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A CHOOSE YOUR
OWN ADVENTURE GUIDE
FOR KIDS
WITH CAMERAS



beryl ayn young

“WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?” I ASK MY THEN 4-YEAR-OLD ONE DAY, JUST FOR FUN.

Imagine my beaming smile when she exclaims, “A camera lady, like mommy!” Just as I’ve watched my daughter grow into herself as a little girl, she’s watched me grow into my role as a photographer these last few years, and now wants to take part in the photo-taking too.

I may be the primary memory keeper for our family, but that doesn’t mean that I have to be the only one.

Have you ever picked up your phone and checked your Camera Roll, only to realize that your toddler took about 60+ selfies of themselves earlier in the day when you weren’t looking? ::raises hand::

KIDS LOVE CAMERAS.

They are growing up in the digital age and thrive on visual tools to explore and understand their world. Why not put a bit of structure into what they’re doing with the camera, and infuse some fun and adventure into their explorations, eh?

Photography is the tool that can educate, inspire, and connect the entire family.

Next time you’re in need of an activity to keep you and your kids happily entertained, I want you to go for the simplicity of one of these photo adventures.



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I've got 10 educational and play-based photography projects that will have you thinking a bit outside of the box, allow your creativity to flow, and get the whole family involved behind the lens.

Some of these projects will put you in the driver's seat, and others will allow your children to snap away.

HINT: It's ok if you're doing more of the guiding, directing, and snapping. Depending on the age of your child, they'll be thrilled simply to be involved and see the 'magic' of a digital photograph as it instantly appears on the screen.

Oh, and these adventures won't all produce frame worthy, award winning shots, but they are sure to get you smiling, connecting, and snapping using a tool you already love.

1) LETTER HUNT

Create your own photo art by taking a scavenger hunt for objects that look like letters in and around your home or neighborhood. This is more challenging than it may sound! You could search for each letter of the alphabet, or simply try to create a word of your choosing, such as your name or an inspirational message.

Practice composition by ensuring each letter is centered in the frame, with a bit of a border surrounding it for ease of cropping during editing later on.

UPLEVEL YOUR ADVENTURE:

If you've found your name, or an inspirational word that has meaning for your family, why not hang the letters in your home? After taking the photos, it'll be time to edit, print, and frame.



Play with the simple online based photo editor, Picmonkey.com, to edit each letter in black and white, and crop to the correct size for printing (I'd recommend 4x6 or 5x7). Choose a fun way to frame or hang the letters in your home!

2) CREATE A STORY

Take your child's favorite toys or stuffed animals on an adventure! Allow your child to take the lead and come up with a fantastic plot, taking their toys around the house or out and about with you for the day. Writing down the story as you go along.

UPLEVEL YOUR ADVENTURE:

Re-tell the story, photo-by-photo, and compile the photos and words into a photobook. [Blurb](#) is my 'go to' resource for photo books, and their online book builder would be a quick, economical option for making your child's photo story come to life.

3) RETURN TO HAPPY

Not too long ago, I was finding that afternoons were a disaster in our house. My then-toddler and I were cranky, bored, moody and just plain tired. So I came up with a simple gratitude challenge parents and kids can do together. In the moments where you notice your day is starting to go downhill, stop everything.

Talk with your kids about what makes them happy, and what is going well in their world. Brainstorm a list of 5-10 'happy thoughts', grab a camera, and find ways to photograph your ideas. It'll be an instant mood changer, I promise. Practice technical skills by looking for good natural light for each of the



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items you decide to photograph.

UPLEVEL YOUR ADVENTURE:

Make a 'happiness print' for each member of the family, and hang them somewhere in your home. My favorite place for creative printed products is [Social Print Studio](#). Their giant photo strips, metal prints, classic frames, or magnets would all be great options for displaying your wall of 'happy'.

4) DAY IN OUR LIFE

Ordinary moments are often when I have the greatest difficulty picking up the camera, but they're also the times that can be the most valuable to capture too.

With the help of your child, set up a timer (on a phone or tablet would be the easiest) to ding at evenly spaced intervals (every 1 or 2 hours would work well). When the timer goes off, stop everything and snap a photo. Kids loves the anticipation of waiting for that timer to go off, and the challenge of composing an image at random.

If your children are a bit older, or if you have two children, give everyone a camera and have each person capture their day individually. At the end of the day, you can sit together to compare and contrast what each person's day looked like from their perspective.

UPLEVEL YOUR ADVENTURE:

Make print studio 'mini books' to document your day in a simple and fun way.

PRO TIP: Horizontal photos work best for this product.

5) PHOTO BOOTH

Design and plan a silly photo booth in your house! Find a neutral wall, or if you want to get really fancy, hang some funky wrapping paper or fabric. Select a few silly props. Take turns taking funny photos of each other, or find a way to prop up your camera (with a tripod or on a flat surface) and try to both get in the frame!

UPLEVEL YOUR ADVENTURE:

Instead of using silly props, take very simple self portraits and give your kids the opportunity to dive into some creative editing instead. Let them play with [Picmonkey.com](https://www.picmonkey.com), and turn their self portraits into whatever character their imagination desires.

Use Picmonkey's drawing tools to make a crown, add makeup and become a princess. Or use the embedded stickers and clipart to transform into a zombie. Picmonkey can make comic strips or watercolor illustrations too.



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PHOEBE THE PHOTOGRAPHER

Beryl Ayn Young, Photo Mom and Mentor, has a new passion project: Her first children's book!

A former elementary school teacher by day, she's written a story of creativity, resilience, connection, and fulfillment for photography lovers young and old.

About to round the corner to her fifth birthday, Phoebe wants nothing more than a special superhero costume. When the big day arrives, however, something else is there to surprise her.

Phoebe's not thrilled with what awaits her, and has to discover that being a super hero comes not from a costume, but from the powers that lie within her heart.

GET YOUR COPY OF PHOEBE THE
PHOTOGRAPHER: GETS A CAMERA
RIGHT HERE!

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