

**SPECIAL  
POINTS OF IN-  
TEREST:**

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# Dennis-Yarmouth Title I

VOLUME I ISSUE V

JANUARY 2020

## From the Title I Coordinator:

A bit about writing: Stylish Writing  
Your children should be interested in writing about topics that have to do with clothing. You might want to open the discussion by telling an embarrassing clothes moment story of your own. Then have your child share his/her stories. You may orally want to discuss the following topics before you begin to write about them. The topics are:

- Your favorite outfit
- A time you hated what you wore
- How you feel about

"labels" and designer clothing  
Ask your child to describe fabrics and colors in great detail. Was the material scratchy or soft? Did it smell of moth balls or dryer sheets? Remind them to write using their senses (look, touch, taste, feel, hear).

More related topics:

- What article of clothing did your child wear every day as a youngster?
- What fad do they think is ugly?
- Be a trend setter. What will be the next fashion craze?
- If they had to wear an outfit for an entire month, what would they choose? (Yes, they have to wear it everywhere and yes, it is washed regularly.)

Just like clothing, sentences should be

well coordinated. Similar sentences are grouped into one paragraph.

Just like clothing, over-used, worn-out phrases and clichés become old very fast in our writing. Try to come up with something new and different.

Many designers say that accessories are essential to good style. In writing, a well chosen adverb, adjective, simile, or metaphor can be just what is needed to turn your writing from flat to fabulous. Be careful, though. Just as with real accessories, you do not want to overdo it!

**Of Note:**  
There will be no school Feb. 17th-Feb 21 for winter break.



# Home & School

## Working Together for School Success

### CONNECTION®

February 2020

Dennis Yarmouth Title I Program



#### SHORT NOTES

##### Measure up

Who can make the longest “inchworm”? Your child will practice measuring with this game. Take turns rolling a die. Using a ruler, measure a “worm” out of clay to match the number rolled (roll a 2, make a worm 2 inches long). Add to the worm on every turn. The player with the longest worm after five rolls wins.

##### Make time for family meals

Research shows that family meals can improve your youngster’s well-being and help him do better in school. Look over your schedules each Sunday to find times when everyone can eat together. If one parent is working late on Wednesday and can’t make dinner, for instance, plan to meet for a nice breakfast instead.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Asthma is a leading cause of school absences. If your child has asthma (or another chronic medical condition), talk to her doctor and the school nurse about ways to ensure good attendance—and good health. Examples might include avoiding triggers like dust and mold and taking medication as directed.

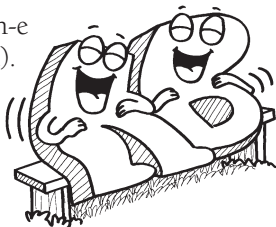
##### Worth quoting

“The most wasted of all days is one without laughter.” *e. e. cummings*

#### JUST FOR FUN

**Q:** How many letters are in the alphabet?

**A:** Eleven (t-h-e a-l-p-h-a-b-e-t).



## We respect each other

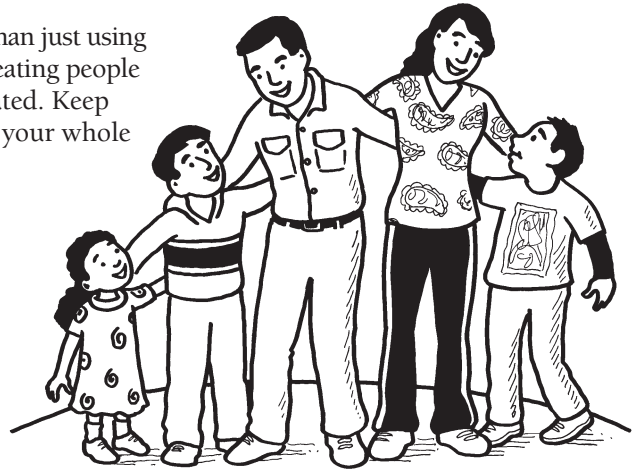
Being respectful is more than just using good manners—it means treating people the way you want to be treated. Keep these ideas in mind to help your whole family focus on respect.

##### Use peaceful tones

It’s a fact that shouting often leads to more shouting. Ask your child to speak in a normal tone to show respect for the person he’s talking to—and for everyone around him. If he starts yelling, speak to him in a whisper. He’ll likely lower his voice to match your volume. Or if he shouts from another room, wait until he comes to you so he learns that you don’t respond to yelling.

##### Avoid making assumptions

Your youngster can respect others’ feelings by giving them the benefit of the doubt. For example, encourage him to rephrase an accusation like “Who took my water bottle?” Instead he could ask, “Has anyone seen my water bottle?”



That’s more respectful because it won’t make anyone feel accused or defensive.

##### Accept different opinions

With your child, role-play ways to respect opinions that are different from his own. He might start a sentence with “That’s one way to look at it, but I think...” or “A lot of people would agree with you. In my opinion...” If a conversation is getting heated, he could simply say, “Let’s agree to disagree and talk about something else.”♥

## My studying tool kit

Developing strong study skills now will help your youngster throughout elementary school and the rest of her school career. Suggest that she add these tools to her studying tool kit.

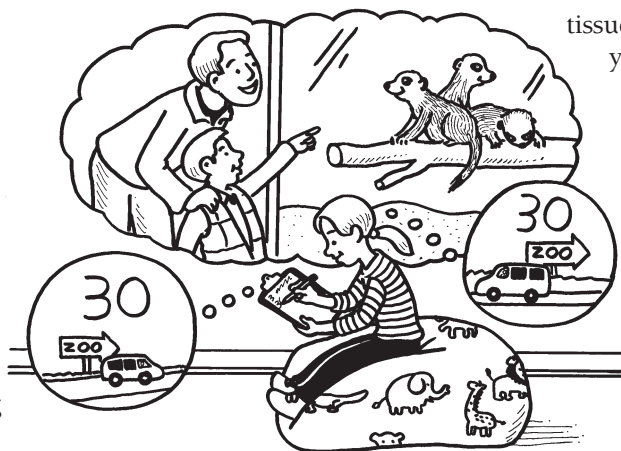
- **Color:** Let your child use highlighters to color-code her notes for easy reference. Perhaps she’ll highlight dates in yellow, people’s names in pink, and vocabulary terms in blue.
- **Recordings:** Encourage your youngster to record herself asking questions about the material. She can hit “play” to hear the questions and “pause” to give each answer.
- **Sticky notes:** Your child could write a one-sentence summary of each textbook section on a sticky note, then use the notes to bookmark the section.♥



## Here's how I use math!

Give your child real-world reasons to use math—she'll see connections between what she's learning in school and what she enjoys in everyday life.

