



Learning Routines for Children

Learning routines offer structure and safety for children, increasing focus, engagement and learning.

Establishing a set learning routine provides predictability and brain breaks that help increase focus, attention and blood flow to the brain. This template and accompanying sample routines will help you plan your daily learning routine.

The left column represents the general flow of your routine. The right column provides space to fill in the specific activities to be accomplished each day. You will fill in this space for younger children, while older children will take on a more active planning role. If an older child will be doing more than two hours of academics, it is best to break the learning into two or more sessions with at least an hour of free time and movement between sessions.

It is helpful to provide children with predetermined choices for their brain break. Your list of choices might include:

Start a family conversation ritual before each meal with a conversation starter like the following:

- Stretch for two minutes
- Dance to one song
- Do one music and movement activity from GoNoodle.com
- Jumping jacks
- Animal yoga
- Freeze dance
- Jump rope (or even pretend to jump rope)
- Keep a beach ball or balloon from hitting the ground
- Simon Says
- Limbo
- Create a secret handshake with a parent or sibling

_____’s Learning Routine

1. Brain Smart Start (3-5 minutes)	Unite, destress and connect by Commit: I’m going to
2. First subject/activity (10-20 minutes)	
3. Brain break (3 minutes)	Move and/or connect by
4. Second subject/ activity (10-20 minutes)	
5. Brain break (3 minutes)	Move and/or connect by
6. Third subject/activity (10-20 minutes)	

Way to go! You did it!

Younger example: Shawn is five years old, so the activities in his learning routine will only last 10 minutes each. At five and six years old, the brain isn't developmentally equipped to sit still and learn for long stretches; it still does most of its learning through experiences and play. With plenty of adult scaffolding, Shawn's attention span and ability to focus will increase as he matures, but for now it's best to keep organized learning efforts short, sweet and fun. That way, you will both experience less stress, more success and a love of learning!

Shawn's Learning Routine

<p>1. Brain Smart Start (3-5 minutes)</p>	<p>Unite, destress and connect by doing the Hokey Pokey with Dad and then Pretzel breathing three times.</p> <p>Commit: I'm going to write my name as neat as I can three times.</p>	
<p>2. First subject/activity (10-20 minutes)</p>	<p>Play Math Magic online.</p>	<p>5 + 5</p> 
<p>3. Brain break (3 minutes)</p>	<p>Move and/or connect by doing 10 jumping jacks.</p>	
<p>4. Second subject/activity (10-20 minutes)</p>	<p>Art and writing practice. Practice name and make a card for Grandma. Sentences to write: Dear Grandma, I miss you. Moana the cat says, "Hi." I love you.</p>	
<p>5. Brain break (3 minutes)</p>	<p>Move and/or connect by doing animal yoga.</p>	
<p>6. Third subject/activity (10-20 minutes)</p>	<p>Do two worksheets from school.</p>	
<p>7. Brain break (3 minutes)</p>	<p>Move and/or connect by fast dancing.</p>	
<p>8. Fourth subject/activity (10-20 minutes)</p>	<p>Take a virtual tour of a museum.</p>	

Way to go! You did it!

Older example: Larina is in fifth grade, so the activities in her learning routine will last 20 minutes each. Some subjects will require two 20-minute blocks with a brain break in the middle. To accommodate her schoolwork, she does one learning routine in the morning after breakfast and another in the afternoon before dinner.

Larina is learning time management and organization skills by filling in the information for the righthand column in her routine chart each day. A parent checks in before Larina starts work to make certain she has filled in the routine with accurate priorities and to do the Brain Smart Start with her. They check in again at the end of the routine to make certain all is well and help her adjust as necessary.

Larina’s Learning Routine MORNING

1. Brain Smart Start (3-5 minutes)	Unite, destress and connect by taking three S.T.A.R. breaths and playing a round of the Rockin’ Robin hand-clap game with a parent. Commit: I’m going to take three deep breaths to help bring my mind back to my work when I get distracted.
2. First subject/activity (10-20 minutes)	Sudoku and crossword puzzles online.
3. Brain break (3 minutes)	Move and/or connect by dancing to one song.
4. Second subject/ activity (10-20 minutes)	School-assigned math.
5. Brain break (3 minutes)	Move and/or connect by stretching.
6. Third subject/activity (10-20 minutes)	Finish my math.
7. Brain break (3 minutes)	Move and/or connect by dancing to one song.
8. Fourth subject/ activity (10-20 minutes)	Read a chapter in my book and write a one-paragraph summary.

Way to go! You did it!

Larina's Learning Routine AFTERNOON

1. Brain Smart Start (3-5 minutes)	<p>Unite, destress and connect by taking three S.T.A.R. breaths and playing another round of the Rockin' Robin hand-clap game.</p> <p>Commit: I'm going to take three deep breaths to help bring my mind back to my work when I get distracted.</p>
2. First subject/activity (10-20 minutes)	Finish reading yesterday's social studies chapter and do the assignment.
3. Brain break (3 minutes)	Move and/or connect by dancing to one song.
4. Second subject/activity (10-20 minutes)	Learn about rainforest ecology online.
5. Brain break (3 minutes)	Move and/or connect by stretching.
6. Third subject/activity (10-20 minutes)	Journal using creative writing prompts.
7. Brain break (3 minutes)	Move and/or connect by jumping rope.
8. Fourth subject/activity (10-20 minutes)	School-assigned science worksheet.

Way to go! You did it!