

CREATIVITY

52 Creative Ideas for 52 Weeks of Fun

Serve creative challenges to your kids regularly. Enjoy a different creative activity each week with 52 Creative Ideas for 52 Weeks of Fun! Being creative with your kids is fun, easy and important. Be sure to make time for at least one creative activity with your kids each week. Stimulating children's imaginations, listening to their ideas and spending time doing creative activities together are keys to their success.

1. **Create an Art Center in Your Kitchen.** Organize a shelf or rolling cart with kids' art supplies, and let their creativity flourish while you are nearby.
2. **Turn Your Home Into an Art Gallery.** Purchase inexpensive frames and hang your kids' creations around the house. Tape some drawings on the ceiling above the kids' beds to inspire their dreams.
3. **Inventors Create.** Gather recycled materials, such as old shoes, worn out clothes, buttons and paper towel rolls. Gather craft supplies, such as Crayola Model Magic, Markers and Glitter Glue. Have your child combine these items to create new inventions—identify a problem and construct the solution.
4. **Pass-Along Story.** Have your child create a multi-page illustrated storybook. Start with a title and cover page. Then pass the book along to another family member, who will write and illustrate the first page. Continue to pass the book around, giving each family member several chances to see what has been added and bring a new twist or turn to the plot.
5. **Our Favorite Recipes.** Think about your family's favorite foods. Have your child write a recipe book, illustrated with pictures that show how much of each ingredient is needed. Make photocopies to share with relatives.
6. **Color Nature Walk.** Get exercise and strengthen your kids' observation skills by enjoying a nature walk and looking for all the colors of the rainbow. While outdoors, collect twigs and leaves. Have your child use these natural items as paintbrushes when you return home and paint a collaborative mural. Urge your child to paint what was seen.
7. **Draw Funny Foods & Favorite Flavor Combos.** Create a family favorite foods and funny flavor combinations poster on the refrigerator. Use a large piece of paper and outline shelves. Have your child add to those shelves everyone's personal favorite entrée, dessert and beverage—with a unique twist. Mix and match favorites, creating imaginative new combinations, like chocolate stew or fruit salad fizzes. Who knows what unique food flavors may be the next big hit?
8. **Sock Puppets.** Gather worn-out or unmatched socks to make a family of sock puppets. Have your child use fabric markers to add facial expressions, hair and outfits. Develop a puppet show that is based on a theme or improvisation. Every family member can play a part.
9. **Overcoming Obstacles.** Have your child sketch an obstacle course that uses blankets, boxes, chairs and other household items. Build the course according to plan. Practice moving through and around the objects. See problems? Modify the course as needed for fun play that is built on their creative ideas.
10. **Imagine Dinosaur Pets.** What if your next pet was a dinosaur? How would it change your house? Yard? Neighborhood? Have your child draw a picture of your house, remodeled to accommodate this new pet.
11. **Time Traveler Arrives from Ancient Times.** Have children pretend they have never seen an airplane before. Who are these people exiting from the belly of the huge "metal bird"? Ask children to draw where they think the people came from. What interesting stories can they imagine that might explain how this big vehicle flies through the air?

