

Formerly Kids Holiday
Crafts Magazine

Saplings Magazine

The Magazine for Parents to Help Their Children Grow

Vol. 1, Issue 1

www.saplingsmagazine.com

July 2004

Getting Patriotic

Holly Bloom's
Garden reviewed

Cool Summer
Recipes

Sharks: Just the
Facts

Celebrate Festa
Junina

Getting Dirty with
the Kids

Blooming Crafts

Fun Coloring
Pictures

Summer Party
Planning

**AND MUCH,
MUCH MORE!**



Staff

Editor-in-Chief:	Nancy Cavanaugh
Managing Editor:	Lisa Keele
Website Design:	Elizabeth Dulemba
Cover Illustration:	Nancy Miller
Writers:	Kimberly M. Hutmacher Sarah Hartman Kristy Dempsey Shari Dash Greenspan Joyce Risë Johnson Sarah Eshelman Amy Rhode Abigail Beal Lata Budhrani Deborah Shelton Jackie Perrin Stephanie Foster Nancy and Caitlin Cavanaugh
Queries:	editor@kidsholidaycrafts.com

Welcome back! Following several months on hiatus, *Kids Holiday Crafts Magazine* has returned. You might not recognize it right away as it has a new name, a whole new look, and a new size but you can expect to get the same great parenting help and fun stuff to share with your kids.

It was not an easy decision to change so much about my “baby” but I am hoping that it will be a better magazine for you, the reader, and will give me more elbow room.

I would like you to give a very warm welcome to my new managing editor, Lisa Keele. She was a contributor in the March 2004 issue and was interested in the role of managing editor. It isn't always easy keeping in touch with someone who lives in Israel when you're in New Jersey but

From the Editor

the wonders of technology make it all a bit easier.

On the home front, my daughter is going to a day camp that is run by the town recreation department. She and her friends had a great time last year and they're all really excited about going again. For my boyfriend it is work, work, work – I guess it keeps from getting into too much trouble.

For me, I get to be a SAHM again. The finding a job thing wasn't working out and I realized that I loved the job I'd had taking care of the house and my family, so that's what I'll be doing full-time. I will still be working as I have a very part-time job doing proofreading and, of course, this magazine.

Nancy Cavanaugh

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Hide and Seek Sun

By Kimberly M. Hutmacher

"Eight, nine, ten! Ready or not, here I come!"

Sam looked behind the tree, under the slide, and inside the tunnel. "Hmm, I wonder where Jack is hiding?"

As he walked around the playground, Sam noticed that the sun wasn't shining on him anymore. He looked up and saw the sun peek out from behind the oak tree.

"There you are!" The sun moved out from behind the tree as if to say, "You found me!"

Sam smiled at the sun. He started searching for Jack again. He looked in the ball diamond dugout, behind the sliding hill and behind the bicycle rack. As he peeked behind the rack, the sun disappeared again. Sam looked up and said, "Okay, where did you go this time?"

Sam saw the sun move out from behind some houses a few blocks away. Sam said, "You're good at

hide and seek, but not as good as Jack. Where is he?"

Sam searched some more. He looked behind a garbage can, under the climber, and behind the fire pole. Wandering along, Sam noticed the sun was missing again. He looked up and saw it peek out from behind a tall building down the street. Then, the sun moved out from behind the building. It shone on Sam and the bush he was standing next to. In the sun's light, Sam saw a shadow next to the bush. He looked at the sun and smiled. It twinkled, as if to give him a wink! Sam ran behind the bush.

"Found you!"

Jack crawled out from behind the bush and said, "What took you so long?"

Sam looked up and said, "The sun wanted to play a game of hide and seek, too. He's pretty good at hiding, but he's even better at seeking!"

Fourth of July Felt Star Pillows

By Sarah Hartman

What you need:

- Large square of red felt
- Large square of blue felt
- Bright white yarn
- Yarn needle
- Scissors
- Pen
- Paper
- Stuffing
- Two large white plastic buttons (optional)

What to do:

1. Draw a large star on your paper. (Make the star the size you want your pillow to be. If you want to make a small pillow, size your star accordingly.)
2. Cut out your star with regular scissors.

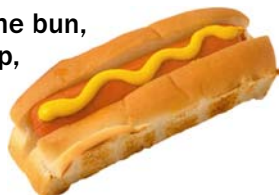
3. Trace your star on both the red and blue felt.
4. Cut out the fabric stars.
5. Place the star together back to back (the side you want showing should face outward).
6. Thread the needle with yarn and tie a knot in the end. Pull the needle through one of the stars near the edge, so that the knot in the end of your yarn is now between the two stars.
7. Using the yarn, whip stitch around the star, leaving a large enough opening to stuff the pillow.
8. Stuff the pillow, leaving the yarn and needle dangling.
9. Once you have the pillow stuffed, complete whip stitching around the pillow. To end, tie a small knot in the yarn near the fabric and cut off.
10. OPTIONAL: Sew a button to the center of each side of the pillow for embellishment.

NOTE: This is a pillow for decoration only. Not machine washable.

Hot Dog

By Claudia Pearson

Hanging from the end of the bun,
Oozing mustard and catsup,
Tasty pickle relish
Drips on my napkin,
Onions crunch,
Gotta eat it all!



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Celebrate Brazil's Festa Junina

By Kristy Dempsey

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live in another part of the world? What are the children like? What kinds of things do they do? This month, while you celebrate Independence Day, Brazilian children celebrate a winter festival called festa junina. Imagine a hayride and square dance rolled into one. With food, games and traditional dances, this winter festival is celebrated all over Brazil.

Festa Junina is a Brazilian tradition that was brought from Europe by settlers from Portugal and France. In Europe during June and July, farmers gathered the harvest from the crops they planted. The farmers celebrated this harvest with bonfires and dances. Even though July is not a time of harvest in Brazil, the festa junina is still celebrated following the European tradition.

Brazilian children plan all year long what they will wear for festa junina, just like you plan your Halloween costume. Girls braid their long hair into pigtails, paint freckles on their faces, and wear frilly gingham dresses. Boys put on straw hats, paint beards and mustaches on their faces, and wear blue jeans, boots and plaid shirts.

