



SPECIAL POINTS OF IN- TEREST:

If you have any further questions, please contact me, Cookie Stewart, at 508-778-7599 or at stewartv@dy-region-al.k12.ma.us

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Dennis-Yarmouth Title I

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

OCTOBER 2019

From the Title I Coordinator:

As October rolls in as a fat pumpkin, Title I is up and running in all our Title I schools. If you have not met with your child's Title I teacher, please make an appointment and be sure to sign the Home/School Compact. We need to have a signed one on file for every child in Title I.

Next month, November, is Massachusetts Family Literacy Month. Watch for notices from your child's school for events to celebrate this month. Listed below are some activities that you could practice at home. And while we ask you to do them in the month of November, we hope that they will become a practice which will remain for the rest of your lives.

© **Set aside time** each day for literacy related activities, such as, reading with your child for 20–30 minutes per day.

© **When you watch a video** or movie, read the book version and discuss the story.

© **Share and discuss current** news, sports, cultural, or school events.

© **Host a reading, science,**

art, dance, or music activity at your home and ask neighbors to take turns as hosts.

© **Create family portfolios** reflecting pictures, stories, poems, and drawings with captions.

© **Support schools** in coordinating family literacy/learning hours before and/or after school.

© **Develop a family action plan** for wellness, such as nutrition, stress management, exercise, etc.

© **Make regular visits to the library.**

© **Use everyday activities** to incorporate literacy, such as developing shopping lists, read signs and labels at the grocery store, count money, measure and read recipes when cooking, count and read street signs when traveling.



Things you can do:



A Helping Hand

Why do kids get homework?

So they can reinforce and practice skills they've already learned, and so teachers can assess a student's mastery of the information. That is also why parents **should not do** the homework for their child.

What's the best way to help?

Ask prodding questions, lead them to the answer, but do not give it to them. It's OK for a kindergartner to write an S backward; don't fix it.

What if I don't know the subject my child is studying?

Homework is a child's independent study, and it should stay that way. But parents can give other assistance: assign a space with few distractions (no TV and no radio), establish a strict time for homework, make the child explain the teacher's expectations. If the child says "I don't know

what to do." Have him or her read the directions on the homework to you. Nine times out of ten, half-way through the directions, they will "get it."

What if my child is struggling?

Get a clean sheet of paper and work on a similar task, but do not redo the homework. It is also helpful to send a note to the teacher explaining the child's problem.

How should you help older kids?

Don't express your distaste for a particular subject. For example, don't say, "I was lousy at math." You are just giving them an excuse to do the same. And help draw up a timeline so they learn to handle deadlines. The whole idea is to create a sense of discipline and order.

Reprinted from [Newsweek Magazine](#) 10/9/2006

Math+Science Connection

Beginning Edition

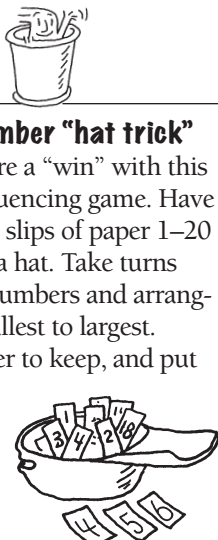
Building Excitement and Success for Young Children

October 2019

TOOLS & TIDBITS

Number "hat trick"

Score a "win" with this sequencing game. Have your child number slips of paper 1–20 and place them in a hat. Take turns pulling out three numbers and arranging them from smallest to largest. Choose one number to keep, and put the rest back. The first person to get three numbers in a row (4, 5, 6) calls out, "Hat trick!"



Earth's path in space

Give your youngster an idea of how Earth orbits the sun. Let her stick a big ball of play dough (the sun) on the middle of a pie plate. Then, help her tilt the plate to roll a smaller play dough ball (Earth) around the edge. Although Earth's orbit isn't a perfect circle, this model helps her understand how we travel around the sun.