12. **Saturday Nights . . . BTV (Before Television).** Yes, believe it or not, there was a time when families did not sit in front of a television set or DVD player to be entertained. Ask your child to interview elderly friends or relatives who may remember these times. Have them draw what they envision as a fun Saturday night family activity that may have been common before televisions were invented.
13. **New Super-Healthy, Best-Tasting Breakfast.** Have your child imagine they are responsible for inventing a new breakfast food that is highly nutritious, fast to fix, and most importantly—kids' favorite. What would this new food be made of? What would it be named? Create an advertisement that will show other kids how good it is.
14. **Harvest Hunt.** Have your child use crayons or markers to draw and cut out fruits and vegetables. Then have them hide the cutouts around the house. Challenge friends and family to go on a treasure hunt, harvesting these foods. Bring back what was collected and ask your child to imagine new recipe inventions that combine some of these tasty treats. Pick one of the new recipes and make it with real fruits and vegetables.
15. **Funny Framed Faces.** Insert a family member's photo or a photocopy of the photo into a plastic picture frame. Have your child use Crayola Window Markers to draw on the front of the frame, embellishing the photo. They can add wild hair, funny features or any embellishments to the picture. When finished, remove the picture and wipe off the front of frame.
16. **Imaginary Vehicle.** Find a large recycled large box, such as an appliance box. Ask your child to decorate it to look like a fantastic new vehicle that can travel in magical ways. Perhaps it is a boat that flies or a rooftop hopper that enables people to hop from one rooftop to another. Have your child design the vehicle and then go on an imaginary adventure using it.
17. **Backyard Talent Show.** Discover the hidden performance talents of your friends and family. Ask your child to draw a program inviting guests to the evening event and to decorate costumes fitting the performers' roles. Enjoy an evening filled with magic tricks, music and dance.
18. **Wrapping Special Wishes.** Forget about the presents we buy each other. The best gifts we can give family members and close friends are those special wishes we have for them. Have your child draw or write special wishes for a Wish Exchange. Tuck them in a box and create personalized wrapping paper that hints at the kind thoughts inside. Share these treasures.
19. **Stars Come to Our Restaurant.** Have your child imagine your kitchen is transformed into a fancy restaurant. What is the name and cuisine? Ask your child to draw menus, help prepare and then serve the meal. Pretend you are famous guests. Who would you like to be . . . a movie star, celebrity musician or historical hero?
20. **That's Our Song.** With your child, pick a favorite song and customize the lyrics to insert family members' names or tell a personalized tale with that tune. Write and illustrate your new version to make sure you remember the words the next time you try to sing it.
21. **Our Money.** Create your own family currency. What do your dollars look like? Ask your child to make some money and create a playful way to buy and pay for special services. For example, how much family fun money would Dad pay for kids to bring the newspaper into the house? How much would the kids pay to pick out a movie to watch? Teach math and budgeting skills with a special creative flair.
22. **Dream Car.** Have your child design a new car that fits your family's wildest dreams. Love the beach? Then design a car that surfs the waves. Always in a hurry? How could your new car fly? Worried about gas prices? Design a car run on alternative fuels. Use Model Magic to show the new shape and functions of this special auto.
23. **Perfect Planet.** Pretend that scientists just discovered a new planet in a far-away galaxy. They call it the "Perfect Planet" since life on the planet is ideal. Ask your child what they imagine when they think of this new place. What would it look like? What planets and animals would there be? How would they get along? What would make this planet so unique?

