

What Can I Do at Home?

If you would like to keep busy at home, here are some ideas:

Math

Your kitchen is full of math! When you cook or bake, you often work with multiplication, division, addition, subtraction, fractions, measurement, and time. You could measure the rooms in your house, the circumference of your head, the weight of a bag of potatoes, and the number of steps from your bed to the fridge. Count the money in your piggy bank. Predict how many minutes or hours you'll spend in the car on the way to Grandma's house. If you want to speed up your basic facts (addition and subtraction), you might practise with playing cards or dice. You can practise your multiplication tables on a piece of paper, or even in the car with your family! Math is part of many games, such as Scrabble (figuring out your score), Monopoly, Trouble, checkers and chess (strategy and problem-solving), and Go Fish (to name just one card game). Many computer websites are available; here's one: www.funbrain.com. Several stores, from grocery stores to office supply stores, and computer websites offer math worksheets.

Reading

You can always read a book, either an imaginary story or else something based on fact. If you can't decide what to read next, then ask the librarian at school or at the public library. They have lots of super suggestions. By reading a wide variety of books, you will pick up knowledge about science, social studies, and all sorts of topics without even realizing it. This will help you throughout your school years and throughout your whole life. Also read the newspaper, magazines, recipes, labels, maps, and street signs. Can your parents read you a story in a language other than English? If so, that's fantastic!

Writing

You can write friendly letters or business letters (maybe ask the zoo how they care for your favourite animal). You can write stories and poems. You can write down the play-by-play of last night's hockey game on TV. You can write in a diary or journal. You might write a report about a dinosaur, or you could draw and label the parts of a castle. Do you wonder about the history of chess, or how snowboards are made? Do you wonder how a toaster works? Find out (the library has scads of books on zillions of topics, and oodles of information is floating around on the Internet), and write about it. You might make a chart of your family tree. You can find writing or printing worksheets in stores and on the Internet. Practise typing with all of your fingers. This is a useful skill!

Art

As long as you have a pencil, a sharpener, an eraser, and a piece of paper, you can draw pictures. The library has many books to help you draw your favourite things. Do you want to draw horses, dragons, airplanes, or human faces? You can find very specific books, written for children, on these topics. You might want to draw your dog; if so, then draw your dog many times, in many poses, from different angles. Or sketch what you see inside or outside your home (draw only what you see; start with the stuff in front). Experiment with pencil crayons, wax crayons, pastels, paint, and charcoal, as well as different kinds of paper. Build a sculpture with recycled materials. Build with playdough. Go to the library and research your favourite artist, or look her up on your computer. Jan Brett has an excellent website that includes drawing lessons.

Social Studies

Find out about your family, your neighbourhood, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, or another country. Read about it, draw it, and write about it. Make maps. Read about olden times. Think about the future. Draw it.

Science

Find out about the world around you, from the workings of your own body, to different animals and their habitats, to electricity, to outer space, and more. What are fossils? How does a tornado begin? What's the purpose of a cat's whiskers? How do sharks find their prey? What would it be like to walk on the moon? Read, draw, and write. Make charts. Create a diagram. Look at insects. Collect leaves and label them.

Gym

Go outside! Skip, bounce a ball, throw and catch a ball, kick a ball, twirl a hula hoop, keep your balance, play hopscotch, juggle, or toss a Frisbee. Play tag. Go skating. Learn to swim. Visit the park and see if you can swing across the monkey bars. Ride a bike. Research your favourite athlete or a new sport (lacrosse, rhythmic gymnastics, etc.).

Field Trips

Explore Chinatown. Visit the Inglewood Bird Sanctuary or the Calgary Zoo. Find out when the Glenbow Museum is holding its next display of medieval armour. Hike through Fish Creek Provincial Park. Go on a picnic. Watch a baseball game at the neighbourhood diamond.