Read Together: Start by reading *Penguinaut!* by Marcie Colleen and Emma Yarlett with your early learner. This is a story about perseverance, friendship and so much more. The exciting and colorful illustrations are engaging to little ones and help tell the story. As you read it together, invite your child to make connections to what's happening by observing the illustrations. Ask open-ended questions along the way like “What do you see?”, “What do you think is happening here?” and “What makes you say that?” Encourage them to help you tell the story using the pictures as clues to its meaning. You can even invent new dialogue between the characters! Then, get ready to create art inspired by the ideas of the story!

Gather Materials Together: Using the materials available, you and your early learner will design and build a rocket together! Begin by inviting your early learner to observe the materials, touch them and to consider their possible uses. Then, suggest to your child a starting point for their rocket – the base. Encourage them to build on top of a larger material such as a cup or tube – or both! If they have other ideas, allow them to lead the way and to try out different possibilities.
Build the Rocket: Continue to build the rocket with your early learner and support them with their ideas along the way. Assist them in assembling and also consider asking them questions to encourage their exploration. For example, ask them, “What else does our rocket need?” and “How should we make that?” Use the illustrations of Orville’s rocket as inspiration! Test out different materials and methods for putting pieces together and continue to ask questions.

Talk About the Story: While constructing the rocket together, talk about the story Penguinaut! and help your early learner to make connections between it and the activity. Encourage them to consider how they might use markers, crayons or stickers to add special details. Let your early learner decide when the project is complete.

Play with the Rocket: Once done assembling your rocket, play with it together – maybe a gentle rocket launch with pillows or outside on the grass. Also encourage your early learner to share their design with others. Encourage them to talk about the discoveries they made while building their rocket.
Early learners (3 – 5) enjoy storytelling and related activities like this one that allow them to connect with what they've heard and seen and to get creative at the same time. This activity is also a way for early learners to explore materials and to test outcomes. To further increase the learning opportunities, talk about the story you read while creating your Recycled Rocket together and also consider exploring one or more of the ideas below.

**DRAMA TIME!** Encourage your early learner to use their imagination through a simple drama activity. Take turns acting out ideas from the story or new ones you invent. Let them decide what they will be miming (e.g. Orville launching up to space). Then, try guessing each other’s mime. Try to model for your child accompanying each guess with an observation or two that led you to make it – e.g. “Your jumping up high made me think of Orville’s rocket blasting off!”

**WORDS ALIVE RELATED RESOURCES!** Words Alive, a local literacy-centered organization and partner of The New Children's Museum, is dedicated to providing literacy education, resources and programs to families throughout San Diego and beyond. In addition to the virtual reading of *Penguinaut!* available on their website www.wordsalive.org, they have also designed a host of related projects and exercises for early learners and caregivers to try together inspired by this book: www.wordsalive.org/penguinaut-eng

**SHARE ANOTHER STORY!** Reading is a wonderful vehicle for learning and for introducing new ideas to early learners. Select any engaging and age-appropriate books by the same author or that explore similar themes, such as space, and read them together before or after the Recycled Rocket project.

**RECOMMENDED RELATED READING (AGES 2 – 5):**
- *The Bear’s Garden* by Marcie Colleen and illustrated by Alison Oliver
- *Mousetronaut* by astronaut Mark Kelly and illustrated by C.F. Payne
- *My First Book of Planets: All About the Solar System for Kids* by Bruce Betts, PhD

**PRESCHOOL LEARNING FOUNDATIONS STANDARDS (VISUAL ARTS, SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND LITERACY)**

**AGE 48 MONTHS:**
- Create marks with crayons, paint and chalk and then identify them; mold and build with dough and clay and then identify them.
- Begin to recognize and name materials and tools used for visual arts.
- Enjoy learning and are confident in their abilities to make new discoveries. Although, may not persist at solving difficult problems.
- Use language to construct short narratives that are real or fictional.

**AGE 60 MONTHS:**
- Begin to plan art and show increasing interest and persistence in completing it.
- Recognize and name materials and tools used for visual arts.
- Use language to construct extended narratives that are real or fictional.

Recommended reading and learning connection activities provided in collaboration with Words Alive.

*PARTners in Creativity is made possible through generous support from Kiwanis Club of San Diego and Maryanne and Irv Pfister.*