



Tips and Activities to Help Your Child Succeed In School



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Parent Resource Newsletter

Parents Are a Child's First and Most Important Teacher

How to Get Your Kids to Love Math

A recent study by the American Institute for Research conducted on students in grades 4 to 8 found that students in the United States score lower in math than students from many other countries. Playing games with math with dice, dominoes, spinners, and board games is a great way to get kids to learn the basic facts.

Especially with younger children from 3 to 7 children need to get a basic sense of numbers. Some early learning math activities that you can do at home include:

- Develop spatial reasoning with blocks or snap together cubes.
- Puzzles of any kind can also develop spatial reasoning, a basic math foundation.
- Finding numbers and patterns all around you such as house numbers, floor patterns, etc.
- Encourage your child to look for shapes in the house and outdoors.
- Read books with a math theme with your child.

At Home Math Activities

- Play "Guess My Number" - Let your child guess your number by giving a range and clues about that number. Clues could include more than, less than- odd, even- etc. Then let your child play with you guessing his or her number.
- What Time Is It?- Ask your child to look at the clock and tell you the time. For older students ask what time it will be in 5 minutes, 10 minutes and so on.
- Adding Dice- This game is great for practice of addition. Each of you takes a turn throwing two dice and adding them together. Whoever gets the higher number gets a point. Older students could use blank dice with numbers written in and multiply the numbers they get and add the totals as they continue.



Parent-Teacher Conferences

Most parent-teacher conferences last about 20 minutes and the time flies by. Make the most of the time with your child's teacher. Come prepared with questions you might have. Ask how you could help your child at home to be more successful.

Since teachers are swamped with appointments to meet all of their students' parents at this time, you could ask for a conference in a week or two after conference time. Or you could meet at conference time and ask for a follow up meeting if you have more concerns.


Don't wait till conference time if something important comes up that you would like to discuss with the teacher. Each school day is important for your child and whether it is an academic problem or a social problem it is important to address it as soon as possible.

Tips for a Successful Parent-Teacher Conference

1. Is there anything your child would like you to talk to the teacher about?
2. Make notes about what you would like to discuss at the conference.
3. Arrive on time.
4. Just as the teacher begins with positive comments, parents can begin with positive comments.
5. Be open to the teacher's suggestions for your child or things for you to do.
6. If you run out of time before you feel you are finished ask for a follow up meeting.

Questions for the Parent-Teacher Conference

1. **What skills will my child have to master this year?**
 - May I see the standards for this school year?
 - What will my child be learning in key subjects such as math, science, reading this quarter?
2. **How can I help my child with his or her academic progress?**
 - What can I do at home with my child?
 - How can I stay informed about homework?
3. **How do you accommodate for differences in learning?**
 - What if my child falls behind, or gets bored with the slow pace?
 - Is there a program for students who fall behind?
 - Is there anything extra you can send home?



“Life is a bowl of cherries. It’s full of pits. Whether you control your life or it controls you, depends, in large measure, on your ability to spit out the pits.” by Richard Saunders

Use the Newspaper to Encourage Reading

A newspaper is an inexpensive way to encourage reading and improve math. You could read a short article and talk about the topic with your children, especially if it has something to do with their lives. The newspaper could also be used for a scavenger hunt where you ask children to find things such as:





- a map of the United States
- a picture of a famous person, actor or actress, or sports figure
- a particular comic
- advertisements and prices for foods or non-consumables
- an article about a particular topic
- TV schedule with the time for a particular TV show
- the times for a particular movie

The newspaper has so many different sections to create a scavenger hunt from. You could also ask them to make words by cutting out letters from headlines, cut out pictures and write captions, or change the words on a particular comic.

A Technique for Limiting TV Time

Playing cards is a wonderful way to get the family together with a social activity that doesn't include the television set, video game, or computer. For young children cards can teach math, patterns, colors and matching skills.

Some card games can include:

- War 
- Go Fish 
- Concentration 
- Crazy Eights 

For older children you can teach them to play:

- Rummy 
- Hearts 
- Solitaire 
- Whist 

Just doing something as a family can help students to communicate and bond, and playing cards is a more active activity than watching television. Your children will ask for more time with you playing cards.

Homework Tips for Parents

There are a lot of things you can do to help your child with his or her homework, which doesn't include doing it for them. You could make sure there is a well-lit, quiet place for homework, with the necessary supplies readily available in that spot.

Another bit of advice from Dr. Harris Cooper, from Duke University, is for the parent to do complementary activities when your child is doing homework. If your child needs to read a book or a section of the textbook, read a book or magazine article yourself. Or with math you might balance the checkbook, or make a grocery list.

Also let your child know that it is okay to ask for help, and occasionally ask your child questions about the homework. You might also let them have a short break after completing a certain amount of homework.

Encouraging Good School Attendance

There is no way that a child can make up all the things that were missed in a regular day of school. They can complete workbook pages, catch up on reading, and work math problems, but the amount of time lost with the teacher introducing the lessons, asking questions and group work is lost forever. What can parents do to encourage good school attendance.?

- Value school and your child will too. Celebrate school successes and let your child know how important each day of school is.
- Let your child know you are there for them with homework and assignments. You are there to answer questions and assist them, but you aren't going to do the work for them.
- Have a home environment that encourages learning and curiosity.
- Attend school events and communicate with your child's teacher.
- Create school day routines.
- Make appointments wisely.

A sick child belongs at home, but a well child belongs in school.



Books for Ages 5-6

Agapanthus Hum and Major Bark, by Jennifer Plecas

Agapanthus finds that she can make an angel hoot by blowing through the space left by losing a tooth.

Amos and Boris, by William Steig

A mouse who was saved by a whale, later returns the favor.

Corduroy at the Zoo, by Don Freeman

While taking a trip to the zoo, Corduroy and his friends find monkeys playing hide-and-seek in the Jungle Walk.

Hamster Chase, by Anastasia Suen

A class hamster gets loose and Peter, Amy and Archie have to lure him back into his cage.

Owl Moon, by Jane Yolen

A father and daughter go walking into the woods on a cold winter night under a full moon.

Town Mouse, Country Mouse, by Jan Brett

The country mice and town mice trade houses and then find that there's no place like home.