Book picks

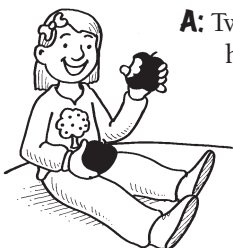
■ Your child will learn pumpkin facts as he skip counts with Charlie and his classmates in *How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin?* (Margaret McNamara).

■ The story of *Magnet Max* (Monica Lozano Hughes) will inspire your youngster to figure out what's magnetic and what's not.

Just for fun

Q: If a tree has 10 apples and you pick two, how many apples do you have?

A: Two, because that's how many you picked.

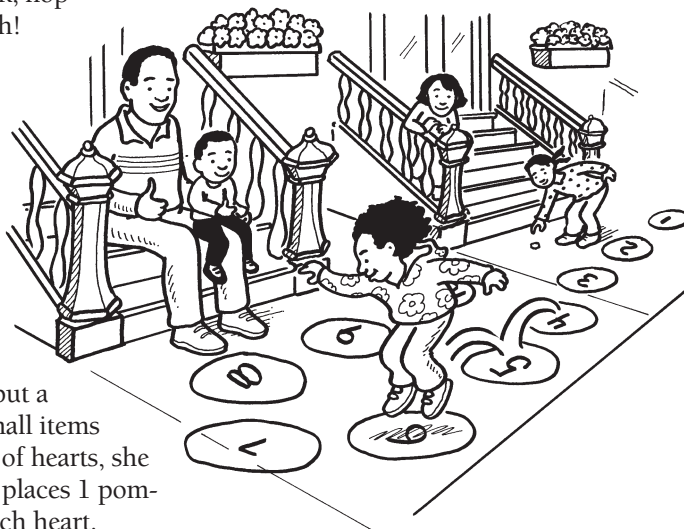


Fun with number sense

Play cards, eat a snack, hop like a frog—and do math! Here are hands-on ideas for building your child's number sense.

1-to-1 matching

Playing cards are ideal for matching up objects 1-to-1. Let your youngster arrange cards faceup on the table (face cards removed, ace = 1) and put a matching number of small items on each card. For the 6 of hearts, she could count to 6 as she places 1 pom-pom or jelly bean on each heart.



Snacks at a glance

As an adult, you can probably tell how many objects are in a small group without counting. Help your child practice this skill. Arrange 1–10 small snacks (pretzels, raisins) on a plate, and give her a few seconds to look before you cover the plate with a napkin. Ask her to tell you how many snacks there are, then count to check. Now it's time to eat!

Lily pad hop

Your youngster can pretend she's a frog while counting from numbers other than 1. Let her use green chalk to draw 10 lily pads, numbered 1–10, on a sidewalk. She should roll a die and stand on the number rolled (say, 4). Ask her to hop and count on to 10 (5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) or backward to 1 (3, 2, 1). *Challenge:* Erase the numbers—can she count the circles without them? 🐸

My science station

Inspire your junior scientist to make discoveries by helping him set up a science station.

First, let your youngster gather science tools he can use to investigate and explore. *Examples:* magnifying glass, flashlight, tweezers, cups, spoons, paper, pencils, crayons.

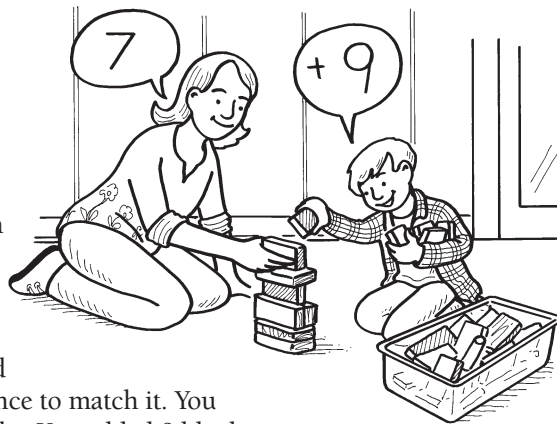
Then, encourage your child to collect natural objects, or "specimens," from the ground outside (bark, rocks, dirt, sticks, flower petals). He can label and display them, then use his tools to observe them closely. Have him draw what he sees. 🐞



Let's build story problems

Your youngster builds a tower with 30 blocks. The dog knocks down 15 of them. What a problem—a math story problem, that is! ($30 - 15 = 15$) Solve story problems together with these activities.

