

COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN



★ 2024 ★

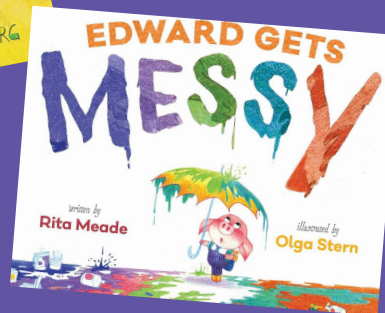
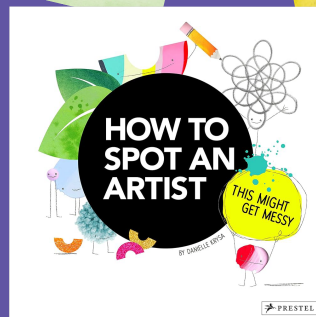
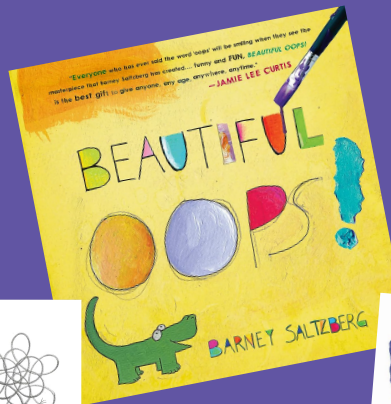
A calendar of activities to
help prepare your little
one for kindergarten

PageAfterPage.org/kindergarten

LET'S GET MESSY!

Child-driven, messy play allows children to explore a variety of materials and textures, using their natural curiosity to experiment and observe. It aids in the building of foundational language, gross/fine motor, social/emotional, scientific and mathematical skills while also helping develop a sense of self.

- Create a sensory bin and hide toys to find. Use different materials like beans, popcorn or cotton balls.
- Play outside - it's naturally messy!
- Practice your art with finger painting.



BOOK SUGGESTIONS:

"Edward Gets Messy"
by Rita Meade

"Beautiful Oops!"
by Barney Saltzberg

"Mud!"
by Annie Bailey

"Mud Book: How to Make Pies and Cakes"
by John Cage

"How to Spot an Artist"
by Danielle Krysa

JANUARY

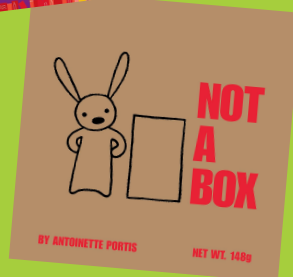
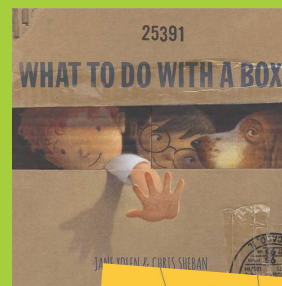
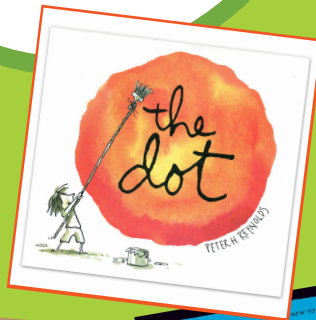
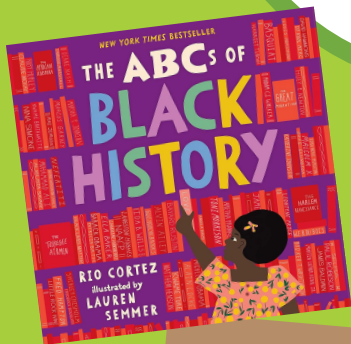
2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	New Year's Day <i>JCPL Branches are closed.</i>		Make a tasty dinner using Play-Doh.		Mix paint colors together when making your next masterpiece!	
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
Skate in your socks on our Franklin Branch indoor rink!		Build a "snow fort" indoors with pillows and sheets.		Play with bubbles. Jump and stretch to catch them.		Trace letters in dry rice on a baking sheet.
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Martin Luther King Jr. Day. <i>JCPL is open!</i>		Explore the parts of STEAM with our Mini STEAM program. <i>Clark Pleasant Branch.</i>	Make snow at Trafalgar Branch's Salty Snow program!		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Try cooking a simple recipe together.		Dye snow with food coloring and use it as paint. No snow? Dye ice cubes.			Attend Hands-on Storytime to explore a story through sensory experiences. <i>White River Branch</i>	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Have your child dot paint with Q-tips dipped in paint.		Fill a baggie with hair gel and practice writing letters.				
28	29	30	31	1	2	3