**Do a craft.** Maybe your youngster would enjoy knitting or making friendship bracelets. In each case, she'll count and work with patterns. Or she could explore shapes and symmetry with



tissue-paper mosaics or origami. Let her tell you about the math in her project.

*Examples:* "The pattern for this hat is knit 2, purl 2, knit 2, purl 2." "My mosaic has hexagons, right triangles, and trapezoids."

**Plan an outing.** Whether you're running errands or going to the zoo, your child can use math to plan your schedule. Say you have three hours for a zoo trip. Your youngster wants to see the parrots, and her brother wants to visit the meerkats. Ask her to calculate how

long it will take to drive to and from the zoo, then figure out how long you can spend at each exhibit. Remind her to allow time for walking from one area to the next.♥

## ACTIVITY CORNER



### A vivid vocabulary

"Draw a *magenta* bird with a *plethora* of polka dots and a *quirky* tail playing a *harmonica*." Would your youngster know what to draw if you gave him those instructions? Try this fun art project to help him learn new words.

**1.** Together, flip through a book or magazine and pick out words that you each think look interesting.

**2.** Write the words on separate slips of paper, and mix up the slips in a bowl.

**3.** Take turns pulling three words from the bowl and using them to describe something for the other person to draw. *Note:* Check a dictionary if you don't know what a word means.

**4.** Let your child describe his finished picture to you—he'll practice using the new words.♥



## PARENT TO PARENT

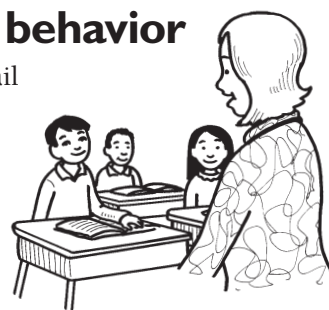
### Good classroom behavior

Yesterday I received an email from my son Simon's teacher saying she had to move his seat because he talks too much in class. I replied to ask whether there should be a consequence at home, too.

Mrs. Roberts said she emailed me because she wanted Simon to know that she and I work together to help him succeed. She wasn't asking me to punish him, but she suggested that I might speak to him.

Simon complained that his friends start the conversations. I pointed out that he didn't have to respond, and I asked him what he could do next time. He said he will keep his eyes on the teacher or his work and talk to his friends at recess.

I'm glad his teacher told me what was happening. Now she and I will stay in touch to help Simon behave better in the future.♥



## Q & A

### Your child's IEP review

**Q:** I have a meeting next month to review my daughter's Individualized Educational Program (IEP).

Any tips on how to get ready for it?

**A:** The first step is knowing what's in your child's IEP. Ask for a copy if you don't have one. There's a lot of information in there, so before the meeting, try to read over her goals and her accommodations (tools and strategies to help her). Jot down

questions about anything you don't understand, and ask for explanations during the meeting.

Also, write down what you want to tell the IEP team about your daughter. Perhaps she struggles with certain subjects at homework time or sometimes has meltdowns.

Finally, plan to take notes during the meeting. That way, you can refer back to what you wrote and follow up with your child's teachers.♥



## OUR PURPOSE

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

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# Math+Science Connection

Building Excitement and Success for Young Children

February 2020

Dennis Yarmouth Title I Program

## TOOLS & TIDBITS

### Cook with fractions

Let your child begin to explore fractions when you cook together. Say your recipe calls for 1 cup flour. Give him a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup measure, and ask how he could make 1 cup (fill the  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup twice). Also, show him fractions like  $\frac{1}{3}$  or  $\frac{1}{4}$  in recipes. Can he find the cup or spoon with the matching fraction?



### Talk like a scientist

Pretend your youngster is a scientist on a TV show! Interview her about an experiment she did in school or at home. Pose questions like “What did you predict would happen?” “Was your prediction accurate?” and “What did you learn?” Explaining the science in her own words will help her understand it better.

### Book picks

■ In *100 Days of School* (Trudy Harris), your child will read rhyming word problems and learn different ways to make 100.

■ Your youngster can learn how animals use tools like rocks and sticks in *Tooling Around: Crafty Creatures and the Tools They Use* (Ellen Jackson).

## Just for fun

**Q:** Since two's company and three's a crowd, what are four and five?

**A:** Nine.

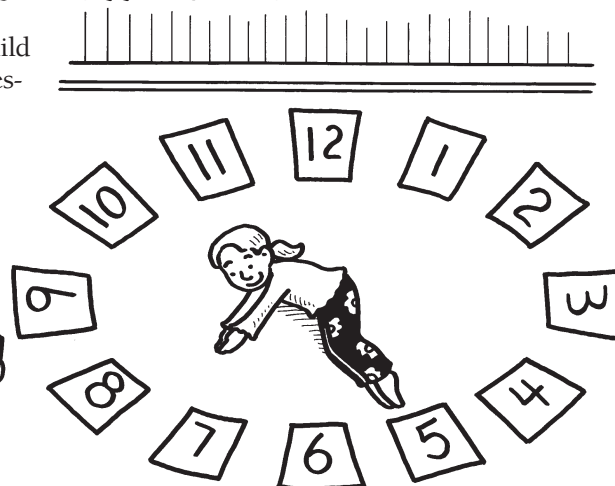


## Learning to tell time

“What time is it?” Your child can answer this common question when she learns to tell time. Try these activities to help her use both analog and digital clocks.


### Life-sized clock

Tick-tock...your youngster's arms and legs can be the hands of a clock! Have her number sheets of paper 1–12 and arrange them in a circle on the floor. Now call out times for her to “set” the clock to. For 7:25, she would lay on her left side with the “hour hand” (her arms) pointing at 7 and the minute hand (her legs) pointing at 5. *Idea:* Take pictures so she can see how her body shows the times.



She might put 6:45 beside “Eat breakfast” and 8:30 by “Go to bed.”

### Matching times

Your youngster will see analog and digital clocks side by side with this idea. Ask her to create a clock face on a paper plate and cut a straw into two “hands” (one longer than the other). Now set a digital clock (say, the one on the microwave) to a random time, such as 2:10. Can she show the same time on her clock? Then, trade roles. 

### Daily schedule


Suggest that your child list things she does every day. *Examples:* “Wake up.” “Go to school.” “Eat dinner.” Beside each one, she could draw a digital clock showing what time she normally does it.

## My cardboard binoculars

Inspire your youngster to take a closer look at nature with a pair of homemade “binoculars.”

