

EXPERIENCE

SUMMER EXPLORATION

An experience **preschool** Summer Guide

Soak up
summer
through play!





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AN INTRODUCTION TO SUMMER EXPLORATION

Summer is a wonderful time for preschoolers to explore, imagine and connect through playful, hands-on learning experiences. The activities in this guide are designed to promote development across key learning domains using only general classroom materials. This approach keeps things simple, accessible and budget-friendly while still offering engaging, meaningful opportunities for young children.

SUPPLIES LIST

- ☐ Balls or beanbags
- ☐ Bag (cloth or paper)
- ☐ Baking soda
- ☐ Basic craft supplies (glue, scissors, tape, crayons, markers, paint, paintbrushes, tissue paper, craft sticks, stickers, beads, etc.)
- ☐ Beach ball
- ☐ Beach props
- ☐ Blankets
- ☐ Books
- ☐ Bubble solution or dish soap
- ☐ Chalk
- ☐ Cones
- ☐ Contact paper
- ☐ Containers & holders (boxes, baskets, jars, trays, cups, bowls)
- ☐ Hula hoops or pool noodles
- ☐ Ice cubes
- ☐ Nature items (leaves, pine needles, flowers, sticks, rocks, shells, sand, dirt, etc.)
- ☐ Paper (plain, construction, scrap, chart, etc.)
- ☐ Paper plates
- ☐ Pictures of feelings
- ☐ Pipecleaners
- ☐ Plastic spoons
- ☐ Scoops
- ☐ Sponges
- ☐ Vinegar
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Water balloons
- ☐ Water cups
- ☐ Yarn

DAY	 LANGUAGE & LITERACY	 MATH	 SCIENCE	 CREATIVE ARTS	 SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
1	Storytime Picnic	Water Balloon Counting Toss	Sun Prints	Sidewalk Chalk Mural	Classroom Gratitude Jar
2	Alphabet Nature Hunt	Ice Cube Melting Challenge	Insect Exploration Walk	Paint with Nature	Host a Talent Show
3	Craft Stick Story Builders	Nature Patterns	Backyard Volcano	Paper Plate Puppets	Kindness Garden
4	What's in the Bag	Build a Shape Town	Shadow Tracing	Make a Suncatcher	Teamwork Obstacle Course
5	Letter Sound Hop	Cloud Watching	Sponge Soaking Games	Paint Rocks	Feelings Charades
6	Spray & Say Letters	Bubble Pop Counting	Bubble Science Station	Make a Wind Chime	Beach Ball Feelings Toss
7	Nature Story Circle	Nature Sorting Station	Nature Water Mixing	Nature Band	Ice Cream Feelings Game
8	Nature ABC Book	Nature Line-Up	Weather Watch & Nature Helper Walk	Beach Day Pretend Play	Shining Helpers
9	Alphabet Nature Hunt	Build a Shape Town	Sun Prints	Paint Rocks	Teamwork Obstacle Course
10	Letter Sound Hop	Nature Patterns	Bubble Science Station	Make a Wind Chime	Beach Ball Feelings Toss





LANGUAGE & LITERACY

Storytime Picnic

LLD 6a & LLD 6b Reading Comprehension SCI 2a Natural & Earth Science

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Books
- ☐ Blankets or towels

Activity

- Weather permitting, hold storytime outside. Place blankets or towels on the ground for the children to sit on.
- Encourage the children to identify and describe any plants or animals they see.
- Read a book. Invite them to predict what will happen or share their feelings about the story. After reading, invite the children to retell the story.

Alphabet Nature Hunt

LLD 4 Alphabetic Knowledge

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Markers or crayons
- ☐ Nature items



Activity

- Take a nature walk and collect nature items, like leaves, rocks or sticks.
- Invite the children to match each item with a letter and sound. Encourage them to label or draw the items on paper to create a group alphabet poster.
- Name each letter and make their sounds together.

