

When I play with blocks, I am learning...

- Sizes and shapes, and how to create and repeat patterns: essential math skills
- Spatial awareness, stacking and balancing: the basics of physics
- Problem solving and logical consequences



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When I play with puzzles, shape sorters, and stacking cups, I am learning...

- About the relationships of parts to the whole: a basic math concept
- Concepts of shape, relative sizes (big, bigger, smaller), and color
- Eye-hand coordination, small motor skills
- Vocabulary related to the subject of the puzzle
- Problem solving



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When I play with water (and other materials in the sensory table), I am learning...

- To use tools to accomplish – funnels, cups, scoops
- Eye-hand coordination as I learn to pour, fill, scoop
- Concepts of empty and full, volume and weight: all relevant to mathematics
- Properties of solids and liquids in motion, and that some things sink and some things float (science!)



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When I play with dolls or stuffed animals,
I am learning...

- To use my imagination
- To treat others with tender, loving care
- To imitate the parenting behaviors I see in my life
- Interpersonal skills



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When I look at books, and when you read them to me, I am learning...

- That reading is important and enjoyable
- That letters on a page represent words – talk that is written down
- To interpret pictures to represent ideas
- To follow the development of thoughts and ideas in the plot of a story



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When I play outdoors and in the big motor play area, I am learning...

- Physical strength, coordination and balance
- To jump, slide, run, swing, roll, and climb
- To take some risks *and* to be cautious if needed
- To watch out for other people before moving, to move around others carefully



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When I play in the kitchen area, I am learning...

- To use my imagination / try on adult roles
- To express myself in sentences
- To solve problems, especially socially, through negotiation with friends. To cooperate.
- To improvise and use things in a symbolic way to represent other things...abstract thinking.



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When I play with cars and trains, I am learning...

- To exercise my imagination and see myself from a different perspective, that of a giant
- How wheeled vehicles move through the world and what happens when they crash
- How things need to be pushed *up* hills, but going *down* hill, they go fast on their own (physics!)



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When I play with play-dough, I am learning...

- To think about things in 3 dimensions, as I try to re-create what I see
- That the amount of a substance remains the same, even when the shape changes
- To express feelings, squeezing and pounding
- When I cut out a shape with a cookie cutter, I learn about negative & positive space, seeing something against its background (helps with reading)



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When I sort things, I am learning...

- To notice details and assess the similarities and differences between objects
- Concepts of color, size and shape
- To form categories, essential concepts for science and mathematics
- Logical reasoning



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When I paint, scribble, or draw, I am learning...

- To develop my imagination and creativity
- To hold a paintbrush or pencil
- The names of colors and how to make new colors
- To distinguish shapes, and purposely create shapes
- To express my feelings & ideas
- Concepts of symmetry, balance and design



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When I choose to have a snack, I am learning...

- To choose and try new foods
- How to sit at a table with others
- How to drink from a cup (and also logical consequences – when you make a mistake, you get wet!)
- Small motor skills



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When I play independently when my parent has left the room for parent education, I learn...

- Independence and Self-Confidence
- That my parent can leave for a while to tend to his/her own needs, but s/he is still available if needed, and s/he always comes back
- That I can ask other adults for help, and that I need to listen to other adults' guidance



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When I participate in circle time activities, I am learning...

- The names of others in the group: an essential skill for building relationships
- To listen, sit still and understand spoken language: important for school readiness
- To wait when others are talking, to cooperate and be considerate of the needs of others
- New vocabulary connected with the topic of discussion
- To remember the words of songs and poems: helps to build memory skills



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When I wash hands before playing, I am learning...

- School Routines
- Good Hygiene Practices
- Small Motor Skills
- How not to make a splashy mess



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When I walk out to the car, I am learning...

- About cars and parking lot safety
- To listen to my parent who helps keep me safe
- That my parent will keep me safe even when I don't like it (they'll make me hold hands or carry me even when I don't want that)



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Original concept (and much of the text) is from
<http://88thservices.com/pdf/learning.pdf>, by Karen Miller.
Additional concepts by Janelle Durham,
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