

CASA

CONNECTION

County After School Activities

VOL 1. ISSUE 6
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LOUDOUN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS RECREATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES

LOUDOUN.GOV/PRCS

FOR ACCESSIBILITY REQUESTS: CONTACT ADAPTREC@LOUDOUN.GOV, 703-777-0343, TTY: 711

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The Loudoun County Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) is open virtually while its centers are closed and programs canceled in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. "We wanted to make sure that Loudoun's citizens can engage with us during this temporary closure and that we continue creating community through people, parks and programs," said Steve Torpy, PRCS Director.

The department launched a new webpage at loudoun.gov/prcscreatingcommunity featuring video playlists, a rotating video spotlight, virtual tours, how-to guides, children's activities, community resources and more. The page includes links to all of all of the department's Facebook pages, where followers can find engaging posts and videos daily. "We're temporarily closed, but we're here for you digitally as we learn to navigate this new environment. The response to the page has been positive and we feel that it may continue to serve citizens after normal operations resume," said Torpy. County parks remain open for self-directed trail and leisure use while practicing social distancing. Visit loudoun.gov/prcs or email prcs@loudoun.gov for more information.



CASA

County After School Activities

We miss seeing you every day. We hope that everyone is staying healthy and safe. Our staff wants to help you continue to grow and learn. Please enjoy this newsletter.

CASA STAFF



IDEAS FOR KEEPING KIDS ACTIVE DURING SOCIAL DISTANCING

An article from REI Co-op

The mental, physical and other benefits of getting outside are many, and a boost of nature and fresh air can be essential for kids, not to mention the adults in their lives, during times when schools are closed and regular recreational opportunities are limited. Children and adolescents need at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. You don't need fancy equipment to get moving or stay physically active, whether you choose to do it inside or outside. It can be as simple as doing jumping jacks or sit-ups in your living room, skipping rope in the apartment hallway (sorry downstairs neighbors), or just moving more and sitting less. And while it's tempting to get together with others to enjoy active time, especially for kids, experts are recommending we seek alternatives.

"Playtime outside is great with family, but it's best if no others are there. If families have their own yard to play in, that is ideal. However, if a family's only option is to play out and around their neighborhood, it's best to keep their distance from others and not to touch objects that others have touched," Dr. Lisa Frenkel, co-director of Seattle Children's Center for Global Infectious Disease Research, wrote in an email. With that in mind, we put together several suggestions for ways to keep your kids active—both outside and inside—during this time of social distancing. (Our tips cover a variety of age ranges; so be sure to use your own judgment about what's appropriate for your child.)

Ideas to Keep Kids Active Outdoors

Include Outdoor Breaks in a Daily Routine

If possible, make a point to get your kids and yourself outside several times a day, even if it's only for 20-30 minutes at a time. Consider these "recess" or "lunch breaks" that you schedule every day. Fortunately, you can do this while still following CDC-recommended practices to protect yourself and others, such as putting distance between yourself and other people, washing your hands with soap and water and staying home if you're sick.

"Outdoor gatherings are less risky than indoors ones since COVID-19 spreads more easily when people are close together in confined spaces," according to guidelines from Public Health – Seattle & King County, the health department for the metropolitan Seattle area.

"Plus, it's important for kids to get active outside time every day. Research shows that daily time for kids outdoors also boosts the health and well-being of the adults in their lives."

Here are some ways to take quick breaks outside:

- Try motivating younger kids with simple challenges such as "Can you find ...?" or "How far can you ...?"
- Play hide and seek.

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- Try motivating younger kids with simple challenges such as “Can you find ...?” or “How far can you ...?”
- Play hide and seek.
- Bust out soccer balls, sidewalk chalk, buckets and other toys like flying discs.
- Walk around the block or to your local park or green space. Ask older teens to walk with younger siblings.
- Jog, scooter, bike, skateboard, pogo stick, hula hoop or roller skate around the block.
- Play hopscotch on the sidewalk.
- Walk, run or play fetch with your dog.
- Challenge your kid to a race down the block.
- Have kids make up a jump rope routine to their favorite music.
- Set up an obstacle course in the backyard (or even in the house).

