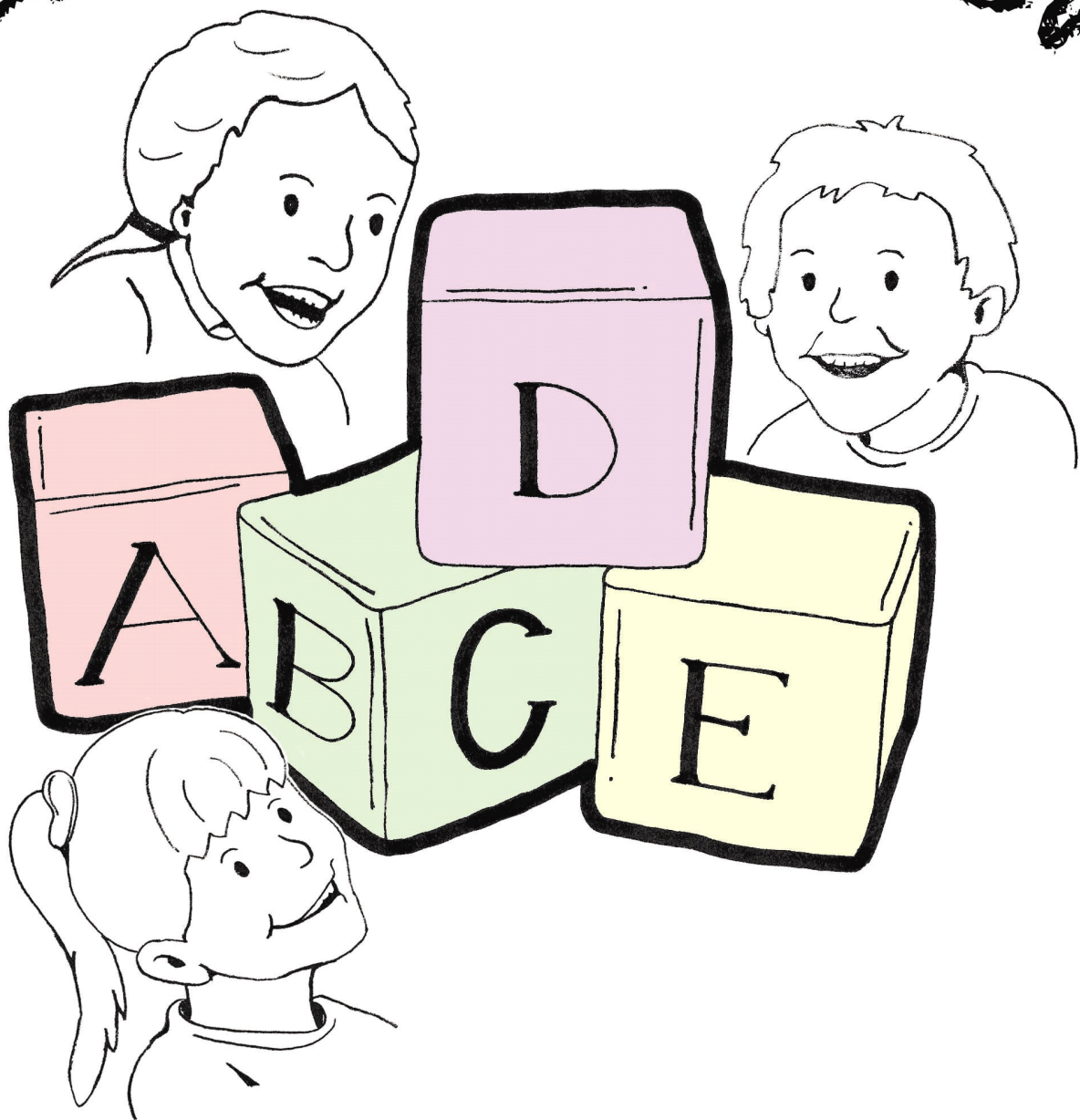


LEARN and GROW



Hands-On Lessons for Active Preschoolers

Compiled by Michelle Caskey
Illustrated by Melanie Rankin

Learn and Grow: Hands-On Lessons for Active Preschoolers

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Introduction

When I first started homeschooling our children, my oldest son was almost two years old. I started out reading to him and doing a few hands-on activities and was completely surprised at how rapidly he progressed. After a few months of working with him, I found myself preparing daily lessons which included English, math, history, science, art, fine or gross motor skills, geography and literature.

I used to spend countless hours researching different topics and projects for us to work on each week. Organizing our schoolwork took me more time than actually teaching it to my son! After a few months, I decided it was time to look for a prepared curriculum we could follow that would save me some time. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to find anything that seemed like real meat and potatoes learning to me. Most preschool curriculums I looked at consisted mainly of crafts and games. Don't get me wrong, there is definitely a place for these types of activities in the life of a preschooler. But they are capable of so much more than what we usually give them credit.