24. **Comic Strip Hero.** Have your child pretend they are the new super hero in a comic strip. Ask them to draw themselves and create a unique costume. What are they known for? Who helps them? Who do they triumph over? Have children draw a few comic strips that show their special powers and the problems they solve.
25. **Curious Creatures.** Ask your child to take an imaginary adventure exploring some unknown part of our planet. To their surprise they discover a creature that is unlike anything seen before. What does it look like? What does it eat? How does it move? What is it called? Use Model Magic to show what the creature looks like. Have your child write and illustrate a newspaper article announcing the new discovery.
26. **The Other Side.** Sometimes a simple change in direction gives a whole new look. Have your child experiment drawing using the hand they don't usually use. Suggest they draw a new type of furniture or an animal. Then have them switch to their dominant hand and add embellishments to finish the picture. Ask them how starting with the "other side" gave them a different beginning.
27. **You Are What You Eat.** Every child has at least one or two favorite foods. Tell them to draw a person made up of their favorite foods. Perhaps one has pasta hair and donut eyes. Would the arms be ice cream cones or chicken drumsticks? How would his/her self-portrait be different if only healthy foods were included?
28. **Mona Lisa's Smile.** Find a picture of the Mona Lisa for your child to examine. What could she be feeling? Then let them paint a portrait of a family member or close friend capturing the feelings they think the person shows.
29. **Pets in Charge.** Set up this scenario: What if pets ruled everything? Imagine if dogs ran the schools and cats ran the grocery stores. What pet would be president? What if humans' jobs were all focused on serving the pets that were in charge? Then have them draw this scene from their imagination.
30. **Up, Up and Away.** Have your child imagine they are traveling high in the sky with a hot air balloon. Ask them what they see when looking down. Have them draw the neighborhood from a bird's-eye view. What different types of landforms and waterways do they see? How do rooftops, swimming pools, cars and people look different from this point of view?
31. **Color Changes.** Have your child imagine everything turned a shade of their favorite color. Does he love lavender? Is she partial to periwinkle? They can paint a landscape where everything is a shade of their favorite color. Or what if the colors all switched around and greens turned red and yellows turned blue? Ask them to paint a scene where all the colors switch.
32. **Combo Creatures.** If kids could combine different animals into one with lots of mixed-up features, what would they create? Would they combine an elephant's trunk, a skunk's stripe, a monkey's tail and a duck's webbed feet? What might this animal be able to do that it couldn't do before? Have your child pick an animal and add a variety of other features. Give their combo creature a new name and then they can create an advertisement explaining why this new creature has benefits the original animal didn't have.
33. **Come Along to a Deserted Island.** If your child was stranded on a deserted island, but could plan for it, what would he or she pack? Who would they invite? When would they decide to come back? Have them draw a scene of their time away, enjoying this special trip away from everyday routines.
34. **Shadow Pals.** Go outside with your child on a sunny day and reacquaint yourselves with your shadows. Stretch and see how your shadows imitate you. What if your shadows became your personal pals and could see, hear, taste and smell? Use Crayola Color Explosion to draw your shadows experiencing new adventures with you.
35. **Follow an Ant.** On a warm day, go on a walk with your child and find an ant outdoors. Follow this tiny creature for a while until it enters a space you can't peek into. Then ask your child to imagine how the world looks to that ant. What would our shoes look like to the ant, as it scurries away? What does a big juicy watermelon look like to an ant that is so tiny? Have them draw a scene from that ant's point of view.