Build it. Make up a story problem, and have your child write a number sentence to match it. You might say, “I built a house with 7 blocks. You added 9 blocks.”



How many blocks did we use in all?” ($7 + 9 = \underline{\quad}$) Now use blocks to act out the problem so he can find the answer. You would stack 7 blocks, then he'd add 9 and count the total (16 blocks, because $7 + 9 = 16$).

Take it apart. Once you have several buildings, use them to create subtraction problems. You could say, “Our tower is 35 blocks tall. A friend wants to use 12 of the blocks for her tower. How many blocks will we have left?” Your youngster can write the number sentence ($35 - 12 = \underline{\quad}$), remove 12 blocks, and count to get the answer (23 blocks, because $35 - 12 = 23$).

Q & A What can we measure with?

Q: My daughter is learning about measurement in school, but she's not using a ruler. Why is this, and how can she practice measuring at home?

A: Children first explore the concept of measurement with familiar objects, such as pasta noodles or paper clips. Later, your daughter will move onto standard units like inches or centimeters.

Together, find fun items to measure with, and give your youngster “measurement challenges” she'll enjoy. You might ask, “How many noodles long is your shoe?” or “How many pencils long is the table?” Then, help her line up the objects carefully, end to end, and count them to check. (Each object must be the same length, just like an inch is always the same. For example, brand-new pencils would work, but not used pencils.)

When your child learns to use a ruler, she'll already know the importance of measuring with units that are all the same size.



MATH CORNER

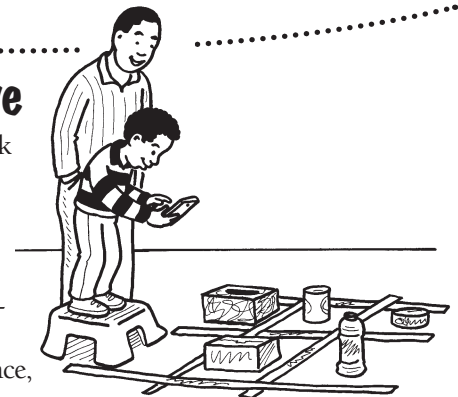
View from above

How does your child think your town looks to a bird flying high above it? With this map-making activity, he'll find out—and develop spatial reasoning skills.

Encourage your youngster to create a miniature town with masking tape “streets” and “buildings” from the recycling bin. For instance, he might use a tissue box for his school and a soup can for a water tower. Now let him pretend he's a bird—he can stand over his finished town and take a photo or draw a sketch.

Have your child use the picture to make a map. He'll realize that birds see the tops of things, so he might simply draw a rectangle for his school and a circle for the water tower. Finally, hide a small toy person or animal in one of the buildings in his town, and mark an X in the matching spot on his map. Can he find the toy based on its location on the map?

Idea: The next time you visit a mall, park, or historic place, let him use a map to locate attractions.



SCIENCE LAB

“See” the oxygen

Your youngster will gasp when this experiment shows her how plants give off oxygen!

You'll need: lettuce, two bowls, measuring cup, water

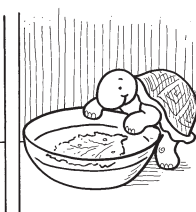
Here's how: In each bowl, have your child place a lettuce leaf and add 2 cups warm water. She should set one bowl in a sunny spot and the other in a dark room, then check the leaves in 1 hour.

What happens? Tiny bubbles form on

the surface of each leaf. The leaf in the sun, however, has more bubbles.

Why? Plants, such as lettuce, make their own food with the help of water and sunlight. Water contains oxygen, which plants don't need (but humans do), so as plants make food, they let out the oxygen they got from the water. The

plant in the shade couldn't release as much oxygen because it didn't have sunlight to help it start the food-making process.