Read more tips on how to up your child’s daily dose of the outdoors.

Go on a Scavenger Hunt or Nature Adventure

Try a fun activity such as a low-tech scavenger hunt that gets you outside. Have your kids search for and identify natural objects in your backyard, on your block or at a nearby park (depending on their ages and level of independence). Or encourage them to look around their natural surroundings and write down what they observe in our printable DIY adventure notebook. Print out free activity cards online, such as this free Nature Bingo card or REI Bug Bingo. (Don’t forget to practice one of the important Seven Principles of Leave No Trace, which is to leave what you find.)

Try Geocaching

For a more high-tech option, try geocaching. You and your kids use a smartphone app to locate hidden caches (usually small containers) in your neighborhood parks, out on trails and in many other locations where others in the geocaching community have hidden them. These days, instead of handling a cache, make a game out of seeing who can spot the cache first. When you get home, log your find online and make a note so you can go back when it’s safe again to sign the logbook and see what kind of interesting schwa the cache has inside.

Geocaching.com has details on where to get the app, how to use it and where you can find caches near you. You can also learn more about geocaching in our article [How to Get Started Geocaching with Kids](#).

Go on a Family Bike Ride

Taking a bike ride with your children can be a good way to get fresh air, get exercise and still keep a proper distance from others. Read more for tips on how to enjoy family biking in our [Cycling with Kids](#) article. If your kids haven’t learned how yet, it’s also a great time to teach your kid to ride a bike.

Plant a Garden

Gardening can help kids learn to develop motor and sensory skills. It engages their senses, encourages an appreciation for the environment and gives them a sense of accomplishment. Depending on where you live, you may be able start some seeds in indoor pots or prepare your garden plot.

Browse books and online resources to begin planning your spring garden. The University of Illinois provides this handy guide to gardening for kids; check with your local university extension program for tips and other resources to help you get started. Follow our tips for planting your own kitchen herb garden; many grocery stores have seed packets available in the spring.

Go Backyard 'Camping'

Kids love hanging out in their own cozy, private spaces. If you have room in the backyard, teach them how to set up a tent and then let them hang out in there reading books, drawing, etc. For a special treat, maybe cook up some s'mores for them on the backyard grill.

Take a Hike

While it can sometimes take some cajoling, and maybe even a little bribery, a hike can do wonders for your child's mood and well-being. And for you, getting outside and surrounding yourself in nature can help relieve stress, allow you to unplug from news overload, and enjoy the time with your children. You don't have to go far: If you're able to get to a nearby city park, forest, beach, botanical garden or waterfront, wander along a trail and observe nature and trees. Or if you have the time to go a little farther afield, check out the REI Hiking Project for easy trails near you. Read more on ways to make hiking fun with kids. And read [7 Tips on How to Rekindle Your Sense of Awe Outside](#).

Bring Outdoor Games Inside

If you're not able to go outside, here are some ideas for bringing activity indoors:

- Blow up balloons and try to keep them up in the air. Maybe hang a blanket as a net and play "volleyball."
- Use painter's tape and create a hopscotch board on your living room floor or rug.
- Set up a mini golf course around the house, using cups for the holes and ping pong or other softer (i.e. less destructive) balls.
- Play "marching band": Children young and old may enjoy marching throughout the house; everyone gets a different instrument (pots and pans included).
- Build an obstacle course indoors for smaller children using sofa cushions and cardboard boxes.
- Adapt these three DIY outdoor games for the indoors using recycled objects.

Dance

Put on your favorite music or cue up a video and dance along. Check out Hip Hop Public Health, which uses the power of hip hop to foster health behavior changes. Or try a popular classroom favorite, Go Noodle, to get the wiggles out. Another perennial favorite, Just Dance, is available online even if you don't have a video game console.

Try an At-Home Fitness Workout

With many gyms and recreational facilities closed, try one of many online workouts that keep you and your children fit and healthy. Try yoga with your kids; many local yoga and fitness studios are starting to offer virtual classes, so check in with your favorite local spots to see if they're participating. Look for workout videos on geared toward kids such as Fitness Blender for Kids.

