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The Absolute Best Play Days: From Airplanes to Zoos (and Everything in Between!)

Pamela Waterman
Sourcebooks (March 1999)
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Even the most creatively-challenged parent or caregiver will have an easy time occupying the children with this abundant and detailed collection of activities for children aged two to seven.
Waterman, a mother of three, arranges the activities into fifty-two “Theme Days,” one for each week of the year. Children explore the themes through craft projects, indoor and outdoor activities, music, books and videos. Themes are varied and interesting, and include dinosaurs, pirates, kitchen fun, rain, post office, nursery rhymes, inventions, farmlife and detectives. For each theme, Waterman gives suggestions for tailoring the activities to appeal to children of multiple ages. On “camping” day, for example, toddlers can play in the “tent” and listen to stories while older children find their way around the backyard with a compass.

Waterman provides detailed instructions for all crafts and activities. Each “theme” also includes a list of related age-appropriate books and videos, and a list of arts and crafts materials needed for the activities. She also provides a master list of supplies used through the book along with columns for checking off what is already on hand and what needs to be acquired (most supplies are common household items). Appendices are extremely useful and include lists of mail-order catalogs for toys, crafts, supplies, and videos, a list of books and Internet websites.

This book is well-organized and easy to use. Activities are simple but inventive and do not require expensive purchases or exceptional creative talent.
SHARON FLESHER (April 15, 1999)

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