Basket Weaving Instructions:

To prepare the basket for the kids to weave, we wove the top section ahead of time. Weaving this part is a little more difficult, since you have to deal with the raffia wrapping around the open arms of the basket frame. Also the weaving pattern that I thought worked best for this top portion, to keep the arms from sliding, is a little more complicated that simple in-and-out weaving. So we had a ladies basket weaving session to get started on this project, and then they took some home to work on them further, after getting the hang of it.

Finished basket measures 3” in diameter at the bottom, and about 4¼” across the top diameter, and 2¼” tall. See photos on next page.

Pre-prep:
Print page 1 (at www.rightad.com/basket-template.pdf) on front side and page 2 on back side of heavy card stock (I used a linen textured card stock). With pg1 facing you, cut out the shape (it’s easiest to cut around the outer circle, and then cut out the arrow-like shapes). Hole punch the 2 tan dots at the end of each arm, using a 1/4” hole puncher. Bend up the arms to form the bowl of the basket (a gently curved bend looks better than a sharp one).

Line up the holes of 2 adjacent basket arms (so the left hole of one arm is over the right hole of the arm beside it). Tie one end of a strand of raffia through the 2 aligned holes. You don’t need to double knot it, because you will double knot it once you’ve gone all the way around the top. Leave enough of a tail on your knot so you will have something to tie the other end to when you come around. When tying the knot, use the end of the raffia that is thicker, so the thinner end will be free to weave with. Loop under the lip of the arms and through the first set of adjacent holes, when tying the knot.

Begin weaving by lining up the next set of holes, and inserting the tip of the raffia through the holes from the outside of the basket, pushing it in towards the inside, then bend the raffia straight up over the top, and wrap it around the outside and back under the same lip. This will help hold the tabs down and makes a nice-looking pattern (see step 2). You may need to pinch the raffia to get it to form tightly around the edge of the basket. Then repeat the weave around the rest of the basket. Your raffia should be coming up from under the lip of the last section and over the top of the basket. Then weave from the outside in through the next set of holes. Wrap it around the lip and repeat (see diagram). When you get all the way around, double knot the end to the tail of your first knot, and trim the tails off of this knot. Your basket frame is then ready for the children to use.

For the kids:
You need four 50” strips of raffia per basket and nine pony beads. Start by taping the wider end of a strip to the inside of the basket. You’ll tape this strip horizontally at the base of one of the frame arms. Then simply let the kids weave the raffia in and out around the frame arms of the basket. When they’ve woven all of the first strip (raffia strand) tie another strip of raffia to the end of the first one (or if you prefer, you can tape the ends down, but that wouldn’t be as secure). The kids will probably need adult help for tying the strands together. When they get to their last strand of raffia (the 4th one) have them begin to weave through the holes at the top of the basket. They may have to scoot the pre-woven strand of raffia out of their way on some of those holes to fit the tip of their strand through them. On each outside weave, have them add a pony bead. They’ll weave around the top through the holes twice, in order to add a bead centered on each frame arm. You can tie the end around a section of raffia or you can just tuck it in under the other weaves.

Then have them cut out their lid. I gently folded the lid so I could get my hole punch closer to the center, but you could just make longer handles if you punch holes closer to the edge. I used a 1/8” hole punch for the handle holes. Use a scrap of raffia to form the handle and tape it in place on the back side of the lid.

We gave the kids a plastic snake that coils to put in the baskets.
with lid on top