

Make a Preschool Diploma Frame

Many preschool and early childhood education centers give young students a "diploma" upon finishing up their Pre-K learning. Help your preschooler celebrate his big day by crafting a handmade diploma frame. You two can work through this fun project together, sharing some special bonding time and improving his ability to follow directions, too. Plus, this entertaining project results in a sparkly, framed keepsake that highlights his early scholastic accomplishments!

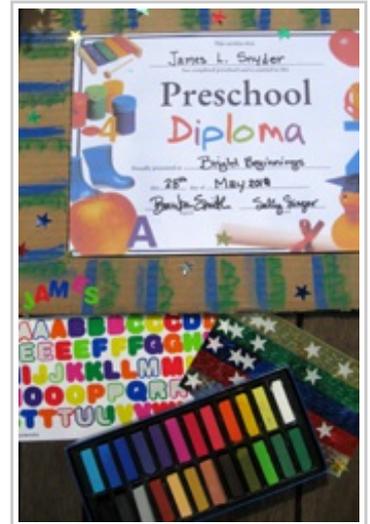
Note: If your child's preschool does not hand out diplomas, you can easily make one of your own! Type a special graduation message in a word processor, and add in colorful graphics.

What You Need:

- Large piece of cardboard (try reusing a side of a packing or moving box)
- Clear drying, non-toxic glue
- Ruler
- Tempera paints
- Paint brush
- Markers or crayons
- Construction paper
- Sequins
- Craft foam
- Foam shapes, numbers, or letters (optional)

What You Do:

1. Cut the cardboard so that it's at least four inches longer on each side than the diploma. Have your child use a ruler to help you measure before doing the cutting.
2. Help him place the diploma (or a copy of it) in the middle of the cardboard, and trace the shape with a crayon or marker. Remove the diploma, and set it aside.
3. Ask him to make an "X" in the middle of the cardboard, in the space where the diploma was traced. This will remain blank until the diploma is added. Your child will only be adding to the area of the frame that's around the border.
4. Have a discussion about what a repeating pattern is. Explain that a pattern can repeat in shapes, colors, lines, or any other images. Ask him to choose a simple pattern, such as colored stripes or polka dots. Help him to paint his special pattern onto the frame space. To avoid messing up, he may choose to first draw shapes or stripes with a marker, and then paint with alternating colors. He can either repeat the same pattern across all four sides of the frame, or choose a different one for each side.
5. Invite him to add images of favorite things, or concepts he learned during preschool. This can include letters, numbers, shapes, animals, and more. There are a few different options for this step: He can draw onto cut pieces of construction paper or craft foam with markers, and then glue it to the frame collage style. Or, he can use pre-made craft foam shapes and use them to create a collage. Finally, he can also choose to paint directly onto the surface.
6. Ask him if he would like his frame to sparkle. He can create a sparkling effect by gluing sequins onto the frame. Invite him to either add these to the pattern, or make abstract shapes and groupings. Another option is to make a glue line across the outside edge of the cardboard and



around the line that was traced around the diploma, and then add a border of sequins in many different colors.

7. Set aside to dry.

After the frame has dried, ask your child to place a few dabs of glue onto the x'd out area. Firmly press the diploma into place, and proudly display!

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