Help your child tape together two empty toilet paper tubes. Punch a hole in each side, help him string yarn through, and tie a knot.

Now head outdoors so he can use his binoculars, and take along a notebook and colored pencils for sketching observations. He might spot a crow perched on a power line, a pinecone on the ground, or a holly bush by the mailbox.

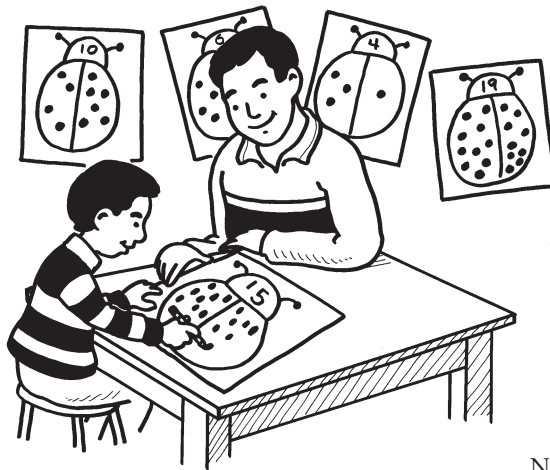
Ask him to describe what he sees. Zeroing in on one thing at a time will make it easier for him to notice details like feathers on a crow, scales on a pinecone, and berries on a bush. 



# Let's subtract


Your youngster can use subtraction to find missing numbers or figure out the difference between two numbers. Use these hands-on ideas to help him practice.

**What's missing?** These ladybugs are missing some dots—and subtraction will tell your child how many. Have him draw 10 ladybugs and write a different number (1–20) on each one's head. Now you pick a ladybug and think of a subtraction problem that begins with that number (for 15, you might think  $15 - 7$ ). Draw the number



of dots equal to the answer (8) on half of the ladybug's body. Can your youngster find the missing number (7) and draw that many dots on the other half?

**What's the difference?** To find the difference between two numbers, your child needs to subtract. Make a number line to help him see the difference. Put a piece of duct tape or masking tape on the floor from one side of a room to the other. Let him write the numbers 1–20, evenly spaced.

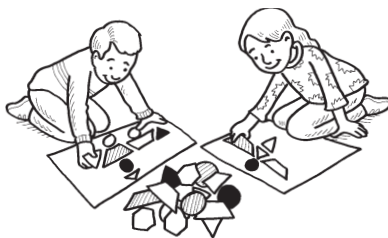
Now give him a “difference” subtraction problem: “What's the difference between 11 and 5?” He can stand on 11 and hop on the numbers until he gets to 5, counting his hops. (“The difference is 6, so  $11 - 5 = 6$ .”) 

## MATH CORNER


### Shape art

This art project is made entirely of geometric shapes. Your child will discover that he can combine two or more shapes to make completely different shapes.

First, help your youngster cut several of each of these shapes from construction paper: circles, triangles, trapezoids, pentagons, hexagons. Then, he can decide what picture he'll create with them (perhaps a robot or a house).



How could he form all the shapes he needs? Perhaps he'll combine two triangles to make a square or use two trapezoids plus two triangles for a rectangle. Ask questions about his picture. How many triangles are there? What shapes are in that rectangle?

**Idea:** Encourage your child to rearrange the shapes again and again. How many different pictures he can make? 


## Q & A

### Should my child use a calculator?

**Q:** My daughter has discovered calculators, and she likes to play with them. I often use them for math—is it okay for her to do so, too?

**A:** It's great that your child is interested in exploring math on a calculator when she plays. However, have her put it away when she does homework or practices math facts.

Encourage your daughter to solve everyday problems with paper and pencil or mental math. She'll master basic facts and do math in her head. For example, in the car, tell her how many miles away your exit is (maybe 7) and how many miles the exit is from your home (5). How many miles do you have left to drive? (Answer: 12, because  $7 + 5 = 12$ .)

Finally, when you use a calculator (say, to figure out how much to tip), invite her to “solve” the problem by telling her which buttons to push. It's good for her to see more complex problems that she can look forward to solving one day. 



## SCIENCE LAB

### Taste and smell


Give your child an appetite for science with this experiment that shows how her sense of smell is related to her sense of taste.

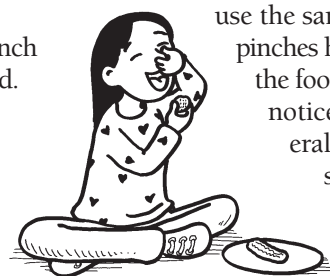
**You'll need:** two foods with similar textures but different flavors, such as strawberries and pickles or oranges and lemons

**Here's how:** Have your youngster close her eyes, pinch her nose, and taste each food. Can she name the foods? Then, she should taste the foods again, with her eyes closed but without pinching her nose. Does she think she

identified them correctly the first time? Now have her open her eyes to check.

**What happens?** Even with her eyes closed, it's easier to identify the food when she doesn't pinch her nose.

**Why?** We smell and taste foods at the same time because our nose and mouth use the same airway. When your child pinches her nose, she no longer smells the food's unique scent, so she only notices its texture and gets a general sense of whether it's sweet, salty, sour, or bitter. That's why food doesn't taste as good when she has a stuffy nose! 



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To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote their children's math and science skills.

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# BUILDING READERS®

How Families Can Help Children Get Ready to Read

Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District  
Title 1

## Support your child's learning at home to ensure school success

Your child may get much of her *instruction* at preschool, but she does most of her *learning* at home. And that means the things you do with her every day can have a major impact on her future school success!

To nurture your child's love of learning and get her ready to thrive in kindergarten:

- **Be enthusiastic.** Show her how exciting reading is and remind her that soon she'll become a star reader!
- **Read to her daily.** It will help her learn to love reading and will build crucial preliteracy skills.
- **Involve her** in lots of new experiences. From a trip to a construction site to a walk in the park, every new encounter widens your child's horizons.



*"You know you've read a good book when you turn the last page and feel a little as if you have lost a friend."*

—Paul Sweeney

## Try Valentine's Day writing activities

Every day offers new opportunities to learn—and that goes for Valentine's Day, too. Encourage your rookie writer to practice shaping letters. Together, make:

- **Letter cookies.** If you're baking heart-shaped cookies, turn the activity into a tasty lesson on the ABCs. Give your child a tube of frosting and help him write one letter on each cookie. Be prepared to get a little messy!
- **A "V for Valentine" poster.** Gather fun writing tools—from glitter pens to highlighters—and let your child fill a sheet of paper with the letter V. It may turn into a rainbow mishmash of squiggly lines, but so what? Your child is still developing important fine motor and writing skills.

