

Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION®

SHORT NOTES



Ticket, please!

If you want to limit your youngster's TV time, try this idea. Every week, give her seven slips of paper. Each is good for an hour of television. Remind her to plan ahead. For example, if she wants to watch a two-hour movie on Saturday, she'll need to save an extra ticket during the week.

Be there!

Regular attendance in elementary school sets up a good pattern for your child's entire school career. Show him that school comes first by trying to keep days off for illnesses and family emergencies. Also, schedule routine doctor and dentist appointments for after school or over school breaks.

Better concentration

Looking for a fun way to improve your youngster's concentration? Try this quick game. The first player makes one motion, like clapping or spinning around. The second person copies him and adds another movement. Continue adding new motions until someone forgets the sequence. The last player to get it right starts a new game.

Worth quoting

"Life doesn't require that we be the best, only that we try our best."
H. Jackson Brown Jr.

JUST FOR FUN

Teacher: Name one important thing we have today that we didn't have 10 years ago.

Brian: Me!



Study smarts

From a history test at the end of each month to a spelling quiz every Friday, studying is a skill youngsters will need throughout their years of school. Help your child study with these tips.

Start a habit. Encourage your youngster to treat studying as a daily assignment, not just something he does the evening before a test. For example, he might study 15 minutes every night for a spelling test on Friday. After he finishes his regular homework, he can spend a little time reviewing his notes and handouts.

Tackle textbooks. When your child has a chapter to study, have him "preview" it to increase his understanding. He should glance over headings, graphics, and photos and go to the glossary to look up boldfaced words. *Tip:* If he finds a section hard to grasp, he could read a picture book on the topic. For a science unit on matter,



for instance, he could try *What Is the World Made Of?* by Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld.

Mix it up. If your youngster reviews information in several ways, he'll be more likely to remember it. He might use colored pencils to copy each spelling word or math fact onto a separate index card. Then, he can shuffle the cards and study them in a different order each time. For extra reinforcement, suggest that he spell each word or recite each fact aloud.♥

After-school chats

"What's in your backpack?" Greet your child with this question, and you'll discover a lot about what she does in class.

- Set aside time each day to go through her papers. Try to do it first thing after school when her day is fresh in her mind.
- Look over your youngster's work together. Help her feel proud by making a specific comment about something she's done. For instance, if she shows you a picture she drew in art class, you might say, "The gray sky and big waves look just like our rainy day at the beach."
- Have her talk through math problems or science experiments to show you what she's learned. She might explain how she finds the perimeter of a triangle or why ants dig tunnels, for example.♥



A recipe for respect

Ava listens quietly when her teacher talks. Ben claps for each performer at his piano recital. These children show respect for others. Here's how you can encourage your youngster to do the same.

Demonstrate

Your child will learn respectful behavior by watching the way you treat others. When she makes a mistake, for instance, gently tell her what she's done wrong—and out of earshot of others. Also, let her see you respect ideas and beliefs that are different



from your own. For example, point out that you're happy a friend is voting in an election even though you each favor a different candidate.

Notice

When you see your youngster acting respectfully, let her know that you've noticed ("I like the way you asked your sister before borrowing her sweater"). Your words and attention will encourage her to show respect in the future.

Tip: If you see disrespectful behavior on TV (a child rolling his eyes or talking back to a parent), tell your youngster that isn't okay in real life. Then, ask her to be on the lookout for respectful actions by characters. How many can she spot before the program ends? ♥

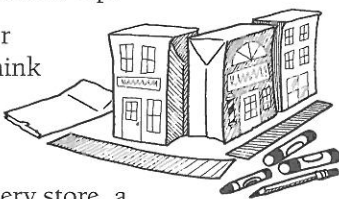
ACTIVITY CORNER

Paper bag city

Let your child create his own 3-D community. He'll practice map skills and learn about urban planning as he decides where to put the buildings in his town.

Materials: paper lunch bags, newspapers, crayons or markers, black construction paper, scissors, tape

Have your youngster think of buildings to include, such as a bank, a grocery store, a school, a library, and houses. He can make them by drawing doors, windows, and signs on flat bags (on the side without the flap). For every bag he decorates, have him stuff a second one with newspaper. Then, he should open each decorated bag and slide it over a stuffed bag so his "buildings" will stand up. For the roads, he can cut black construction paper into strips and tape them together.



Finally, have your child lay out his roads and arrange his buildings alongside them to make his very own town. ♥

Q & A

Bullying: The bystander's role

Q: My child came home from school upset because kids were picking on a classmate and wouldn't let her play with them. What advice should I give my daughter?

A: Tell your youngster that her classmate was being bullied—and that she has the power to help stop it!

There are several things she can do. She could start by standing up to the bully and saying something like, "That's not nice." Then, she might ask the child who is being bullied to join her in a game or school project.

Also, remind your youngster to report bullying to a teacher or other adult when she sees it. Let her know this is not tattling, but a way to help someone who is being hurt. You can explain: "Asking an adult to help a child who is being bullied is like asking the nurse to help a child with a scraped knee." ♥



PARENT TO PARENT

Thinking games

Between school, errands, and activities, my family spends lots of time on the go. I decided to use some of it for "thinking games."

I taught my kids a game my parents used to play with me, called "Would You Rather?" I offer two options and ask which they prefer and why. For example, I might say, "Would you rather live near the beach or the mountains?"

My son came up with a game he named "Three Favorites." Someone picks

a category (outfits, movies), and we all tell our top three choices. My daughter thought of "What Doesn't Belong?" We take turns naming items and asking the others to explain which is the odd one out and why. The kids especially like this game because there can be more than one "right" answer. For example, when I named "owl," "ostrich," and "eagle," my daughter said, "Ostrich, because it can't fly."

My son's answer was, "Owl, because it hunts at night."

Now they want to play all the time. I'm glad because we're having fun—and they've gotten better at thinking through their ideas. ♥



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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