ExceleRate ILLINOIS
Preparing Children for Success

Brain Building Activities
For parents and their children
ages 3–4

I Pick, You Pick

When you are getting your child dressed in the morning, pick out his/her pants and then ask him/her to find a shirt that matches the color of those pants.

Brainy Background
powered by Mind in the Making

This game helps your child make connections and group like things. Your child might have a good reason for why things go together. So listen to his/her ideas. If your child's idea won't work, explain why.

Light Show

On!

Turn playtime into a lightshow with your child. Lift your child so he/she can reach a light switch, or let him/her stand on a steady chair (stay close to keep him/her safe). Say "on" or "off" and see if your child can flip the switch to match your words. Then let your child take a turn calling out directions to you!

Brainy Background
powered by Mind in the Making

This game teaches your child about how one action causes another (cause and effect). When one of you flips the switch, talk about how the lights turn off and on. It's also the chance for your child to hear new words like "flip" and "electricity."

Dance Moves

Playtime can become a dance party. Turn on some tunes on your phone or radio and start doing a silly dance: shake a leg, wiggle your hips. Can your child copy your moves? Next song, it's his/her turn to lead. Go back and forth until you're danced out!

Brainy Background
powered by Mind in the Making

Believe it or not, dancing games can be great brain builders! This one in particular teaches your child to pay attention to sounds and rhythm and to imitate you using his/her body. It also gives him/her the chance to be the leader and that's a good feeling.

Daily Recap

Turn bedtime into a reflection of your child's day. Ask your child if he/she got dressed or ate breakfast first. Tell what you remember too. If you want to be playful, switch the order—"you went outside and then you got dressed" and have your child correct you.

Brainy Background
powered by Mind in the Making

Helping your child describe parts of his/her day helps build his/her communication skills.

Inspired by

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