Have Them Track Their Steps

Use a smartphone app to motivate your kids to move more during the day. Let them borrow your fitness tracker or download a free app on your phone. Challenge your kids to hit a goal for each day, like a certain number of steps. If you have stairs in your home, set a goal for them to climb a certain number of stairs by the end of the day. Check in with them at the end of the day and celebrate their accomplishment. Challenge them to do a little more the following day.

Give Them Chores

This won't be their favorite activity, but you surely need the help and they need to contribute to the family's well-being. Put your kids to work doing an easy project around the house. Assign them jobs such as dusting, mowing the lawn, doing dishes, wiping the counters, or folding laundry. Assign older kids dinner duty. Or get them to help you with a simple home improvement project you've been meaning to get to.

Give Them Unstructured Play

Rather than trying to re-create the schedule they have in school, consider giving kids time and opportunity to explore and get creative on their own. This can be especially welcome for tweens and teens who want more freedom and don't want to be told what to do. Give them some broad structure—e.g. no screens during certain hours—but let your kids choose what they want to do whether it's listening to music, drawing, reading or making a batch of cookies. If they don't know what to do, offer some suggestions. Leave piles of books, board games, card games or art supplies where they have access.

Opt to Act Now

Might be a great time to introduce your kids to the REI Opt to Act Plan: 52 weekly challenges to reduce your impact, get active and leave the world better than you found it. Read up on 5 simple ways to act on climate change. And browse our list of 52 actions that can help your kids incorporate eco-friendly behaviors into their daily lives. Here are just a few actions:

- Make cleaning up a part of your daily habits.
- Donate old toys and items instead of throwing them out.
- Read a book about an environmental issue.
- Become water wise in your home through mindful showering and dish washing.
- Repair an item instead of purchasing a new one.

Help Them Stay Connected

When you're home-bound, it can become easy to feel socially isolated. Make sure to connect with friends and family members—whether through a phone call, texting or online video chat. Have your child connect with extended family members including grandparents, cousins or school friends. Since teens' social lives often revolve around their peers, allow time for them to connect with friends online. How are you keeping your kids active? *Join the conversation and share ideas with fellow community members.*

Source: <https://www.rei.com/blog/fitness/ideas-for-keeping-kids-active-when-home>

IDEAS FOR KEEPING KIDS ACTIVE DURING
SOCIAL DISTANCING

Author: PHUONG LE

Published Date: MARCH 17, 2020



RAINBOW JELLO FROSTED GRAPES

*Have fun making these
colorful treats!*

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 TO-2 LBS. GREEN GRAPES
- (4) 3 OZ. BOXES FLAVORED GELATIN (ANY FLAVORS)

step by step directions
on the following page

Rainbow Jello Frosted Grapes

1. Wash and rinse grapes, then leave them in a bowl filled with water.
2. Pour each package of dry gelatin powder into 4 bowls, keeping each color separate.
3. Take a grape from your bowl of water and, while the grape is still wet, roll in one color gelatin powder until thoroughly coated.
4. Repeat using all the grapes, varying the colors used, and lay them on a baking sheet
5. Tip: Use a toothpick to hold the grapes while coloring, to keep your hands from staining.
6. Refrigerate grapes for 1-2 hours, or until the powdered coating hardens on the grapes.



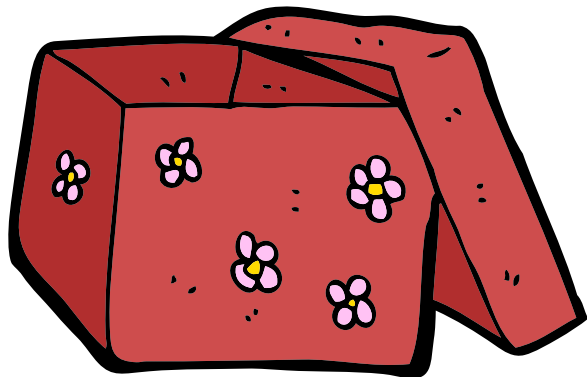
Comfort Box



A comfort box is a great simple idea that you can try at home. A comfort box is a box which you can fill with things that relax you or calm you. Bags and backpacks can also make great portable alternatives to an actual box..

