



Did You Know

AT 3 YEARS OLD I CAN —

- sleep 10 to 12 hours each night.
- put on my own shoes, but I can't tie the laces yet.
- use the toilet with your help (boys might not be ready for toilet training until 3 1/2).
- undress myself, but I still need your help with dressing.
- feed myself, but I still may be messy.
- throw and kick a ball.
- climb upstairs and downstairs while alternating my feet.
- walk, jump, gallop, tiptoe, and run short distances.
- walk backwards or sideways.
- ride a tricycle.
- open doors by myself.
- wash my hands and brush my teeth by myself.
- understand now, soon, and later.
- repeat words and sounds.
- follow simple story lines from pictures or books.
- sing and carry a tune.
- ask who, what, when, where, and why questions.
- put together a six-piece puzzle .
- copy shapes like a circle or a square with my crayons.
- recognize everyday sounds.
- match objects and pictures.
- learn short rhymes and songs.
- identify primary colors like green, red, blue, and yellow.
- count one to three objects aloud.
- accept suggestions and follow simple directions.
- speak clearly enough that strangers can understand me.
- use words most of the time to express my feelings.
- help you with simple household tasks.
- choose between two different choices.
- play with other children, but I still like to play alone and I don't cooperate or share well yet.
- imitate and observe your actions.

YOU CAN HELP ME LEARN & GROW! YOU CAN-

- read to me often. I like to listen to short familiar stories.
- show me how to hop like a frog, waddle like a penguin, gallop like a horse, and run

like a cheetah. This will help me connect learning with fun while encouraging physical activity.

■ help me add to my vocabulary by adding new information to my sentences. "Yes that's a flower; it's a bright, red flower." This will help me learn how to form sentences.

■ have me tell you a story during reading time. This builds my creativity and vocabulary, while giving me a sense of responsibility.

■ begin toilet training me. Be patient with me, I still might have some accidents.

■ encourage independence by buying clothes that I can pull on and off by myself.

■ encourage my imagination and creative side by playing make believe with me, reading me stories, and letting me finger paint, or draw on paper.

■ teach me my first and last name.

■ teach me how to brush my teeth everyday.

■ give me choices and let me choose, such as letting me choose between two different shirts to wear or two different foods to eat.

■ encourage me to count items aloud.

TOYS THAT TEACH

Imagination Box

This box of goodies encourages me to use my imagination, be creative, and engage in make believe.

Materials: Large cardboard box or plastic storage container, old articles of clothing, hats, wigs, scarves, jackets, shawls, neckties, costumes, jewelry, etc.

Your three-year-old will enjoy endless hours of pretend play with this homemade imagination box. Your child has lots of imagination so encourage him or her to be creative when dressing up in the articles of clothing provided in the box. Promote make believe play by suggesting characters they can pretend to be. Try to guess who your child is dressed up like or pretend by dressing up yourself.

Perfect Fit Puzzles

Puzzles are easy to make, fun to put together, and have many learning benefits. Puzzles encourage problem solving, reasoning, language development, color identification, shape identification, eye-hand coordination, creativity, social skills, and self-esteem.

Materials: Magazine, calendar pictures, photos, drawings; cardboard; glue; clear contact paper; storage container (flat box, shoe box, etc.); scissors, ruler, pencil or marker.

Find a picture, photo, or drawing. Cut it to the size you would like. If desired, photocopy it and save the copy to paste onto the storage box for easy identification. Glue the original picture to the cardboard and carefully place clear contact paper over it on both sides. Cut the picture into pieces: most three year olds can put together a six-piece puzzle, but remember that each child learns at a different rate and will advance in puzzle-working skill at his own pace.

SAFETY TIP: Be sure that all toys, or the parts on toys, you give your baby are larger than the end of an empty paper towel roll and will be safe in his mouth. Toys, or the parts on toys, for children younger than 3 years old should not be smaller than $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter or $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches long. Any part small enough to fit inside a paper towel roll could cause your child to choke.