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

Creativity is a skill that must be learned over time. It is not just about art but also about thinking and problem-solving skills necessary throughout life.

- One way to encourage creative thinking is by asking questions while reading a book to develop higher-order thinking skills, such as predicting the outcome or how a character can solve a problem.
- Give your child ample time to solve a problem - don't jump in too early with solutions!
- You can also play games that require solving problems or riddles.



BOOK SUGGESTIONS:

"The ABCs of Black History"
by Rio Cortez

"Not a Box"
by Antoinette Portis

"The Dot"
by Peter H. Reynolds

"Duck! Rabbit!"
by Amy Krouse Rosenthal

"How to Catch a Dragon"
by Adam Wallace

"What to Do With a Box"
by Jane Yolen

FEBRUARY

2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	31	1	Groundhog Day Did you see your shadow? Use a flashlight to make shadow puppets.	It's Take Your Child to the Library Day! Celebrate by visiting a branch today for fun activities.
4	5	Read a book for Black History Month. See a suggestion above.	7	Ask your child for silly words, add their name and make up a song.	9	Read a book about the Lunar New Year, Year of the Dragon. See a suggestion above.
11	Make music using pots, pans and spoons. Sing and dance to the music.	13	Valentine's Day Cut out paper hearts, write kind words or draw pictures to make Valentines.	15	Draw pictures together. Label the things you draw.	17
Play with Play-Doh today. What shapes and letters can you make?	19	Talk about colors. Ask your child their favorite color and share your favorite color.	21	Sing a song but change a word to something silly (e.g., Old MacDonald had a pizza).	23	Make puppets and put on a puppet show.
25	Pick a favorite book and make up a new story using the pictures.	27	Ask your child about their favorite winter activities. Do one today.	Leap Day Pretend to be a jumping animal and play a game of leapfrog.	1	2

MATH COUNTS

Math skills are often overlooked when preparing for kindergarten. Showing strong math skills at an early age predicts long-term success in school, not just in later math learning but also in reading proficiency. Math isn't just about counting - kindergarteners also need to recognize shapes and patterns, develop spatial awareness, and be able to sort items by factors like size.

BOOK SUGGESTIONS:

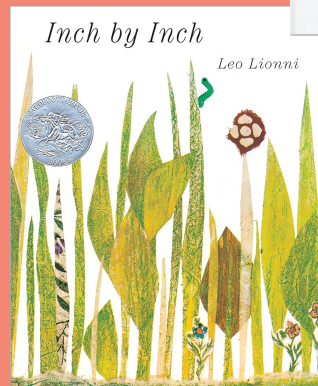
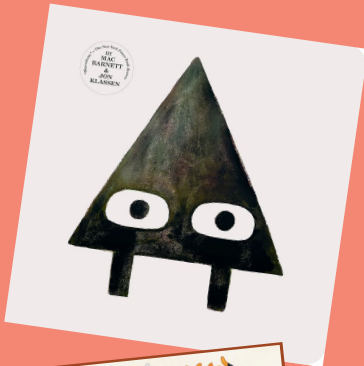
"Gato Guapo"
by Anika Denise