Read ahead for activity directions!

Comfort Box



Directions

1. Decorate the box with crayons, markers, wrapping paper
2. Find a couple things from this list to put in the box
3. Label the box "Comfort Box"
4. Done! Access in times of stress!

Here are some possible things a comfort box or bag could include:

Your favorite chocolate or candy
Stuffed animals or toys
Your favorite Books or poems
Coloring kits or drawing materials
A journal
Play Doh
A soft blanket
Bath or shower items (bath bombs etc)
Scented candles
Safety plan printable cards
Bubble wand
Face Mask
Body lotions
Pictures of loved ones and/or pets
Herbal tea
Stress ball
Jigsaw puzzles

Relaxation or meditation exercises or audios
Old birthday cards
Friendship bracelets/floss to make friendship bracelets
Glitter jars
Favorite t-shirt
Encouraging notes/letters
Essential oils
Fluffy sweater
List of things you like about yourself
Stickers
Bubble wrap
Worry Stone
Crayons and a coloring book/printed coloring pages
Anything that makes you calm or relaxed

A TRIP THROUGH THE ALPHABET

Created by CASA staff

We have reached the end of the alphabet with the letter Z!

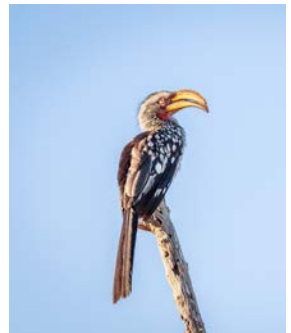
Z
is for Zephyr.....A wind that blows from the west is called a zephyr. Since winds from the west are normally calmer and gentler than winds from the north or east some people refer to any light breeze as a zephyr. In Greek mythology Zephyrus was the god of the west wind. The NBA team the Washington Wizard's name used to be the Chicago Zephyrs. (Chicago is where their franchise started and Chicago is known for its powerful winds. Then the team moved to Baltimore and became the Bullets. Later they moved to Washington and lastly changed the name to Wizards.) You can make a simple yet simple windsock that will look great when you hang it to blow in the breeze. All you need is to decorate a piece of paper and then roll and tape the narrow sides to each other forming a wide tube. Make sure your decorated side is facing out so everyone can see your artwork. Cut strips of tissue paper about 15 inches long and 1-2 inches wide that you will then tape to the inside of one end of your tube. Tape your strips one at a time into your tube at least 1 inch in. At the other end of your tube you need to punch two holes opposite of each other. Thread a piece of yarn through both holes and tie to make the looping handle. Hang up somewhere so it can catch the wind but don't leave outside if it might rain as it will get ruined.

If you want to know if the wind that is blowing is coming from the west you can make your own weather vane. The following website has directions and you probably have all the needed supplies at home already. If you don't have a plastic container with a lid you can use a paper or plastic cup with a piece of cardboard taped on top to poke your pencil through.

learningideasgradesk-8.blogspot.com/2012/01/make-wind-vane.html



Z
is for Zootopia, Zathura, and Zenon.....There are a surprising number of movies and characters that start with the letter Z! The Disney channel used to have a show called the Suite life of Zack and Kody about a set of twins who lived in a hotel their mother worked at. Zazu was the bird that helped Mufasa and later Simba in the Lion King movie. Nintendo has a character named Zelda in their game series the Legend of Zelda. Several movies start with Z such as Zenon: Girl of the 21st Century (1999) which is a Disney film that takes place in the distant future. Some of the older kids might like Zathura (2005) which is similar to Jumanji except the kids get transported to space instead of the jungle. Zootopia (2016) is a fun animated movie for all ages.



ZCONTINUED

Z

is for Zeppelin..... ***PARENT WARNING***.....Zeppelins are cool in the fact that something that big was used a means of crossing the ocean way back in the early 1900s but zeppelins also have a not cool history that goes along with them. They were used as a means of attacking Britain during the First World War. And since they were made in Germany the Nazi party symbol was continued to be painted on the sides even after the war. If we were discussing zeppelins at CASA and the symbol came up we would say a sentence or two about how the symbol is used to spread hate. This is a warning so that if your child does try to research zeppelins or the Hindenburg you will have a heads up about what they might find.