## Turn storytelling into a game

Strengthen your child's language and memory skills by involving the entire family in a storytelling session. With a group of family members:

1. **Choose a family photo** that shows something or someone special.
2. **Have one person start** telling a silly, made-up story about what's happening in the photo.
3. **Take turns adding** details to the story.
4. **Challenge one family member** to retell the entire story once it's finished.



## Even Cupid adores books!

Celebrate love this Valentine's Day. The love of reading, that is. Take your youngster to the library on February 14th and check out a few special books about love. Read them together. Ask the librarian for suggestions.



## Make a set of sandy alphabet letters

For a touchable way to review the alphabet, make a set of sand letters. You need index cards, glue and sand. Then:

1. **Use the glue to write** one letter on each card. While the glue is still wet, sprinkle the letters with sand. (You can also use salt or glitter.)
  2. **Lay the index cards** flat to dry.
  3. **Shake off** any excess sand.
- Have your child practice tracing the letters of the alphabet with his finger!





## Reignite your child's interest in sight words

You've labeled everything in your child's room to help her recognize words and letters. But she doesn't pay attention to those labels and she's not learning the words. Does this mean she's not interested in reading?

No! She may just be overwhelmed. After all, if you stick a label on everything, there's a good chance it'll intimidate her. Instead:

- **Label only three or four** objects at a time. Begin with basic items like *bed*, *rug* and *door*.
- **Every few weeks**, take down the current labels and label three or four new objects.

By keeping a rotating selection of sight words up for your child to see, she will be able to focus on just a few words at a time—and she will look forward to learning new ones!



### Libraries can assist parents, too

Do you spend most of your time in the children's section when visiting the library? You could be missing out on a wealth of adult resources.

Along with books, movies and magazines, many libraries offer:

- **Computer** training.
- **English** as a Second Language classes.
- **Parenting** courses.

On your next visit, be sure to ask the librarian about the many resources available.



## Finger plays boost motor and listening skills

Finger plays, such as *This Little Piggy* and *Five Little Monkeys*, are short rhymes or songs that include finger motions. They are fun and they help your child's development in numerous ways! Finger plays:

- **Build fine motor skills.** Your child has lots of small muscles in his fingers, and it's important to strengthen them. This will help him with writing, as well as daily tasks, such as tying his shoes.
- **Build listening skills.** Some finger plays require actions, such as clapping on certain words. Your child will need to practice listening for those words.



## Books to delight your early reader

- ***Here Come the Horribles*** by Susan Alice Ware. Who says *horrible* means something bad? Not these silly, fun-loving warthogs! In fact, they think horrible is wonderful!
- ***The Day it Rained Hearts*** by Felicia Bond. One day it rained hearts. Find out how Cornelia makes the most of an unexpected event in this sweet story about thoughtfulness!
- ***Z Is for Moose*** by Kelly Bingham. What happens when zebra tries to get all the animals on the correct ABC page? Not what he expects! Alphabetical order has never been so disorderly!



**Q:** My preschooler doesn't "get" reading yet, and I'm worried. She was an early talker; shouldn't she be an early reader, too?

**A:** Unlike speaking (which comes naturally), reading is strictly a *learned* skill. It's not something the brain is born knowing how to do. So don't be concerned if your child doesn't understand it yet. Children develop at their own pace. Most first show an interest in books, songs, then signs and simple words. Actual reading often begins during kindergarten.

### Building Readers®

How Families Can Help Children Get Ready to Read

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# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

February 2020

Dennis Yarmouth Title I Program

## Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites



### ■ *It's Only Stanley* (Jon Agee)

The Wimbledon family is trying to fall asleep, but every time they do, Stanley the dog wakes them up. First he howls, then there are clanks, buzzes, and other random sounds. What's all the noise about? Stanley is up to something wonderful in this rhyming story.



### ■ *Starring Jules* (As Herself)

(Beth Ain)



Second-grader Jules Bloom is in a panic. She has an audition for a commercial that she's sure

will lead to fame. But she's going to need the help of her ex-best friend and a potential new best friend to make it happen. This early chapter book is the first in the Jules series.

### ■ *Little Libraries, Big Heroes*

(Miranda Paul)

How did Little Free Libraries get their start? Readers will find out in this biography about Todd Bol. He created the first Little Free Library to share his mother's love of reading with others. Since then, the movement has spread, turning Todd into a reading hero for people all over the world.

### ■ *I Am Earth* (Rebecca and James McDonald)

Earth itself "narrates" this nonfiction book about gravity, changing seasons, orbits, and more. Information on keeping the planet healthy is woven in, and comic-style illustrations and speech balloons make the book easy to read. (Also available in Spanish.)



## Clever decoding strategies

What goes through your child's head when he's reading and comes to a word he doesn't know? Encourage him to think like a detective by asking himself these questions that will help him "decode" unfamiliar words.

### "Does it remind me of a word I know?"

Once your youngster learns to read a word, he can use it to read other words. For practice, take turns picking a word and saying words it makes you think of. See a stop sign? Your youngster might say *stop* starts like *step* or rhymes with *top*. Now have him use this strategy when he reads. *Example*: "S-t-o-m-p looks like *stop*. But there's an *m* in it. *Stomp*!"

### "Is there a part I recognize?"

Even if your child doesn't know a long word, chances are there are small words inside it that he can read. Choose a long word in a book, and see who can find the most words in it. In *window*, your youngster may see *win* and *wind*. Or maybe he'll notice that *macaroni*



contains *car* and *on*. Putting together the familiar parts can help him read the whole word.

### "Does it have a pattern?"

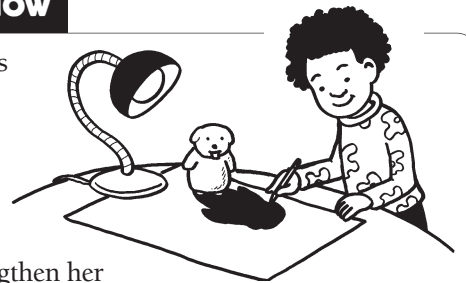
What do *cake*, *lime*, and *note* have in common? They all follow the pattern consonant / long vowel / consonant / silent *e*. When you read with your child, encourage him to look for words that fit patterns he is learning in school. Spotting the pattern might help him correctly read *mine* instead of saying *min*, for instance. ♥

## Trace the groundhog's shadow

Will the groundhog see his shadow this Groundhog Day? The groundhog in this activity will—and by tracing the shadow, your youngster will give her "writing muscles" a workout.

● **Sculpt.** Let your child use clay or play dough to make a groundhog. She'll strengthen her fingers as she rolls and shapes the dough.

