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When there is no time for home-schooling!

Teachable moments throughout the day:

During breakfast look out for different shapes, “the bread is square” Notice any writing, numbers or logos on the food packets. Talk about which foods are healthy and where they come from. Highlight phonics by sounding out “B for bowl” Encourage independence and develop motor skills by giving children small manageable tasks such as pouring cereal or buttering toast. You could extend further by threading Cheerios’ on to a straw.



Encourage children to dress themselves to help develop their fine motor skills, buttons, zips and pulling on socks are all tricky for children and will help to build strength in their hands which is essential for writing. Putting on their own clothes promotes independence and self-care which is particularly important if your child is starting school in September.



Look out the window at things in the environment. Are there any people about who have different occupations? You could talk about the postman, delivery driver, window cleaner, construction worker? What differences and similarities can you see? How do the trees change? How are the houses in your street different? What changes take place when it rains or is cold? How do things work? What technology, engineering or machinery can you see? What different sounds can you hear? Open the window and notice the sounds inside and outside. Point out things at different levels what is up high? What can you see on the ground? How are they different?

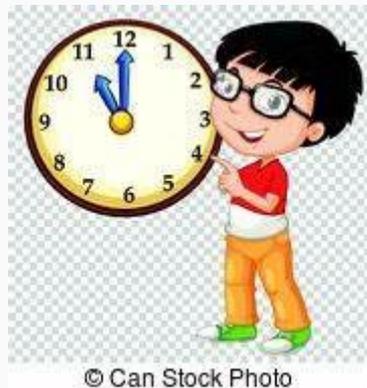


Free play. Play underpins the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. It also underpins learning and all aspects of children's development. Through play, children develop language skills, their emotions and creativity, social and intellectual skills. Play takes place indoors and outdoors and it is in these different environments that children explore and discover their immediate world. It is here they practise new ideas and skills; they take risks, show imagination and solve problems on their own or with others.



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Talk about the time and use language relating to it. You could use different ways of measuring time during the day such as setting a sand or cooking timer or use the stopwatch on your phone to show 5 more minutes of play. Talk about the routine of the day.



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Daily chores can provide learning opportunities. When they need to wash their hands encourage independence and try to get them to do it by themselves. Talk about why we need to wash our hands and where water comes from. If you have the time stay for a little longer and allow children to have a sensory play experience. While they are playing with the water ask them about how it feels, is it warm or cold? Can they make any bubbles with the soap? Ask children to help you water a plant, talk about what plants need to grow and the stages of decay. Measure the plant to see if has grown next time you water it. At tidy up time add a song or music, give your child instructions with two parts to develop their understanding and ability to follow directions, for example “Can you pick up the blue dinosaur on the sofa?” Encourage children to think about ways of grouping and sorting their toys to develop early maths skills.



At snack time children can learn new skills and develop independence by helping to prepare it. Cutting fruit with a safe knife, peeling a satsuma or spreading butter on a cracker are all great for their physical development. Ask them to count out different quantities of raisins, “which group has the most or least?” Highlight phonics “A is for apple”. Talk about words that rhyme like snack and quack, dish and fish.



Look for opportunities to mark make. Let children help if you are doing any writing such as a shopping list. Add a pen and paper to their play and offer some inspiration, a teacher taking the register, write a letter to Grandma, create an office, a police officer writing in his notebook.



When you are out on a walk encourage children to notice details in the environment, wildlife and nature, different occupations, point out any writing or numbers you see, signs and logos. Highlight phonics as you see them “B is for Bus.” Encourage physical development by asking them to move in different ways, “Can you hop to the lamppost?”

Point out shapes and encourage counting, the wheels are round, how many wheels on the bus? "Can you take 5 giant dinosaur steps?" Talk about the community you live in and how other places might be different. Introduce new words when children are interested in something "That digger is called an excavator" and emphasise prepositions, "Look the robin is under the bush".



Introduce ideas for role play based on things you saw when out on a walk for example a construction site with building blocks, a shop, a cafe, lorry driver, farmer, fire fighter. Look for ways to enhance their learning, you could add a pen and paper so they can write orders down in the café, add a measuring tape to the construction site or use real money in the shop. To extend you could look for any books you may have connected to the role play or learn a song.



Doing the laundry together has lots of potential learning opportunities. Using pegs is great for developing fine motor skills, you could make a washing line indoors with string and some socks or toy clothes. Ask children to sort the washing into groups of different items, ask them to match up pairs of socks, use language relating to size and compare the different sizes of clothing for each family member.



Listening to music at home or in the car. You could listen to different types of music. Encourage listening skills by asking what sounds they can hear, notice differences

between types of music, pointing out instruments, rhythm and tempo. How do different styles of music make us feel? Encourage dancing in different ways allowing them to express themselves through music and create different types of movement. Do they prefer a particular type of music? singing develops communication, literacy and imagination. Sing along with music and learn new songs together, point out rhyming words and sing counting songs.



Helping to prepare dinner. Reading a recipe, measuring and weighing, pouring and scooping, counting and quantities, introduce temperatures look at the fridge, freezer and oven and talk about how things change with temperature such as water and ice, melted cheese. Helping to prepare food encouraging fine motor skills, talking about healthy eating and why our bodies need food. Safety in the kitchen.



Dinner time is a great time to practice social skills. Setting the table, listening to others, taking turns and sharing will help children to build relationships and manage difficult

emotions. Children can practice using utensils and serving themselves with jugs and large spoons developing fine and gross movement. Encourage conversation and talk about the day, building vocabulary and sharing experiences. Food from around the world can support children in thinking about the world and exploring different cultures.



During bath time children can learn about floating and sinking, heavy and light. Give children containers to investigate pouring, filling, quantities and measuring. Introduce fractions “The cup is half full” “The bottle is empty” Sensory play allows children to explore the world around them, bubbles, soap, sponges and rubber ducks. You could add Bath books and alphabet letters and encourage singing and counting to maximise learning. Offer commentary on what you are doing to build vocabulary.



Reading helps your child to develop in so many areas of the curriculum. Communication – Listening skills, developing concentration, increasing vocabulary. Literacy – Looking at print, how books are structured, phonics, alliteration, rhyming words. Understanding the world – Learning about the world, people and cultures, occupations, how things work and are made, the human body, moving parts and flaps, nature and animals. Expressive art and design – looking at different types of illustrations etc, you could encourage your child to make up their own stories, even if it is only one line. You can use props to visualise the story or act it out, developing imagination and creativity. Mathematics – Counting and number books, looking at shapes, time and measurement. Personal social and emotional development – Feelings, emotions, thinking about others, making friends, preparing for new experiences, processing difficult experiences and feelings.