Do you know why some balloons fly up in the air? That's because they are filled with helium. Helium is a gas that is lighter than air which is why it floats up. Have you see the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade with the huge helium filled balloons? They are huge balloons filled with helium and require many holders to keep them from floating away. Have you ever seen a blimp? Blimps are huge oval shaped balloon looking machines that are filled with helium and are often seen flying overhead at big sporting events. Blimps and zeppelins look similar but what they are filled with is what makes them different. Zeppelins were rigid flying airships that people used to travel in before airplanes were invented. They even traveled across the ocean! Zeppelins were rigid airships made off a metal frame covered with fabric. They did have engines to make them go but it used a gas which is lighter than air called hydrogen to make it able to fly.

The oldest Zeppelins had a much smaller area called a gondola car which was attached underneath of it and that is where the people rode. Since hydrogen gas can explode from heat they didn't heat the gondolas where the passengers were so passengers had to bundle up in many layers of clothes and often sat huddled in blankets almost like hot air balloon passengers ride today. After several years they made some changes and did move the passenger area up into the vessel instead of hanging underneath. The most famous zeppelin was called the Hindenburg. The Hindenburg was huge and people described it as a hotel in the sky. It could only travel about 80 miles per hour so it would take 4 or 5 days to travel from Europe to the United States. Since the trip would take so long it was set up more like one of today's cruise ships than today's airplanes. There were sleeping areas, dining areas, and big window viewing areas. It flew many times but the last time was in 1937 when it caught fire while trying to land in New Jersey. People then decided they were too dangerous and they stopped being used. This website will show you what it looked like both inside and outside. https://www.boredpanda.com/inside-hindenburg-zeppelin-luxury-interior-vintage-photographs/?utm_source=bing&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=organic

WHAT
SOUNDS
CAN Z
MAKE?

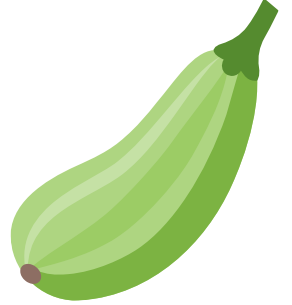
Sketch out how you would design a traveling airship for people to fly around the world in. Since airships would be huge and not able to land and let people explore like cruise ships do you will need to have lots of fun things to do and lots of windows for people to look out of. Use the same oval type design to draw your sketch. You will need to draw lines running across to make the different decks just like floors of a building. Will you have a bowling alley? A movie theater? Playgrounds? Computer labs? Don't forget rooms for people to sleep in and a kitchen to make all the food needed. Draw another sketch that shows how the outside is painted. Does it have a name? Is it colorful?



ZCONTINUED

Z

is for Zucchini.....Zucchini is a type of green summer squash. All squash are part of the pumpkin family and originated in south and Central America. But zucchini specifically was introduced to Americans by Italians in the 1920s. "Zucca" is an Italian word that means squash. One of the largest zucchini ever grown was over 6 feet long and weighed more than 65 pounds! The larger the zucchini grows the tougher the insides become. Farmers say the darker green the zucchini is the more nutrients are in it. There are lots of ways to cook zucchini. Some people like to make little zucchini pizza bites.



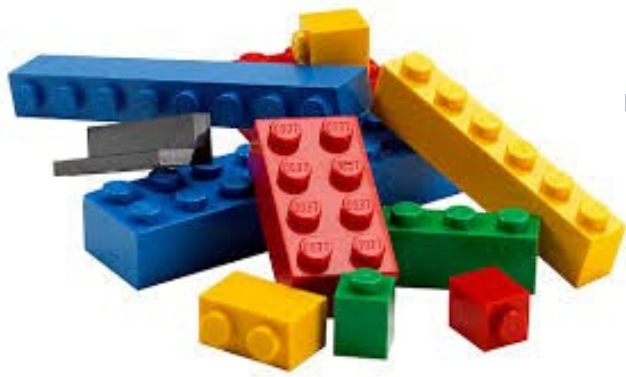
Here is a simple [recipe for the pizza bites](#). You will slice the zucchini into ¼ inch slices. Arrange slices on a lined baking sheet and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Broil in oven 4 inches from heat for 2 minutes just to get them crispy tender. Flip them and broil another 2 minutes. Top with tomato sauce, mozzarella cheese, and any toppings you normally like on pizza. Put back in oven and broil until cheese is melted (about another 2 minutes).

