

Things that you can do at home: 2

There is absolutely no pressure to do these activities. These are on offer if you are looking for things to do with your child. Not all things will be appropriate for all children; think about your child's stage of development before you attempt anything.

This is a great activity to expand your child's vocabulary and getting them to use their problem solving skills - Explain to your child that you are going out on a nature walk - Take your child into an outdoor space e.g. walk to a park, if not go into your garden. - Encourage child/children to spot and collect various natural materials e.g. leaves, flower heads, grass, twigs. - Talk to children about what they are picking up, where do they think it has come from? - Ask them do they know what flower it may be or can they see any bugs/insects that may be living on the flower/leaf? If there is a bug, ask them if they think we should choose something else to use for the collage, speak to children about what insects eat and the environments they live in to survive, should we be disturbing them? - Once you and your child have collected enough collage materials from the outdoor space head home/inside - encourage child to place their collage materials where they would like, support them to spread/place glue onto their paper/card - ask them what shape can they make with their materials, can you make a pattern with them? - you could also ask them about how the materials feel, are they bumpy, smooth, scratchy? - how do your flowers smell, do they smell sweet? - can also extend by asking them what colours they can see on their collage - extend learning by using other materials to make collage's e.g. tin foil, different textured/colour paper, straws, cotton wool.

Write numbers in cupcake cases and see if your child can place the correct number of objects inside. You can use pompoms, dried beans/pasta or even small toys.

Get your child/ren to be beans; "runner bean" will run on the spot, "jumping bean" will jump up and down, "coffee bean" will be running superfast on the spot, "jelly bean" will shake like a jelly. Swap roles and get your child to give the commands

Do you have large cardboard boxes in your home? Why not make a car or a house using these boxes. Children love building things that they can crawl into. When making your child's preferred model, they can help identify which parts are required to make their model eg: windows, doors, wheels, colour, how big/ small. Whilst creating you could ask questions to prompt conversation and curiosity such as like how many windows will your car have? or How many doors does your house have. Children can use expressive art using paint, pens and other mark making tools to create their end product. The best bit is at the end, when they can get inside and try out the fantastic product that they have created.

Hide & seek games. You could use junk boxes & an object, a toy or ball to hide for the game. It can go inside or under the container. Use simple questions like -"where is it? Where has it gone? Which box is it in? Can you find it? "Where is it now? Take a turn with your child to hide or seek. You could also use positional language "In/out/under/on top/in front/behind. This game will give them challenges to find or hide an object, learn problem solving, following simple instructions, turn taking & pleasure when they find it. You could also play by hiding yourselves!

It would be great fun to have a talent competition with all the members of your family. Sing, dance or even do some role play and express your talents to each other. You could even film it and edit it as a movie and watch it all together as a family memory. There are loads of apps that allow you to do this really easily.

Watch with your child the power, the magic and the wonder of the nature. Can you re-grow different vegetables from kitchen scraps? Let's start with potatoes, sweet potatoes and ginger. Cut the veggies in half and suspend them in a bowl or jar over water. Lettuce, celery, onion and cabbage re-grow from their bases. Just place the root end into water using a container. Slightly different for carrots. Place a carrot top in a bowl, cut side down, and fill with water so the top is halfway covered. Finally garlic. Place a clove (or a whole bulb) in a small cup, bowl, or jar adding water until it covers the bottom. For all the vegetables mentioned above, put the containers in a sun filled spot and change the water every other day. Soon you will see roots begin to form or greens to sprout. You can observe and discuss what happened. If you want to take it to the next level, when the roots or the greens are quite long, plant the veggies into a pot of soil or out in the garden and see what happens.

Use or make some finger puppets with old clothes or material to sing some nursery rhymes. Use some toys that children may have at home to sing nursery rhymes.

Make masks using paper plates or thin card. You can try animal themes, superheros or even emotions.

Memory game: Collect items ie car, pencil. Place items on table. Study items for 30 seconds. Cover with a cloth. Get them to look away or close their eyes whilst you remove an item. Child to tell the adult which object is missing.

Take a fresh flower to investigate the different parts. You can draw your own version of flower and label it for e.g. stem, leaf, petals.

With a small ball ask your child to squeeze the ball, roll the ball, pinch, twist the ball. This would help them to develop their fine motor skills. You can also help develop these fine motor skills by using kitchen tongs to pick up items. See how many items they can pick up in a specified amount of time. Can they better that number next time.