36. **Choose Wheels.** What if your child had more choices at the shoe store? Do they want a pair of shoes with customized wheels, or with special powers, so they could walk on water or through the air? What if the new pair of shoes' special powers changed based on their needs? If your child is in a hurry, do they want shoes that can sprout wings and fly? Can your child reach the top shelf? Try the elevator shoes that make them taller. Your child can now draw a picture of people wearing the new design.
37. **Create a New Holiday.** Everyone loves holidays—special times to celebrate an event or tradition, enjoy special foods, and gather with family and friends. What if your family could celebrate a new holiday that your child invents? Let your child plan the celebration. What is the theme and name of the holiday? Create decorations. Plan the food. What new traditions would be part of this holiday? Would you repeat this holiday annually? Who would be invited to this celebration? Enjoy!
38. **Wake Up and Smile!** If your child could invent a new way to wake people up—to help those who aren't early risers or who are grumpy in the morning—what would it be? Remember happy places or special days that your family enjoys. How can those ideas, sounds or pictures help people wake up happily?
39. **Perfect Playground.** Have your kid design the playground of his/her dreams. What equipment would it have? How would it be different from other playgrounds? They can draw the area and use Model Magic to make miniature rides, benches, tree houses and other playground items.
40. **If Pigs Could Fly.** What if pigs everywhere sprouted wings and learned how to fly? Your child could create a Model Magic pig with wings and write a story about the bizarre flight the pig experiences. Watch out birds and airplanes, there is a new creature taking to the sky. Kids can imagine what farmers have to do to keep their livestock on the farm. What if a pig landed on a rooftop for a rest?
41. **Aliens Visit the Grocery Store.** Give them the scenario that aliens from outer space just landed on Earth and found themselves in the middle of a grocery store. They can then draw the scene. What would the aliens think? Might they mistake grocery shelves as new gardens where we grow food? Would they wonder how we open the canned goods? What questions would they ask and what funny thoughts might they think if this was their first introduction to planet Earth?
42. **Drawing to the Music.** Use crayons or markers and a big piece of plain paper. Turn on music that has various styles and beats. Try some classical, jazz, rumba and salsa. Move your arms to the music while drawing. How do the lines and patterns look different, based on the musical inspiration?
43. **Sitting Pretty.** Find an old wooden or metal chair that is ready to be recycled. Allow your child give it new life with a new coat of paint and a lively pattern following a favorite theme—with flowers, polka dots, or stripes or with names in fancy letters. Use acrylic paint (which is permanent when dry) or, if younger children are involved, let them use a washable paint that you can then coat with a clear sealant.
44. **Spies "R" Us.** Get your child to create a mystery mission that involves secrets and spies. If kids had to save grownups from getting too serious or working too hard, what could they do? They can pretend they are secret agents working on a special mission. Even develop codes for written messages. Challenge them to know how and when the mission is accomplished.
45. **Our Family Magazine.** Create your own family magazine. Let your child assign someone to draw the illustrations and take pictures. Someone should design the cover and layout of the pages. They can have someone else conduct interviews and write articles. What topics would the family magazine cover? Perhaps news about the family's favorite outings or movie reviews. They could include recipes or snack tips. How about some family history or personality reviews? Would there be advertisements in this magazine? If so, what might they want the family to advertise? Does someone baby-sit or run a dog walking business? Let them control the production of this magazine. How many copies would they need? Would relatives, family friends or neighbors want a copy of the completed publication? If so, help them photocopy or use the computer printer to create multiple copies.

46. **Growing Up to Be ...** Ask your child to imagine what they will be doing 10 or 20 years from now. Have them draw pictures of what they'll look like and write a description of where they'll live, what jobs they might have, and how they'll be the same or different from who they are today.
47. **Pack My Bags, I'm Ready to Go.** If your child could vacation anywhere on the globe, where would they go? Ask them to draw a picture of what they would expect to see on this trip. Why did they pick this destination? What sites do they want to see and what adventures would they expect to have? What unique foods and tasty treats would they want to try?
48. **But It's Light Out!** With your child, look at a map of Northern Canada or Alaska. Find some locations where daylight lasts nearly 24 hours in the summer. Ask your child to imagine living in a place where the sun stayed out until very late at night. Together, write and illustrate a humorous story about a young child who doesn't want to go to bed until it is dark outside. Include the solutions that the family comes up with to help the youngster go to sleep.
49. **Sidewalk Comic Strips.** On a warm day, give your kids Crayola Sidewalk Chalk or Sidewalk Paint to create an outdoor comic strip. First, have them think about the characters the comic strip will feature. What is the plot or the exciting story that will happen to these characters? Is there going to be trouble? Who stops the trouble? Does the comic strip have a happy or funny ending? After planning out the tale, they can draw or paint it on the sidewalk!
50. **Enter for Enchanting Spells.** Tell your child to imagine that the door to their room casts an enchanting spell on all who enter. Do they want to make people dance? All who enter will develop dancing talents. Do they love to read? Stacks of books will rain down in the room. Create a door sign for their room that warns every one of the magical powers that transform all who enter. You can cover the door with plain wrapping paper, then draw decorations and write words that express what others need to know about these magical spells.
51. **Imagine No Batteries or Electricity.** Does your child know there was a time when there were no batteries and no electricity? What games would they have played? Let them interview elderly relatives about their childhood games to give them some ideas to create their own "kid powered" games.
52. **On Butterfly Wings.** Have your child envision flying on a butterfly's or bird's wings. What would it be like for them to soar through the air, enjoying this beautiful creature's adventures? Your child can then draw what the garden and house look like from this point of view. Where would they go? How would the winged creature communicate?

