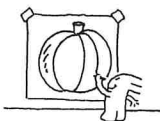


Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION®

October



Rosa Parks-Millbrooks Elementary School

Josephine Catanach, Counselor

SHORT NOTES

Spot respect

Ask your youngster to write the word “R-E-S-P-E-C-T” across the top of a sheet of paper, with a column for each letter. Post the paper on the fridge, and let everyone write examples of respect that start with those letters. (“Return borrowed items in good condition.” “Express thanks for favors.”) Put a tally mark by each one someone does or notices this week.

Sprinkle in similes

Your child can use similes—comparisons with *like* or *as*—to write vivid descriptions. Try this: Pick something (say, the wind), and take turns describing it with a simile. Your youngster might say, “The wind tickled my ear *like* a whisper.” Or you could say, “The wind howled *as* loudly *as* a wolf.”

DID YOU KNOW?

The last speech sounds children typically master include *ch*, *sh*, and *th*. By age 8, your youngster should pronounce all sounds correctly in the beginning (*cheese*), middle (*seashell*), or end (*with*) of a word. If you're concerned about his speech, contact his teacher. She may suggest an evaluation by the school speech therapist.

Worth quoting

“Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.” *Arthur Ashe*

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What's one question you can never answer with “Yes”?

A: What does n-o spell?



Homework success

Which homework assignment should your youngster tackle first? How can she make sure she follows the directions? Suggest these strategies that will help her do her best at homework time.

Start smart

Before your child digs into the day's homework, have her rank her assignments from easiest to hardest. She may want to do the hardest work first while her mind is fresh. Or perhaps she'd prefer to get an easier assignment out of the way first to give her a sense of accomplishment.

Read the instructions

Paying careful attention to directions can help your youngster complete assignments correctly. For instance, the instructions might say to write explanations or draw pictures to show her thinking in solving math problems. Also, tell her that if she doesn't understand the directions, it's okay to ask for help. Offer to read them with her, or she could call a friend.



Take breaks

Short breaks will help your child stay focused. Between assignments or subjects, let her set a timer for 10 minutes. She can stretch, snuggle with the cat, or dance to music until the timer goes off, then get back to work.

Review work

As your youngster finishes each assignment, have her check it over before putting it away or sending it electronically. Is her name on her paper? Did she skip any parts? Do all answers make sense? Once she's satisfied, she should put her paper in her backpack or hit “send.”♥

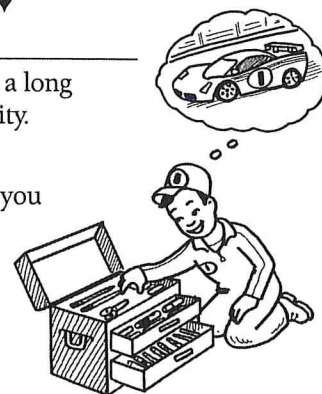
Share expectations

How you tell your child what you expect will go a long way toward turning your expectations into his reality. Consider these three techniques.

1. Show understanding. You might say, “I know you want to play, but it's time to study for your test.”

2. Give choices. Your youngster may do what's expected if he gets to decide when to do it. Ask him, “Do you plan to practice piano before or after dinner?”

3. Look to the future. Help your child tie your expectations to his goals. Does he want to become a race car mechanic? Try: “When you grow up, you'll need to be organized to know exactly where all your tools are.”♥



Count on courage

Children may believe that being brave means being fearless. But having courage really means taking action even when something feels scary—like learning to ride a bike or speaking out if something is wrong. Encourage your child's bravery with these tips.

Recognize it. Since courage often doesn't feel "brave" while it's happening, your youngster might not realize he is being brave. When he



shows courage, point it out to him. ("It was brave of you to meet the neighbor's dog. I know you're not comfortable around big dogs.") Or you could say, "It took a lot of courage to tell your friend to stop teasing that girl."

Control feelings. If your child is nervous or afraid, he may convince himself that something is too difficult. Help him develop ways to manage his feelings. He might take a few slow, deep breaths before he tries riding

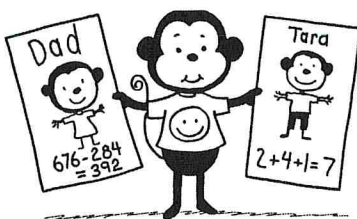
his bike without training wheels. Or he can give himself a pep talk before speaking up for himself. ("I know it's wrong to share answers. I'm doing the right thing.")♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

"I'm 3 x 3 years old!"

Age, shoe size, address ... your child's world is full of numbers. For a fun way to practice math facts, she can use those numbers to make up personalized math problems for everyone in your family.

Have each person write equations about herself or relatives. Your youngster might write " $2 + \text{my shoe size} + 1 = 7$ " (answer: size 4). And you could write " $676 - 284 = \text{our house number}$ " (answer: 392). More numbers to use in equations: age of our dog, Dad's birth year, number of people living in our home, year of grandparents' wedding.



Trade papers—can you solve each other's problems? Then, let your child display the math by drawing portraits of your family and writing the equations on each person's portrait.♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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Strengthen bonds with family traditions

Traditions build a sense of security by giving your youngster something to count on. Try these ideas.

Talk about family traditions

Maybe you take a full-moon walk once a month or visit a pumpkin farm every October. Discussing these traditions will help your child recognize and treasure them as part of what makes your family special.

Make adjustments

Accept that some traditions may not work this year, such as hosting a World Series watch party or attending a neighborhood potluck. Then look for ways to adapt them. Perhaps you'll eat peanuts and popcorn with your family while watching baseball or classic sports on TV.

Tip: If you have a blended family, start new traditions together—and be sure to keep old ones, too. You'll build stronger bonds and a sense of a family identity.♥



Q & A Learning to brainstorm

Q: My son often has to brainstorm for school assignments, but instead of coming up with a lot of ideas, he gets stuck after one or two. How can he learn to generate more ideas on his own?

A: Brainstorming often stalls when kids spend too much time trying to think of "good" ideas. Remind your son that brainstorming has no wrong

answers, and a so-so idea might lead him to an ideal solution.

Practice brainstorming together. Each night, try to come up with a headline that describes your day, a new title for tonight's bedtime story, or a name for a stuffed animal. Your son can toss out the first idea, then take turns suggesting others until he has one he likes. Over time, he'll get more comfortable offering ideas without overthinking them.♥

