

Some ideas for SVPACT volunteer mentors

You and your mentees have met, started to get acquainted, and talked in general terms about who you are and what you might do during your mentoring partnership. Now what?

The most important thing to remember is that mentoring isn't another meeting or program; it's about building a relationship.

Effective mentoring is your personal involvement in helping mentees develop and become all they can be. Time spent doing things together—a series of “mentoring moments”—is what will build your relationships and change lives. “Layering” your times and conversations is less intimidating to young people than is a Big Meeting.

Mentors can best support children's academic development by having fun learning activities ready to use:- to engage in if the child needs a change in academic/tutoring activities, if there is extra time available, or when child is having a tough time concentrating. The following activities are transportable, literacy-based, and learning-rich. They require minimal materials and, best of all, **they're fun!**

Use these activities whenever you think you need them.

Instead of jumping into schoolwork right away, take some time to break the ice, or reward hard work with a game at the end of a session. These activities will allow you to learn a little bit about the child and get comfortable with one another.

Conversation Starters

Ask open-ended questions to put the child at ease and to get to know each other a bit.

Some openers might include:

*I bet your teacher reads stories to your class. One of my favourites is **The Cat in the Hat**. What are some of your favourite stories?;* or

I love animals. My favourite is the cheetah because it can run very fast. Which animals do you like? Or

I know lots of kids watch television. Can you tell me about some TV shows that you like to watch?

NOTE: Remember that a conversation is an exchange. Offer your ideas but focus most on what the child says.

The goal is to encourage the child to speak. A good way to do this is to say, '**That's interesting—tell me more.**'

When you meet the child again show them that you have listened to what they said by asking a question about what you discussed last week.

Getting to Know You Game

Supplies: • Notepad • Pens or pencils

Directions: On a piece of paper, have each person (including yourself) do the following:

1. Write an alliterative nickname for yourself (i.e., Adventurous Andrew) in the middle of the page.
2. Write something that is important to you in the upper right-hand corner of the page.
3. Write something you want to learn in the top left-hand corner of the page.
4. Write something you are good at doing in the bottom right-hand corner of the page.
5. Write the name of your favourite food in the bottom left-hand corner of the page.
6. Share answers with each other.



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Meaningful Conversations

Open-ended questions move conversations beyond facts and information into feelings, attitudes and beliefs. Ask your child to take their time and give reasons to support their answers. Show that you are actively listening by reflecting back what they have said and gently prompting them to tell you more.

Would you rather.....? is a game that builds creative thinking and conversation skills. Take turns to come up with questions such as: Would you rather have teeth made of marshmallow or hands made of cardboard? Ask the child to justify their answers.

Some questions for starters:

If you could send a text message to any famous person and be sure they'd read and answer your text, who would you write to and what would you say?

Would you rather travel back in time or into the future?
How do you know that when you see "green" and I see "green", they are the same colour "green"?

What is a person? If dolphins could talk to us would they also be people?

Echo Reading

1. Select a story to read.
2. Read one page or one sentence at a time. Then have your mentee echo read the same sentence or page aloud.
3. Engage the student in a conversation about what you have read.

Alphabet Shopping is a game to help you build your child's memory skills.

Player's take turns in adding new items to the list after repeating the whole list. The list of items are in alphabetical order.

Eg. Me: I went to the shops and bought an apple

Student 1: I went to the shops and bought an apple and a **banana**.

Student 2 I went to the shops and bought an **apple** and a **banana** and a **cake**

The game continues until an error is made reciting the list.

For older children encourage them to come up with wacky and unusual items, eg African avocado, a Cobra, a Diamond etc..

Maths activity using dice.

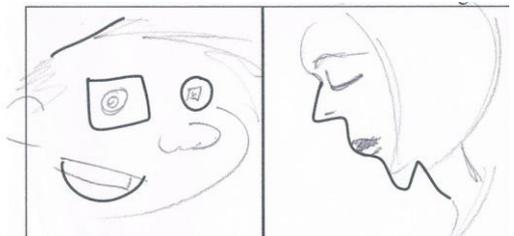
You need 4 or 6 dice for this game

Roll two dice to make a number, eg a 6 and a 5 were rolled. $6 \times 5 = 30$ so 30 is the target number.

Now take it in turn rolling the other dice and see if you can use the numbers shown to make the target number. You can add, subtract, multiply or divide.

Mr Squiggle Drawing Fun

Take a notebook with you. On a few pages have a squiggle drawn. Show the child how you can turn a squiggle into a picture. Then it is their turn. After a few turns you might like to take it in turn to draw squiggles for one another. Then turn them into pictures.



Traveller's Alphabet

- using the letters of the alphabet to build sentences about travel. It requires players to know a little bit about geography and also extends their vocabulary.

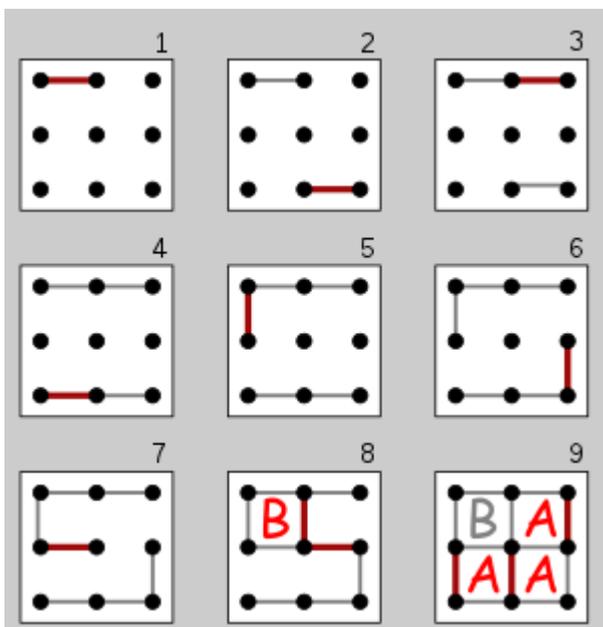
Each player must create a sentence that begins with the phrase "I'm going to" followed by the **name of a place, then a verb, then an adjective and a noun – all starting with the same letter of the alphabet.**

For example I am going to Alaska to adopt an African antelope.