Part of the fun is decorating for the party! The decorations are rarely bought. The children make bandeirinhas (bahn-dehr-EEN-yas) to be hung up like streamers and use ribbons to hang down from poles around the dance floor.

At every festa junina, the children dance the quadrilha (kwa-DREE-ya), a square dance that originated in France. Using traditional songs, the quadrilha tells the story of a wedding. Different children wear costumes to play the part of each member of the wedding party.

In addition to the dances, children make their way from booth to booth sampling many different types of food and playing games, hoping to win prizes. If you were to visit Brazil during a festa junina you might first ride (and be thrown off of!) a mechanical bull. After that, you would grab some pipoca (popcorn) or algodão doce (cotton candy) to munch on while you make your way around the rest of the fair.

Then you could see how much fun the games are! Common games include pescaria (fishing) for small prizes, bean bag tosses, and a guessing game where you try to predict which house a coelho (rabbit) will hide in. If you are really skilled, you might make it to the top of the pau-de-sebo (greased pole), where you could grab and keep the money you find there!

For the rest of the evening, you could listen to forró



Photo Credit: Kristy Dempsey

Students in Brazil dressed up for Festa Junina. From left to right: Ana Luisa, Gabriel, Gabriella, Maria Theresa and Megan.

(foh-hoh), a type of Brazilian music, while you enjoy the many types of food that are served at the festa junina.

Now that you know what Brazilian children do during July, you can celebrate your very own festa junina. Aproveite! (Enjoy!)

Canjica (Grits)

Ingredients:

- 1 pound hominy
- 1/4 gallon of milk
- 1/2 cup grated coconut
- 1/2 cup chopped peanuts, unsalted
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 Tbls. margarine

What to do:

1. Soak the hominy in warm water for at least an hour.
 2. Pour soaked grains into a pressure cooker. Cook in pressure cooker for up to an hour.
 3. Open the cooker (CAREFUL! Allow to cool before opening.) and add the rest of the ingredients, stirring until thickened.
- Serves 10.

String It Up: Making Bandeirinhas

By Kristy Dempsey

Children in Brazil have as much fun decorating for the winter festival of festa junina as they have at the party itself. In the weeks before the party, the children begin making long strings of streamers trimmed with colorful flags.

You can make these bandeirinhas for your own festa junina or to decorate for any party. They add just the right touch of color and fun to your celebration. They should look like the picture below.

What you need:

- String
- Scissors
- Colorful paper – crepe paper or construction paper in 5 different colors
- Craft glue

What to do:

1. Decide where you will hang your streamers.
2. Using the string, measure the room from corner to corner. Cut your string a little longer than this length to allow the streamer to sag a little when you hang it up.
3. Cut out the patterns provided on the next page.
4. Using the patterns, cut enough shapes out of the colored paper to fill up the string. Use a variety of colors.
5. Placing the string in the center of a cut out shape, fold the shape in half over the string so that all the edges meet.

6. Place a small amount of glue near the edges and press the two sides together.

7. Place your shapes about 5 inches apart on the string.

8. Repeat for each color, alternating shapes and colors.

9. Allow the glue to dry and hang your streamers.

10. Enjoy the party!

Brazilian Food Words

Canjica (can-JEE-kah) – a sweet pudding-like dish made with hominy, almost tastes like sweet grits

Pé-de-moleque (pay-JEE-moh-LEH-kee) – peanut brittle

Milho verde (MEE-yo VEHR-jee) – corn on the cob

Cassava (cass-AH-vah) – smoked beans

Amendoim (ah-men-doh-EEN) – roasted peanuts

Sopa com carne (SOH-pah cohn CAR-nee) – soup with beef

Cachorro quente (CAH-show-ho kentch) – hot dogs



Quick Peek: Facts and Figures About Brazil

Capital: Brasilia

Form of Government: Federative Republic

Independence: September 7, 1822 from Portugal.

Population: 184,101,109 (July 2004 est.)

Nationality: Brazilian(s)

Languages: Portuguese (official), Spanish, English, and French.

Location: Eastern South America, bordering the Atlantic Ocean. Brazil is the largest country in South America; it shares common boundaries with every South American country except Chile and Ecuador.