OUR PURPOSE

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

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Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION®

October 2019

SHORT NOTES

Estimate everything!

Weave estimation into daily life to build your youngster's math skills. While cooking, you might ask, "How many cherry tomatoes do you think are in that container?" Or in a waiting room, challenge her to estimate the number of ceiling tiles. Have her count to check. The more she practices, the better she'll get at estimating.

Take initiative

Part of developing initiative is learning to recognize what needs to be done. Instead of guiding your child through each step in a task, get him in the routine of figuring out what to do next. If he's clearing the table and forgets to wipe it off, say, "Take a look at the table—what's the last step?"

Family fire drills

Use National Fire Prevention Week (October 6–12) to create a fire escape plan with your youngster. Encourage her to draw a map of your home with two exits per room and a meeting place outside. Then, hold a fire drill. *Note:* Studies show that many kids sleep through smoke alarms, so be sure your plan includes waking everyone up.

Worth quoting

"Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere."

Chinese proverb

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What do you get when you cross a stream and a brook?

A: Wet feet.



Secrets of better behavior

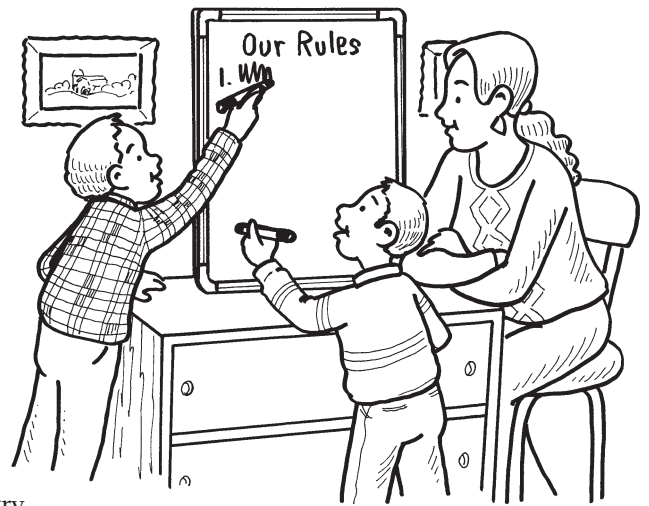
It's no secret that parents want their children to behave appropriately. But what really works? Try focusing on teaching your child to behave rather than punishing him for misbehavior, and you're likely to see better results. Consider these tips.

Be a mirror

Your youngster looks to you for guidance, so model the behavior you expect. For example, if he sees you staying calm when you're angry, he'll be less likely to throw fits when he's upset. Talk through your actions, too. You might say, "I had a stressful day at work. I'm going to relax with my book for a little while so I'm not cranky."

Make rules together

Children find it easier to remember and follow rules that they have a role in creating. Sit down together, and write a list. Be sure your youngster understands the reason behind each rule. For instance, ask, "Why shouldn't we leave things on the stairs?" (Because someone could trip



and fall.) *Tip:* If you need to add or change a rule, include him in that discussion, too.

Highlight success

When you praise your child, emphasize the good feelings he gets from behaving well. Saying "You must be proud of yourself for waiting so patiently" gives him a sense of accomplishment. That feeling of pride will motivate him to repeat the behavior in the future.♥

Mistakes make your brain grow

Did you know that mistakes actually help kids learn more? Use these ideas to encourage your youngster to make the most of her mistakes:

- Give your child room to "mess up." You might suspect that masking tape isn't strong enough to hold her project together. But she'll gain more from the experience if she tries, fails, and comes up with a new solution all by herself.

