

Imagine That!

Studies show that the brain is not idle during daydreaming. While imagining, the brain is very active. Creativity and imagination are high-level skills in the brain, and it is through play that children develop higher-level brain skills. Brain connections are best created through frequent opportunities for children to explore, experiment, test new ideas, and pretend.

Imagination and Becoming a Reader

In order for children to understand what they are reading, they must be able to imagine what the characters are doing, why they are doing it, and what they might do next. If children have never engaged in imaginative play, it is very difficult for them to do this. Singing, talking, reading, playing, and writing/drawing with your young child every day will help her develop the skills she needs in order to learn to read.

Imagine the Fun!

Unlike coloring books, blank paper inspires children to imagine and be creative. But we often hear our children say, "I don't know what to draw!" Here are just a few ways to encourage your child to use their imagination with blank paper:

- Read or tell a favorite story together, then suggest drawing a favorite character or part of the story.
- Draw a squiggly line on the blank page. Ask your child to continue the drawing. Encourage her to talk about the design or picture.
- Encourage your child to experiment with mixing colors, or creating designs or patterns.
- Use blank paper as a part of pretend play: to create a menu, an order pad, a grocery list, an appointment book, an exam chart, and more!
- Be creative with travel and wait times. Keep some blank paper and crayons in the car or travel bag to use while waiting for appointments, at a restaurant, in the car or on the bus, etc.

Be sure to take advantage of all the resources your local library has to offer your family, such as storytimes, books for all ages, music, videos, special events and programs, computers, magazines, and more.



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