Craft Stick Story Builders

LLD 6b Reading Comprehension

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Craft sticks
- ☐ Markers or crayons
- ☐ Stickers (optional)
- ☐ Variety of books

Activity

- Provide a variety of books to explore.
- Invite the children to decorate craft sticks with drawings of characters, places and events from a story of their choice.
- Encourage them to pick 2-3 sticks and use them to retell a story to a peer or the class.



What's in the Bag

LLD 2a & LLD 2d Communication

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Bag (cloth or paper)
- ☐ Nature items or classroom objects

Activity

- Place the nature items in a bag and invite one child at a time to reach in and feel an item.
- Encourage the child to describe what they feel and guess what it might be. Reveal the item and encourage them to make-up a silly sentence or story about it.
- Continue to play until each child has had a turn.

Letter Sound Hop

LLD 4 Alphabetic Knowledge LLD 3c Phonological Awareness

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Markers or crayons
- ☐ Tape (optional)
- ☐ Balls or beanbags (optional)

Activity

- Write large upper- and lowercase letters on sheets of paper and spread them around the floor or outdoor space.
- Call out a letter or its sound. Encourage the children to hop to the matching letter.
- Add challenges by asking them to name a word that begins with that letter or toss a beanbag to the matching letter instead of hopping.

Spray & Say Letters

LLD 4 Alphabetic Knowledge LLD 7a Writing

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Chalk
- ☐ Water cups or spray bottles

Activity

- Write letters on the pavement with chalk.
- Say a letter or letter sound, and invite the children to splash or spray water on the matching letter.
- Add a challenge by calling out simple CVC words, such as “cat” or “dog.” Encourage the children to erase each letter in order.

Nature Story Circle

LLD 6a Reading Comprehension LLD 7b Writing

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Nature items (collected on a walk)
- ☐ Blankets
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Markers



Activity

- Sit outside in a circle with the collected nature items in the middle.
- Begin a story using one item, such as, “One upon a time, a pinecone...” Invite each child to pick an item and add to the story.
- Afterwards, encourage the children to write and draw the story.

Nature ABC Book

LLD 4 Alphabetic Knowledge

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Stapler or hole punch
- ☐ Yarn
- ☐ Nature items (collected on a walk)
- ☐ Glue

Activity

- Go on a nature walk to find items that begin with various letters. For example, “L” is for leaf.
- Invite the children to glue real items or draw pictures onto pages labeled with letters to create their own ABC nature book.
- Bind the pages with yarn or staple them to complete the book.



MATH

Water Balloon Counting Toss

M 1b & M1e Number Sense

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Water balloons
- ☐ Chalk
- ☐ Balls or beanbags (optional)

Activity

- Write numbers on the pavement with chalk.
- Call out a number. Invite the children to toss water balloons at the matching number.
- For a challenge, try combining numbers. For example, splash 2 and 3 to make 5.
- For a less messy option, use beanbags as a dry alternative.



Ice Cube Melting Challenge

M 4a Measurement **SCI 1a** Investigation & Inquiry **SS 4** History & Sense of Time

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Water
- ☐ Ice cubes
- ☐ Containers: cups, bowls, trays
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Markers

Activity

- Give each child an ice cube in a container. Invite them to predict which will melt fastest: in the sun, shade or water.
- Divide the children between the different options. Encourage them to observe and draw what happens.
- Talk about temperature and changes over time.

Nature Patterns

M 5 Patterns

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Nature items
- ☐ Paper (optional)
- ☐ Glue (optional)

Activity

- Collect leaves, sticks or rocks outside. Arrange them into AB, AAB or ABC patterns.
- Invite the children to copy or extend the pattern. Encourage them to make their own nature patterns.
- If desired, create a “pattern path” on the ground or glue the pattern onto paper.