- Help your youngster put mistakes in perspective. Perhaps she forgot to include an important point during her class presentation. Ask her what part went well—maybe her graphics were cool and her classmates seemed interested in her topic.♥

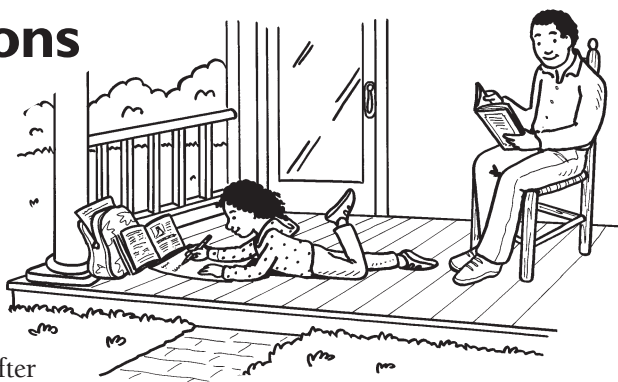


Homework solutions

Whether your child is new to homework or has been doing it for years, your support can help her do her best. That's important, because homework reinforces what she's learning in school. Here's how to set her up for success.

Find a good schedule

Set aside a specific time for homework so it becomes a habit, perhaps right before or after dinner. Also, suggest that she figure out a plan that works best for her. She could start with the easiest assignment to gain momentum or get the hardest one out of the way first.



Eliminate distractions

Make sure your child turns off electronics before she starts homework. Also, you might encourage everyone in the house to have "quiet time" while she does her assignments. Maybe you'll read or pay bills while younger siblings color, for instance.

Troubleshoot problems

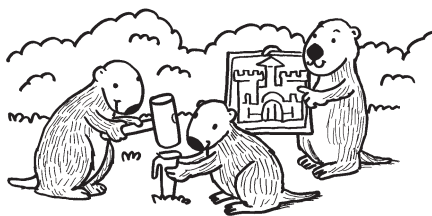
When your youngster gets stuck, offer to help—but avoid telling her the answers. If she's confused by the directions, try reading them together. Or if she's struggling with an addition problem, offer to walk her through a few sample problems in the back of her math book. ♥



PARENT TO PARENT

Engineer a maze

Ever get lost in a corn maze? That's what happened to our family last week at a fall festival. When we made our way out, the farmer explained that engineering and technology were used to create the maze.



My son Mason was fascinated. We learned that a designer drew the maze on a computer. Then, an engineer generated GPS coordinates, which guided the farmer as he mowed the corn into the maze.

At home, Mason decided to create his own maze. He drew a castle-shaped design and plotted it out in the yard with tent stakes. Next, he arranged pool noodles, lawn chairs, and other outdoor items between the stakes. When it was ready, he invited friends over to go through his maze.

Now Mason is busy planning his next maze. I can't wait to see what it is! ♥

OUR PURPOSE

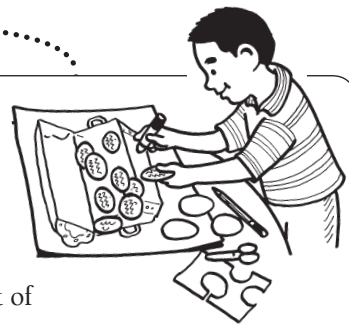
To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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ACTIVITY CORNER

Be a true friend

Children who form friendships with classmates tend to do better in school. Inspire your youngster to "treasure" his friends with this writing activity.



1. Draw: Have him draw a treasure chest on a sheet of paper and make "coins" by cutting circles out of yellow paper.

2. Identify: Take turns naming things you each value in a friendship. *Examples:* Being loyal, enjoying the same things, helping each other. Your child can write each idea on a separate coin.

3. Discuss: Let him glue the coins onto his treasure chest. As he adds each one, you can both share real-life examples from your own friendships. Your youngster might say, "Raul and I like to read together at language arts time," and you could say, "My friend Jess helped us by bringing meals over after your sister was born."

Hang up his treasure chest as a reminder of qualities he'll look for in his classmates—and will remember to show in himself. ♥



The parent-teacher team

Q: I want to be more involved in my daughter's education. Where should I start?

A: Teaming up with your child's teacher is a great way to get started. Send the teacher a nice email, perhaps about a classroom activity your daughter enjoyed, and let him know you'd like to stay in touch throughout



the year. You might ask if you can volunteer in the classroom or from home.

