



Problem Solving

Activities to Help Your Child Grow and Learn



Your child is learning to count with some accuracy, up to three or four items. He can probably count up to 10 from memory. His knowledge about the world is growing. He now understands simple opposites and whether things are the same or different. He understands patterns, or degrees of change, such as “cool, warm, hot water” or “loud, louder, loudest.”

Remember What Happened When... Encourage your child to tell you about things that happened in the past. You can start with this phrase: “Remember what happened when [you went to Grandma’s and we went swimming]?” Follow up with questions such as “When did we do that?” “What did you like the best?” or “How did that make you feel?”

Color Hunt Have a scavenger hunt for colors. Say to your child, “Find something [color] and put it on the table.” When she returns, give her another color. This is a fun game for everyone to play, including older children or adults. Try to use four or five different colors. Even if she brings back the wrong color, praise her for trying.

Where Does the Sock Go? Put a sock (of any type) on your head or somewhere else it doesn’t belong. Ask, “Where is my sock?” When your child points or says it’s on your head, ask him where it really belongs: “On my foot? Really?” Have fun with this silly game. Try another object, such as a bar of soap in a cereal bowl.

What Do You Do When... Ask your child simple questions such as “What do you do when you’re really tired?” “What do you do when you get hungry?” “What do you do when you’re all wet?” See if your child can give you answers that make sense. Talk about it.

What Doesn’t Belong? Play this fun thinking game. Gather four things. Make sure three are very similar or are in the same category, such as three lemons. Add a fourth item that does not belong, such as a bar of soap. Ask your child to tell you which one doesn’t belong. Try something different: Gather three things from the bathroom—such as soap, shampoo, or toilet paper—and add something such as a screwdriver. Ask your child to tell you what doesn’t belong and why.



42–48 months