● **Trace.** Have your youngster trace her groundhog's shadow to work on hand coordination. Lay a sheet of paper under a lamp. She can position the groundhog so the light casts a shadow on the paper. Then, she could use a crayon to trace around the shadow's outline. ♥

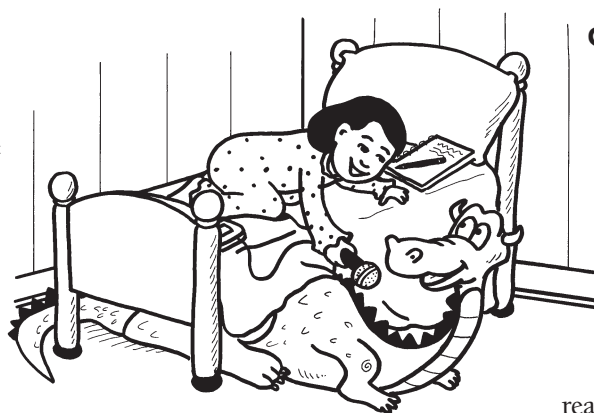




# Write to learn

As your child learns to write, she can also use writing to learn. Here are a few ideas.

**“What I know” journal.** Encourage your youngster to start a notebook about what she’s studying in school. After a science experiment with magnets, she might list things that she discovered are magnetic, then test household objects and add to her list. Or if she’s learning to solve story problems in math, she could make up her own problems and illustrate them.



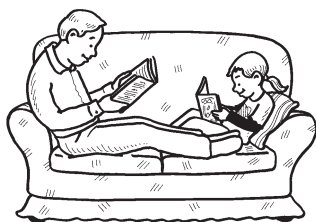
**Character interviews.** What would your child ask a famous person or a fictional character? She can use her imagination by writing pretend interview questions and making up answers. Maybe she’d ask, “What’s the hardest thing about being a dragon?” and reply: “Hiding under the bed!”

**Reading log.** Suggest that your youngster keep track of books she reads. She could practice summarizing by writing a sentence or two about each title. She may even rate each book with 1–5 stars—she’ll practice critical thinking as she compares books and decides which ones she liked more or less than others.♥

## Q&A Silent reading

**Q** My daughter has started reading silently. What is my role now?

**A** The ability to read silently shows that your child is becoming more independent as a reader. Still, she’ll benefit from the same kinds of things you did when she was just beginning to read.



For example, make sure she has plenty of reading material. Take regular trips to the library, and encourage your daughter to choose a variety of books. Also, set aside time to read. You might snuggle up and read your own book alongside her—you’ll show her that reading is a lifelong pleasure.

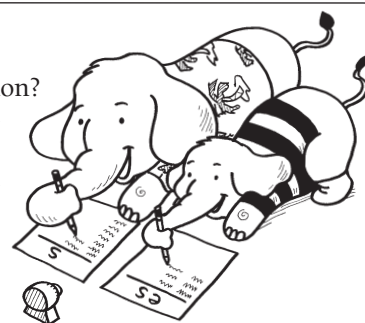
Finally, talk about books with your youngster. Ask her about what she reads in school and at home, and tell her what you’re reading. The two of you might even read the same book and discuss it when you’re finished.♥

## Fun with Words

### Play with plurals

What do *s* and *es* have in common? They turn singular words into plural ones! Play this game to help your youngster discover guidelines for choosing the correct ending when he writes.

1. Have your child label two sheets of paper, one with *s* and the other with *es*. You take one sheet, and he gets the other.
2. Set a timer for three minutes. Each of you should look through a book and write plural words you find with the ending on your sheet. For *s*, your youngster might list *arms*, *birds*, and *cups*. For *es*, you could write *dishes*, *couches*, and *boxes*.
3. When time’s up, have your child count the words on each sheet. Which ending “wins” (is most common)? He’ll see that most plural words end with *s*.
4. Ask your child what he notices about the *es* words. He may realize that many have *ch*, *sh*, *s*, *o*, *x*, or *z* before the *es*, while other words take an *s*. Then, suggest that he keep the lists handy when he writes so he can refer to the examples.♥



## Parent to Parent

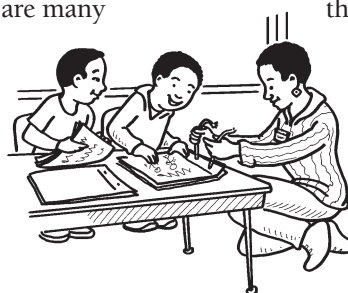
### Be a reading volunteer

I wanted to support the reading program at my son Ricky’s school. Since I stay at home with my infant twins, I emailed the teacher to ask if she had take-home projects I could do.

I found out that there are many ways I can help. Sometimes the teacher sends home instructions and materials for me to make classroom games like spelling bingo and vocabulary tic-tac-toe. Other

times, she has asked me to write poems or sentences on poster board. The projects are fun, and Ricky is always interested in what I’m doing.

I’ve also volunteered in the classroom a couple of times while my mom watched the twins. One morning, I read with small groups, and another day, I helped students turn their stories into books. Ricky likes seeing me in his classroom, and I like that I’m making a difference at his school.♥



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# BUILDING READERS®

How Families Can Help Children Become Better Readers

Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District  
Title 1

## Journaling can reinforce your child's reading and writing skills

Keeping a journal is an effective way to build reading and writing skills. But kids aren't always enthusiastic about journaling. Try giving your child a notebook, a pen and some irresistible entry starters. Here are some ideas to try:

- **Rewrite a favorite story.** Encourage your child to write something new about a character she loves.
- **Write a silly poem.** Challenge your child to craft a poem that uses fun combinations of words.
- **Pass notes** with your child. Write a silly question in her notebook for her to answer. Then she can write back and ask you something.
- **Write for TV.** Suggest that your child imagine a new episode of a favorite TV show. Read—and compliment—the story she writes!



*"It is well to read everything of something,  
and something of everything."*

—Lord Henry P. Brougham

## Teach your child to tackle tough words

Sometimes words are hard to figure out, and that's why schools teach "word attack" skills. When your child approaches a challenging word, encourage him to:

- **Sound out the word,** making and blending letter sounds. Which sounds make the most sense?
- **Think of similar words.** What words look like the mystery word? For example, *freight* looks and sounds like *eight*.
- **Look carefully at pictures.** What people, things and actions are shown? Do they provide any clues?
- **Read more.** Reread the sentence—and the ones before and after it. Think about what words might fit. Give them a try!

