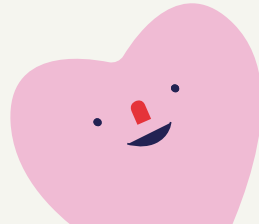
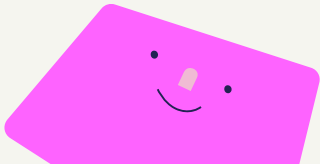


Fun

Games





POP!
PSYCHOLOGY

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MAGAZINE PICTURE PUZZLES



Ages
2+

Create your own simple jigsaw puzzles with your children from large magazine pictures.

What you need:

- Large magazine pictures
- Glue
- Scissors
- Thick cardboard

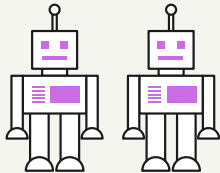
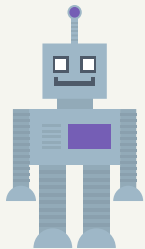
How to play:

Look through magazines with your children and let them choose some pictures from which they would like to make puzzles. Help them cut out the pictures and use a strong glue to stick onto thick cardboard.

When it is dry, cut it into puzzle shapes. With younger children begin with four or five pieces. As they master the skill, cut the pictures into more pieces.

Store and label the puzzles in plastic lunch bags in a shoe box.





ODD ONE OUT

Help your younger children begin to understand the meaning of same and different.

What you need:

- Sets of objects that have two exactly the same, e.g.
- Pair of socks
- Pair of shoes
- 2 matching mugs
- 2 matching forks

How to play:

Mix up the items and have your children find the two that are exactly the same. Then they cover their eyes. Put a pair of objects together with one that is different. They have to find the odd one out and tell you why it doesn't belong.

Make this game more and more difficult by making the differences more and more subtle.

BOTTLES AND LIDS

This activity will help develop your children's powers of prediction as they guess which lid fits which bottle. A good way to develop the muscles in their hands and fingers also.

What you need:

- Bottles of different shapes and sizes with screw-top lids

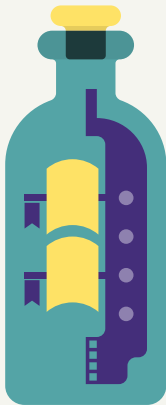
How to play:

Put out a selection of jars (at least ten) with lids with different circumferences. See if your children can find all the correct lids for the jars and screw them on.

Later, they might like to time themselves with an egg-timer to see how fast they can do it.

They could also put the jars in order from the smallest lid to the largest.

(Have your children do this actively on a mat or carpet rather than a hard floor. Remind them to take great care with glass bottles).



SILLY WALKING

This has been a favourite bedtime routine with our young children for some time

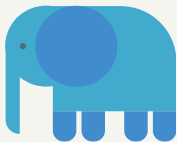
What you need

- Time!

How to play:

Bedtime routines vary in all families, but 'funny walking' is one we use that I thought I would share with you. If you bring routines into bedtime, it often makes putting young children down for the night easier.

When it's bedtime my child and I take it in turns to be the leader for 'silly walking'. As we go through the house playing 'follow the leader' he gets ready for bed – a small drink of water stop in the kitchen, a kiss for Dad in the lounge, toilet stop and then brushing teeth stop in the bathroom. Then he happily snuggles down for a bedtime story and kiss goodnight





INDOOR HOCKEY

Show your children how to play this simple table-top variety – great for bored kids on wet days.

What you need:

- Table-top
- Paper
- Books
- Masking tape
- Iceblock sticks

How to play:

On a large table, position thick books all around the edges to form the sides of the hockey field. Leave a space at each end to be the goal to shoot through. Each player has an iceblock stick for a hockey stick. To make the ball, roll a piece of paper into a ball shape and wrap masking tape around it to secure it. Let the game begin.

The players stand at each end behind their opponent's goal and take it in turn to shoot the 'ball' towards their goal. Stay around because, like most family games, an umpire is often needed!

FOLLOW THE LEADER

Play a game of follow the leader with your little ones

What you need:

- Time
- Room to play

How to play:

Line the children up and show them how to play the old favourite 'follow the leader'. Try to move in lots of different ways such as skipping (they will have trouble with this one but it's hilarious watching them try), jumping, walking sideways, walking backwards, taking little fairy steps or big giant's steps, running, crawling and so on.

When you run out of ideas one of the children can be the leader and think of things for the others to follow!



KNOCK 'EMS

Develop your children's throwing skills with a game of home-made 'Knock 'ems'.

What you need:

- 6 tins with lids (powdered milk or baby formula tins are ideal)
- Pain or collage materials for decorating the tins
- Sand or dirt
- Balls or bean bags

How to play:

Put some sand or dirt in the tins so they don't topple over too easily and replace the lids and tape closed.

Paint or decorate the tins with your children. Show them how to arrange the tins in a pyramid.

Throw the bean bags and count how many they knock down. Keeping the scores will be good counting practice too!

COIN TOSSING

Ages
8+

POP!
PSYCHOLOGY

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Another good game that not only improves your children's throwing skills, but also gives them counting practice.

What you need:

- Muffin tin
- Pencil
- Paper
- Coins

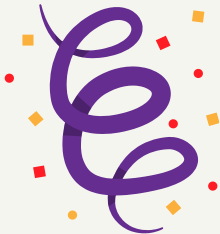
How to play:

Cut out circles of paper to fit in the holes in the muffin tin. Give each hole a different number.

Stand the tin against some books so it stands on an angle.

Mark a spot for the players to throw from and take it in turn to try to toss a coin into one of the holes in the muffin tin. Coins that land in a hole score that number of points.

Players must add up their own scores and keep a running total. The first player to reach a designated score (perhaps 100!) is the winner.



BOX FUN

Lots of good fun, cheap creative play!

What you need;

- Cardboard fruit boxes of all sizes
- Other props such as cardboard cylinders, broom handles, sheets, rugs
- Masking tape

What to do:

On wet days when the children are driving you crazy, drive to your local fruit shop and they are usually happy to let you load up as many fruit boxes as you can fit in your car. Let the kids loose with the boxes and their imagination, and they will spend hours making tunnels, cubby houses, towers and other creations.

When they have lost interest in building cubby houses, save the boxes to make box cars or enlist their help to tidy up their toys and store some away in boxes for other rainy days.

