another piece of paper.
32. Play store with your child's toys.
33. Play restaurant with play dishes/food or even real dishes/food!
34. Let children plant their own garden.
35. Have a birthday party for one of your child's dolls/stuffed animals.

36. Have your child create a book about themselves. (a great way of keeping handprints, etc.)
37. Make placemats by covering your child's artwork with clear contact paper.
38. Read and act out one of your child's favorite stories.
39. Line up chairs like a bus/train/airplane. Pretend to go on a trip.
40. Save large boxes and simply be creative with them and create boats, cars, etc.
41. Create a treasure hunt.
42. Bake cookies.
43. Read.....Read.....Read....Read
44. Potato stamping
45. Go on a special outing (Tulsa Zoo, bowling, Jones Center, etc.)
46. Look at Photo Albums
47. Make a volcano. Mound dirt 6-10 inches high and clear a hole in the middle of it. Put 2 tsps of baking soda in the hole. Pour in some inexpensive vinegar and watch your "eruption."
48. Have a tea party.
49. Grow a sweet potato. Put a sweet potato halfway into a jar filled with water.
50. Get some nails started on a board and let your child hammer them in.
51. Puzzles. (Even create your own puzzle from a magazine page.)
52. Let them play in the laundry basket.
53. Host a backyard carnival.
54. Make paper airplanes.
55. Send your children to the "Island of perpetual tickling!!!!!"