## Get some read-aloud assistance from famous actors!

Need a break from doing dramatic read-alouds for your child? Visit Storyline Online!

There, you'll find video recordings of popular stories read by members of the Screen Actors Guild. Check it out at [www.storylineonline.net](http://www.storylineonline.net). Or, download the app on your tablet or smartphone.



## Let reading inspire activities

Your child has to read a biography for school, and she's not excited about it. So plan some fun activities related to the book.

If she reads about Benjamin Franklin, for instance, she might learn that Franklin supported fire departments. As a family, you could visit a fire department in honor of Franklin's work.



## Patience pays off when reading textbooks

Some children rush through reading assignments just to be finished quickly.

But when they do that, they miss out on learning. When reading a textbook, your child should:

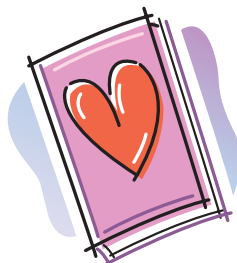
- **Skim the text,** noticing main ideas.
- **Turn headings into questions,** and then answer them by reading the text.
- **Restate main ideas** after each section.
- **Pause and review** what he learned.



## Suggest comic books for reluctant readers

Does your reader hesitate to pick up traditional chapter books but eagerly reads comic books? That's OK! Experts say that comic books are just another type of reading material. They provide many of the same benefits and opportunities to boost reading skills. In fact, picture books and graphic novels have adopted elements of comics, including motion lines and speech bubbles.

By reading comic books that you approve of, your child can learn how words and pictures come together to tell a story. She will also see the progression of a story from beginning to middle to end. So when your child says that she just doesn't want to read, suggest a comic book featuring some of her favorite characters—she may just change her mind!



**Source:** J. Vecchiarelli, "5 Ways Comic Books Can Improve Literacy Skills," ProLiteracy, [nlswc.com/br-es\\_comicbooks](http://nlswc.com/br-es_comicbooks).

## Integrate TV time and reading time

With a little planning, television can become an effective tool for learning. You can even use it to encourage your child to read. To use TV programs to promote reading:

- **Have your child read** reviews and descriptions of TV shows and movies. Decide together if you'll watch them.
- **Encourage your child** to look up new words that he hears on TV.
- **Watch the news** with your child (making sure that it's age-appropriate). Then, look in the paper or online to learn more about current events.
- **Look for books** and articles that relate to a TV show that interests your child.



**Q:** Is it normal for children to reverse letters? I'm worried that my daughter has dyslexia.

**A:** It's common for early readers to confuse similar-looking letters, such as *b* and *d*. As reading skills improve, however, this shouldn't happen often.

It's wonderful that you pay attention to your child's skills! But if you are worried about her reading, be sure to discuss your concerns with her teacher.

## Try mnemonic devices

To help your child remember long lists of information, teach him how to use *mnemonic* devices.

A mnemonic device is a memory aid. If your child is learning the names of the Great Lakes, he can use the acronym HOMES to remember Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie and Superior!



## For lower elementary readers:

- ***Because Amelia Smiled*** by David Ezra Stein. Because she saw Amelia smile, Mrs. Higgins smiled and baked some cookies. See what else happens in this chain of events started by a smile.
- ***Ish*** by Peter H. Reynolds. Ramon loves to draw, but he's discouraged when his brother says his drawing of a vase doesn't look realistic. That is, until his sister says that it looks vase-ish!



## For upper elementary readers:

- ***Nuts*** by Kacy Cook. When Nell and her brothers find two baby squirrels in their yard, they figure out a way to take care of the animals.
- ***Our White House: Looking In, Looking Out*** by the National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance. This is a beautiful collection of essays, personal accounts, historical fiction and poetry.

## Building Readers®

How Families Can Help Children Become Better Readers

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# Reading Connection

INTERMEDIATE EDITION

Working Together for Learning Success

February 2020

Dennis Yarmouth Title I Program

## Book Picks

### ■ *The Nora Notebooks: The Trouble with Ants* (Claudia Mills)

Nora dreams of being a scientist like her parents. Her current fascination? Ants. When she's given a persuasive writing assignment in school, she decides to present scientific facts to convince others that ants are as interesting as she thinks they are.



### ■ *Kid Athletes: True Tales of Childhood from Sports Legends* (David Stabler)

Explore the childhoods of famous athletes like gymnast Gabby Douglas, basketball player Yao Ming, race car driver Danica Patrick, baseball player Babe Ruth, and others. Before they were world-renowned athletes, they were just kids who went to school and dealt with daily challenges—like your child does.



■ *The Time Machine* (H. G. Wells)  
What will life be like in the future? In this classic science fiction novel, a man travels in a time machine. He discovers a society without disease, poverty, or war—but the people have also lost the qualities that make each person unique. (Also available in Spanish.)

### ■ *Pass Go and Collect \$200: The Real Story of How Monopoly Was Invented* (Tanya Lee Stone)

Learn all about how one of the most famous and beloved board games was invented by Lizzie Magie in the 1800s. The history of Monopoly is told in this nonfiction book that includes a trivia section and Monopoly Math problems for readers to solve.



## Nonfiction family fun

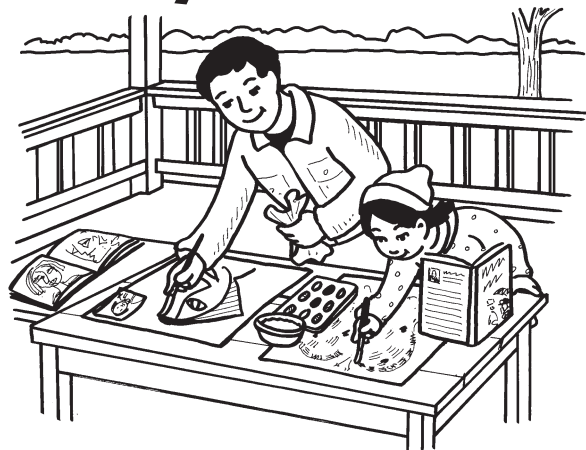
Biographies...science... history...nonfiction books not only give your youngster practical reasons to read, they're fun and interesting, too. Use these ideas to encourage her to enjoy and learn from nonfiction.

### Explore art

Ask each family member to read a biography of a famous artist. Then, talk about the artists' lives and how they created their art. Each person can choose her favorite and do an art project based on that artist's style. If your child picks Georges Seurat, she can try *pointillism*—Seurat's technique of making entire pictures with tiny dots.

