

Grocery List

Language, Literacy, and Communication



Level: Preschool

Cost: None

Mess factor: None

Suggested room in the house: Kitchen



Grocery shopping with young children can be a challenge oftentimes because they get bored, but here is an activity that will keep children engaged before, during and after the trip!

Your child will experience:

- Making choices
- Reading
- Writing



Materials:

- Something for the children to write with
- A large piece of paper

Beginning:

Explain to children that it is time to get ready to go grocery shopping, but that first you need their help to remember everything you need to buy! Ask them to make a list of the things you need. Set your child up for success by using these strategies:

- Ask them to write down the name of something that they can copy the words from. If you have Ritz crackers on a low shelf they can get to, then ask them to copy that word onto their list.
- If the word *banana* is too long to write or sound out, let children draw a picture of it with a single "b."
- Tear the lid off a cereal box and tape it to the shopping list.
- Write a word on a separate piece of paper and then let children copy.



Finally, let children choose one healthy food item they would like to request and have them add it to the list!



Middle:

While you are shopping, have children cross off the items from the list as the items go into the cart. You can let children get the item off the shelf or you can, if they can't reach.

End:

When you get home, have children put away the items on their list.

Cleanup:

Gather the plastic or paper bags to recycle the next time you go to the store!

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Younger children:

- Making a list will most likely be too difficult for toddlers. Give younger children a piece of paper to draw on as you sit at a table and make out your shopping list.
- Have children count the items as you put them on the belt and see how high they can go!
- Let children carry something for a while in the store, like their own package of diaper wipes or diapers.
- Talk about each food as you put it into the cart. Describe how it tastes or feels. Talk about what food group it goes into.



Older children:

- Hang a piece of paper low on the refrigerator so children can add something to the list when it runs out or if they would like to request an item.
- Have children hunt through coupons and match them to what is on the list.
- Have children count the items as you put them on the belt and see how high they can go!
- Start teaching children about comparing prices. Show them how the generic version costs less than the name brand.



Hints:

- Most people are pretty busy these days, but if you can schedule a time to shop when you are not hungry and have a little extra time, it can really reduce frustration for you and your child. When you have a little extra time, you don't have to feel rushed and can make the experience as enjoyable and educational as possible!



More!

- A store bought Doodle Pro works well for young children to try writing or drawing while they sit in the grocery cart.
- When you get to the produce aisle, let the children count the pieces of fruit and vegetables you put in each bag.
- Show children how to use the scale to weigh the food items.
- Label the colors of the fruit and vegetables as you select them by saying something like "I am getting two RED apples."



Special Needs Accommodations:

- If children's special needs are so complicated that a grocery shopping trip is not possible, set up a mock store or restaurant in your own home. Maybe the children could buy their food from you at lunchtime!
- Use any of the adaptations listed under the "Younger Child" section.
- Videotape sections of your trip and replay these for children once you get back home.