April 25th is National Zucchini Bread day. Here is a recipe you can use to make your own zucchini bread. You will need to grate zucchini until you have 2 cups worth. In a mixing bowl blend together 3 eggs, 2 cups sugar, 1 cup oil, and 3 teaspoons of vanilla. Add in 1 teaspoon baking soda, ¼ teaspoon baking powder, a pinch of salt, and 3 teaspoons cinnamon and blend together. Add shredded zucchini. Stir and then pour into sprayed/greased bread loaf pan. Bake at 350 degrees for about 45 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean. If you want to make muffins instead of bread pour into lined muffin tins and shorten cooking time to 20 minutes.



And finally.....Z is also for the end of the alphabet and in this case the end of our Trip Through the Alphabet pages. We have had lots of fun writing them up and hope you have had lots of fun reading them and trying out some of the activities!

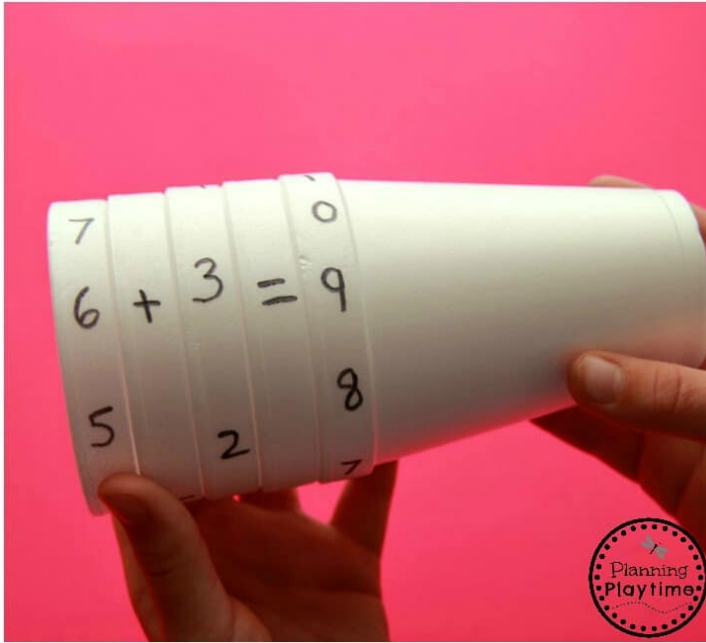




The Building Block Challenge

1. Oh no, the lions escaped from the zoo! Build a new den to keep them safe.
2. Your school is hosting a contest to create the best design for a new playground.
3. Create a map for Captain Hook to find his hidden treasure.
4. Construct a Time Machine so you can go back to the days of the dinosaurs.
5. The Royal Palace needs a makeover. Design a new Castle for the King and Queen.

MATH ACTIVITY FOR KIDS



Directions

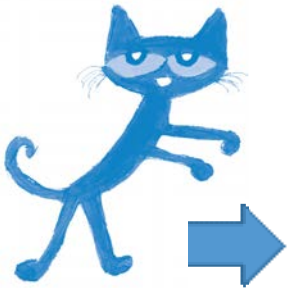
- You'll need to gather a few Styrofoam cups with a lip.
- You'll also need a marker to write with. Colored markers could be a lot of fun.
- Write the numbers 0-5 around the rim/lip of 2 cups and 0-10 on another.
- Write an addition and subtraction symbol on the edge of 1 cup, and an equals sign on another.
- Stack the cups. First, a 0-5 cup. Second, addition or subtraction symbols cup. Third, the other 0-5 cup. Fourth, the equals sign cup. Finally, the 0-10 cup.
- Spin the different cups to make true equations.

Learn the Cool Cat Boogie!

Follow the steps below to learn the Cool Cat Boogie with
Pete the Cat!