"Triangle"
by Mac Barnett

"Inch by Inch"
by Leo Lionni

"Bracelets for Bina's Brothers"
by Rajani LaRocca

"Circle Under Berry"
by Carter Higgins



MARCH

2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						Count how many times you can bounce a balloon.
25	26	27	28	29	1	2
3	Create shapes with sticks. How many shapes can you make?	5	Practice pouring water into different sized containers. Which one holds the most water?	7	Make a simple color pattern with LEGO® blocks or bricks. Repeat it as many times as possible.	9
Daylight Savings Why do we measure the day with hours and minutes? When do you have lunch or a nap?	11	Write numbers and draw shapes in shaving cream to practice writing.	13	It's Pi Day! Celebrate by noting the circles around you, like wheels and coins.	15	Visit the Library and check out a counting book.
10		12		14		16
	Sort objects like beans by size, shape or color. Count them as you sort.	19	Work together to finish a simple large-piece puzzle.	21	Play store and practice buying and selling items using coins.	23
17	18		20		22	
Ask who, what, when and where questions as you read a story.		Count the things you can find that start with the first letter of your child's name.		Sing a counting song like "Five in the Bed" or "The Ants Go Marching."		Play a board game that uses numbers to move, like Trouble or Chutes and Ladders.
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Easter <i>JCPL Branches are closed.</i>						
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

FINE MOTOR SKILLS: GET THOSE FINGERS MOVING!

Developing fine motor skills helps children create a solid foundation for future independence in everyday tasks. Encouraging activities that develop little hand muscles set children up for success with dressing, eating, writing and creating. Simple tasks such as ripping paper, using glue sticks, scribbling, opening and closing velcro tabs and using tongs to transfer items encourage their creativity and develop those fine motor skills they will build upon throughout their life.

BOOK SUGGESTIONS:

**"After the Buzz
Comes the Bee: Lift the
Flap Animal Sounds"**
by Robie Rogge

"A Squiggly Story"
by Andrew Larsen

"Mix It Up"
by Hervé Tullet

"My Very First Cookbook"
by Danielle Kartes



APRIL

2024

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

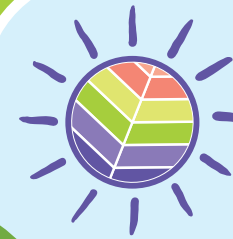
SAT

31		Practice with zippers, snaps and buttons on anything you find with them.		Make a solar eclipse viewer. Find instructions on our website at PageAfterPage.org/eclipse .		
	1		3	4	5	6
7	Use the viewer you created to view the solar eclipse. Discuss what you experience. <i>JCPL Branches are closed.</i>		Ask your child to write their name in flour or sugar on a tray.		Play Freeze Dance. Play music and pause it periodically, calling "Freeze!"	
	8	9	10	11	12	13
Draw zigzags, wavy lines and shapes on paper. Ask your child to cut them out.		Looking in your pantry, ask your child to count big cans and then small cans.		While shopping, ask your child to find things that begin with the first letter of their name.		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Have your child tear different colored papers into small pieces. Save the pieces for the next activity.		Have your child draw a shape with a glue stick. Cover the shape with the ripped paper pieces to create unique art.		Play with Play-Doh! Roll, smoosh, pat and pound.	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Celebrate Día! Explore cultures with fun activities. <i>Clark Pleasant Branch.</i>		Strengthen your child's hand muscles when they help whisk and stir in the kitchen.				
28	29	30	1	2	3	4

SUMMER SAFETY

With summer on the horizon, so are the days of ample sun, pool time, and learning to ride a bicycle. It's never too early to begin making summer safety a well-practiced habit.

- Sunscreen, sunhats, and sunglasses are all great ways to limit young skin and eyes from excessive UV exposure.
- Puddle jumpers and life vests are much safer than arm floaties or water wings when little ones spend time in and near water.
- Even if your preschooler has taken swim lessons, there should always be a set of adult eyes monitoring them at all times near and in water.
- Bicycles, scooters, and hoverboards are all fun ways for children to continue developing their balance and gross motor skills, but always remember the importance of protection such as helmets.