Build a Shape Town

M 3 Shapes **LLD 7b** Writing

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Recyclable items: cardboard boxes, plastic containers, etc.
- ☐ Cups
- ☐ Scrap paper
- ☐ Crayons or markers
- ☐ Tape or glue

Activity

- Invite the children to use recyclable items, cups, paper scraps and tape or glue to build pretend buildings.
- Encourage them to label the type of building they constructed. For example, a school, library or local store.
- Invite the children to identify the shapes they used in construction.
- Encourage them to tell a story about their town.

Cloud Watching

SCI 2b Natural & Earth Science

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Blankets
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Markers or crayons

Activity

- Lie on blankets and observe the clouds above.
- Encourage the children to describe the shapes or pictures they see.
- Draw and label cloud shapes.
- Turn the cloud images into a group story.

Bubble Pop Counting

M 1c & M 1d Number Sense

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Bubble mixture
(or mix 1 cup water,
2 tablespoons dish soap)
- ☐ Chalk



Activity

- Blow bubbles and count how many each child pops.
- Draw tally marks with chalk for each pop.
- Invite the children to practice counting and comparing their bubble-popping “scores.”

Nature Sorting Station

M 6 Classification

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Nature items: leaves, rocks, sticks, etc.

Activity

- Take a nature walk and collect items like leaves, rocks, sticks, etc.
- Invite the children to sort the items by color. Encourage them to sort again by a different feature, like size or type.
- Ask them to explain how they sorted the items.



Nature Line-Up

M 4b Measurement

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Nature items (5): sticks, rocks, leaves

Activity

- Encourage the children to collect five nature items of a similar type.
- Invite the children to compare the items and order them from longest to shortest. Encourage them to try a different way to order the items, such as lightest to heaviest.
- Once they have ordered the items, encourage them to use words like “first,” “second” and “third.” Ask, “Which came first? Which is the longest? Which is third?”



SCIENCE

Sun Prints

SCI 1a Investigation & Inquiry

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Paper (dark color)
- ☐ Nature items

Activity

- Invite the children to arrange the nature items on pieces of paper. Lay the papers in the sun. Encourage them to predict what will happen to the paper.
- After a few hours, remove the items to see the “print” left behind.
- Invite the children to describe how the sun’s light created the print effect.



Insect Exploration Walk

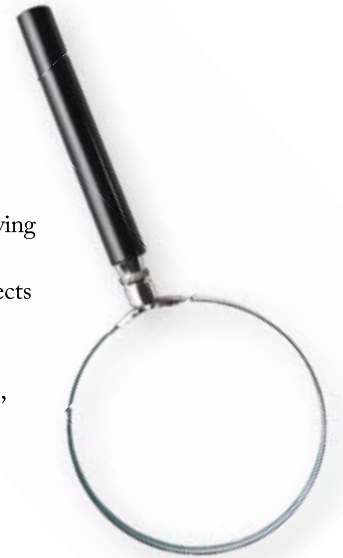
SCI 2a Natural & Earth Science LLD 7b Writing

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Crayons or markers
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Magnifying glasses (optional)
- ☐ Containers with lids (optional)

Activity

- Invite the children to use magnifying glasses to go on a bug hunt.
- Encourage them to observe insects and talk about what they see.
- Invite the children to draw the insects and describe their colors, shapes and movement.



Backyard Volcano

SCI 1a & SCI 1b Investigation & Inquiry SCI 3b Physical Science

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Sand or dirt
- ☐ Baking soda
- ☐ Vinegar

Activity

- Invite the children to work together to build a volcano shape with dirt or sand.
- Add baking soda inside. Encourage the children to predict what will happen when you add vinegar. Select a child to help pour in the vinegar to cause an “eruption.”
- Invite the children to observe, record and describe the reaction.

Shadow Tracing

SCI 1a & SCI 1b Investigation & Inquiry

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Chalk
- ☐ Toys or nature items

Activity

- On a sunny day, invite the children to stand or place items on the pavement.
- Encourage them to trace the shadows with chalk. Ask, “What do you think will happen to the shadow throughout the day?”
- Return later in the day to observe and describe how the shadows have changed.

