10 ways kids can use ChatGPT to learn, by age, with a grown-up beside them

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Ten ideas for using ChatGPT with a child, from a spelling quiz to a debate, with the age each suits, the exact words to type and what to check. Free through 2026.

ChatGPT is most useful to a child when it asks the questions: a quiz, a role to argue against, a riddle to solve, a story to continue. It is least useful when it simply hands over the answer. Below are ten ways to use it for learning, with the age each suits, the words to type and what to check afterwards. Every one assumes a grown-up is beside the child, on the grown-up's account for under-13s, because that is what OpenAI's own rules ask for. The rules by age are in our earlier post.

This post is from Peabody (peabody.kids), a free reading and learning site for kids, free through the end of 2026. Peabody isn't connected to OpenAI. The ideas are ordinary uses of any chatbot, and we have not tested them with children at scale, so treat them as things to try, not as results.

Ten ways, at a glance

- #: 1 · Idea: A spelling or vocabulary quiz · Good from about: 6 · The grown-up's job: Check the words are the ones from school
- #: 2 · Idea: Twenty questions · Good from about: 5 · The grown-up's job: Type for them; talk about the clues
- #: 3 · Idea: Continue a story together · Good from about: 6 · The grown-up's job: Keep the child's idea in charge
- #: 4 · Idea: Explain it three ways · Good from about: 8 · The grown-up's job: Check the facts in a book
- #: 5 · Idea: Be the other side of a debate · Good from about: 10 · The grown-up's job: Ask what the best point was
- #: 6 · Idea: Check my working · Good from about: 9 · The grown-up's job: Make them show their steps first
- #: 7 · Idea: Riddles and jokes to solve · Good from about: 5 · The grown-up's job: Laugh; decide what's funny
- #: 8 · Idea: Practise a language · Good from about: 8 · The grown-up's job: Ask a speaker or a teacher to check
- #: 9 · Idea: Plan a project · Good from about: 10 · The grown-up's job: Make the child choose
- #: 10 · Idea: Spot what the chatbot got wrong · Good from about: 9 · The grown-up's

job: Bring the real source

1. A spelling or vocabulary quiz

Paste the week's list and let it quiz.

"Quiz me on these spelling words, one at a time. Say the word in a sentence, wait for me to type it, then tell me if I'm right. Words: [list]."

It works because the child does the recalling, which is the part that sticks. Check that the sentences it makes up use the word the way your child's teacher does.

2. Twenty questions

The child thinks of an animal or an object. The chatbot asks yes-or-no questions to guess it.

"Let's play twenty questions. I'm thinking of an animal. Ask me yes or no questions, one at a time."

Younger children enjoy watching the questions narrow things down. Ask them why each question was a good one.

3. Continue a story together

"I'll write one sentence of a story, then you write one, and we take turns. Keep it to two or three short sentences each time. My first sentence is: [sentence]."

Keep the child's idea in charge: if the chatbot takes the story somewhere your child didn't want, say so and go back. For a story with reading-level control and no chat, Peabody's story maker writes one from a few tapped ideas.

4. Explain it three ways

"Explain how rain forms to a 9-year-old. Then explain it again in one sentence, and then as a short rhyme."

The same idea at three sizes is a good way to see what a child already knows. Because a chatbot can be confidently wrong, check the facts in a book or a trusted site, and ask your child which version they trust and why.

5. Be the other side of a debate

"I think kids should have a shorter school day. Argue against me in three short points, then let me answer."

This is a good one for ages 10 and up. It makes a child practise making a case and listening to one. Afterwards, ask them which of the chatbot's points was the strongest.

6. Check my working

"Here is how I solved this. Don't give me the answer. Tell me which step you'd look at again, and why: [working]."

The rule is that the child shows their own steps first. Used the other way round, with the chatbot doing the sum, it teaches nothing. Use AI as a tutor that asks questions, not one that gives answers has more prompts like this one.

7. Riddles and jokes to solve

"Give me three riddles for a 7-year-old, one at a time. Wait for my guess before you tell me the answer."

It is a small thing, and it builds the habit of thinking before looking. Decide for yourselves which jokes are actually funny: chatbots often aren't.

8. Practise a language

"Let's practise Spanish. Ask me how I am, in Spanish, and wait for my answer. If I make a mistake, say it back to me correctly in one short sentence."

Chatbots can slip on accents, regional words and grammar. For anything that matters, have a speaker or a teacher check what was said.

9. Plan a project

"I want to build a model volcano for the school science fair. Ask me five questions first about what I have and how much time I've got, then suggest a plan."

The child answers the questions and picks from the plan. A child who chose the project will finish it more often than one who was handed it.

10. Spot what the chatbot got wrong

Ask it something your child knows well, such as a favourite animal, a game or their own street, and read the answer together.

"Tell me three facts about [thing your child knows well]."

Then let your child find any that are wrong. It is the best lesson in why a chatbot's answers need checking, and children love catching a mistake. The game AI or human? works in a similar way.

What to check after any of them

- Facts. Pick one that matters and check it in a book, a teacher or a trusted site.
- Names, books and web addresses. Chatbots sometimes make these up. Search for a title or a link before you trust it.
- Age. Is the answer right for your child, or written for an adult?

- Privacy. No full name, school, address or photos of faces, and nothing about friends.
- How it felt. Ask your child what they thought, and whether anything was odd.

If your child is under 13, they shouldn't have their own ChatGPT account. OpenAI's Terms of Use set 13 as the minimum age, as we explain in ChatGPT for kids: is it safe?. The quiz asks eight questions about your child and the situation.

When a chatbot isn't the right tool

For reading practice, a chatbot has no idea what your child can read. Peabody's library is sorted by measured reading level, from level 0 up, with no chat and no sign-up, and beginning reader books is a good place to start. For maths and word practice, short game rounds work better than a conversation. Free AI learning tools for kids covers the kinds of tool and what each one is for.

Questions parents ask

What can kids do with ChatGPT for learning?

With a grown-up beside them, they can be quizzed on spelling words, play twenty questions, take turns writing a story, hear an idea explained at three sizes, practise a debate or a language, plan a project and check where the chatbot went wrong. The best uses are the ones where the chatbot asks and the child answers.

Is ChatGPT good for homework?

It can help, if the child does the thinking first. Ask it to give a hint or to point to the step that went wrong, never to give the answer. Check any fact that matters somewhere else, because chatbots can be confidently wrong.

How old do you have to be to use ChatGPT?

OpenAI's Terms of Use set the minimum age at 13, and anyone under 18 needs a parent or legal guardian's permission. For children under 13, an adult should do the typing, on the adult's own account.

What should kids never type into ChatGPT?

No full name, school, address, phone number, photos of faces, passwords or friends' names. Nothing a child wouldn't say to a stranger in a shop.

Can ChatGPT replace a teacher or a tutor?

No. It doesn't know your child, it can be wrong, and it can't see how they work. It is a practice partner at its best, and it works best next to a person.