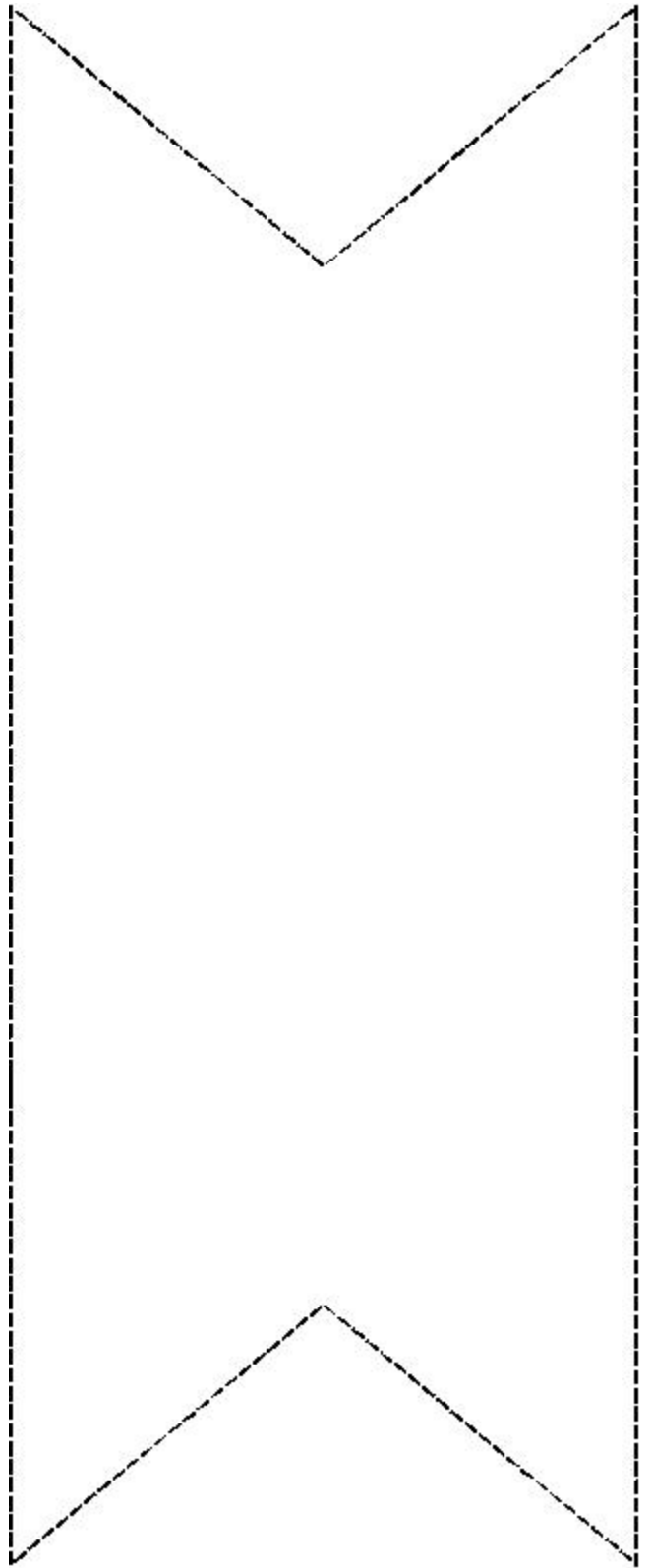
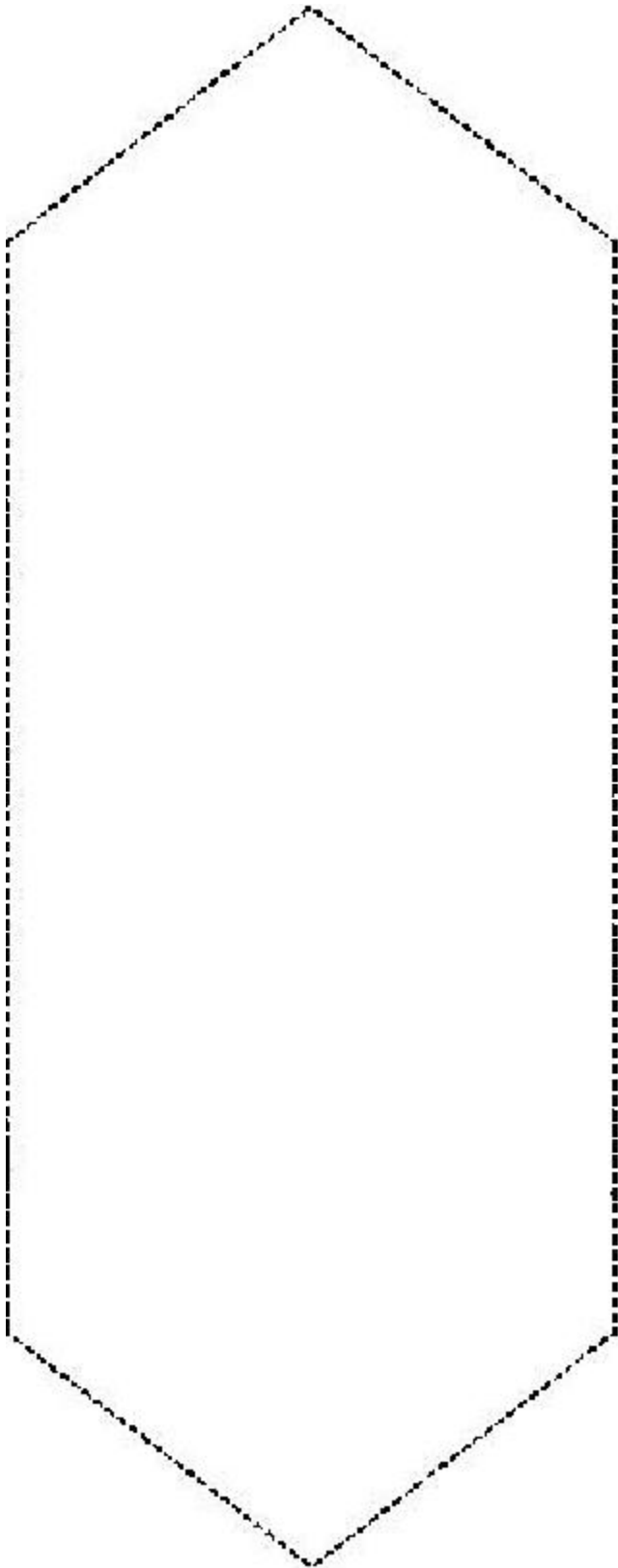
Area: Total area 8,511,965 sq km (Comparative area slightly smaller than the US); Coastline: 7,491 km.

Climate: Mostly tropical, but temperate in south.

Natural hazards: Recurring droughts in northeast; floods and occasional frost in south.



The stars on the Brazilian flag represent each of the 27 states. The letters on the white band say *Ordem e Progresso* or "Order and Progress." It was created in 1889.



Cut out and trace onto tissue paper or construction paper.

Book Review: *Holly Bloom's Garden*

By Nancy and Caitlin Cavanaugh

Holly Bloom's Garden

Written by Sarah Ashman and Nancy Parent

Illustrated by Lori Mitchell

Flashlight Press, ISBN: 0-972-92250-4

Caitlin:

I liked the book *Holly Bloom's Garden* because Holly worked hard and never gave up. She found a solution and made paper flowers. That was my favorite part in the book. I think it's good enough that you work hard, even if it does not look good. The illustrations were pretty and I liked them a lot. I especially liked the picture of Holly's paper flower garden.

Nancy:

Holly Bloom's Garden shows children that they don't have to try to be like everyone else and can do things the way that works best for them. I think this is something that everyone tends to forget, and it isn't an easy thing to teach. My daughter often forgets this and needs to have a reminder now and again that there's more than one way to cook a fish.

I loved the illustrations, Lori Mitchell did an excellent job with bringing the vibrance of a garden to the pages of the book.

I would definitely recommend this book, especially if your child is having a hard time thinking outside the box.

Make Your Own Paper Flower Bouquets

By Shari Dash Greenspan

These are some of the flowers my daughter, her friends and I created to show Lori Mitchell, the illustrator of *Holly Bloom's Garden*, some child-crafted flowers beyond tissue paper carnations.

We took all the craft supplies we had at home and dumped them on the floor. From there we just started creating various flowers, making them up as we went along. Here are instructions for three of the flowers that we invented.