Sponge Soaking Games

SCI 3b Physical Science M 4a Measurement

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Sponges
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Container
- ☐ Cups or scoops

Activity

- Fill a container with water and add sponges.
- Invite the children to soak the sponges and run to squeeze the water out into a cup.
- Encourage them to count how many trips it takes to fill the cup.
- Invite them to notice how the sponge changes when it absorbs and releases water.

Bubble Science Station

SCI 1a & SCI 1b Investigation & Inquiry

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Water
- ☐ Dish soap
- ☐ Cups or shallow trays
- ☐ Pipecleaners

Activity

- Invite the children to help you mix water and dish soap to create a bubble solution.
- Encourage them to create different wand shapes and sizes using pipecleaners.
- Invite the children to predict which wand will make the biggest bubble.
- Encourage the children to observe and describe what happens when bubbles touch grass, water or dirt.

Nature Water Mixing

SCI 3b Physical Science

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Water
- ☐ Containers
- ☐ Nature items: leaves, dirt, petals, pebbles
- ☐ Plastic spoons

Activity

- Encourage the children to collect nature items and add them to cups of water.
- Invite them to smush, mix, stir and observe changes in color and texture.
- Encourage the children to describe and compare their mixtures with one another.

Weather Watch & Nature Helper Walk

SCI 2b Natural & Earth Science

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Markers or crayons
- ☐ Nature items (optional)

Activity

- Go outside and invite the children to observe the weather (sunny, windy, hot or cloudy).
- Encourage them to talk about what the day feels like and how it affects nature. Ask, "What can we do today to take care of the Earth?"
 - Invite the children to draw the weather and one way they helped nature.





CREATIVE ARTS

Sidewalk Chalk Mural

CA 3a Visual Arts LLD 2a Communication

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Chalk (variety of colors)

Activity

- Invite the children to create a mural together with chalk.
- Encourage them to describe what they are drawing.
- If desired, choose a theme, like “Under the Sea” or “Our Town.”

Paint with Nature

CA 3b Visual Arts SCI 2a Natural & Earth Science

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Nature items
- ☐ Paint
- ☐ Paper or fabric

Activity

- Take a nature walk and collect items like leaves, pine needles or flower petals.
- Invite the children to dip the items in paint and press them on paper to make prints.
- Encourage them to explore how different textures create different effects.

Paper Plate Puppets

CA 3b Visual Arts LLD 6b Reading Comprehension

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Paper plates
- ☐ Crayons or markers
- ☐ Glue
- ☐ Yarn
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Craft sticks



Activity

- Invite the children to decorate paper plates as storybook characters. Help them tape craft sticks to the plates to create puppets.
- Encourage them to use their puppets to act out familiar stories or create new ones.

Make a Suncatcher

CA 3b Visual Arts

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Contact paper or clear packing tape
- ☐ Tissue paper
- ☐ Hole punch
- ☐ Yarn
- ☐ Tape

Activity

- Invite the children to stick tissue paper shapes to contact paper. Encourage them to create intentional designs or patterns.
- Help to seal the suncatcher by adding another layer of contact paper on top. Add a hole and yarn to hang it in the window.
- Invite the children to observe how the sunlight shines through the colors.

Paint Rocks

CA 3a & CA 3b Visual Arts

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Nature items: rocks
- ☐ Paint
- ☐ Paintbrushes
- ☐ Sponges
- ☐ Craft sticks
- ☐ Pipecleaners



Activity

- Take a nature walk and collect rocks, then wash them.
- Invite the children to paint the rocks with patterns or pictures. Encourage them to explore using different tools, like a paintbrush, sponge or pipecleaner.
- Place the decorated rocks around the playground, in a garden or inside the classroom.

