

Home & School CONNECTION[®]

Working Together for School Success

Hemet Unified School District

April 2007

SHORT NOTES



Speak and listen

Remind your child that speaking is only half of a conversation. The other half is listening. Encourage him to listen and let others finish speaking before chiming in again. He'll find conversations are much more fun when they're a two-way street.

You can do it!

As children get older, they can do more and more. You can help your youngster build self-confidence by encouraging her to try new things. Suggest that she audition for the school math competition or read an extra-challenging book. You'll give her a boost by showing you believe in her abilities.

They need you

Parent volunteers can make the end of the school year go much more smoothly. Consider offering your time and talents to your child's teachers and principal. Maybe you could decorate for end-of-the-year parties, make certificates for award ceremonies, or help pack up your youngster's classroom.

Worth quoting

"Education is the transmission of civilization."

Will Durant

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What goes up but doesn't come down?

A: Your age!



Encourage cooperation

Cooperative children are ones who work well with others. They know how to pitch in and take part in a team effort, whether at home or in school. Try these ideas to help your youngster develop the important trait of cooperation.

Stress teamwork. Let your child see how everyone wins when you work as a team.

Example: "Wow! With everybody helping to clean up the house, we finished early. Now we have time to go to the pool!" Learning that cooperation pays off will motivate your youngster to form the habit.

Point out results. Help your child understand how cooperating can help him succeed in school. Say he is working on an assignment with a classmate. What will happen if one of them doesn't do his part? (Their grade will suffer.) What will happen if they work together? (The assignment will be done on time.)

Congratulate effort. Show your youngster that all efforts, no matter how small they may seem, add up: "If you hadn't been backstage helping with the props, the show would not have been such a hit." Kids will enjoy being part of a group if they know their contributions are appreciated.

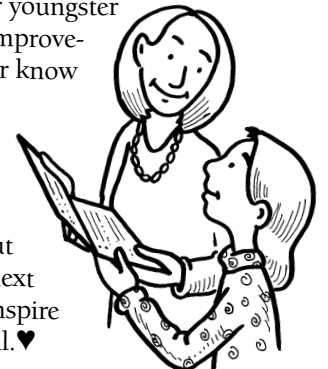


Note: Giving choices can help your child be more cooperative. For instance, if he's in the middle of playing a game, let him decide: "Would you like to set the table now, or when you've each had one more turn?" ♥

Report cards ahead

As the school year winds down, it's time to start thinking about how to handle final report cards. Try this approach when the big day arrives:

- Read through the whole report card before reacting. You'll be able to see the full picture and pick out parts to highlight with your child.
- Celebrate progress first. Find a grade that went up, a tough subject your youngster held her own in, or an improvement in behavior. Let her know you are proud of her.
- Your child already knows the disappointments. Discuss what happened, and talk about ways she can do better next year. Being upbeat will inspire her to try again in the fall. ♥



Collectors unite!

Young children love to collect things. The good news is that they can collect academic skills at the same time. Here are some ideas for getting started.

★ **Rocks.** Your youngster can pick up rocks at the park, in your backyard, or while walking home from school. Suggest that she store her collection in shoeboxes or ice cube trays. While grouping and labeling her rocks, she'll practice sorting and classification skills. Have her use a library guidebook to identify each rock and learn how the rock was formed.

★ **Favorite animal.** Does your child love pigs? Elephants? Have her collect magazine stories and pictures from the



Internet and store them in a binder. She'll build reading skills and become an "expert" as she learns interesting facts about the animal's appearance, habitat, and diet.

★ **Stamps.** Encourage your youngster to collect stamps. She can use envelopes from the day's mail and ask relatives and friends to save stamps for her. Arranging them in a scrapbook by country or topic (famous people, nature) will help your child develop organizational skills. Together, do research to learn more about the countries, people, or buildings pictured on her stamps. ♥



Q & A Practice makes perfect

Q: My son's teacher said his handwriting needs work. How can I help Eric at home?

A: Try practicing a few times a week—in ways he finds fun. For example, try "air writing." Have Eric use his fingers to write the alphabet in huge letters in the air. Then, let him do it again with much smaller letters.



Next, get out some lined paper, and have him practice with a pencil. Ask Eric to write big letters at first, covering

three to four lines. Then, have him fit his letters into two lines, and finally into one line.

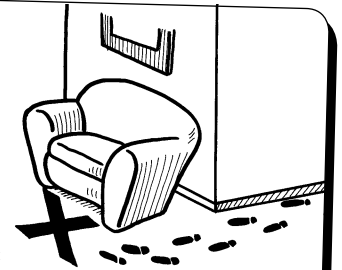
Also, suggest that he use fun materials. He can form letters with glitter glue on paper or chalk on the sidewalk. You'll see that a little practice will make a big difference in your son's handwriting! ♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

Which way is it?

Knowing how to follow—and give—directions will help your child in the classroom and at home. Help him work on both skills with these activities:

1. Pick a secret destination in your house (the living room sofa). Give your youngster directions to get there ("Take two small steps forward. Turn right, and walk 10 steps"). After he arrives, let him pick a spot and direct you.
2. Ask your child to give you instructions for a simple task (brushing his teeth, pouring juice into a cup). Follow his directions exactly. Are they accurate? Then, give directions to him, and let him try to follow yours.
3. Take out game rules or a recipe. Have your youngster circle the words that give directions (move, add, stir). He can use the words to make up a new game or recipe. ♥



PARENT TO PARENT

Curing forgetfulness

Earlier in the year, my daughter Andrea kept forgetting her lunch. And sometimes she forgot her homework folder, too. To help her keep track of everything, we created a new morning routine.

She now has to put her lunch and homework in her backpack before eating breakfast. On the way out the door, we ask Andrea to look inside her bag. She says, "Homework, check!" as she

touches her homework folder, and "Lunch, check!" as she taps her lunch box. In the afternoon, her teacher has her follow a similar routine to make sure she takes her homework folder with her.

The system is working great! Andrea does it automatically now. She has learned it takes only a few seconds to stop and check that she has what she needs. ♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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