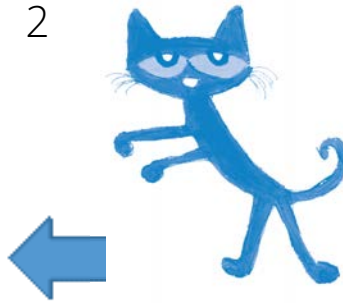
I want to boogie with you.
Grab your boogie shoes!

1



slide right...shake
your tail

2



slide left...shake
your tail

3



now clap, clap, clap
real smooth, you've
got the groove

4



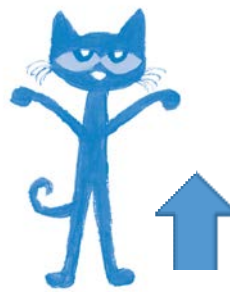
jump front

5



rock and roll

6



jump back

7



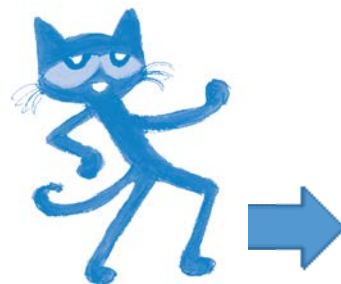
rock and roll

8



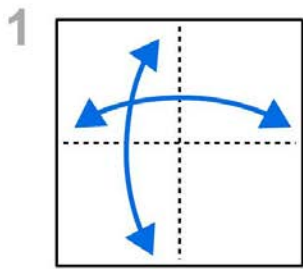
that's neat you
got the beat

9

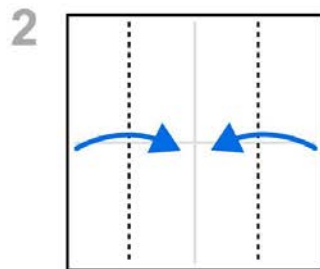


grab your air guitar
and rock it out like Pete

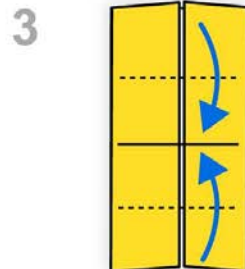
Origami Fish



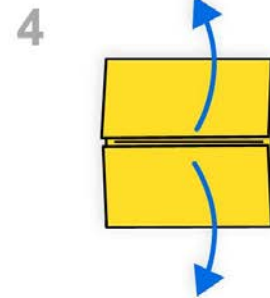
Fold the paper in half both ways and unfold.



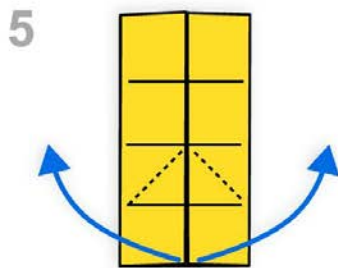
Fold the left and right to the centre.



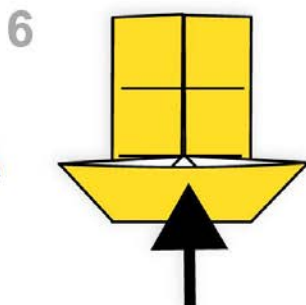
Fold the top and bottom edges to the centre.



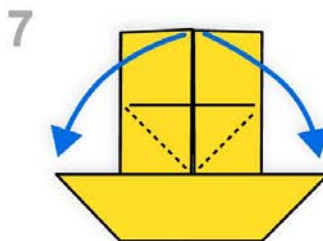
Unfold the top and bottom.



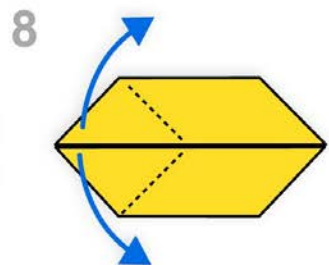
Pull the left & right centre points up and out to the sides.



