

Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION®

February 2014

Haywood County Schools



SHORT NOTES

The five Ws

Spark your youngster's interest in the newspaper by sharing sections with her. Tell her that a news story usually answers the five "W" questions: who, what, when, where, and why. Read an article together, and see if she can spot the answers to all five questions.

Camp registration

In many areas, camp sign-ups begin now. If you want your children to attend, start looking into options. City or county camps will cost less than private camps, and some may offer free or discounted registration to help people afford them. You could also check with community centers and places of worship.

Household fire drill

Your youngster is probably used to fire drills in school—but what about at home? Ask him to draw a map of your house and use a red X to mark two exits from each room. Then, pick a safe meeting place outside (the corner, a neighbor's front yard), and hold a fire drill.

Worth quoting

"Every great dream begins with a dreamer." *Harriet Tubman*

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What kind of horse has six legs?

A: One that is being ridden.



Your child's social life

Just like being involved in your youngster's education can lead to his success in school, taking an interest in his social life can help him form healthy friendships and handle peer pressure. Try these strategies.

Ask about friends

When you talk to your child about what he's learning in school, also find out who he plays with at recess or sits with at lunch. During conversations with your youngster's teacher, discuss how he gets along with classmates. If he struggles to make friends, see if there is someone he seems to like or has things in common with. Then, encourage him to invite that child home to play.

Meet other parents

Building relationships with the parents of your youngster's friends makes it easier to manage any problems that arise. Before your child visits a friend's home, call the parent to touch base. Better yet: Drop your youngster off, and introduce yourself in person. You can also meet friends'



parents at school functions (literacy night, concert), sports games, and neighborhood playgrounds.

Explain peer pressure

Help your child make good choices when he's with his friends. Point out that kids influence each other in good *and* bad ways, and together, brainstorm examples of each. To determine the difference, he should think about whether a friend's advice is helpful ("You *have* to read this book!") or harmful ("Only babies wear helmets when they ride bikes").♥

Fun with analogies

Here's an easy way to boost your child's thinking and word skills.

Give her an *analogy*, or a sentence comparing how things are related. For example, "Basketball is to sports as mozzarella is to ____." She should say "cheese," since basketball is a type of sport and mozzarella is a kind of cheese. Then, let your youngster give you an analogy to solve.

You could also make up analogies about topics she's studying in school. If she's learning about continents, you might say, "Japan is to Asia as Mexico is to ____." (Answer: North America.)♥



Winter walks

Walking in a winter wonderland can be fun *and* educational. Find a trail in your neighborhood or at a park, bundle up, and have your youngster take along these items.

Camera. Bare branches allow your child to observe details that are hidden when trees are full of leaves. She can choose a favorite tree and take photos of it, zooming in on things like a squirrel perched on a branch or a hole in the trunk. *Note:* Have her come back to the same tree in the spring so she can observe changes like buds and bird nests.



Bag. Suggest that your youngster collect a few natural items from the ground, such as rocks, pinecones, or nuts. At home, help her practice research skills by using library books or websites to identify each object.

Book. Pick a comfortable place to sit, and enjoy an outdoor read-aloud. A volume of nature poems, a story set in the woods, or a nonfiction book about wildlife make nice choices. Encourage your child to look around for images from the book (an icicle dangling from a porch, a deer darting through a field).♥

ACTIVITY CORNER



Memory strategies

Try this game to boost your youngster's memory. He'll discover techniques that can help him remember information he learns in school.

1. Write down 10 random words. Let family members look at the list for one minute, then put it away.



2. Give everyone a blank sheet of paper, and have them write as many words as they remember in two minutes. Count to see who got the most.

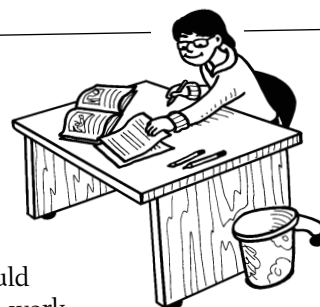
3. Discuss the strategies you each used to recall the words. Maybe your child noticed that *supermarket*, *crisp*, and *bowl* could all be linked to food, and remembering food made him think of those three words. Or perhaps you made up a sentence using four of the words.

4. Play again with 10 new words. Encourage your youngster to try one of the ideas you discussed. Can he remember more words this time?♥

Developing a work ethic

A strong work ethic—a belief in the value of hard work—can help your child in school, at home, and in her future career. Consider these suggestions:

- Show her how you put work before play. You could say, "I want to relax with a magazine, but I have to work on our taxes first." Then, have her do her work first, too. For instance, she should complete homework before she watches a movie.
- Help your youngster recognize the feeling of satisfaction that comes from hard work. After she cleans her room, let her invite family members to take a tour. Or when she finishes a painting that took a long time, you could let her display it in the hallway as a reminder of her effort.♥



Q & A

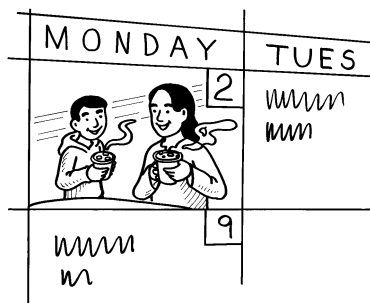
Create together time

Q: Our family has a busy schedule, and I feel like I don't spend enough time with my son. How can we stay connected?

A: Try giving your son a special spot on your calendar. Find a pocket of time, and pencil in his name. Then, ask how he'd like to spend it. Perhaps you could visit the library on Saturday morning or chat over hot chocolate after dinner on Monday.

You might weave "together time" into your existing schedule, too. If you work the evening shift, call him during your break and let him read you a story. When you're in the car or on the bus together, sing songs with your child.

Also, think about ways you can save an hour here or there so you can make time to be with your son. Could you put dinner in a slow cooker once or twice a week? Would switching to online banking help you pay bills faster?♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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