Green Wiggles

What you need:

Green craft foam
Floral wire
Scissors

What to do:

1. Cut strips of green craft foam.
2. Push the florist wire through the strips several times to create a wiggle effect. Bend the top of the wire down in the back to prevent anyone from getting poked.



Gladiolas

What you need:

Green craft foam
Long teriyaki sticks
Various colors of craft foam
Hot glue gun (parental assistance required)
Florist wire
Green florist tape

Scissors

What to do:

1. Cut approximately six leaves as shown from the green craft foam starting with smaller leaves at the top and getting larger as you move down the stick. Hot glue onto the teriyaki stick.

2. Cut a 2"x8" rectangle from craft foam. Snip one long side to create a fringe with the cuts approximately 1/4" apart and 1 1/2" deep. Tightly roll the rectangle from short side to short side and hot glue to itself.

3. Wrap florist's wire tightly around the base of the flower and wind the extra wire around and down the teriyaki stick.

4. Cover the teriyaki stick and florist wire with the green florist tape.



Calla Lilies

What you need:

White craft foam (you could also use yellow, pink or black)

Yellow craft foam
Green craft foam
Scissors
Craft glue
Hot glue gun (parental assistance required)
Florist wire



What to do:

1. Cut a large teardrop that is wider at the bottom (see illustration) from the white craft foam. Cut a long finger-shaped piece from the yellow craft foam.

2. Glue the florist wire to the back of the yellow piece. You can hold it in place with masking tape until the glue is dried.

3. Wrap the white teardrop around the yellow piece with the florist wire in the back, overlapping the bottom. Hot glue in place. Bend back the edges of the white flower to give it the calla lily look.

4. Cut two long heart shape or pointed leaves and push the florist wire through them to attach. You can use a drop of hot glue to hold them in place.

Bookworm Backyard Hometown Marching Band

By Joyce Risë Johnson

Tama-lama, ding-dong!
The Bookworm Backyard Hometown Marching Band plays and plays. They wind their way over and around the toys scattered across the backyard.

Tama-lama, ding-ling!
Ally-oop, ally-oop!
Wolfgang the conductor struts, leading the way. His chest is puffed out and his head held high.

Ally-ip, ally-eep!
Bee-bop, biddly-op!
Kendra bangs her kettledrum. She keeps the beat for their marching feet.

Be-bop, biddly-boom!
The Band does not stop as they march their way around the house and on to the sidewalk.

Brrrapp-pa-de, be-de-boo!
Sammy blows his horn, cheeks red, big and proud. The notes sound their fancy display.

Brrrapp-da-de, bo-de-boo!
Rat-a-tat, rat-a-tat!
Hunter tosses jazzy tunes from his trumpet, sending excited sounds of happy news bouncing off the houses.

Rat-a-tat tattie-a-tat!
The Bookworm Backyard Hometown Marching Band plays and plays as they march their way down the sidewalk and into town.

Tootie-toot-toot, tootie-toot!
Houji lets fly tinkling musical scales full of laughter and smiles from his recorder.

Tootie-tootie, toot, toot!
Ba-Boom, bang, clang, clash, crash!
Max brings his cymbals together so hard, he squeezes his eyes shut every time.

Ba-Boom, bash, bang, crash, smash!
The band plays on, marching down Main Street. "Where are they going?" people ask. Clapping and cheering, they follow the band.

The Bookworm Backyard Hometown Marching Band marches on, making their way down Main Street and across the town green to the public library.

Tama-lama, ding-dong!
Bee-bop, biddly-op! Tootie-toot!
The Band goes up the marble steps. Stomp, stomp, stomp. Playing,
Brrrapp-pa-de, be-de-boo!
Rat-a-tat, rat-a-tat! clash-bang, too!
Wolfgang the Conductor gives the signal and the band stops outside the front door. A crowd gathers around the steps, spilling out into the street. Everyone wants to see what the commotion is about.

The library doors open and Ms. Appleton, the librarian, steps out.

"Hmmp!" said Wolfgang clearing his throat. "Quiet please. Ms. Appleton, this is for you."

He waves his baton and the Bookworm Backyard Hometown Marching Band plays Happy Birthday. It sounds like this:

Tama-lama, ding-dong! Ally-oop, ally-oop!
Bee-bop, biddly-op! Tootie-toot!
Brrrapp-pa-de, be-de-boo!
Rat-a-tat, rat-a-tat! clash-bang, too!

"Thank you," said Ms. Appleton, wiping a tear from her cheek. "This is the best gift ever."

The Bookworm Backyard Hometown Marching Band and all the townspeople cheer. "Hip-Hip Hooray!"

Wolfgang hands his marching baton to Ms. Appleton. The band strikes up and Wolfgang and Ms. Appleton lead on as they parade their way down Main Street.

Has your child read a newly published book that they would like to write a review for? In 100 words or less, have them tell us if they liked the book and why, and what their favorite part of the book is.

E-mail the review with the title of the book, author's and illustrator's name, the publisher and ISBN. Don't forget to include your name and age! Send to:

saplingsmagazine@gmail.com

Sharks: What's There to Be Afraid Of?

By Sarah Eshelman

What comes to mind when you think of sharks? Scary teeth? Monsters of the ocean? Many people have this opinion about sharks. Sharks are strong and powerful, but they are not monsters. Sharks rarely attack humans, and most "attacks" are actually accidents. The chance of seeing a shark in the ocean is very small, and the chance of being hurt by a shark is even smaller. In fact, a person is more likely to be struck by lightning than hurt by a shark. Let's learn more about these amazing fish.

Sharks live in every ocean on earth, and there are over 350 different kinds of sharks. They range in size from being as short as a pencil (pygmy ribbon-tail catsharks are 8 to 10 inches long) to as long as a school bus – the whale shark is around 40 feet long. Sharks have fascinating traits and abilities.



TEETH

How many teeth do you have? A single shark can have thousands of teeth. Remember when you lost your first tooth? A shark loses about one tooth a week – its whole life long – and can go through thousands of teeth in a lifetime. Its teeth are arranged in rows, and most sharks have about five rows of teeth. When a tooth falls out, a tooth from another row moves forward to replace it. Sharks can regrow lost teeth within days!