Also, look over papers the teacher sends home. You'll see how your child is doing in various subjects. Then, if she's struggling with anything, you can reach out to the teacher for advice.

Finally, tell your daughter that you and her teacher are a team, with the same goal—helping her succeed in school. ♥

BUILDING READERS®

How Families Can Help Children Get Ready to Read

Dennis-Yarmouth School District Title I
Virginia Stewart, Title I Coordinator

Motivate your child to read and learn with these three strategies

When your child is excited about school, she will feel more motivated to learn to read. Here are three ways to boost her enthusiasm:

- 1. Ask your child** questions every day about what goes on at preschool. What interesting things did she learn? Did her teacher read her a story?
- 2. Have your child** give you a tour of her classroom the next time you visit her preschool class. Note what interests her most and use this to help her choose books later on. "You love your class garden. Let's find books on plants at the library!"
- 3. Support your child's** growing independence by letting her choose some things to read and learn about. For example, she could select which books to check out at the library.



Source: D. Stipek, Ph.D. and K. Seal, *Motivated Minds: Raising Children to Love Learning*, Henry Holt and Company.

'Picture directions' build reading skills

Pictures can help children figure out what words mean. Try creating some "picture directions" for your child. To make them, draw pictures and write simple directions underneath. For example, you could draw a picture of:

- **A boy brushing his teeth**, and write "Brush your teeth."
- **A boy wearing pajamas**, and write "Put your pajamas on."
- **A boy holding a comb**, and write "Comb your hair."
- **A boy holding a book**, and write "Pick out a bedtime story."

Your child will feel proud that he can "read" and follow these directions with little or no help from you. Not only will they strengthen his reading skills, they will also reinforce household routines.

Teach language skills with songs

Songs aren't just fun to sing—they're also an important learning tool. After all, music is another way to expose your child to words and language.

To help your child get the most from songs:

- **Listen** to music together.
- **Move** to music.
- **Sing** his favorite rhymes.
- **Invent** silly lyrics.
- **Share** songs from your childhood.



Games boost brain power!

Boost your child's thinking skills, and she'll be one step closer to reading readiness. Give her opportunities to:

- **Paint** and draw.
- **Explore** the great outdoors.
- **Play** memory games.
- **Experience** new places and things.
- **Make up** stories.
- **Solve** jigsaw puzzles.



Use conversations to introduce new vocabulary words

Errands and household chores may be routine to you, but some may be new to your child.

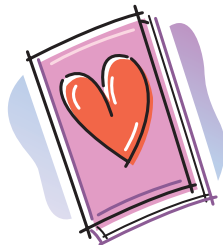
Take time to explain tasks as you do them, and use specific vocabulary. "We'll drop this letter in the *mailbox*. Soon, the *mail carrier* will pick it up and take it to the *post office*, and the *postal workers* will make sure Uncle David receives it."



Build your child's print awareness

Your child needs to understand *concepts of print*—the order and pattern of books—before she can really learn to read. To show her how books work:

1. **Choose a book** from your child's collection.
2. **Show her the front of the book.** Say, "This is the front cover. Can you turn the book over?" When she does so, say, "This is the back cover."
3. **Point out the author's name.** Read the name to her. Explain that the author is the person who wrote the story.
4. **Open the book and begin reading.** Use your finger to indicate the place where reading begins. As you read, trace your finger under the words to indicate the direction the print goes.



Source: J.R. Bradford-Vernon, *How to Be Your Child's First Teacher: Insights for Parent Involvement*, Instructional Fair.

Encourage your child to explain pretend writing to you

When your child scribbles "words" as part of a drawing, encourage him to explain what he has written. This promotes reading and writing as your child learns that he can express himself with written words.



Encourage this expression by asking your child to draw a picture and "write" about what he's created under the picture.

Make sure reading time is fun for your child

The more your child has fun while reading, the more he'll grow to love it! There are lots of ways to make sure that reading time is fun time, too.

