

# GOOFY SENTENCES

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What would your child think if you asked him to read this sentence?

An orange barked to get strong.

## MATERIALS

index cards  
pen  
rubber bands  
storage box

He'd probably think it was pretty funny. What would he think of an activity that consisted of constructing and reading dozens of such crazy sentences? If you guess he'd think it a great idea, then keep reading.

On page 66 there are twenty sentence beginnings, twenty sentence middles, and twenty sentence endings. Start by copying the sentence beginnings on index cards (you can use half or quarter cards for this purpose). Mix up the cards. Then keep them together with a rubber band. Copy the sentence middles, mix them up, and bind them, too. Do the same thing with the sentence endings. Now you have three piles of cards.

When you're ready to play, place the cards—beginnings, middles, and endings—in front of the child. Explain that in this game he'll get to create and read goofy sentences. All he has to do is pick three cards—one from each pile—put them together, and read the results. Sometimes these parts fit together sensibly:

Mom	was in a hurry	to go to work.
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More often they don't:

Mom	lives in a cave	with milk.
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or

Mom	flies quickly	with milk.
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Sometimes the fit is not at all fitting:

Mom lives in a cave to his nest.

or

The brown chair was there to the store.

These nonsentences don't ruin the game. Just shrug them off. "Boy, that doesn't make sense at all. It's not even a sentence."

When you and your child have finished goofing off for the day, wrap up the sentence parts in their rubber bands and store them for another time. These twenty beginnings, twenty middles, and twenty endings allow a child to create 8,000 different sentence combinations. That should keep him giggling for a while. While he giggles he'll get lots of practice reading words and phrases. Feel free to add your own sentence parts. Your child might have some good ideas, too. Just combine new cards with the originals and see what goofy sentences pop up.

By the way, this game also gives a child an early taste for sentence structure and grammar. Later in his school work he'll learn about sentences in a more exacting way, but this is a nice beginning.

**BEGINNINGS****MIDDLES****ENDINGS**

The little boy

rode a bicycle

to the store.

Dad

ran from the house

to catch a bus.

Mom

was in a hurry

to go to work.

My teacher

waited

to get my work.

The horse

ran through the woods

to get to the ranch.

My cat

wanted

to catch a mouse.

The dog

barked

to scare a stranger.

The brown chair

was there

so I could sit down.

The big lion

slept in the woods

while I ran away.

A baby elephant

looked for his mom

in the jungle.

My friend

ate apples

to get strong.

An orange

grows

in the sun.

The cat

cleans himself

by licking.

The bear

lives in a cave

to keep warm.

The boat

sails down the river

without stopping.

The woman

opens the door

to the house.

The man

catches fish

in the river.

The sofa

is on the floor

by the window.

My cup

is filled

with milk.

The bird

flies quickly

to his nest.