

Table of Contents

Dear Parents	4
Welcome to Pre-Kindergarten!	5
Building Connections	6
Let's Read!	8
Let's Write!	10
Let's Talk!	12
Everyday Math	14
Squeezing in Science	16
Hello, History!	18
Being Civic Minded	20
Let's Build!	22
It's Tech Time!	24
Let's Think!	26
All About Art	28
Much Ado About Music, Dance & Theater	30
Happy & Healthy	32
Fun, Fun, Fun	34
Tips & Tricks	36
You've Got This!	37
Learning Charts	38



Dear Parents,

Let's face it: school days can be chaotic. There's the morning hustle to get the kids awake, dressed, and off to school. After-school activities flood the afternoons: sports, language programs, and classes on computer coding (yes, that's a real thing now). Trying to tackle homework amidst cooking dinner and settling sibling arguments fill the evenings. Oh, and let's not forget the dilemmas and distractions of raising a child in the digital age—the perils of parenting in a world with YouTube are endless!

Schools desire parent involvement not because they want to add to your already hectic schedule, but because studies have shown that students are more successful when there is a strong connection between home and school. Creating a supportive and positive learning environment at home fosters knowledge, sparks curiosity, and builds self-confidence.

This parent guide will not burden you with more tasks and to-do lists; rather, it will empower you with useful tools, meaningful advice, and resourceful activities to help you create opportunities for learning in the moments that make up your everyday life.

Not every activity in this book needs to be completed. Choose what works best for you and your family. Take small steps. Live in the moment with your child. If you do that, you will naturally create a learning environment that will connect your home and school beautifully and seamlessly.

Let's Build!

Creative Construction ➔

Engineering is the perfect subject for pre-kindergarteners! It's all about hands-on learning. How is that built? Why is it built that way? How can we build it to make it better? For pre-K children, learning about engineering involves taking materials and seeing what can be made out of them. It's all about exploring, discovering, and playing, which is what pre-K kids do best!



Tool Time!

Before embarking on building activities, start saving household items you might normally throw out, such as egg cartons, empty paper-towel rolls, empty toilet-paper rolls, packing materials, used paper, old boxes, etc. Place these items in a basket or a container large enough to hold them. Also, collect a stash of connecting materials, such as rubber bands, paper clips, tape, toothpicks, putty, or glue. Then, when it's time to build, just grab the basket of materials and let your child's imagination soar.

Float On

Tell your child that some of his small toys were left stranded after a big rainstorm. He will need to build a boat to help them cross back over the water to safety. Ask your child, "Can you make a boat that will float *and* be able to carry the toys back to safety?" Have your child test the boat in the bathtub or sink.



Structural Snacking

Take a bowl full of grapes and a box (or two) of toothpicks and see how many buildings your child can create before snack time. Grapes are ideal for this because they're sturdy, easy to stick with toothpicks, and make a delicious, healthy snack. (You could also try this with other fruits or marshmallows.)



Give Me Shelter

In a worried voice, say to your child, "Oh, no! A rainstorm is coming and one of your toys needs a place to stay out of the rain! Quick! Use your building materials to make a structure that will keep your toy safe and dry." Explain that the structure must be freestanding, must allow the toy to remain standing upright, and must keep the toy from getting wet!

Commence Countdown ... 3-2-1 ... Launch!

Follow the steps below to construct a catapult that will launch small toys (or other suitable objects) across your yard!

You'll Need:

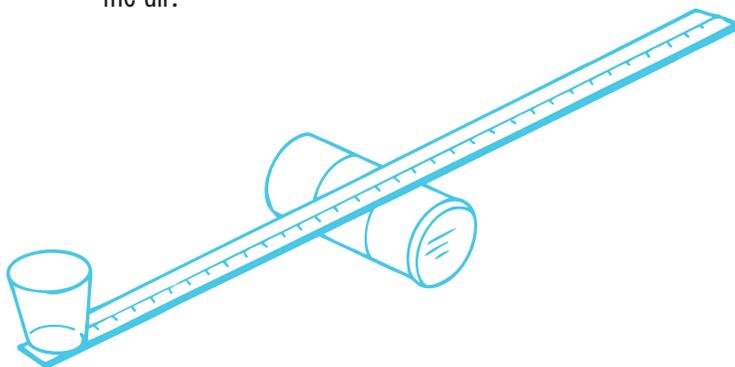
- a long, sturdy stick with a flat surface (e.g., a yardstick)
- a plastic cup
- tape
- an empty coffee can or other cylindrical container

Step 1 Attach the plastic cup to one end of the stick with tape. Make sure it's secure.

Step 2 Place the cylinder on the ground and rest the stick on it so that the cup end is on the ground while the other end is up in the air.

Step 3 Place a small toy or object in the plastic cup.

Step 4 Use a hand or a foot to smash down on the end of the stick that's in the air. *Wheee ...* there goes the toy soaring through the air!



Now, try some of these ideas to get more mileage from this activity:

- Vary the size and weight of the toy. Does the size and weight have an effect on how far the toy flies?
- Vary the length of the stick. Does the length of the stick affect how far you can launch a toy?
- Put out a target and hold a competition to see who can hit closest to the center.
- Have one person launch the toy while the other family members try to catch the flying toy with baskets or their hands.



Wrecking Crew

We all know that kids have the ability to wreak havoc without even trying. But what if you harness that destructive power in the name of science?

You'll Need:

- materials to create a tall structure (such as LEGOS®, Duplos®, wooden blocks, foam bricks, cardboard boxes, etc.)
- an old sock or tights
- a tennis ball

Setup: Do this activity where it will do the least amount of damage. Pieces are sure to go flying! Begin by building a tall tower out of your materials. Once the tower is built, it's time to take it down! Put the ball into the toe of the sock (if you're using tights, cut the legs off around the thigh).

Play: Give the wrecking ball to your child and have him swing the sock around to knock down the tower! Once the tower has been knocked down, try building it up again using different materials.

- Which materials are easier or harder to knock down?
- What happens when you swing the wrecking ball faster or slower?
- What happens when you hit the tower at a higher point and a lower point?
- How many hits does it take to knock each tower down?