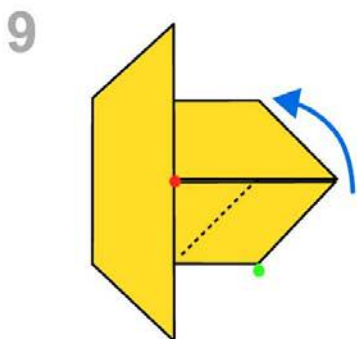
Squash the bottom fold into the centre.



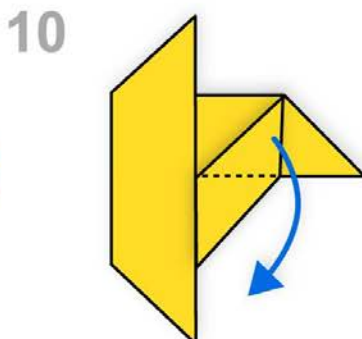
Repeat the last step on the top section.



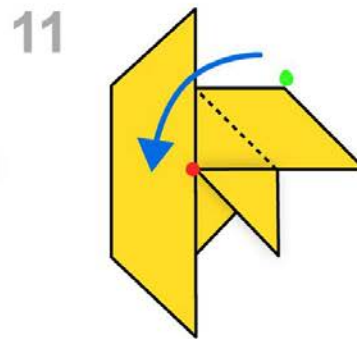
Fold the left points as shown.



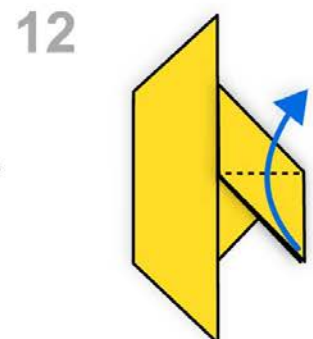
Fold the corner with a green dot up to the red dot.



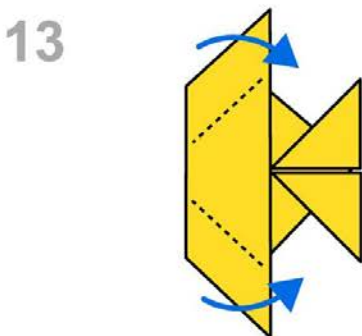
Fold the flap down from the centre.



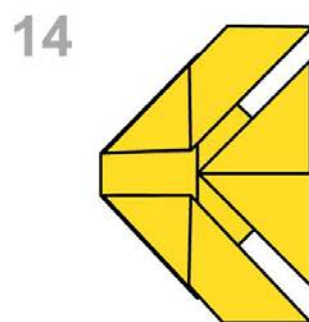
Fold the corner with a green dot down to the red dot.



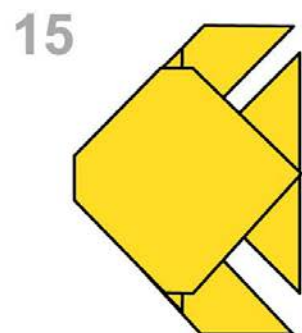
Fold the flap up from the centre.



Fold the top & bottom corners to the right as shown.



It should look something like this!



Turn the model to the other side.



Additional Learning Resources

THROUGH STELLARIUM WEB, KIDS CAN EXPLORE OVER 60,000 STARS, LOCATE PLANETS, AND WATCH SUNRISES AND SOLAR ECLIPSES:

[HTTPS://STELLARIUM-
WEB.ORG/](https://stellarium-web.org/)

DYSON STEM CHALLENGE CARDS:

[HTTPS://WWW.JAMESDYSONFOUN
DATION.CO.UK/RESOURCES/CHALL
ENG-CARDS.HTML](https://www.jamesdysonfoundation.co.uk/resources/challenge-cards.html)

**TOP 20 INDOOR ACTIVITIES TO
GET KIDS UP AND MOVING:**

[HTTPS://WWW.THEGENIUSOFPLAY.
ORG/GENIUS/EXPERT-
ADVICE/ARTICLES/TOP-20-
INDOOR-ACTIVITIES-TO-GET-KIDS-
UP-AND-
MOVING.ASPX#.XQGPH8HKJIV](https://www.thegeniusofplay.org/genius/expert-advice/articles/top-20-indoor-activities-to-get-kids-up-and-moving.aspx#.XQGPH8HKJIV)