

PANCAKES PLAYDATE

CONNECTING GENERATIONS THROUGH PLAY

HOW TO BUILD A PLAYDATE BOX



Choose one picture book.



Choose one activity.



Choose one question.

Gather supplies in advance for instant fun with the grandkids.

Play together in person or via Zoom.



How It Works

Develop relationships virtually or in person.

The Pancake Playdate Box is a themed box of fun designed to get you and a child you love playing together.

Whether you are creating pancake art or reading about pancake parties in far-away Kenya, you'll be making sweet memories that bring you closer together. We've done the heavy lifting to help you find pancake-themed children's books and activities. All you need to do is gather simple ingredients and supplies that are age-appropriate for your child or grandchild—then let the fun begin!

You'll be developing curiosity, creativity, and connection as you play.

Pancakes are more than just breakfast—they're a way to bring joy and laughter to the table. So, we'll ease into the fun by exploring the magic of flipping, stacking, decorating, and eating pancakes in new and exciting ways! 🥞✨

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CELEBRATE NATIONAL PANCAKE DAY MARCH 4, 2025

Eat Pancakes in the Middle of the Day

Think back to your own childhood and imagine what it might have felt like to have a grownup you loved “kidnap” you out of bed, or pick you up from school in the middle of the day to go on a special outing, totally unannounced.

Next, plan a trip to a local pancake house for a free “short stack” on March 4th, National Pancake Day. Just you, pancakes, and time to talk. That’s a recipe for a great day with a child!



Make Pancakes from Scratch

Pancakes are simple to make, typically from ingredients you already have on hand at home.

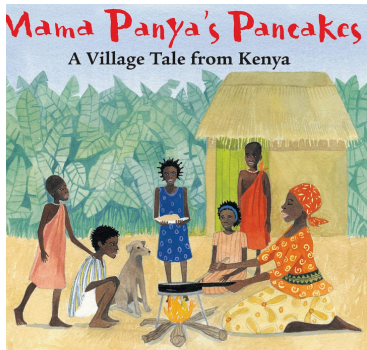
Learning how to stir up a batch together, then practicing the technique of flipping them over can be a lot of fun for an older child.

Keep in mind that this is an experience with a new skill, and it might take a little time to master the ability. A mess is OK. Mistakes are part of the process.

You’ll find hundreds of pancake recipes online, together with great advice for how to make them turn out every time. This simple project can be a great opportunity to helping a child develop confidence and a new skill.

PANCAKE PICTURE BOOKS

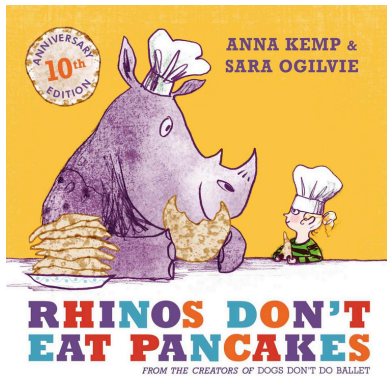
I've chosen several fun books you might want to read with your playdate buddy. Pick one that works best for you!



Mama Panya's Pancakes by Mary and Rich Chamberlin

(Ages 3-8) On market day, Mama Panya's son Adika invites everyone he sees to a pancake dinner. How will Mama Panya ever feed them all?

[FIND IT HERE](#)



Rhinos Don't Eat Pancakes by Anna Kemp and Sara Ogilvie

(Ages 4-8) Daisy's parents are "a million miles away" and Daisy can't get their attention long enough to warn them that there is a purple rhinoceros eating all of the pancakes in the kitchen.

[FIND IT HERE](#)



Once Upon a Pancake by Rick Bengert

(Ages 6-8) This fun fill-in-the-blank book is designed to help children develop their storytelling ability. The author has provided the beginning of a story, and you fill in all of the details together.

[FIND IT HERE](#)

MAKE PANCAKE ART



Pancake Art Basics:

Pancake Art is a favorite Playdate at my house on lazy weekend mornings when the grandkids visit. I consider this a craft project, not a meal plan. Pancake Art is edible, but it takes time and some patience to create.