BREATHING UNDERWATER

Sharks breathe through their gills, which let them absorb oxygen from the water. Unlike most other fish, sharks do not have muscles that push water across their gills. Most sharks must keep swimming all the time to keep water flowing over their gills so they can breathe.

SKIN

What does a shark's skin feel like? A shark's skin is made up of small tooth-like structures called dermal denticles or placoid scales. If you rubbed a shark from head to tail, it would feel smooth – but in the opposite direction it would feel like sandpaper.

COUNTERSHADING

Many sharks have a special color pattern that helps protect them. Their underside is light-colored, making it difficult to see them against the water's surface when viewed from below. This special pattern is called "countershading," and it helps camouflage sharks from both their predators and their prey.

ESP--"ELECTRIC" SENSORY PERCEPTION

Sharks have a special set of sensors that let them pick up mild electrical impulses produced by other sea animals. This ability, along with their excellent senses of hearing and smell, helps sharks find their prey.

NO THANKS – I'M NOT HUNGRY

Have you ever eaten a really big meal, like at Thanksgiving, and felt afterward like you wouldn't want to eat again for a month? After a Great White shark eats a very large meal, it really can go without food for up to a month.

Sharks play an important part in marine ecosystems. Sadly, because of overfishing and pollution of the oceans, many kinds of sharks are in danger of extinction. Some people actually throw garbage on beaches or into the water—scientists have found trash like bottles and tin cans inside the bellies of some dead sharks.

HOW CAN I BE A FRIEND TO SHARKS?

You know that all animals deserve respect. You do your part to keep the environment clean, and you wouldn't dream of throwing trash into the ocean. But what else can you do?

Start by learning as much as you can about sharks, and share what you learn with others. Remind your friends and family to keep our environment clean. Help teach others that these animals share our planet and deserve respect. The more we know about them, the better we can protect our friends the sharks.

Picture Book Play

A Review and So Much More

By Kimberly M. Hutmacher

I want to start this month's column by welcoming the first issue of our newly designed monthly magazine.

My column is just one of the many additions and changes made since your last visit. My mission here is to gently guide you, as a parent of a young child, to some of the best picture books available. Each month you'll find a mix of old books and new brought together by a uniting theme.

This column is more than a collection of reviews; each month you'll find a "Playtime" section – supplemental activities and/or discussion starters to compliment each featured book.

This month's featured book is a poetry collection centered around the four seasons, and our uniting theme today is summer. Happy Reading!

Featured Book

Come to My Party And Other Shape Poems

Written by Heidi B. Roemer

Henry Holt and Company 2004

115 West 18th Street

New York, NY 10011

48 pages

\$17.95

Watermelon

A sliver, a slice,

Deliciously nice;

A nibble, a drip, a lick.

And when I'm done, I pucker my lips;

I'm ready! I aim and I...

Spit!

You can almost taste it, can't you? Imagine those delightful words spread across the page in the shape of a watermelon. *Come To My Party And Other Shape Poems* is a volume of thirty-eight seasonal concrete poems. There are very few collections of children's poetry that focus specifically on the concrete form. Ms. Roemer's words dance across the pages and in the imaginations of her young audience. The poems are enhanced beautifully by the playful illustrations of Hideko Takahashi.

Playtime

1. There are nine poems in this collection that deal specifically with summer themes. Pick one poem a day. Read it to your child and then do whatever activ-

ity the poem talks about. Share a slice of watermelon. Go to the beach. Blow the fluff off of a dandelion. While having fun engaging in each activity, occasionally recite the corresponding poem.

2. Choose a summer subject with your child. Brainstorm words or phrases with him or her until the two of you have created a poem about your subject. Mold the poem into concrete form. Ask your child to help you manipulate the letters of each word until the two of you have created a poem in the shape of the subject you chose- just like Heidi B. Roemer did in *Come To My Party And Other Shape Poems*.

More summer poetry fun...

- *Lemonade Sun: And Other Summer Poems*

Written by Rebecca Kai Dotlich

- *Summersaults*

Written by Douglas Florian

- *A Circle Of Seasons*

Written by Myra Cohn Livingston

Note: Please do not copy or reproduce this article in any form.

The Banner

By Kristy Dempsey

Back and forth, the color goes

Red and white in perfect rows

Fifty stars on a square of blue

An emblem of our equal view

Proudly flapping in the wind

Standing for a culture's blend

Raised for glory

Lowered for grief

The symbol of a firm belief:

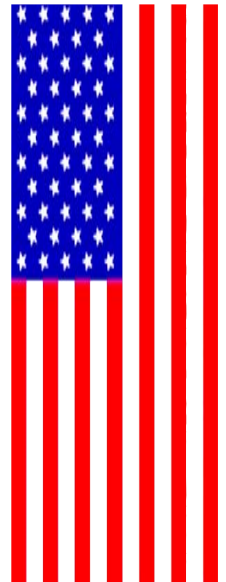
Freedom

Justice

Honor

Worth

The values of our nation's birth



Toys Make Great Development Tools

By Amy Roode

In our crazy 24/7 world, you hear about so many parenting ideas and ways to enhance your child's developmental process. Some you've thought of yourself and have adapted to your children, others friends and family have passed along. Often, we hear of a great idea that we'd love to learn more about, but we don't know where to start. Well, today you've found a great starting point for introducing appropriate learning tools into your children's lives.

Let's look at some of the primary ways that children develop:

Through physical activity: During their first year, a child's movements become more refined and coordinated as they learn what their own body can do through simple actions. As the years pass, these movements (also known as gross motor skills) become more complex and will require children to use their bodies during play. Especially helpful in this developmental area are toys that encourage building, stacking, pulling, kicking and throwing.

Through interaction with others: From the moment of birth, children begin to form relationships with others. As they grow, hopefully these relationships deepen and enable them to handle many and varied relationships with individuals outside of their initial circle. The ability to build and to further relationships, make complex judgments (such as deciding between right and wrong) and exercise fair play can all be enhanced with group games, stuffed animals, puppets and instruments.

Through mental activity: Learning, recognition, developing concepts, problem solving and cause & effect relationships are all abilities that can benefit a person from birth through adulthood. The baby that finds a mobile moves when they touch it, begins to understand cause and effect, while older children will begin to develop concepts and organize ideas as they interact with others and gain exposure to the world around them. Books, games, puzzles and toys with various shapes, colors and sizes can be especially helpful in encouraging mental activity.