### Discover nature

Field guides and other nature books have detailed photographs and descriptions of trees, birds, and flowers. They can introduce your youngster to new vocabulary and spark her interest in science. Plus, they'll get the whole family outdoors. You might find one at the



library and use it to identify plants and animals in your neighborhood.

### Delve into history

Read about family trees in a book like *Climbing Your Family Tree* (Ira Wolfman). Gather photos and information from relatives (full names, dates and places of birth), and make your own family tree. Or pick a local landmark, such as a historic home or battlefield. Then, read about it in your library's local history section, or research it online. ■

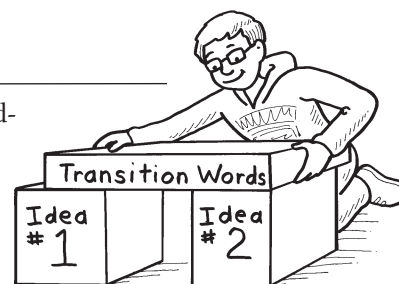
## Transition words

Writers use transition words to help readers move smoothly from one idea to the next. Show your child these ways to use them when he writes.

● **To indicate order:** *first, second, next, then, finally, last.* (First, Josie unlocked the door. Then, she opened it. Finally, she peeked inside.)

● **To compare ideas:** *like, unlike, however, instead, still, also.* (Unlike spiders, which have eight legs, bees have only six legs.)

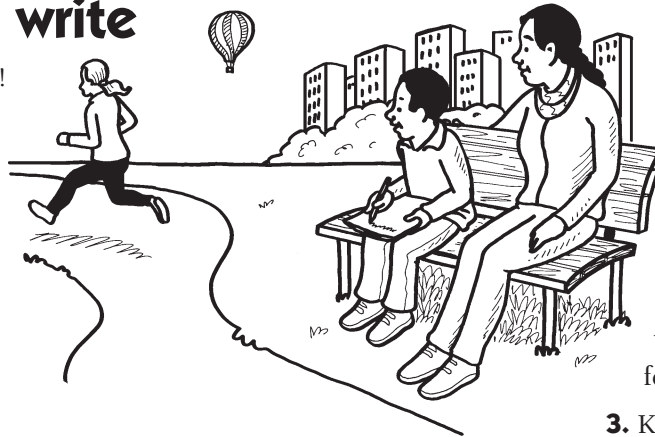
● **To indicate cause and effect:** *because, since, as a result, therefore, so.* (Since it's getting late, we have to go to bed.) ■



## Stop, drop, and write

Anytime is a great time to write! Spark your child's enthusiasm for writing with these spur-of-the-moment activities.

**1.** Bring a spiral notebook along for writing on the go. He can choose three things he spots, say a jogger, a hot-air balloon, and a park bench. Then, ask him to write a news report that uses all three. When he finishes,



he can pretend to be a TV or radio reporter and “broadcast” his story to you.

**2.** Hang a poster board on your child's bedroom door, and let him use markers and colored pencils to cover it with “graffiti.” He could write interesting quotes, compose poems, or draw comic strips. When the board is full, he's ready for a new one.

**3.** Keep index cards on hand for “writing breaks.” A family member can hand out cards and ask everyone to stop and write about what they're thinking or doing. *Idea:* Exchange cards and take turns reading one another's words aloud. ■

## Parent <sup>2</sup> Parent Speak confidently

My son's teacher told me that Jeremy tends to mumble and look down when he talks. She explained that this will affect his grades as oral presentations become more important in school.

Mrs. Ross suggested that I give Jeremy opportunities to practice at home. We started with phone calls. I had him RSVP for a family reunion and make his own dental appointment. Then he worked on face-to-face communication. He practiced making eye contact as he ordered at restaurants or asked store clerks where to find items.



When Jeremy's next presentation rolled around, he rehearsed speaking clearly, looking at his audience, and using gestures. He said it went well—and he told me the practice helped him feel more confident. ■

## Habits of good readers

A good reader doesn't necessarily know every word or immediately understand everything she reads. But she does know strategies for figuring out unfamiliar words and understanding tough material. Your youngster can use this checklist when she reads:

- ☐ Before I read, I skim the book cover, inside flap, table of contents, or chapter subheads so I know what to expect (and look for) when reading.
- ☐ I pause while I'm reading to visualize a story event or jot down information. This helps me understand and remember what I read.
- ☐ I slow down when a book gets confusing so I don't miss anything important. If necessary, I go back and slowly reread difficult material. ■



## Fun with Words Digging up roots

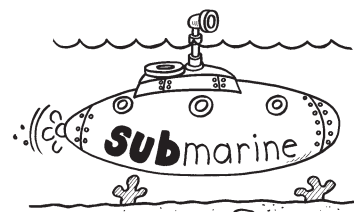
Has your child ever wondered how spelling bee contestants learn all those long words?

One of their secrets is understanding word roots. For example, the root *geo* means *earth* (*geography*), *voc* means *word* (*vocabulary*), and *sub* means *under* (*submarine*). Help your child learn more about roots with this game.

Find a list of roots in a dictionary or online. Then, let your youngster choose one and read

its definition. Now take turns calling out a word with that root. The twist? Your word can be real or made up. For *phon* (*sound*), she might say *xylophone* (real) or *cellophone* (made up).

The other person has to say if the word is real—and, if so, give its definition. Then, look it up in the dictionary to check. If she's right, or she correctly identified the word as fake, she picks a new root for the next round. ■



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# Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

FEBRUARY 2020

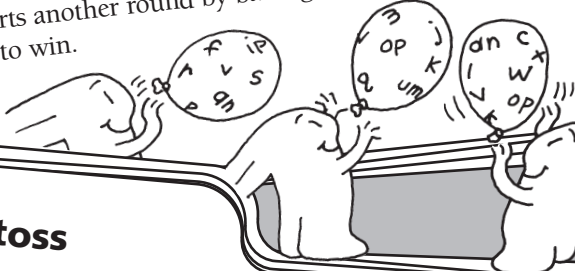
## READING Word-family balloons

Exploring word families, or words with the same ending, is like being at a party when your family plays this game.

**Ingredients:** one inflated balloon per player, markers, pencil and paper

Have each player write 10 consonants (letters other than a, e, i, o, u, and y) and five common word endings (examples: an, et, ip, op, um) all over his balloon. Stand in a circle, and pick one player to go first.

He bats his balloon to any player. That person makes a word by combining any consonant and any ending he's touching. Example: His left thumb is on c and his right pinky is on an, so he says can. Is it a real word? Yes—he scores a point. Then, he starts another round by batting his balloon to someone else. Earn 10 points to win.



