

MONTH 5



Understanding "1" -

collect a few empty boxes, cereal packets, snack boxes. Tape a bit of paper to each box. Use a pen to mark one big dot on the paper.

On another box you could write the numeral '1' (at earlier stages of development you could leave the boxes unlabelled).

In each box, put one object (one car, one pencil, one dinosaur). Show the boxes to your child. What do they notice? Point out the dot, saying 'one'. And the numeral '1'; saying 'one'. Your child will probably want to dive into the box and see what's in there. When they do, say 'one car' or 'one dinosaur'. Give your child time to explore the boxes and the objects, taking them in and out of the boxes. If they put all the things in one box, you can play at taking them out saying 'one car, one pencil, one dinosaur.' You can add amounts. Begin a collection of boxes with different numbers of dots on them, or different numerals up to 5. Place objects in them, keeping to the same object (2 cars in a box, 3 Lego bricks in a box, 4 socks in a box). This activity will help your child to understand that the number we say or the numeral we write stands for an amount of objects.

All dressed up -

you don't need special dressing up clothes to play dressing up. 'Real' clothes allow children to create different characters and enter imaginary places. Collect together some hats, scarves, perhaps some fabric, you might have some saris, maybe some jewellery, grown up shoes (make sure everything is safe). Add a mirror if you have one, and you could keep these items in a box or basket where your child can reach them. You may need to show them how to play dressing up. Help them choose some items to put on and choose some for you too. Fabric can become capes, masks, head wear. Who are they? Who are you? Come up with some fun names. Can you do a special voice for your character? At later stages of development, you can begin to make up stories together for your characters and act them out. At an earlier stage of development, you could look in a mirror with your child and try on different hats and pull funny faces.

Rhyming with real objects -

collect some pairs of things from around your home that rhyme: a hat and a toy cat, a jar and a toy car, a shoe and a glue stick, a coat and a toy boat. At an earlier stage of development, introduce one pair e.g. hat and cat. Give your child time to explore the items. Say the word for each one as they pick them up. Play silly games with the words - put the hat on the cat, or the cat on the hat. Put the cat on your head rather than the hat. Use the names for the objects as you play. At later stages of development, you can introduce 2 pairs of objects: jar and car, shoe and glue. Again, give your child time to play with them, they may say the names of the objects themselves. What do they notice? Talk about the words that sound the same. Do they all sound the same? Which ones go together? Your child can match the actual objects. Play silly games again - put the car in the jar, and the glue in the shoe. What does your child do if you put the car in the shoe and the glue in the jar? If your child is ready, add more rhyming pairs. Remember to notice and make up rhymes together as you go about your day - this will help your child to hear words that sound the same: put your bear on the chair, nice rice, a goat ate your coat! If you speak another language at home, play with sounds in that language too.

This week's activities for you to try at home with your child are about the Specific Areas of Learning - **Literacy (L)**, **Maths (M)**, **Understanding the World (UTW)** and **Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)**. Have a go at adapting these to meet your child's interests.

Technology on the go -

there's lots of opportunities to explore technology when you're out and about with your child. If you're in the supermarket, show them how you're using the scanner to scan items, or position them so they can see the till and the checkout conveyer belt. Are there things they can press at the self-checkout? Have they noticed themselves in the closed-circuit TV? Can they see the traffic lights changing colour? What about the button that rings the stop bell on the bus? And there's always the button to press at the crossing that has the power to stop traffic! Remember to wash your child's hands after they've touched any buttons!

Knead it -

you will need a few basic ingredients for this activity, to make a simple dough. Depending on what you have available and on your child's stage of development, you could use flour and water, or you could make a simple no-cook playdough recipe (there are lots online) or you can make some bread dough and bake it to eat afterwards. This activity is all about strengthening and practicing control over the muscles in their hands that will support your child as they begin to make marks and form letters with pencils and pens. Make your dough together with your child - whether you are putting flour and a little water in a bowl or whether you are adding ingredients to make playdough or bread. Support your child to pour, spoon out, mix, stir and finally knead, prod, push, roll, pinch and squeeze their dough. You may need to model some of these actions. You could give them some safe tools such as a teaspoon or fork, to make marks in the dough. What do they do? What do they notice? At later stages of development, they may give meaning to the marks they make in the dough. Be prepared for some mess!