Explore
Summer
at JCPL

May 13 - July 31

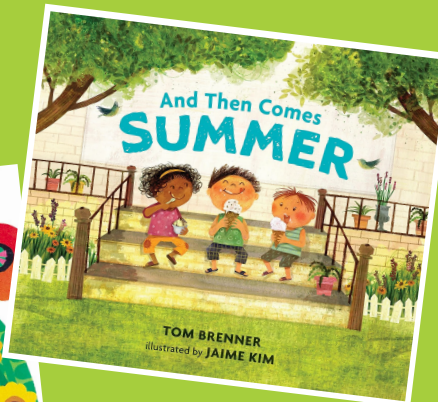
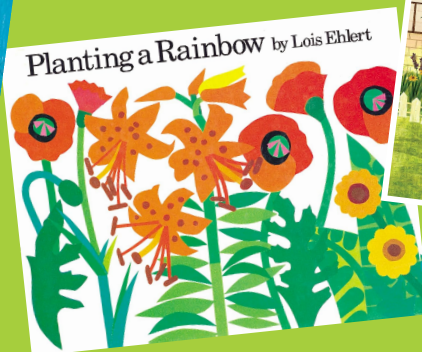
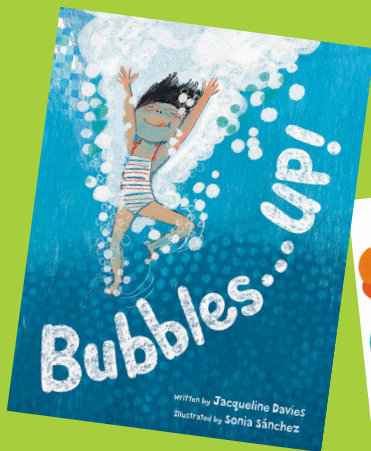
Visit any JCPL Branch to register or go to
PageAfterPage.org/ExploreSummer

BOOK SUGGESTIONS:

"Planting a Rainbow"
by Lois Ehlert

"Bubbles . . . Up!"
by Jacqueline Davies

"And Then Comes Summer"
by Tom Brenner



JCPL
Johnson County
Public Library

MAY

2024

SUN**MON****TUE****WED****THU****FRI****SAT**

				Practice writing your numbers, shapes, and letters with sidewalk chalk.		Play a game of Sink or Float with different objects.
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
	Draw a rainbow. Talk about what causes a rainbow.		Find the letters in your name on food boxes, signs etc.		Go outside and play chase.	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Explore Summer starts today. Register, read and win prizes. 			Talk about the different shapes you see in the clouds in the sky.		It's International Museum Day! Borrow a museum pass from JCPL.
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	Talk about the weather together. Can you feel the sun, wind or rain?		Read a story together outside.		Draw your favorite animal and share facts about its life.	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Make a paper airplane. How far can it fly?	Memorial Day Make a flag and talk about the shapes and colors. <i>JCPL Branches are closed.</i>			Ask a librarian to suggest a book about a place you have never been.		
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS: MOVING OUR MUSCLES!

Children develop their large muscles before their small muscles. The first few years of a child's life should be packed with opportunities to build these gross motor skills. Going outside and climbing on a jungle gym is a great way to develop these skills. Playing catch and chasing games or games that involve hopping, skipping and jumping are another great way to build up their gross motor skills.

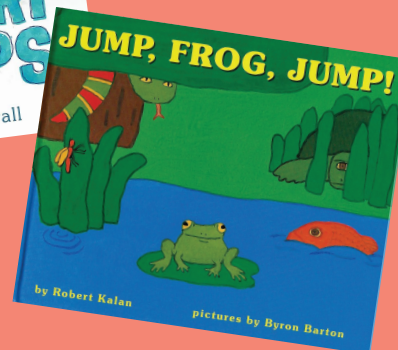
BOOK SUGGESTIONS:

