

# FEBRUARY ACTIVITY CALENDAR: AGES 3-5



## Monday

## Tuesday

## Wednesday

## Thursday

## Friday

### WEEK 1

**Monday madness.** Mix it up by putting items that have letters or words on them upside-down. Talk about how the letters look different!

**Painted toast.** Using a piece of bread or toast, use water or a little food coloring to paint a letter on your snack! Talk about the letter and the sound it makes.

**Letter fairy.** Instead of your child putting a tooth under their pillow, hide a letter under their pillow at night. In the morning, talk about what the letter fairy left!

**Letter toss.** Using a ball, take turns throwing to each other. Make a letter sound and as your child catches the ball have them name the letter that sound makes!

**ABCs anytime!** Kids love to recite the ABC song. Use it while waiting for something or while they are waiting for their turn.

### WEEK 2

**Jenga!** Playing games like Jenga really help with self-control and fine motor skills. No Jenga game? Use boxes or regular blocks to carefully stack.

**Guess what?** Ask your child to think of something without telling you what it is. Have them give you hints until you guess. Take turns guessing!

**Puzzle me.** Puzzles are a great way to increase focus for children. No puzzles? Cut up a picture of your child or a magazine picture and make your own!

**Sleeping lions.** Have your child lie down and pretend to sleep. Walk around trying to get them to open their eyes. See how long it takes them to open their eyes!

**Grocery game.** Say "I went to the store and I bought..." and name an item beginning with A (e.g., avocado). The next person continues with B, also saying the A word, like this: "I went to the store and I bought a banana and an avocado." Continue!

### WEEK 3

**Body count.** Ask your child to do something with their body, like blink 3 times, turn around 2 times, or jump 5 times. Can you make a pattern?

**Word wrestle.** Start with a topic (colors, types of fruit, animals, etc.) and go back and forth with your child naming a color until no one can think of any more!

**Missing it.** Lay out 5 items (like 5 different types of snacks or 5 different color cars). Have your child close their eyes and count to 5. While eyes are closed remove 1 item and see if they know which one is missing!

**Paper chain countdown!** Have an exciting event coming up? Create a paper chain, with a 2-color pattern. Remove a piece of the chain every day while you count down to the event.

**Pattern play.** Which toys do you already have that can make color or shape patterns? Have your child help find good toys for patterns.

### WEEK 4

**Game changer.** Thinking flexibly can be hard for kids. Practice being flexible by helping kids make up new rules for games they usually play in a specific way.

**Creative counting.** Gather a pile of different objects, like game pieces, crayons and toys. Then say, "Let's see how many ways we can make the number 5." For example, 2 cars and 3 crayons.

**Song-ify chores.** If your child is having trouble getting a chore done, turn it into a song! Use a well-known song in your family and change the lyrics to what it is you want your child to do.

**Sneaky reading.** Read a favorite book together. Change the name of the main character! Does your child notice? Can you make up a new version of the story?

**What's that?** Help kids view things in creative ways by taking regular objects and seeing how many things you can pretend they are. For example, a funnel could be a party hat, a trumpet or a unicorn horn!

RESOURCES FROM SAVE THE CHILDREN

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Your child's brain is growing so quickly! Our friends at Vroom share more activities and the science behind them.

## WEEK 1

**SAME LETTER SENTENCE:** Start this game by choosing a letter. See if you and your child can think of a sentence that uses as many words as possible that begin with that letter. If you chose the letter M you might say, "My mother made meatballs." What other M words can you both come up with?

**Brainy Background:** Playing with letters and sounds is not just fun, it's also the building blocks of your child's language and reading skills. They're using what they already know, paying attention and thinking flexibly. These skills also help them to come up with new, creative ideas.

## WEEK 2

**SENSE SCAPE:** Outside with your child? Name one of the senses like "see" or "hear." Encourage them to share everything they notice with that sense, like the sun shining or birds chirping. Then it's their turn to say one of the senses and your turn to share what you notice. Take turns using all your senses.

**Brainy Background:** When your child takes the time to slow down and notice what is going on around them, they're using skills like focus and self-control. Being able to pay attention, manage behavior and follow rules are important skills for learning in school and in life.

## WEEK 3

**PREPARE A PATTERN:** Do you have a muffin tin or an empty egg carton? Look for things that can fit inside each hole, like pen caps. Make a pattern, like one red cap in a hole, then two blue caps in another, then another red cap. Then give the caps to your child. Can they match the pattern?

**Brainy Background:** Making and re-creating patterns asks your child to focus and keep the pattern in mind, even when it isn't there anymore. Being able to recognize patterns is an important skill for math, science and language learning.

## WEEK 4

**SENTENCE MIXER UPPER:** Sometimes it can be fun to mix things up as you make statements like, "Your banana is blue. I wear shoes on my ears," or "This ice cream is hot." Give your child a chance to correct you and show how much they know before they take a turn mixing things up.

**Brainy Background:** In this game, your child compares what they know about the world to your mix-ups. Playing helps them develop the thinking skills of paying attention to details and using information they know in fun and flexible ways.



## PARENT AND CAREGIVER CORNER

**Time together – with some time alone.** Many families have experienced lots of together time during these last several months, including doing the activities on this calendar. This can create powerful bonding among family members. But parents also need time for themselves...don't forget to re-charge yourself. Time alone for you, while your child is safely engaged in an activity that does not require you to play along, is a good thing. Take a few minutes to read or watch TV while your child plays close by. These little amounts of time can make a big difference for you – and it gives your child some time to be creative and use their imagination in play.

And remember, your child not only loves for you to play with them and their toys, they love to do things that make you smile, too. If you like to cook, make something together. If you like to do crafts, let your child create with you. If you like music, sing and dance with your child. Children love being with the people they love the most, and they love to see you smile. **Parents, caregivers and children, don't forget that we're all in this together!**