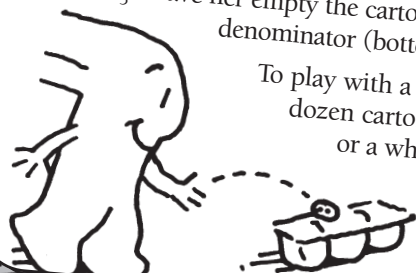
## FRACTIONS Egg-carton toss

Don't throw away that empty egg carton! It makes the perfect tool for working with fractions.

**Ingredients:** empty egg cartons (lids cut off), scissors, buttons

Cut an egg carton to make a piece with 3 "dimples" (sections). Let your child put that piece on the floor, stand a few feet away, and try to lob in a few buttons. What fraction of the carton contains buttons? If buttons land in 2 of the 3 sections, it's  $\frac{2}{3}$ . Have her empty the carton and toss again. Since there are 3 spots, the denominator (bottom number) will always be 3.

To play with a different denominator, she could use a half-dozen carton (6 spots = a denominator of 6, for sixths) or a whole carton (twelfths). Or cut a carton into a 4-section piece for fourths or a 2-section piece for halves.



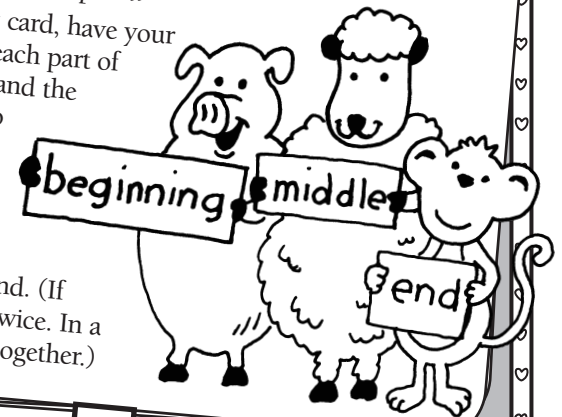
## SEQUENCING Put on a skit

Acting out story events in order boosts your child's sequencing skills, an important part of reading comprehension.

**Ingredients:** picture book, three index cards, pencil

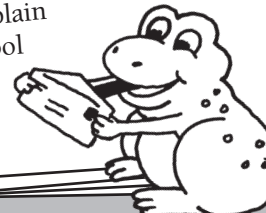
Read a book together. On each index card, have your youngster write a short summary of each part of the story: the beginning, the middle, and the end. Shuffle the cards, and give one to each family member.

The person with the "beginning" card acts out that part of the story. The second family member acts out the middle, and the third person acts out the end. (If there are fewer people, one actor goes twice. In a larger family, two people act out a part together.)



## WRITING

Suggest that your child write letters about her school to different people. She'll practice writing for an audience by deciding what to tell them. In a letter to her little brother, she might describe a typical school day. If she writes to the governor, she could explain why her school deserves an award.



## Refrigerator Poster

Just hang your Recipes poster on the refrigerator and sneak in an activity when you have a few minutes. These fun activities will help develop school success and positive behavior. Check off each box as you complete the "recipe."

## SAFETY

Ask your youngster to help you test your home's smoke detectors. Together, mark a calendar or set a phone reminder to check the batteries monthly (maybe the day you pay your electric bill). Have him note when you replace them, and be sure it's at least once a year.





# Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

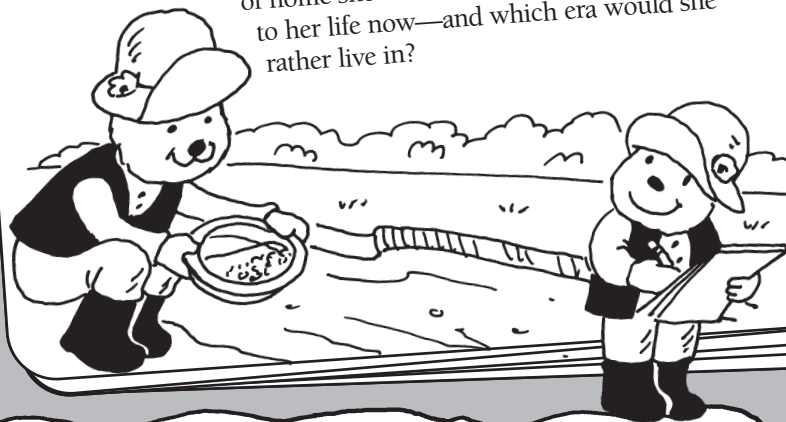
## HISTORY Life in the "old days"

Foster interest in the past by having your child imagine life in a different era.

**Ingredients:** paper, pencil

What was life like long ago? Let your youngster pick a location and time period, then look up facts and write a story placing herself there.

Say she chooses California during the 1800s. She might imagine panning for gold during the Gold Rush. Her story could include details like what kind of transportation she used, what she ate and wore, and what type of home she lived in. How does that life compare to her life now—and which era would she rather live in?



## Congratulations!

We finished \_\_\_\_\_ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)

FEBRUARY 2020

## ADDITION

Play this addition memory game with your youngster. Have him cut paper into 12 squares. Let him write addition problems ( $2 + 7$ ,  $21 + 4$ ) on half of them and the answers (9, 25) on the rest. Place the squares face-down in even rows and columns. Take turns flipping over two squares at a time, and keep any matches. Collect the most matches to win.



## READING

Let your child create a bookmark that will help her connect with stories she reads. On a strip of cardboard, have her write sentence starters, such as "The setting reminds me of..." or "I was surprised when..." She can complete the sentences after she finishes reading.



## OBSERVATION

Boost your youngster's powers of observation with this idea. Face each other for 20 seconds. Look carefully at one another, then turn around. Now change two things each (untuck your shirt, remove your watch), and turn back around. What is different about the other person?



## Character Corner

### SELF-RELIANCE

If your child gets stuck while doing homework, it's natural to want to rescue him. Instead, help him find a way to get the job done himself. *Example:* "How about a 10-minute break? Then you can take a fresh look at your work."



### FRIENDLINESS

With your youngster, list ways to be friendly. Encourage her to try as many as possible in a day or week. She could wave at a custodian, ask a neighbor about his day, or say hello to the cashier at a store.



### GENEROSITY

Teach your child to be generous with his time—no money required. He might let a classmate who's in a hurry go ahead of him in line for the pencil sharpener. Or perhaps he'll attend a friend's sporting event or offer to proofread a classmate's story.



## LISTENING

Sit in a circle. Let someone sing a line from a song. The next person has to listen carefully for the last letter of that line and then use it to start a line from another song. ("Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily." "You are my sunshine.") Keep going until everyone has had a turn.