Together you can:

- **Play dress up** and act out scenes from favorite books.
- **Cook up a meal from a book.** Use food coloring and serve green eggs and ham. Or, fill a basket with goodies that Little Red Riding Hood can take to Grandma's house.
- **Build a reading fort.** Stretch a blanket or sheet over the backs of two chairs. Then, crawl in and read.



Books to delight your early reader

- ***At Our House*** by Isabel Minhós Martins. This book starts counting all the people who live together in one house—from their fingers to the number of hairs on their heads.
- ***Too Purpley!*** by Jean Reidy. A girl is having trouble figuring out what to wear. Everything is too itchy, too scratchy, too baggy or too purpley! Will she ever find something to put on?
- ***Moonday*** by Adam Rex. One night, the moon lowers itself into a family's backyard—and doesn't go away when morning comes. Everything in town is different on this unusual day. This book's beautiful illustrations and lyrical text will delight readers, young and old.



Q: I took my preschooler to story time at the public library all last year. She fidgeted and squirmed the entire time. Is it worth signing up again?

A: Yes! Group story time is ideal for exposing your child to books *and* strengthening her social skills. Now that she's older, your child may enjoy it more. But just in case, ask your librarian to suggest the most age-appropriate session. You can also talk to your child about how to behave at story time. Practice by asking her to sit quietly while you read a story to her at home.

Building Readers®

How Families Can Help Children Get Ready to Read

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Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

October 2019

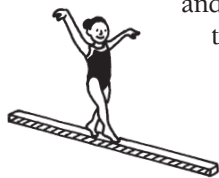
Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ **Gymnastics Time!** (Brendan Flynn)

This nonfiction book takes readers inside a gym to see gymnasts in action. It explains basic facts about the sport, such as how to get started and what equipment the athletes use.



Part of the Sports Time series.
(Also available in Spanish.)

■ **We Don't Eat Our Classmates**

(Ryan T. Higgins)

Penelope Rex is a little dinosaur who ate her classmates on the first day of school. (Could she help it if they were delicious?) Now no one wants



to be friends with her. It takes a lesson from the class goldfish to put Penelope on the right track.

■ **Space Taxi: Archie Takes Flight**

(Wendy Mass and Michael Brawer)

Archie Morningstar is excited to spend Take Your Kid to Work Day in his dad's taxi. But when he climbs in the car, he discovers that his dad is a taxi driver for aliens from outer space. Instead of a trip around the city, Archie is on an intergalactic adventure! The first book in the Space Taxi series.

■ **A Full Moon is Rising**

(Marilyn Singer)

Poetry, geography, and culture come together in this volume. Each poem is about a full moon in a different part of the world. A special section offers interesting facts about each place mentioned in the poems.



Writing is practical

Show your youngster how useful writing can be by giving him real-life reasons to put pencil to paper. Here are a few ideas.

To-do lists

What does your child want or need to do this week? Help him make lists to keep track. He might list Lego structures he plans to build (castle, rocket) or chores he needs to complete (water plants, dust). Or maybe he'll list upcoming events, such as going to the book fair and eating dinner with Grandma. He can check off each item as he finishes it.

Reminders

Let your youngster be your secretary and write reminders for you. *Examples:* "Buy milk." "Sign field trip form." Provide a pad of sticky notes (and a little spelling help) for him to jot them down. Then, set up a place to leave the notes where you will see them. Encourage reading practice by leaving notes for him, too.



Memory book

Suggest that your child start a notebook of favorite memories. Each night before bed, he could write and illustrate three things he wants to remember about the day. *Examples:* Jumping in a pile of leaves, listening to his teacher read a good book, learning a funny joke.

Note: If your youngster is just learning to write, ask him to write letters or words he knows, and help him fill in the rest. ♥

A record of my reading

These ongoing craft projects will help your child keep track of books she reads this year—and show her how she's progressing as a reader.

● **Paper chain.** Help your youngster write each book title on a strip of construction paper. She can link the strips together to form a colorful chain that will get longer the more she reads. *Idea:* Suggest that she use different-color strips for different types of books (green for animal tales, purple for poetry).

