

Hands-On Homeschooling Session with Liesl

Why hands-on homeschool activities? They are... engaging, captivating, exciting, creative, motivating, interesting, memorable, fun... and we'd love to have the kids demanding more!

Hands-On Activity Ideas

1) **Songs** such as *Rock the Capitals*, *South America*, *USA Presidents Song*, *50 States that Rhyme Song* and this works effectively in foreign languages too (*Grün, grün, grün sind alle meine Kleider* in German)

2) **Scavenger Hunts:** You can hide math facts, letters, sight words, vocabulary words, foreign language words and more! Plus, (without anyone knowing) you can put a sticker under one dinner plate, have everyone choose a plate and have everyone check their plate mid-meal. Everyone says something meaningful & nice about the person who got the sticker... just to make them feel good!

3) **Spelling Activities:** sorting mats, cereal box sorting, game boards, bingo games

4) **Math Activities:** throw a sponge at the math fact, math cups (either face down or face up), hopscotch math, jump on math facts, math fact chalk games, math fact relay races (outdoors), math races (on paper with no winner), online math games, math monster (i.e. freeze tag with math facts!). Skip Counting Songs & hand-clapping game, skip counting mazes, skip counting card games

5) **Geography Activities:** free hand map drawing (for older kids), pin maps, clay maps, cookie maps – with frosting, country studies (animals, food, plants, money, lapbooks, postcard exchange), dioramas (of habitats), average rainfall, world landmarks, geography games (like 10 days in Europe or 10 Days in Africa)

6) **Using Read Aloud Time:** crafts, coloring, cutting – often while read a novel together, the kids would be doing something else. This always worked well in our family!

7) **Science:** There are so many hands-on things you can do with science. In the slides we talked about Natural Disasters (volcano, tsunami); weather; fun chemistry experiments; biology (there are tons of topics you can cover with younger kids like Living-NonLiving, vertebrates-invertebrates, 5 animal groups, life cycles, nocturnal-diurnal animals and more!); astronomy (moon's phases, the solar system)... plus there are lots of fun things you can do with engineering (STEM) – like building & testing with different materials.

Final thoughts:

Studies show that physical exercise really fires up the brain helps kids to learn better!

If you can work an air of mystery about the activity, that adds to the excitement (and enjoyment!). You can use that sense of anticipation to your advantage... i.e. I can't wait until we're done with math and writing so we can do this exciting activity!

Hands-On Homeschooling - What else can you do?!

plays, drama, re-enactments – Recreate a scene from a novel or a historical event

simulations – have students step back in time and “be” a different person

role play – Create role-cards each containing a description of a character to play during the activity. Provide general parameters of how the character would react. This is effective in history and foreign language lessons

conduct fake interviews — have students play a role and interview them (news style). Ask probing questions.

set the scene – Kim Bearden (author of *Crash Course: The Life Lessons My Students Taught Me* does a great job incorporating this technique effectively into her classroom — setting up an operating table to “operate” on sentences. History teachers could transform their classrooms into Ancient Egypt or demonstrate trench warfare (with chairs turned upside down for the barbed wire). For a foreign language class, you could set up a post office or spend the day at the beach.

debates – take a side and argue it well, even if you don’t actually agree

music – songs and rhythm – People remember a lot from songs they sing. In our homeschool, we have sung the U.S. Presidents Song and the 50 States Song... about the Human Body Systems... and are currently singing songs in German to help us remember the parts of the body, clothing & colors, etc.

rhyme, chants

time for personal reflection – When people relate what they are learning to what they know, they go a step further in the learning process, connect and relate to the material better. Create opportunities for students to empathize with others and connect emotionally with the material (in a novel, back in history) Help the students to capture the moment or feeling of that situation/event/period.

posters, brochures, portfolio projects – Writing projects help students synthesize the material and put it into their own words.

create cartoons about the information at hand

create multimedia presentations – blog, video, slides, power point presentations

create interactive notebooks and lapbooks

research projects

art projects - dioramas, drawings, paintings, sculpture that relate to the subject

hands-on geography maps, relief maps, pin maps

Montessori cards

science experiments

online games



There are some additional resources at
homeschoolden.com/conference

If you have any questions after the
conference, feel free to email me!

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