"Jabari Jumps"
by Gaia Cornwall

"Jump Frog Jump"
by Robert Kalan

"Stretch"
by Doreen Cronin

"Cheetah Can't Lose"
by Bob Shea



JUNE

2024

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

26	27	28	29	30	31	1
Write a list of all the things you like to do during the summer. Do one today.		Go outside and play with chalk. What shapes can you make?		Sing and do the actions, slow then fast, to "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes."		Visit a JCPL StoryWalk® today.
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Make a boat out of cushions. Are there big waves? Do you see any animals?		Play music and dance. Pause the song and shout "Freeze" to surprise your child.		Visit your Library today and ask the librarian for a good book.	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Go outside and play catch with family or friends.		Make bubbles outside. Chase them around while you try to pop them.		It's the first official day of summer! Visit a park and play on the playground together.		Use pillows and blankets to build a fort. Read your favorite books inside the fort.
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	Check out one of the outdoor games from our Library of Things.		Clap the syllables (beats) to your child's name together. Try other family members, too.		Make shapes on the floor with tape. Have your child walk, crawl or hop along the lines.	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

LOOK OUT, KINDERGARTEN, HERE I COME!

Having the skills, knowledge and emotional readiness for Kindergarten prepares a child for success in school and later life. Daily self-help skills, such as toileting, washing hands, blowing their nose, tying or fastening their shoes and opening lunch options build their self-confidence and pride in their independence.

- Find a way to fit math skills into your everyday activities. Play a matching game with your child or ask them to sort items by size, shape or color to encourage math readiness.
- Read as many books about kindergarten as you can. Talk with your child about what they can expect and get them excited about school.
- Keep in mind that being at school all day can be exhausting. It may be beneficial to set aside 30 minutes or so for quiet time to help your child unwind from their new adventure.

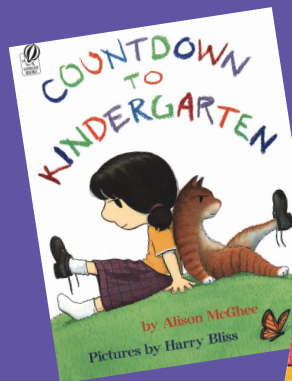
BOOK SUGGESTIONS:

"Ready for Kindergarten"
by Bethany V. Freitas

"Kindergarten Rocks!"
by Katie Davis

**"Countdown to
Kindergarten"**
by Allison McGhee

**"The Night Before
Kindergarten"**
by Natasha Wing



SUN

MON


TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

30	Check out a new book at the Library and read it to your child.	2	3	Independence Day Ask your child to find red, white or blue items. Which color has the most items? <i>JCPL Branches are closed.</i>	5	Suggest a word and ask your child to create rhyming words, even nonsense words.
7	8	Ask your child to count to 20. Then count backward from ten.	10	11	12	13
14	Go to a local school this week for the free lunch offering to practice cafeteria skills.	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	Ask your child to "read" the pictures to you rather than the words.	Have your child practice writing their name and find items that begin with the first letter.	25	26	Act out your child's favorite story or book with them.
28	29	Encourage your child to use words and express feelings when talking about their day.	Explore Summer ends. 	1	2	3

KINDERGARTEN READINESS SKILLS

Learning starts before kindergarten! To help your child have a successful kindergarten experience, work on these skills at home. Your child will enter the classroom ready for kindergarten success.

MOTOR SKILLS

- Runs
- Walks in a straight line
- Jumps
- Stands on one foot
- Throws a ball
- Buttons, snaps and zips independently
- Builds with blocks
- Draws and colors using three-finger grip
- Uses scissors
- Beginning to tie shoes

READING READINESS

- Identifies their name
- Prints name using proper uppercase/lowercase letters
- Understands reading left to right
- Recites alphabet
- Demonstrates familiarity with letter names and sounds
- Knows address/phone
- Knows age/birthday
- Understands rhyming words

LISTENING & SEQUENCING

- Follows simple two-step directions
- Retells a simple story in sequence
- Listens and responds to simple questions

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL

- Shares
- Sits and listens for up to 5 minutes
- Expresses self verbally
- Cares for belongings
- Uses manners - please, thank you
- Takes care of toileting needs
- Respects peers during structured play
- Waits for short amounts of time

MATH READINESS

- Identifies eight basic colors (red, yellow, blue, orange, green, purple, black, brown)
- Names shapes - triangle, rectangle, square and circle
- Counts at least ten objects
- Identifies numbers 1-10
- Sorts by color, size or type
- Understands basic patterns (ABAB, AABAAB, etc.)