

Summer Activities Part III: Social Studies and The Arts

We hope these summer activities, as well as the weekly tutorials, are keeping your child busy. You and your child are sure to see the benefits of an “educationally active” summer come next school year. Keep up with past activities, while enjoying these new ones in the areas of social studies and the arts.

Social Studies

Social studies is the study of how people past and present interact with one another. It is the study of people, places, and events from all over the world. Completing the following activities will help your child learn more about society and the societies of other cultures near and far.

- Read stories and articles with your child about other cultures. Look up the countries on the map where the stories take place.
- Ask your child to pick a part of history he or she is curious about and read nonfiction books about that time period.
- Read history and culture magazines with your child.
- Discuss with your child where your ancestors are from. Did they experience any major historical events first hand?
- Go on “people walks” with your child. Discuss how people are different. How are they the same?
- Help your child make a map of your house, neighborhood, community, state, country, or world.
- Encourage your child to chart the weather for a week and make a graph. What are his or her conclusions about the week’s weather?
- Recycle with your child and make a list of ways to conserve energy.
- Ask your child to check labels on clothes and other products. Help your child locate the country where the items are made on the map.
- Collect “new” quarters with your child. Find the states on a U.S.A. map. Record which ones you have found.
- Play the license plate game with your child while driving in the car. Record the states you find and locate them on a map.
- Visit history museums as a family.
- Ask your child to write a report about another country.
- Encourage your child to research a famous person in history and write a report. How has this person changed the world?

The Arts

The arts are a very important part of a child’s education. Whether it’s singing, dancing, sculpting, or acting, the arts help promote a child’s creativity and increase his or her self-confidence. They have even been proven to increase a child’s overall academic success. Enjoy the

activities listed below and learn more about arts education by visiting www.americansforthearts.org.

- Read art history books with your child. For younger children, picture books are available about art and artists.
- Visit art museums with your child. Be sure to stop by the contemporary museum of art in your community. How is the art in the contemporary museum different than the art in other museums?
- Check your local paper for art openings in your community. Go to an opening as a family.
- Check your local paper for symphonies. In some communities, there are symphonies in the park available free of charge. Pack a picnic dinner and go as a family.
- Check your local paper for plays, musicals, and movies. See them as a family. Discuss how plays, musicals, and movies are different? How are they the same? What makes someone a "good" actor or actress?
- Encourage your child to do art. Use different mediums such as clay or charcoal. Try making a collage out of scraps of magazine.
- Allow your child to take pictures when on nature walks, tide pooling, or at the zoo to practice photography.
- For a younger child, clap a pattern and have him or her repeat it back to you. For an older child, share your favorite genre of music with him or her.
- Make an instrument with your child out of household things.
- Sign your child up for a dance class. Some are offered free of charge at local community centers.
- Act out scenes from a book together as a family.
- Encourage your child to research a famous artist, actor, or musician and write a report. How has this person contributed to society?

Continue to complete activities in the areas of social studies and the arts all summer long. Ask you child if he or she has learned anything new. Does your child have a new appreciation of a culture, place, or time period? Is he or she interested in pursuing music, art, or drama more? We hope so!

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