

TWL Summer Challenge - The Art of Astonishment

The challenge for the summer of 2015 is to find ample ways to astonish your children. Here is a list of ideas to stimulate your children's imaginations. Most of the ideas will ask you to invest your time rather than your money. All will give you a shot at returning to your childhood and a time when life was easier. Enjoy your kids' break from school.

1. Help your children be keen observers. Sit with them and look at what is in front of you. Ask them to correctly identify something that you are looking as you give them clues. (You might remember this as the *20 questions game*.)
2. **Create a story together. Give them the start of the story and have them finish it. Then let them start the story.**
3. Read a novel together.
4. **Plant a garden.**
5. Instead of turning on the TV, play music for everyone to hear.
6. **Eat dinner by candlelight.**
7. Engage your children in imaginary play by asking them questions that begin with, "Imagine what it would be like to..." Imaginary ideas might include walking on the moon, walking on the ocean floor, meet the Pope, feed a giraffe, and (get the idea?)
8. **Wake your children up before the dawn breaks and watch the full sun rise.**
9. Sit outside and watch the full sunset (from the time it sets until it is pitch black).
10. **Give your children a camera and ask them to record their day.**
11. Take a walk in the woods in complete silence. What did you hear?
12. **Track the position of the sun every Monday of the summer. Where did it move from to?**
13. Take a trip to a place you have been to several times and determine what has changed since your last visit.
14. **Travel along a river or stream. Where does the water come from? Where does it go?**
15. Look at the stars during the crescent moon. How many constellations can you identify?
16. **Visit a farm and compare and contrast all animals. What do they eat? How do they live? What do they do each day? How do they sleep?**
17. Make a bonfire and sit and watch it.
18. **Take a trip to a place you have never been to that is within 2 miles of your home.**
19. Bring out pictures of you when you were a child. Tell your stories.
20. **Ask your kids to find a way to make you say, "Wow! That was amazing!"**
21. Find a high hill and look out to the farthest point. Then drive to that far point. What was the distance between the two?
22. **Using Google earth, find a place on the planet that you would really like to visit. How would you get there?**
23. Let your children cook for the family (and clean up!)
24. **Sit outside and watch a rainstorm approach.**
25. Trace your family's history. How far back can you go?
26. **What can you come up with? Let your imagination run wild.**