Throughout this article, I've made reference to various developmental tools that can be beneficial to a child's learning and social/emotional growth. But, with so many choices out there, how do you know where you can get quality products, and if they are right for your child's age group or developmental

stage?

Today's toy, game and software markets are FLOODED with war and crime themes and I am of the opinion that so much exposure to this violence will hurt children and society in the long run. But, with just a little bit of research and communication, it's easy to find products that are non-violent, age-appropriate and entertaining. Introducing educational tools that send positive messages and that are purposeful and fun, is one step you can take to provide your child with the best opportunities for development-even from birth!

What makes a good toy?

A good toy, game, book, or software program has multiple benefits and, as stated, can be a valuable tool in learning and development from birth through the school years. To select the right products for your child, you can start by asking yourself these questions:

1. Can the toy be used in several different ways?
2. Can a child power the toy with their imagination and own ideas?
3. Is it fun, safe, durable and attractive?
4. Are there varying levels of activity that offer ongoing challenges to a variety of ages and ability (software)?
5. Are appropriate values, ethics, problem solving and life situations presented (books)?
6. Over time, will my child still enjoy this product?

There is no final word on the best way to develop your child's potential, but the opportunities to do so are limitless. Informed and involved parents can give their children a head start in ways that encourage learning through play!

Let's get chatting! Sign up for the Forums today!

Do you like to write?
Saplings Magazine is looking for writers. Click on the submission link for the guidelines today!

Do You Love Crafts? Teach a Crafts Class

By Abigail Beal

Are you a "crafter"? Do you love crafts and get compliments on your work? Would you like to share your crafting abilities with others? Then perhaps it is time to consider teaching a crafts class!

There are as many types of crafts classes as there are crafters. There are classes for beginners and classes to learn advanced techniques. There are classes to learn how to create holiday crafts and how to create crafts as gifts. Classes are offered for everyone and anyone – children, teenagers, adults, senior citizens, the developmentally disabled and those battling mental illness.

The first thing to consider is what type of craft you would like to share with others. Do you paint? Do you draw? Do you decoupage? Do you do clay pot crafts? Many crafters do not do only one craft, most do several types of crafts.

Make a list of all the crafts you love. Then below the craft, list what you believe is your skill level. Remember that sometimes we do not see ourselves accurately - many who think they are just average at a craft could be very talented. So think about the compliments other people have given you about your crafts when you consider your 'skill level'.

Once you have this list, then write down the types of projects you can create. If you are a knitter you would list 'Knitting' and then your skill level 'Intermediate,' and then the projects that you have created. Have you made a hat? A scarf? A sweater? A baby blanket? Remember to list the different variations of projects that you have done. Have you created a fishermans' sweater and a fair isle sweater? Have you made mittens or gloves? List everything!

After listing your projects, then write down all the techniques you have learned. What techniques does it take to create each project? Remember – these are techniques that others will want to learn, that you can now teach!

What you have in front of you is now the raw material to create a class – or many classes! If you have knitted sweaters and enjoyed doing this – you could create a class for knitters to learn how to make a fair isle sweater, or a fishermans' sweater. You could create a class for new mothers to learn how to make sweaters for their babies.

Many crafts teachers teach beginning through advanced students, but not in the same class. Remember that there are probably plenty of people who would love to learn your craft, but they may need to start with a beginner's class and work their way up to an advanced class.

Looking at your list, what would make a good beginner's class? What would make a good advanced level class? What could be a good holiday or seasonal class?

Crafts classes are offered at so many places. Look around in your community to see where the popular places for crafts classes are. Local continuing education centers through your Department of Education often offer many crafts classes. Many colleges also have continuing education departments that will offer crafts classes.

Local libraries and community centers offer crafts classes. Senior centers often offer crafts classes. You might consider offering your crafts class in a crafts store, or at another store that has room for a class.

You could offer your class in your home, or at a friend's home. If you have the time and a generous spirit, consider donating a crafts class to a cause that is close to your heart – the admission to the class could go to the charity that you choose. Crafts have invaded the world wide web ... you could even offer your crafts class online!

Even if you have never taught before, chances are you have had to explain things to other people or been in a position where people have looked to you for inspiration. What have you done to make explaining things to people simple? Often you have broken things into steps and oftentimes have shown them what to do one step at a time. With a crafts project, you can show students finished crafts and then show them how to create a craft step by step. Giving them a project sheet to take home explaining the steps means that they can do this craft on their own again and again.

Teaching crafts is a way to share something you love with someone else. It is a way to have fun, and also you can earn additional income. That will help you buy more crafts materials!

Stay at Home Parents List

A free mailing list for parents who stay at home with their kids. Chat about life and the trials of being at home, get sanity checks, and make new friends. Come join the fun!



Summertime Party Planning Made Easy

By Lata Budhrani

Come summer and the “party people” start grooming up for organizing 'cool' summer parties. Although they are a great idea for family fun, summer parties are not restricted to families alone. Remember old friends, call up your relatives and make your party rock.

Summer parties need not necessarily be held on beaches or expensive hotels and pool sides. You can have one right in your backyard!

Indoor Party

Here's how to make the best of an indoor summer party:

1. Make it a 'Beach' themed party.
2. Decorate your interiors based on beach themes and use fans, air conditioners, air coolers, etc. to keep the room breezy.
3. Move away your chairs and sofas and get some boulders (look-alike cushions will do) and mats.
4. Place a couple of beach umbrellas if you can get hold of some.
5. Use a 'beach scene' wallpaper on a prominent wall.
6. If a projector can be arranged, use it to project a 'live' beach scene on a wall.
7. Keep the dress code for the party necessarily a 'beach theme'.
8. An old surf board will also add to the look.
9. Serve 'Seafood' and lots of cool beverages.
10. As for you yourself, get a special look – how about a Mermaid dress with sequined seashells?

Outdoor Party

A lawn, garden, a local park or even your backyard will be a lovely place to host your outdoors summer party.

