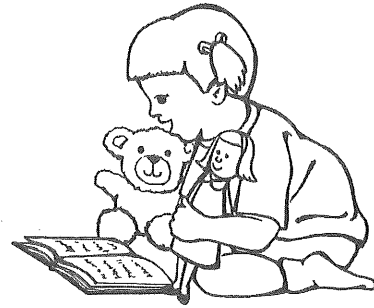




Problem Solving

Activities to Help Your Child Grow and Learn



Your child's attention span is growing, and she can attend to an activity she enjoys without supervision. She is starting to sort according to shape, size, and length and can match items that look alike. She is also learning how things go together on the basis of function; for example, she can point to "all things that are tools" in a picture of multiple objects. Your child loves to read stories and is learning how to make up stories or story endings by herself. Wild stories and exaggerations are common.

Rhyme Time When you are in the car or on a bus, play a rhyming game with your child. Think of a word, and have your child come up with a rhyme. Then, have your child think of a word and you find a rhyming word. For example, you say, "star," and your child says "car." Your child says, "train," and you say, "rain." If your child is having a hard time thinking of a rhyming word, help him out a little.

Grouping and Sorting Gather together a lot of little things in a small container. You might already have a box in your home with buttons, coins, or odds and ends. Sit with your child and try to come up with ways to group the things together. For example, the two of you might sort buttons by color, size, or numbers of threading holes. Find the biggest button and the smallest button. Line up five items, and point to each one as you count. Now let your child try.

Waiting Game When you and your child are waiting for something, try counting together to see how long it will take for the event to happen. For example, when you are in the car and waiting for the light to change to green, count how long it takes to change. She will learn how to count, and it may help her become more patient.

Broadway Baby Read a story to your child, and then encourage him to act out the story. He can pretend to be different characters. For example, you might read a story about farm animals and he could pretend to be a cow, chicken, piggy, or horse. Encourage him to act out the beginning, the middle, and the end of the story.

Number and Letter Search When you are at stores with your child, play number and letter searches. Encourage her to find numbers or letters on the walls, pictures, and signs. When she spots one, say, "You found the number 5. Good for you!" Point out numbers between one and 9 or single letters of the alphabet. Ask your child to find something specific: "Now we're looking for the letter C."



48-54 months