

MAKING A BOOK AT HOME FROM PICTURES YOUR CHILD DRAWS

Looking for something to lure your preschooler away from the television? Something that's not another toy and won't need any batteries? Here's an idea that doesn't cost much, that children enjoy and that actually will help them with reading skills later: *make a book from pictures your child draws or paints.*

If you already have pictures on your refrigerator door that your child painted or drew in her preschool or childcare center, just use those. Or you could encourage your little one to make pictures at home.

All you'll need is some paper and markers, paints and/or crayons. The big wrap-around papers that separate the sections of the Sunday newspaper make a good source of paper for drawing or painting. If you choose water-base paints and markers, you won't have to worry about clean-up; they'll wash out of clothing or off surfaces easily. And since they're non-toxic, you can store the supplies where your child can get to them himself, once you've shown him how to use them correctly and how to put them away when he's finished.

If your child's stuck getting started, remind her of something you saw last weekend. For example, "Remember when we saw the big balloons float over the field on Saturday?" Ask her to make a picture of something she remembers and, then, write her words along the bottom of the page. See if she remembers anything else. For example, did the neighbor's dog bark when it saw those balloons? What happened then?

Once you have 2 or 3 drawings, you can staple or just tape them together and you'll have a book, written in your child's own words. Chances are he'll want you to read it to him, or, better yet, he might want to pretend to read it himself.

Look! He already sees himself as someone who reads. Hooray!