1. Clean Up! Whichever spot you choose, be sure to clean it up thoroughly to avoid any hazards for your guests.
2. Make proper arrangements for ample light and mosquito repellants. Lanterns can be hung on tree trunks to present a lovely sight.
3. If the party is not on a very short notice, prepare in advance. Build a garden pond. It would be the 'coolest' thing to happen to your party!
4. A garden figure such as a birdbath or a small fountain will complete the picture.
5. You can set up a tent and make your party a 'Camping Party'. You can also have a 'Campfire'.
6. A game of Treasure Hunt with clues to the prize hidden under small rocks, flower petals, tree trunks etc. will spice up the evening.
7. If you have a musical talent amongst your guests, be sure to arrange for a guitar or other such musical instrument or request that guest beforehand to come prepared with it.
8. A gas barbeque will be perfect for the food.
9. Use paper plates and other such disposable utensils. Place neatly painted garbage cans to dispose these.
10. If you have a swimming pool nearby, a 'Moonlight Swim' will be the perfect finale to your summer party.

Make Cool Snacks for a Hot Summer

By Deborah Shelton

Mouse Popsicles

Wash a bowl of seedless grapes, and then set the grapes in the freezer for about an hour. Poke colored toothpicks into the grapes to serve.

Fruit Fizzy

Pour one can of Sprite (it doesn't have caffeine) into a blender, along with small ice cubes. Add several large strawberries, a handful of blueberries, or other favorite fruit to the mix. Blend the mixture until it has the texture of a slush. Pour into a glass and garnish with a cherry on top.

Frozen Monkey Treats

Here is a healthy snack that your kids will go

bananas for! Peel a banana and cut it in half. Insert popsicle sticks into the cut ends. Dip the bananas into yogurt or melted chocolate, and then roll the bananas in chopped nuts, crushed cereal, or coconut shavings. Place the bananas on a small waxed paper-lined baking sheet and set the sheet into the freezer for an hour or so. Fun to make and even more fun to eat!

Juice Pops

Simply fill a popsicle mold or an ice tray with your favorite fruit juice. Cover the ice tray with clear plastic wrap and poke a toothpick through the plastic into each square. Place the tray into the freezer until the popsicles are frozen solid.

Gardening and Kids: Perfect Recipe for Success

By Jackie Perrin

The Perfect Recipe

Take one energy-filled youngster. Provide subject with a cup of seeds and a shovel. Infuse with dirt and sprinkle on healthy dollops of fresh air and sunshine. Mix with a shovel. Yield: One happy kid and the beginnings of a summer long project for the domestic unit, otherwise known as: The Family Garden.

Sharing Traditions

I had fond memories of gardening as a child- my family shared a large backyard garden with a neighbor. Each spring, every willing youngster old enough to hold a spade was assigned a vegetable. Through the spring, summer and early fall, she was responsible for the weeding, watering, sowing and distribution of her yield. Over the years, we had a variety of crops: summer squash, horseradish, leaf lettuce, corn, beans, eggplant, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, chives and rhubarb. As a result, I grew up with an appreciation for the process and consumption of fresh produce. For me, gardening is a relaxing escape from the pressures of an urban environment, and I wanted to pass that tradition on to my children.

Tips on Gardening with Kids

Following are some tips from local experts on gardening with your kids from Carol Sorbello, a 20 year employee of Wayside Garden Center in Macedon, NY; Bob Eller, a Master Gardener with Cornell Cooperative Extension; and Sarah VanEnwyck of Grandpa's Nursery and Gardens in Sodus, NY:

1. Pick a spot for your garden where you know things grow. If you don't know about the soil, have it tested.
2. Pick a spot that receives 6 hours of filtered light (sun) per day (necessary for crops such as tomatoes, lettuce, beans, carrots, beets, etc.).
3. Plant a few things in the garden that germinate quickly, such as lettuce and sunflowers.
4. Give the kids an area of their own in the garden and make it fun. For instance, construct a teepee for pole beans.
5. If you can't wait until after the last frost (predicted date is May 3 for Rochester, NY), you can start seeds indoors. Sorbello recommends using a mini greenhouse, priced at about \$5.
6. Suggested seed-starters for eager growers: beans, peas, lettuce, radishes, marigolds and zinnias
7. Vegetables that are especially popular with jun-

ior gardeners: corn, beans, peas, tomatoes

8. Flowers that are easy to grow: marigolds, impatiens, and petunias.

Make your Hometown a Great Place to Live and Grow!

This spring, with a lot of enthusiasm, we will prepare and plant our crops. Then, we'll hope for the best. With a fresh dose of sunshine and a few sprinklings, we'll have the makings of cost-effective meals all year long and some happy kids (one in a 40 year old body). Whatever you decide to grow this year, and wherever you decide to do it, enjoy! Make your hometown a great place to live and grow!

Resources:

- For assistance with your backyard garden, including soil analysis, contact the cooperative extension office nearest you. Consult the USDA Cooperative State Research and Education directory at <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/>
- For information on home gardening in general: Cornell University Home Gardening Database: <http://www.explore.cornell.edu/homegardening/>
- Garden in the City – Designed for youth and adults who have had little experience with gardening and limited space. Covers the garden box, starting seeds, planning the garden, cleaning the site, breaking ground, planting, weeding, thinning, and harvesting. Lists supplies and tools you'll need; suggests activities for groups. 40 pp. 141L78 \$4.45
- The Home Vegetable Garden – A popular how-to reference. Planting schedules, recommended varieties, pest control, and more. 31 pp. 161IB101 \$4.45
- To find the predicted last frost in your geographic area, consult the Old Farmer's Almanac Gardener's Companion Frost Chart at <http://www.almanac.com/garden/frostus.php>.
- To find a garden center near you, consult the American Landscape and Nursery Association at <http://www.anla.org/>.

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Stay-At-Home Parents Need Time Too

By Stephanie Foster

It's wonderful being able to stay at home with your children, whether you have a job or business, or not. But you need your spouse to be supportive, as well as friends and family, or your life becomes much more difficult. You may feel as though you are stuck in your house, or spend all your time taking care of others with no time for you. Fortunately, there are plenty of things you can do about this.

If you're facing an unsupportive spouse, whether they're not helping with the kids or telling you to find an outside the home job, you need to sit down and talk with them about what you're doing and how important it is to you. Even if your only job is caring for your family, you need a break sometimes too. And if you have a home business, it can be even harder to run it if you're always being told to get a job. So talk about it.