This project has been extremely rewarding for me. It has been a joy to go back through my children's first lessons and to reminisce. I hope that you and your child have as much fun with these lessons as I have with my children! I'd love to hear how you're doing. All the best!

Michelle Caskey

Email: Michelle@homeschool-your-boys.com.

A Few Tips Before You Get Started...

Daily Lessons – This curriculum is set up with 26 weeks of lessons. There are projects you can work on with you child five days per week. Be flexible – when you first start out, your child may not be ready to do lessons every day. Feel free to skip a day here and there. Most preschools meet three mornings a week for two year olds and three mornings a week for three year olds. I think you will find that your child will enjoy these lessons

and won't want to skip that many days – but use this curriculum as a tool, don't become a slave to it.

Also, don't expect your child to sit down and do all of these activities back to back. Do a few in the morning and a few in the afternoon with play breaks in between. Whenever you sense your child getting tired or frustrated, take a break. One of the goals of schoolwork at this age is to teach your child to love learning... and extra stress and pressure on them won't accomplish this task.

The Library – The library is an amazing resource! If you don't already use the library, be sure to get in there and check it out before starting this curriculum with your child. Ask your librarian how to do interlibrary loans. Many libraries are parts of coops so their patrons are able to check out books from a wide variety of libraries – this makes for a huge financial savings for families. And most libraries are connected to the internet so you can search for books and put them on hold in your own home.

In the literature sections of this curriculum, I have recommended books which are related to that week's theme and that my children and I have enjoyed over the years. These books are all available in our library's coop. Most of them will probably be available to you as well. If not, please search for similar books in your library that are related to the theme. Again, if you need help with this task, you should ask your local librarian.

How Do I Get Started? –

Overall:

1. Look through the entire curriculum.
2. Make a list of needed materials which you don't normally have around the house.
3. You may want to give a copy of this list to all of the grandparents – they are usually eager to help out, either with digging up supplies at home or with helping to purchase some of the school supplies for your child.
4. Begin collecting the necessary materials so that you'll have them when you need them. Try to stay at least a week or two ahead on gathering supplies if possible.

Weekly:

1. Familiarize yourself with one week's lessons at a time.
2. Confirm that all of the necessary materials are available.
3. Complete all of the preparations which are necessary for each lesson.
4. You are ready to start the lessons with your child. Have fun!

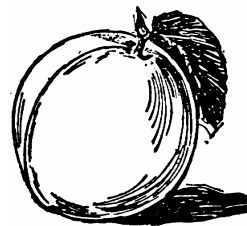
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Week One

Your theme for this week will be apples. You will be focusing on the following topics with your child:

English – The letter A
Pre-Math – Circles and the number 1
Art – The color red



Lesson One – Monday

English: Recognition of the Letter A

Materials: Card stock
Apple
Red paint
Newspaper
Paint smock or an old shirt

Preparation: Cut a capital letter A out of card stock.

Lesson:

1. Have your child put on their paint smock or an old shirt to protect their clothing. Have them roll up the sleeves to minimize the mess.
2. While your child is watching, cut the apple in half. Let your child observe what the apple looks like on the inside (the seeds, etc.)
3. Put the paint in a container which is wide enough to easily accommodate the apple. Spread the newspapers out to protect your work surface.
4. Let your child dip their apple into the paint and make apple prints on their capital A. Let their project dry.

Pre-Math – Recognizing Like Objects

Materials: Paper lunchbag
Variety of differently-shaped objects for child to choose from (blocks, etc.) – be sure to include circle shapes and red objects

Preparation: None

Lesson:

1. Spread the block or other objects out on the floor in front of your child.
2. Give your child the paper lunch bag.
3. Tell your child to fill their bag with “all of the circle blocks” or “all of the red blocks”, etc.
4. As your child puts each object into the bag, have them explain why it belongs in there.

Art – Hand Apple Tree

Materials: Construction Paper
Brown, Red, Yellow and Green Paint
Paint brush

Preparation: None

Lesson:

1. Let your child paint one of their hands brown.
2. Help them press their hand with outstretched fingers onto the construction paper to make the tree trunk.
3. Have your child wash their hands.
4. Then give your child the red, yellow and green paint as well as any other supplies you choose.
5. Let your child create their own version of an apple tree.

Gross Motor Skills – Apple Toss

Materials: Laundry Basket or Bushel Basket
Red Bean Bags or soft red balls
Masking tape



Preparation: Use the masking tape to create a line on the floor. Place the basket a couple of feet behind the line.

Lesson:

1. Have your child stand behind the line and try to toss the “apples” into the basket.
2. Have them try throwing overhand, underhand, while standing backwards, etc. Come up with as many variations as you can think of.
3. Continue to let them play this until they grow tired of the game.

Science – How Many Apples Am I?