Make a Wind Chime

CA 3b Visual Arts SCI 2b Natural & Earth Science

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Sticks or a small paper plate
- ☐ Yarn or string
- ☐ Beads, paper shapes or nature items (rocks, leaves, etc.)
- ☐ Hole punch (optional)
- ☐ Markers or paint (optional)

Activity

- Use a stick or paper plate as the top of the wind chime.
- Help the children tie pieces of yarn to it. Encourage them to string lightweight items, like beads, nature items or paper shapes, onto the yarn.
- If desired, invite the children to decorate the top with markers or paint.
- Hang the wind chimes outside and encourage the children to listen to how they move and sound in the wind.

Nature Band

CA 1a & CA 1b Music

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Nature items: sticks, rocks, leaves, seed pods, shells
- ☐ Containers: cups, bowls, boxes
- ☐ Yarn or string
- ☐ Paper and crayons (optional)

Activity

- Take a nature walk and collect nature items.
- Invite the children to brainstorm how they can use the materials to create music. For example, place rocks in a container to make a shaker or use sticks for rhythm tapping.
- Encourage them to explore different sounds by tapping, shaking or rubbing items together.
- If desired, decorate the instruments and hold a “Nature Band” concert outside!

Beach Day Pretend Play

CA 4a Drama

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Blankets or towels
- ☐ Boxes
- ☐ Buckets
- ☐ Nature items: shells, rocks, sticks
- ☐ Beach props (optional)



Activity

- Set up a pretend beach using blankets, nature items, buckets and boxes as sandcastles. If desired, add beach props, like sunglasses or hats.
- Invite the children to choose beach-themed roles, like a lifeguard, swimmer, beachcomber or ice cream seller.
- Encourage them to engage in conversation and cooperation as they act out summer scenes together.



SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Classroom Gratitude Jar

SED 1d Self-Awareness LLD 7a Writing

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Clear jar or container
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Markers or crayons



Activity

- Invite the children to help decorate the jar or container.
- Each day, encourage the children to add a note or drawing about something they are thankful for.
- Read the notes aloud at the end of the week.

Host a Talent Show

SED 1a Self-Awareness SS 1c Culture & Community

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Blankets
- ☐ Props or costumes (optional)

Activity

- Host a talent show. Set up a “stage” with blankets for the audience.
- Invite the children to sing, dance, tell jokes and share art or something like they like about themselves.
- Encourage the children to celebrate everyone’s talents by cheering and clapping.

Kindness Garden

SED 3c Social Relationships LLD 7a & LLD 7b Writing SS 1c Culture & Community

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Markers or crayons
- ☐ Tape or glue
- ☐ Scissors (child-safe)

Activity

- Invite the children to write and draw one kind thing they did or saw someone else do.
- Encourage them to cut their work into flower shapes and add them to a wall or bulletin board to create a “Kindness Garden.”
- Review the flowers together and celebrate the kind actions.
- Encourage the children to continue “growing the garden” all summer.

Teamwork Obstacle Course

SED 3b & 3c Social Relationships PD 1 Gross Motor

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Cones, hula hoops or pool noodles
- ☐ Scarves
- ☐ Beanbags or balls

Activity

- Set up a simple obstacle course outside with safe, soft materials.
- Pair up the children and encourage them to complete sections of the course together. Emphasize taking turns, listening to each other and cheering on peers.

EMENT

Feelings Charades

SED 1d Self-Awareness CA 2b Dance & Movement

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Pictures of feelings
- ☐ Basket or container

Activity

- Cut out pictures from magazines or printed that show a variety of feelings. Add the pictures to a basket.
- Invite the children to sit in a circle and encourage them to pull an image from the basket one at a time.
- Encourage each child to act out the feeling they chose, and invite the other children to guess which feeling it is.
- Ask, “When have you felt that way?”



Beach Ball Feelings Toss

SED 1d Self-Awareness

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Beach ball
- ☐ Permanent marker

Activity

- Write feeling words or simple questions on each section of a beach ball, such as “What makes you laugh?” or “Mad.”
- Toss the ball and invite the children to catch it and respond to the feeling or question under their hand.

