



Home not School

Practical ways to learn without curriculum





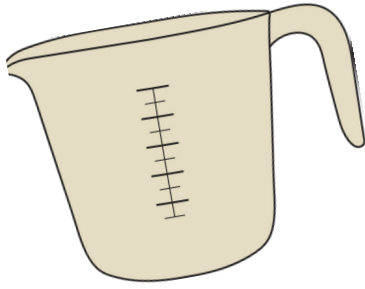
You are a home and a family, not a school and a teacher. The way you learn at home can and should reflect that! The simple activities in this little guide will show you some practical ways that you can learn as a family - without any curriculum at all. Take the everyday and turn it into intentional learning.



Retell a story

You don't always need a formal lesson or a curriculum to learn skills. Your kids could practice them during an everyday conversation at the kitchen table or when you're sitting on the couch together. It could look more like a game than a worksheet.

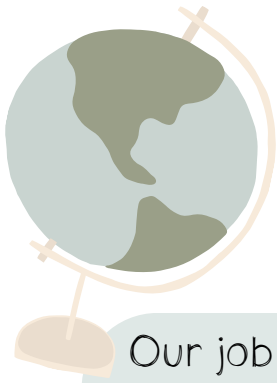
- Story basket: fill a basket with objects that are part of a story your child knows well; give them the basket and the book and have them retell the story with the objects.
- Object search: have your child go on a hunt for 4-5 objects that represent parts of a story (a book you're reading together or a book they are reading); have them tell the story aloud, using the objects to help .
- Make it silly: retell a story, but change the way it ends to give it a really silly ending.
- Different point of view: have your kids retell a story or a part of a story from a completely different point of view (ex: from the point of view of a different character).



Recipe Making

The things we do in our everyday lives are great ways to teach our kids academic skills. We can use these everyday activities to introduce or reinforce a topic. When kids make connections between things they do in everyday life and the things they learn, they are more likely to remember them! And when we do it together with them, that connection in their memory is even stronger!

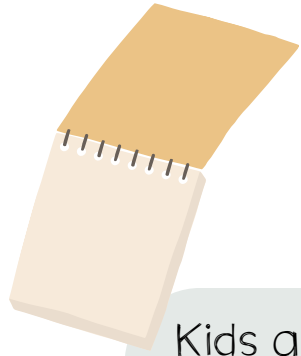
- Follow the recipe: work together with your child to follow a recipe. Talk about measurements, temperatures, etc. This is a great time to introduce nutrition - are these ingredients good for our bodies? See if you can find books to read together that go along with what you're making.
- Recipe book: have your kids create their own recipe book - write or draw the recipes you make together.
- Make your own: challenge your child to take a favorite recipe and make it healthier. Which ingredients can you swap for better ones? They may need to do some reading to figure out which ingredients are healthier and how that affects baking/cooking.
- Cook/Bake Off: When your kids are old enough to cook or bake completely on their own, have a friendly competition - who can make the better muffins, cake, or entire meal? Have them write their recipes down (with proper measurements), make ballots for the family to vote, make a menu for the night's meal, etc.



Maps & Globes

Our job as homeschool parents isn't to pack our kids with all the information possible before they turn 18, but to introduce them to ideas that they can build on over time. Each small conversation about a topic is the beginning of a strong foundation. As they get older, we can go deeper into topics that they are more interested in or that they need to pursue future goals, building on that foundation!

- Pick a spot: Close your eyes and pick a spot on the map. Find books about that place or look up videos/documentaries. Talk about if you would like to visit and what you would do there. Have your kids draw or write about what they would like to see.
- Spin the globe: Spin a globe and see where your finger lands. Have your child draw a map of the country where they land. What do you know about it? What new things can they learn?
- Where you were: Find a spot on the map that you've visited before as a family. Talk about the things you loved doing there - look at pictures if you have them. Young kids can draw or write about their favorite part of the trip. Older kids could write a letter to someone about their visit. Can they convince someone in the letter to take a trip there too? Other ideas: make a family scrapbook and write about your trip or make a travel brochure about the location.
- Plan a trip: Pick a spot on the map that you'd like to visit as a family, then plan a hypothetical trip. How long is the trip? How would you travel? Older kids can calculate mileage, add up the cost of a trip, etc. Younger kids can pretend to pack and travel there!



Sticker Stories

Kids are born naturally curious - they want to learn! It isn't until we tell them the "right" way to learn something that they begin to decide that learning isn't fun anymore. So what if we could find ways to reframe learning and take it back to the freedom of those early days - when it was natural and not forced?

- Tell the story: Gather up stickers of common objects or places. Have your child pick a few stickers that will be the main parts of the story. For example, they pick the stickers dog, balloon, a lake. Then they write a story about a dog who was chasing a balloon and fell in the lake, popping the balloon! Young kids can tell the story aloud. (You can also cut pictures out of a newspaper or magazine if you don't have stickers)
- Pick another sticker: Add another sticker to the story - now you have to change the story and rewrite it!
- Sticker swap: After your child writes their sticker story, you or a sibling should also write a story. Then swap papers and keep the story going! Write another sentence and then swap again.
- Synonym sticker: For older kids, give them a sticker and invite them to write descriptive sentences about the sticker. Challenge them to use a thesaurus to find synonyms for words in their sentences. Then try writing the story with antonyms to change the meaning!



Building challenge

We often overcomplicate things, thinking we need a curriculum to teach every single thing. Curriculum is not the enemy, but sometimes we can find a better way. One that doesn't involve a worksheet or a quiz, but just comes from a fun afternoon together as a family. Connecting with our kids over fun activities builds memories that can last a lifetime!

- Recycled buildings: Gather everyday materials like cardboard boxes, paper towel tubes, paper cups, popsicle sticks, milk jugs, duct tape, straws, string, rubber bands, etc. Challenge your kids to see how high they can build a tower while you time them. Shorten the time and try again!
- Engineer it: Have your kids compete for who can build the tallest tower, the strongest bridge, the longest bridge, longest marble run, boat that floats the longest or carries the heaviest weight, etc. Look up the world's longest bridge, tallest tower, etc.
- First flight: Use the materials to create an airplane - think beyond a paper airplane! Read about early airplanes and the people who flew them. Who can get their plane to fly the farthest? Invite your young kids to pretend they're on the first flight!
- Recreate it: Gather pictures of famous landmarks or buildings and books about those places. Challenge your kids to recreate famous landmarks or buildings; use the books as examples. Read about the buildings and write a story together about a fictional character who visits the landmark. Or plan your own family trip there!