Don't be confrontational, just explain your position. Remember, you do far more than just sit in front of the TV all day.

But what if your spouse simply can't help you, because they're working long hours and are quite simply not there at the times you need them? You can still get out of the house to do your own thing if you want.

For time without your children when your spouse is too busy, try checking with your church. Some have Mother's Day Out programs, which allow moms to get out and do something while someone else watches the kids. You need to make time for yourself regularly, and this is one way to get it even when your spouse's life is busy.

Friends and other family members may assume that just because you're home all day, you're available to run their errands, visit whenever they feel like it, and so forth.

Be firm about leaving yourself enough time to do the things you need to take care of every day. Many parents find that staying home with their families isn't exactly the life of leisure others may assume it is. If you work at home, be firm about your office hours.

Taking care of your family involves taking care of yourself. Make sure you're getting the support you need from the people who love you. Tell them your needs, whether it be helping to pick up around the house, putting the kids to bed sometimes, or giving you a few hours to be by yourself. When you spend your entire day at home, it's really not so much to ask, is it?

Fun Science Experiments: Making Ice Cream

Ice cream freezes at -6 degrees C (21 degrees F). Ice cream can be made in the classroom with the understanding that the freezing point of water is actually lowered by adding salt to the ice between the bag walls. Heat energy is transferred easily from the milk through the plastic bag to the salty ice water causing the ice to melt. As it does so, the water in the milk freezes, resulting in ice cream. Use this recipe for some fun classroom experiments.

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup of sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Two plastic zip style bags (1 quart and 1 gallon plastic bags)
- 1 cup of milk
- 1 cup whipping cream or half & half
- Crushed ice (one bag)
- 1 cup rock salt (per experiment)
- Duct tape
- Bath towel
- Cones and toppings



What to do:

Put the milk, whipping cream, sugar and vanilla in a 1 quart freezing bag and seal. For security, fold a piece of duct tape over the seal.

Next place the bag with the ingredients inside a gallon freezer bag. Pack the larger bag with crushed ice around the smaller bag. Pour 3/4 to 1 cup of salt evenly over the ice.

Now wrap in a bath towel. Shake for 10 minutes.

Open the outer bag and remove the inner bag with the ingredients. Wipe off the bag to be sure salt water doesn't get into the ice cream.

Cut the top off and spoon into cups. This should make about 3 cups. Serve plain or top with nuts, coconut or fruit.

Experiments:

How much ice and salt are needed? Try different amounts to see what works the best. Which works faster? Make some vanilla ice cream as well as that with fruits or candies. Do they make freezing time faster or slower? Does it make a difference if they're already frozen or not?



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HAPPY SUMMER!





Meet the Writers

Kimberly M. Hutmacher has authored two ebooks for the educational publisher A to Z Kids Stuff, *Poetry Play For Preschoolers 2003* and the forthcoming *Picture Book Play 2004*. Preview these books at www.atozkidsstuff.com.

Sarah Hartman is a freelance writer, mother, and office manager who enjoys crafting all manner of things. Her articles have appeared in magazines such as *College Bound Teen* and *Catholic Parent*. She can be reached via email at sehartman@aol.com.

Claudia Pearson was a Civil Rights trial lawyer for twenty years before retiring to write for children. She lives in Birmingham, Alabama and is an active member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators.

Kristy Dempsey is a busy wife, mother, missionary, poet and writer living in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. She enjoys running, diet cola, and chocolate cake with cream cheese icing...in that order.

Editor at Flashlight Press, **Shari Dash Greenspan** has also been an elementary school reading consultant and English teacher, designed costumes, scenery and props for amateur musical theater productions, and taught arts-and-crafts. Her hobbies include crossword puzzles, crafts, and reading aloud at her well-attended weekly library Story Hour.

Joyce Rise Johnson grew up in Suffern, NY. She has lived all over the USA and currently reside in New London, NH with her husband, two children, an Au Pair named Lucie, two rottweilers and a cat. She placed fourth in the mid grade category of the 2004 Write it Now Contest at www.smartwriters.com with her manuscript *The Casting*. You can visit her at <http://www.joycerjohnson.com>

Sarah Eshelman writes and teaches in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Amy Roode is an Independent Educational Consultant with Discovery Toys who loves to share educational products with parents who are looking to have fun with their children while making a difference in their development. For more parenting tips and to see all of Discovery Toys high quality toys, books, games and software go to: <http://www.discoverytoyslink.com/myrtoys>

Abigail Beal has taught the craft of gift wrap through local continuing education in suburban New York State. She is the editor of *Creative Crafts Teachers*, an e-zine for crafts teachers that offers inspiration, a teacher's toolbox and project ideas. *Creative Crafts Teachers* is published monthly. Subscribe at CreativeCraftsTeachers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. You can contact her at [\[craftsteachers@yahoo.com\]\(mailto:craftsteachers@yahoo.com\).](mailto:creative-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Lata Budhrani is the founder/editor of 'Dot Com Women', a premier women's website and a major resource and exchange element for women online. Visit her at <http://www.dotcomwomen.com>

Deborah Shelton is a mother, freelance writer, and author of the brand new book, "The Five Minute Parent: Fun & Fast Activities for You and Your Little Ones." Visit Deborah's website for more family-friendly ideas: <http://www.fiveminuteparent.com>.

Jackie Perrin can be reached at jperrin@rochester.rr.com.

Stephanie Foster is the owner of Home with the Kids, a resource that knows that there's more to staying home with your family than just business. You can visit the site at <http://www.homewiththekids.com>

Elizabeth Dulemba is a former graphic designer currently writing and illustrating children's picture books. Her website is Dulemba.com. You can also email her at elizabeth@dulemba.com.

More information about illustrator **Nancy Miller** can be found at <http://nmillerillustration.com>.

Bugging Out Contest



Do you know what this insect is? Believe it or not, this picture was taken in my basement a few weeks ago when one of them decided to visit us. Your parents can help look online as you try to figure out what it is. When you find out what it is, write a short fictional story of 500 words or less about this insect.

E-mail it to saplingsmagazine@gmail.com. Be sure to include your name, age, state you live in and an e-mail address so we can contact you. The best story written will be printed in an upcoming issue and the winner will receive a \$10 gift certificate from Amazon.com.