Ice Cream Feelings Game

SED 1d Self-Awareness

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Paper (variety of colors)
- ☐ Paper cones or cups
- ☐ Glue or tape
- ☐ Scissors

Activity

- Cut paper into circle “ice cream scoops.” Explain that each scoop color represents a feeling, such as red for mad, yellow for happy and blue for sad.
- Invite the children to build an “ice cream cone” by stacking scoops that match how they feel.
- Ask, “Why did you pick that scoop? What are you feeling?”

Shining Helpers

SED 3c Social Relationships LLD 2a Communication

YOUR SUPPLIES

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Tape or stapler

Activity

- Cut paper into hand or star shapes.
- Invite the children to write and draw one way they helped someone during the week. Encourage them to share what they wrote.
- Add the shapes to a bulletin board or open space, with the title “We Shine When We Help.”
- Throughout the week, celebrate classroom helpers and acts of kindness.



ADAPTATIONS

All children deserve to grow and learn to their fullest potential. Quality programs are inclusive of all learning styles and offer adaptations for children with special needs. Experience Preschool is a flexible curriculum model that exposes children to rich experiences where children can learn in their own way within the context of play and everyday interactions. Use the suggested adaptations to support children according to their needs while implementing the Experience Preschool lesson plans.

For the children who are nonverbal or are uncomfortable speaking in front of other children:

- Offer visuals for the child to point at in response to the discussion prompt.
- Invite the child to whisper their idea to an adult or to a friend.
- Offer other ways to communicate responses, such as giving a thumbs up or clapping their hands.

For the children who have limited attention spans or difficulties sitting still:

- Offer something for the child to hold.
- Offer a textured cushion to sit on during seated activities.
- Encourage the child to visit an open area, such as the library, when finished with a task.

For the children with sensory processing challenges:

- Model and participate with them during a task.
- Invite the child to make a quick attempt to participate.
- Create a “peaceful” area in the room. This is a designated space that may include pillows, books and a blanket.

For the children who have difficulty with transitions:

- Use picture cards for the daily schedule to look at and review throughout the day.
- Offer a transitional toy/item to carry to the next activity.
- Have a friend invite them to the next activity.
- Use a visual timer.

For the children with restricted motor skills or physical disabilities:

- Encourage the child to move in any way their body is able.
- Offer an instrument to play instead of moving.

For the children with tactile challenges:

- Offer alternatives, such as using only a finger to paint instead of a hand.
- Offer other materials that are similar in texture.

For the children who avoid their peers or are withdrawn:

- Have the child play within a small group of their peers or one-on-one.
- Invite the child to bring a special item from home to play with friends.
- Invite the child to bring in a family photo to put in the “peaceful” area of the room.

For the children with restricted fine motor skills:

- Offer loop scissors for the child to squeeze with their hands.
- Offer short and wide writing utensils (e.g. break crayons to make them easier to grip).
- Offer a slanted work surface to write and draw.

For the children with separation anxiety:

- Encourage parents to give a quick hug and say goodbye.
- Offer the child a quiet space to sit as they calm themselves.
- Invite the child to bring in family pictures to look at during the day.
- Refer to the visual schedule.

For the children with hearing loss:

- Teachers can wear a sound amplification device.
- Break down steps with picture cards/visuals. Check for understanding.
- Implement suggestions from a hearing loss specialist.

For the children with visual impairment:

- Create a space with open pathways and allow easy access to the room before the program starts.
- Keep the same room arrangement.
- Preferential seating closer to the teacher.
- Enlarged pictures or tactile labels.
- Include braille books in the book corner.
- Implement suggestions from a visual impairment specialist.

For the children with anger/aggression:

- Offer a quiet, safe place for the child. Allow the child to join the group when ready.
- Offer an object (such as a stress ball) to squeeze.
- When speaking to the child, kneel down to their level and give some space. Use a soft voice.
- Ask the child, “What can we do to make this better?”

Our Summer To-Do List

Ask, "What would you like to do together this summer?" Record or encourage the children to write their responses below.
Check off items as you complete them. If desired, display the list in the classroom for inspiration.

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