

Playing

Play is one of the best ways for children to learn language and literacy skills. Play helps children think symbolically, for example, a ruler becomes a magic wand. Through play, children realize that one thing can stand for another. This also helps children understand that written words stand for real objects and experiences.

Dramatic play helps children develop narrative skills as they make up a story about what they're doing. This helps them understand that stories happen in an order: first, next, and last.

Make believe also gives children a chance to act out real-life situations, work through worries and fears, and use their imagination to solve problems.

Encourage your child to create stories by imagining that he or she is in another place or pretending to be someone else. Give your child simple props such as a box or old clothes to use as costumes. Provide plenty of opportunities for your child to engage in imaginative play.

Information from Every Child Ready to Read, a project of the Association for Library Service to Children and the Public Library Association, divisions of the American Library Association.

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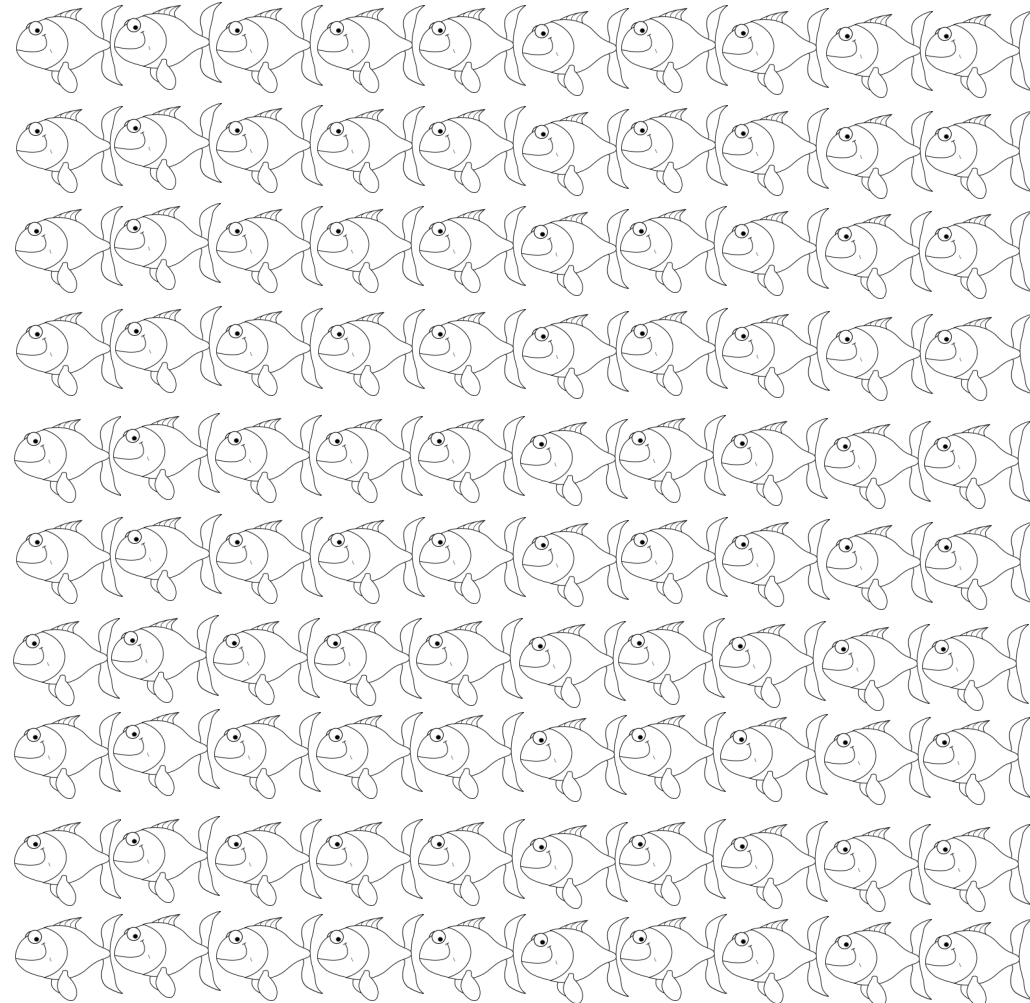
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