

instruction guide

School Readiness Activity Boxes

The first five years of a young child's life lay the foundation for learning and school success.

According to many experts, in order to do well in school children need to be supported and nurtured in the following areas, called Domains of Learning:

- **Social and emotional development:** getting along with others, following rules, starting and finishing activities.
- **Physical development:** fine and gross motor development – running, jumping, playing ball, using scissors, drawing – and using good health and safety skills.
- **Language and literacy:** talking, understanding, listening to others, speaking clearly, knowing some numbers and letters.
- **Mathematical Thinking:** sorting things by color and shape, counting.
- **Scientific Thinking:** exploring, gathering information, and talking about how things are alike or different.
- **Social Studies:** understanding about family and community.
- **The Arts:** dance, art, music, and make believe.

the early years

matter!

You are your child's first and most important teacher!

Spending time with your child is important to helping your child learn and grow! In fact, your involvement is key to your child's future success in school.

There are many things you can do with your child, starting at birth, to help build his skills, knowledge and abilities in each of the Domains of Learning. To help you, Ready At Five developed the School Readiness Activity Boxes.

What are the School Readiness Activity Boxes?

The School Readiness Activity Boxes are part of a seven-part series that align with the Domains of Learning. Each box contains:

- Overview information. Background information on the Domain of Learning.
- Hands-on activities. Step-by-step activities developed to help build the skills your child needs for kindergarten.
- Materials. Because the activities are designed to be hands-on, age-appropriate materials are suggested and directions are included on how to use them.

The activities aren't difficult and don't take a lot of time. In fact, the step-by-step directions make the activity easy to do with your child. Each activity clearly states the purpose of the activity, lists the targeted age of the child (infant, toddler, or preschooler), and the materials you will need to do the activity. Other ideas or activities to do with your child in the future are also included.

Remember, doing these activities with your child will help ensure that your child enters kindergarten "ready to succeed!"

How do I get started?

Whether you want to put together one activity, one box or the entire seven-part series, Ready At Five makes it easy!

1. Select an Activity.

There are 35 activities available FREE of charge on Ready At Five's website! All you need to do is select one or more! Visit www.readyatfive.org and print the activity sheet(s) containing the step-by-step directions and needed materials.

2. Gather the appropriate materials for each activity.

Each activity is a hands-on activity. This means that you and your child will be able to DO lots of fun things using many different materials. For your convenience, this guide and each activity lists all the materials you will need.

Don't feel that you need to buy materials in order to do the activity. In fact, books can be found at your local Public Library! You can also substitute materials for things found in your home. For example, if you don't have measuring cups or spoons, use spoons from your silverware drawer and plastic bowls. Instead of buying foam shapes, cut out a variety of shapes from construction paper. Just remember that if you use other materials, be sure that they are SAFE. If you want to purchase art supplies, toys, or other materials, they can be found inexpensively at arts and crafts stores, dollar stores, or super-stores.

3. Do the activity with your child.

Before you start, familiarize yourself with the activity. Then, sit down with your child and follow the step-by-step directions.

If the activity doesn't turn out exactly the way it is written, it is ok! Follow your child's lead. If your child doesn't seem interested in the activity you selected, move on to a different one and come back to the activity later. If the activity is too hard or too easy, modify the activity to suit your child.

4. Have Fun!

Learning is fun! These activities use play to help your child build his skills and abilities. And remember, if you are enjoying yourself, so will your child!

5. Try other activities.

Doing one activity once is not going to help your child fully develop all the skills needed to succeed in school. For your child to gain these skills, he will need the opportunity to try what he has learned many times. Repeat the activities often, and remember there are 35 activities and over 150 follow-up activities to try!

School Readiness Activity Boxes At-A-Glance

Social and Emotional Development

Activity Name	Age	Purpose	Things You Will Need
Feelings	3-4	To help your child label and express her emotions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The book: <i>What is Blue Feeling? Bring Your Own Crayon!</i> by Angela C. Santomero■ Crayons
Tea Time	3-4	To help your child get along with others in order to make and keep friends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Tea set
Taking Care of Others	3-4	To teach your child responsibility and to care for others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Baby doll■ Baby bottle■ Infant diaper■ Blanket
What does it Feel Like?	3-4	To help your child learn good manners and understand how people feel and why.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The book: <i>The Grouchy Lady Bug</i> by Eric Carle
Making Faces	0-2	To show your child that you enjoy her company and help her feel good about herself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The book: <i>Baby Faces</i> by Margaret Miller

Physical Development

Activity Name	Age	Purpose	Things You Will Need
Pick-a-Pom-Pom	3-4	To improve your child's eye-hand coordination and strengthen her hand muscles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Plastic bowl■ Clothes Pin■ Ice-cube Tray■ Pom-poms■ Plastic tongs
Jump Rope Games	3-4	To strengthen your child's muscles and improve her balance and coordination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Jump Rope
Wash Our Hands	3-4	To help your child learn about basic hygiene and teach him how to wash his hands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Tub or Sink■ Liquid Soap■ The book: <i>Wash Your Hands</i> by Tony Ross
Bean Bag Toss	3-4	To improve your child's eye-hand coordination, balance, and muscle coordination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Bean bag
Hokey-Pokey	0-2	To increase your child's flexibility and strength.	