The next player might say.....I'm going to Brazil to buy battered bananas.

An atlas, an enlarged map or access to a computer could assist students who are not familiar with the names of many places.

The game continues until the players run out of ideas.



BOXES

Players draw a square grid of 16 dots with four rows, each containing four dots. Players now take turns drawing lines connecting any two dots that are next to each other. The lines must be either horizontal or vertical (no diagonals). Each player can draw only one line per turn – at the outset. As the lines accumulate, each player tries to be the one who can close up a four dot box by drawing the fourth line. When a player completes a box, she claims that box with her initial and then draws another line. She can continue with her turn for as long as she can keep completing boxes. Then it is the other players turn.

Eventually all the boxes have been completed and all the dots are connected.

The player with the most boxes containing their initials is the winner.

The Snake

The snake is created on a dot grid just like the one used in **Boxes**. **The object here is just the opposite. – players must avoid closing the boxes at all costs.**

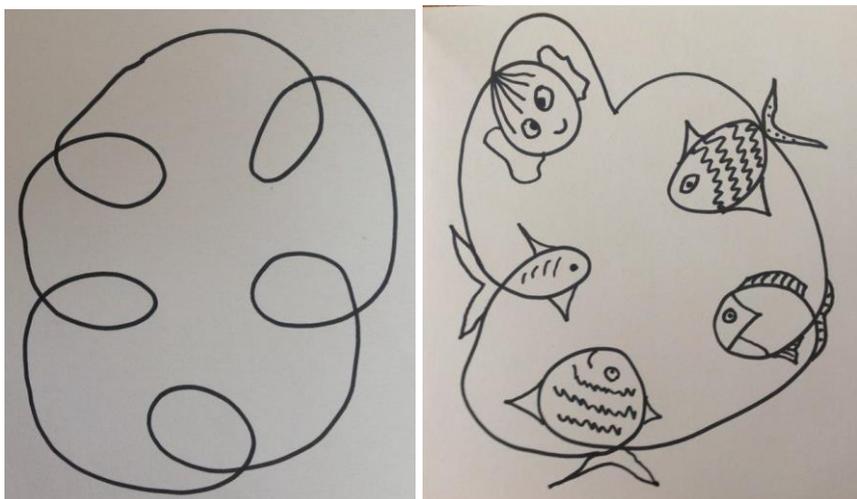
Make a grid of 100 dots by drawing ten rows containing ten dots each.

The first player connects any two dots with a line between them. The next player must connect the end of the first line to another dot. The lines must be either horizontal or vertical (**no diagonals**). Players continue extending the line drawing a 'snake' which slithers across the grid. The line must be continuous, with no branches or crossing over from one part of the snake to another. Players must try to avoid connecting either end of the snake to itself. The first person who can't connect the snake's tail to an adjacent dot – and instead has to make the snake 'bite' its own tail loses the game.

Some fun drawing games – all you need is a pen or pencil and some blank paper

Fish loops

Use a pen or pencil to draw a big, loopy closed shape around the perimeter of your page. I have drawn an example below:



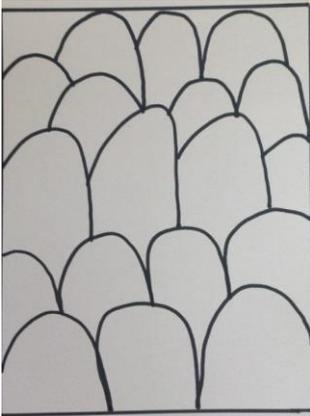
Using your creativity turn the loops into fish.

In the egg box

1. On your piece of blank paper rule up a square or a rectangle.
2. Then fill the box with 'egg shapes', as shown in the example below.

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3. Draw a face on each egg in the box.

This is a good starting point for a conversation about emotions. Which of the eggs are 'happy?' What are some of the other emotions shown?



Totem Poles



TOTEM POLES

Each person has a blank piece of paper. Without showing each other what you are doing, draw a face or upper body at the bottom of your piece of paper.

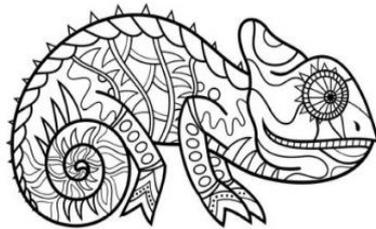
Carefully fold the page so that only the edge of your drawing can be seen. Then swap pieces of paper with another player.

The next player then draws another head or upper body, connecting with the edge of the previous drawing.

Once again fold the paper to hide the image but just show the edges.

Keep drawing and folding until the page is full.

Unfold the paper and see what a fabulous creature you have created!



Colouring In

You can easily download pictures from the internet that children might like to colour. Bring a box of coloured pencils with you.

Great sites to get images are:

[Coloring pages for kids](https://www.coloring.ws/coloring.html) (<https://www.coloring.ws/coloring.html>)

[Just Color](https://www.justcolor.net/kids/) (<https://www.justcolor.net/kids/>)

[Coloring Pages for Kids · Download and Print for Free ...](http://www.essentialkids.com.au/activities/colouring-pages) (www.essentialkids.com.au/activities/colouring-pages)

[Crayola Colouring pages](http://www.crayola.com.au/free-coloring-pages/) (<http://www.crayola.com.au/free-coloring-pages/>)