Just fill plastic squeeze bottles with different colors of pancake mix, then "design" on a cold pancake griddle.

We always start out by watching a couple of [YouTube pancake artists](#) creating more intricate designs. This helps children understand the process, including drawing outlines first, then adding successive layers of color.

Try It!

Supplies You'll Need For Pancake Art:

- A non-stick griddle, if possible, or a non-stick pan if you don't have a griddle
- Pancake mix (any brand should work well)
- Food coloring ([gel coloring](#) gives you the most vibrant color)
- [Squeeze bottles](#) for piping the pancake mix onto the griddle
- A large pancake spatula

RESOURCES GALLERY



Make Lion Pancakes

Ages: 3-10 years

Gather up some mandarin oranges, a halved strawberry, whipped cream in a can, chocolate candies for the eyes, and fruit leather or pretzels for the whiskers.

[RECIPE](#)



SHORT STACK: A Pancake Story by Me

Ages: 2-7 years
Free Download

This fill-in-the-blank book will give your child some experience writing a book of their own. What is the craziest thing you would put on a pancake?

[FREEBIE](#)



Pancake Flip Game

Ages: 2-6 years
Free Download

Use a pancake flipper to flip over the cards that suggest fun “actions” you and your teammates can try.

[FREEBIE](#)



Emoji Pancake Griddle

\$29.99

Make your mornings fun and magical with this cute pancake maker. My grandkids request them every visit!

[PURCHASE](#)



Pancake Art Squeeze Bottles

(Amazon)

\$10.99 for 6 bottles

Squeeze bottles with fine tips for creating Pancake Art.

[PURCHASE](#)



Pancake Pile-Up Game

Ages: 4+
\$17.99

Flip an order card and race to the first pancake shown, use the spatula to place it on your plate, race back. A fun relay game for preschoolers.

[PURCHASE](#)

VALUES TO HAND DOWN

Empathy and Turn-Taking



Did you know that child psychologists recommend the concept of "turn-taking" instead of "sharing" to help children learn empathy and generosity?

Sharing and turn-taking sound like the same thing, but they aren't. Researchers tell us that for very young children (ages 2-4) the complicated give-and-take involved in collaborating around a common goal (sharing) isn't something toddlers' brains are developed enough to do.

And if you think about it, being forced to "share" something with someone else against your will isn't really a teaching moment at all. It's more like coercion. If you are a grandparent who often encouraged your own children to "share," it may be helpful to look at some of the most recent research on the benefits of teaching turn-taking instead. I have had to change my vocabulary and my approach as I've learned that there is a better way than the one I used as a parent.

I love the book, ***Mama Panya's Pancakes*** because it teaches the concept of sharing and generosity in such a simple, approachable way. Mama Panya is worried about running out of her meager supplies, but her son, Adika understands that when everyone collaborates around a common goal of a shared meal, magically, there's plenty for everyone!

Turn-taking and generosity are great tools to add to your arsenal of values to pass on as you play intentionally with a child.

CONNECTION QUESTION



What is your favorite thing to eat for breakfast?



Each month, I include a "connection question" or two that you can ask one another. Sharing these "family stories" will help create bridges of connection between you and your grandchild. Take turns answering any of these questions, and when possible, record or write down the answers!

More Questions to Consider:

- What is the first thing you ever cooked by yourself?
- Have you ever had a time when you had to take turns with someone to get an important job done?
- What is something really generous that someone else did for you? How do you feel about that person now?



How to Do This Remotely:

If you are meeting remotely with your grandchild, hit "record" to record these conversations and then use a transcribing application such as temi.com or otter.ai to preserve the answers to these questions. Save them in a binder or journal and add photos if you have them.

A NOTE FROM YOUR VIRTUAL GRANDMAS

You have just discovered an opportunity to create your own Box of Love. Just assemble your own supplies and ship them to a child you want to play with. Or, keep the box on hand for readymade fun when the grandkids visit. We call this a Playdatebox!

Our vision is that you will use the contents of this newsletter to help you connect with a child you love, regardless of distance! Many Playdatebox activities are designed so that they can also be enjoyed "remotely" via videoconferencing software like Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Just assemble supplies on both sides of the call so that you can play "together."

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