PLAY THESE FINGER PLAYS WITH ME

Five Little Monkeys

Five little monkeys swinging on a tree
(*swing your hand back and forth, fingers extended*)

Teasing Mr. Alligator, "can't catch me,
can't catch me" (*shaking your head, wag
your finger like you're saying "no, no"*)
Along comes Mr. Alligator quiet as can be,
and (*say this in a whisper, with palms
together making a slithering motion like an
alligator*)

SNAPPED THAT MONKEY RIGHT OUT
OF THAT TREE! (*clap hands together like
the mouth of an alligator*)

Four little monkeys swinging on a tree...

Three little monkeys swinging on a tree...

Two little monkeys swinging on a tree...

One little monkey swinging on a tree...

Five Little Puppies



Five little puppies
were playing in
the sun. (*Hold up
hands, fingers
extended.*)

This one saw a rab-
bit and he began to
run. (*Bend down first
finger*)

This one saw a butterfly and he began to
race. (*Bend down second finger*)

This one saw a cat and he began to chase.
(*Bend down third finger*)

This one tried to catch his tail and he
went round and round. (*Bend down fourth
finger*)

This one was so quiet that he never made a
sound. (*Bend down thumb*)

A Walk in the Jungle

Giraffes are tall with necks so long. (*Stand
on tip toes, raise arms high up into air*)

Elephants' trunks are big and strong.
(*Make trunk with hand and arm*)

Zebras have stripes and can gallop away,
(*Gallop around in a circle*)

While monkeys in the trees do sway.
(*Sway back and forth*)

Old crocodile swims in a pool so deep,
(*Pretend to swim*)

Or lies in the sun and goes to sleep.
(*Place head on hands and close eyes*)

START EARLY WITH BOOKS:

Enjoying books is developed early in life. From the moment an infant is born, he or she needs someone to be read to him or her. Reading helps babies understand language and it helps their language develop appropriately.

Set a Good Example

Read a lot! Parents who read usually have children who are interested in books and reading. Early on, children model their parents' attitudes toward books. Let your child see you enjoying magazines, books, and newspapers.

Select Good Books

As children grow, their attention spans increase and their interests change. Select books to fit these changes as your child grows. Continuing to read aloud to your child at all ages is important. Some suggestions follow for choosing suitable books:

2- and 3-Year-Olds

■ Choose stories about action, people, and activities. They love stories about animals and familiar objects and ideas.

■ Choose simple stories with simple plots.

■ Choose books with repeated phrases or words. Children will quickly learn them and "read" with you.

Make Story Time Special

Make story time part of your child's routine. You and your child will look forward to it. Some suggestions for making story time special include the following:

■ Involve the child's hearing, seeing, feeling and sometimes smelling because children learn through their senses.

■ Choose a book that you enjoy. Familiarize yourself with the book by reading it first.

■ Choose a good time to read. At bedtime and before naps are usually good opportunities for reading to your child.

■ Choose a good spot: a quiet, comfortable place where you will not be interrupted.

■ Make sure the child can see the pictures and can follow along with you while you read.

■ Point to each line of words, from left to right, as you read. This helps strengthen left-to-right eye coordination.



■ Pay attention to the way you sound. Change your pitch (high and low) with the words in the story. Change your volume (soft and loud) and pace (fast and slow) as well.

■ Give life to the words. Sound scared for the word "scared" or speak slowly for the word "slow," and so forth.

■ Read so that the words can be heard clearly.

■ Read with enthusiasm.

■ Choose stories with repeated phrases or sentences. Children will often repeat these lines with you. Repetitive language in books is important for language development.

Suggested Books:

Margaret Wise Brown. *Goodnight Moon; The Runaway Bunny.*

Eric Carle. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar; The Secret Birthday Message;* and others.

Eric Hill. *Spot's First Walk* and others.
Russel Hoban. *Bedtime for Francis.*

Mary Ann Hoberman. *Miss Mary Mack, The Lady with the Alligator Purse.*

Edith Kunhardt. *Pat the Cat; Pat the Bunny; Ladybug, Ladybug;* and other nursery rhymes.

Nancy Vann Lann. *Possum Come a Knockin.'*

John Langstaff. *Over in the Meadow.*

Bill Martin and John Archambault. *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom.*

Kate McMullan. *If You Were My Bunny.*

Beatrix Potter. *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* and others.

Peter Spier. *Little Rabbits; Food Market; Little Cats; Noah's Ark;* and many more.

Rosemary Wells. *Max's Breakfast* and others.



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