Materials: Several apples
Tape measure

Preparation: None

Lesson:

1. Have your child lay down on the ground.
2. Measure how tall they are by using apples. If you don’t have enough apples to equal the length of your child, take apples from the beginning of the measurement and move them to the end in a leap frog method as you continue your counting.
3. After you know how many apples tall your child is, you may want to measure them with the tape measure and let them know how tall they are in feet and inches.
4. Then lay down on the ground and let your child measure how tall you are with the apples and/or tape measure. They will love this!

Literature:

Apples Here! by Will Hubbell

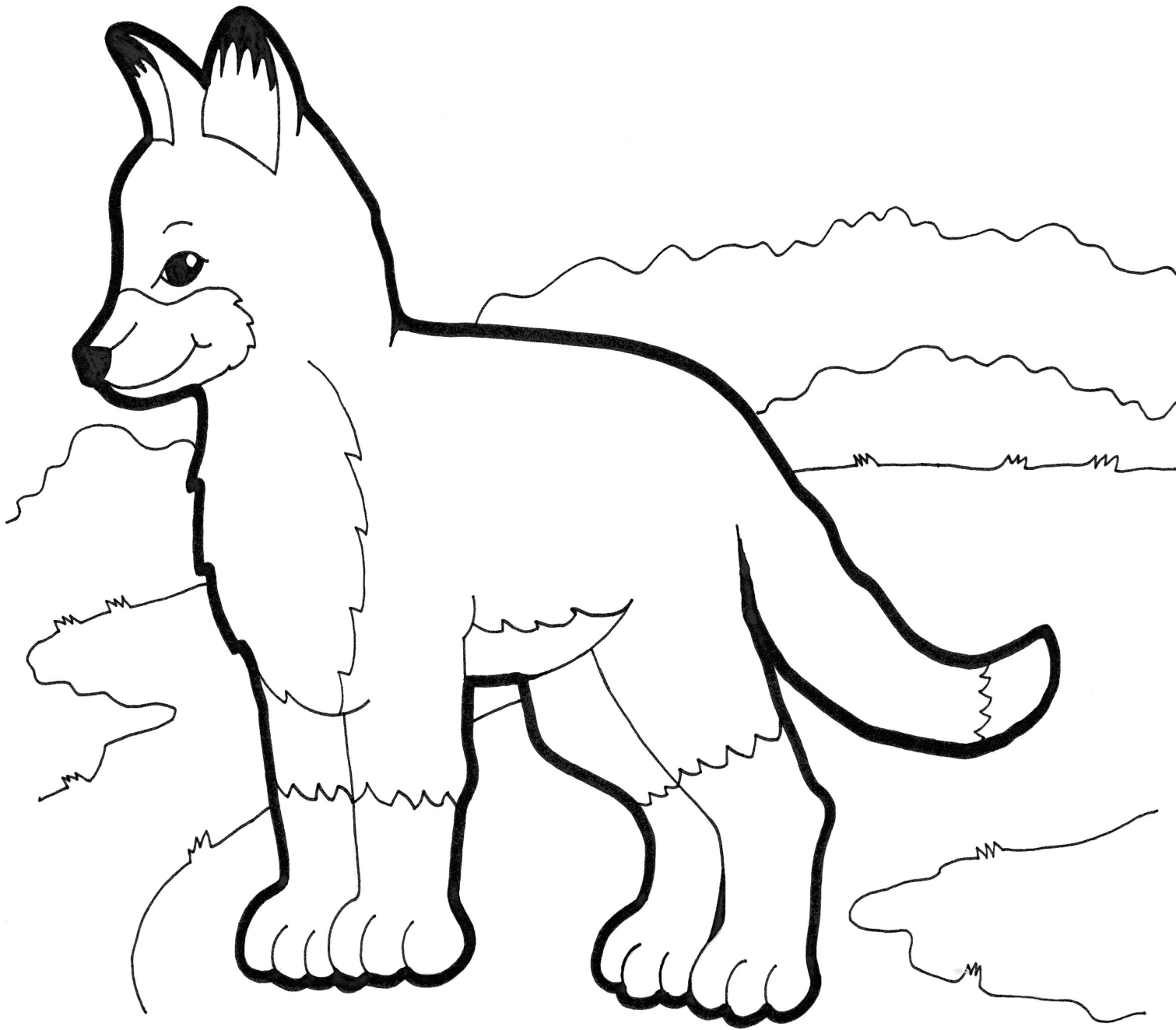
Autumn is for Apples by Michelle Knudsen

Up, Up, Up! It's Apple-Picking Time by Jody Fickes Shapiro

The Apple Pie Tree by Zoe Hall

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Use with Lesson 100



Use with Lesson 114



Cumulus clouds - signal fair weather



Cirrus clouds – light rain or snow in 1 to 2 days



Nimbus clouds – rain clouds



Stratus clouds – signal rain or snow