Language & Literacy

Activity Name	Age	Purpose	Things You Will Need
Read with Me	3-4	To introduce your child to books and help her comprehend (understand and talk about) them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The book: <i>The Three Bears</i>■ The book: <i>The Little Red Hen</i>■ The book: <i>The Three Billy Goats Gruff</i>■ Arts and crafts materials (paper, crayons, yarn, glue, scissors, pipe cleaners, beads, Popsicle sticks, paper bags, and other materials)
Fun with Sounds	3-4	To help your child understand the sounds that letters make.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The book: <i>My Very First Mother Goose</i> by Iona Archibald Opie
Playing with Letters	3-4	To introduce your child to letters and give him an awareness of print.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Box of letters (foam or magnetic)■ The book: <i>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</i> by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault
We Can Write	3-4	To help your child understand the purpose for writing and practice her writing skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Dry erase board■ Dry erase marker■ Paper■ Pens and pencils■ Sidewalk chalk
Reading Time	0-2	To introduce your child to language by reading and looking at books.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The book: <i>Pat the Bunny</i> by Dorothy Kunhardt

Mathematical Thinking

Activity Name	Age	Purpose	Things You Will Need
Shape Sorters	3-4	To help your child learn about numbers, counting and problem solving.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Foam shapes (rectangle, square, circle, diamond, triangle, star, heart, or oval)
Bears At the Zoo	3-4	To help your child learn to sort, understand patterns, and positional words.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ "Counting Bears" (about 20 small plastic bears in 4 colors)■ Four (4) containers, labeled with the same colors as the bears■ The book: <i>We're Going on a Bear Hunt</i> by Helen Oxenbury
Shape Detective	3-4	To help your child identify and look for shapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The book: <i>Brown Rabbit's Shape Book</i> by Allen Baker■ Paper bag■ Foam shapes (rectangle, square, circle, diamond, triangle, star, heart, or oval)
Let's Measure it!	3-4	To help your child begin to understand measurement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Plastic measuring cups■ Plastic measuring spoons■ Two (2) plastic tubs or containers
Water Play	0-2	To support your child in exploring his/her world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Plastic measuring cups■ Plastic tub

Scientific Thinking

Activity Name	Age	Purpose	Things You Will Need
Sink or Float	3-4	To help your child to wonder about and investigate things, by making predictions and observing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Plastic tub (or bathtub)■ Water■ Four (4) to five (5) objects (cork, wood, shell, styrofoam)■ Sink/float chart (piece of laminated paper labeled "sink" and "float")
All About Oranges	3-4	To help your child investigate and collect information about his world using his 5 senses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The book: <i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i> by Eric Carle■ Scratch-n-sniff sticker of an orange■ Plastic orange
Explore Your World	3-4	To help your child notice things in his world by thinking, asking questions, and talking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Paper bag■ Magnifying glass
Science Toolbox	3-4	To show your child that tools can be used to learn and see things in a different way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Magnet■ Mirror■ Flashlight■ Magnifying glass
Let's Feel It	0-2	To support your child in exploring her world by using sight, sound and touch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The book: <i>Pat the Bunny</i> by Dorothy Kunhardt

Social Studies

Activity Name	Age	Purpose	Things You Will Need
All About Me	3-4	To help your child learn about himself and others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Mirror■ Paper■ Multicultural skin tone crayons■ Yarn■ Hole puncher■ Child scissors
Map Making	3-4	To help your child learn about her community and her surroundings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Paper■ Markers■ Blocks■ Map of the Baltimore Zoo
Let's Play A Game	3-4	To help your child understand the need for rules.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The board game: <i>Memory</i>■ Construction paper■ Markers■ Tape
People in My World	3-4	To show your child that tools can be used to learn and see things in a different way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The book: <i>What Will I Be?</i> by James Levin■ Notepad■ Marker■ Apron■ Plastic fire hat■ Play stethoscope■ Play money
Where is Baby?	0-2	To help your child begin to recognize himself and learn the names of his body parts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Mirror

The Arts

Activity Name	Age	Purpose	Things You Will Need
Marching Band	3-4	To let your child explore and create music using different instruments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Musical instruments (a tambourine, cymbals, maracas, castanet, drum and drumsticks)
Scarf Dancing	3-4	To allow your child to explore movement and dance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Scarves
Collage Art	3-4	To let your child express himself through many different art materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Art Materials (markers, glitter, tissue paper, feathers, yarn, crayons, cotton balls, and tin foil)PaperGlue
The Mitten	3-4	To help your child try the art of acting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The book: <i>The Mitten</i> by Jan BrettA mittenPictures of the animals from the book
Making Music	0-2	To help your child explore music and the sounds that different instruments make.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Musical Instruments (a tambourine, cymbals, maracas, castanet, drum and drumsticks)

Ready At Five is a statewide, non-profit, public/ private partnership committed to ensuring that all Maryland's children enter school ready to succeed. For more information, contact:



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