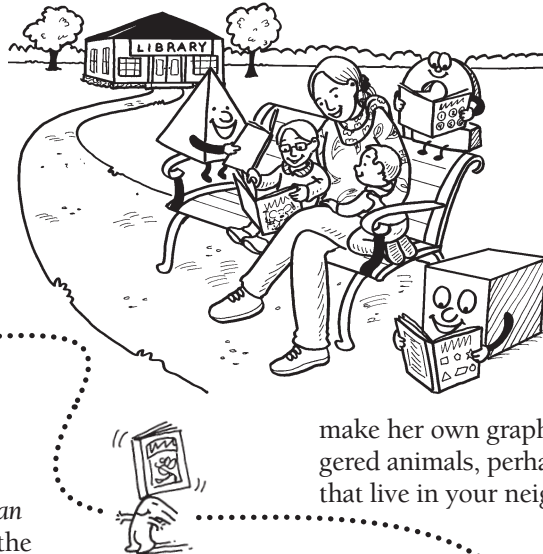
● **Patchwork quilt.** Have your child write book titles on separate construction-paper "quilt" squares. Encourage her to decorate each one—maybe she'll make a red-and-white striped square for *The Cat in the Hat* (Dr. Seuss). Now help her tape or staple the squares together in rows and columns for a quilt that grows throughout the year! ♥



I can learn from nonfiction!

Nonfiction books are fun for your youngster to read—and they build knowledge she needs in school now and later. Help her become a fan of nonfiction with these tips.

Explore school subjects. Let your child check out nonfiction library books that are related to topics she studies in school. As she learns about



numbers and shapes, for example, read math picture books. Or she could find a biography of a historical figure she's studying. She'll learn new facts and gain a deeper understanding of the topic.

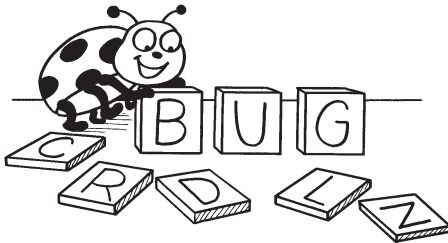
Read graphics. Many nonfiction books include charts, tables, maps, and diagrams like those your youngster will see in textbooks. When you read together, be sure to read the graphics, too, so she becomes comfortable with them. For instance, she'll learn to read the titles, captions, or data they contain. *Idea:* Suggest that she

make her own graphic. After reading a chart about endangered animals, perhaps she'll draw a chart showing animals that live in your neighborhood.♥



Real or nonsense?

How are the words *fan* and *can* related? They both belong to the *-an* word family! Give your youngster's reading and spelling skills a boost with this word family game.



1. Get a set of magnetic letters or letter tiles. Set aside the vowels, and mix up the consonants in a bowl.
2. Let your child choose a word family, such as *-an*, *-op*, *-ug*, or *-et*, and find the magnetic letters or tiles for his "family."
3. Take turns drawing a consonant from the bowl and saying it with the word family. Does it make a real word or a nonsense word? For instance, adding *b* to *-ug* makes *bug* (real). But adding *g* makes *gug* (nonsense).
4. If it's a real word, the player writes it down. When all the consonants have been used, the person with the longest list picks the next word family so you can play again.♥

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Autumn fine-motor play

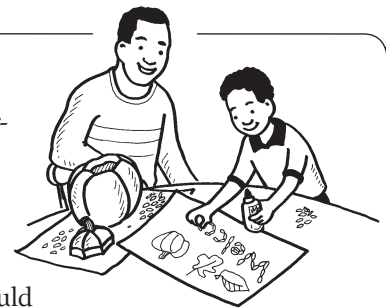
Your child's hands need to be strong and coordinated for tasks like writing and cutting with scissors. Try these fall-themed activities to give his little fingers a workout.

Pumpkin pincushion. Let your youngster stick pushpins all over a small pumpkin. Then, he could stretch colorful rubber bands between the pins to create designs.

Apple tree. Have him draw the outline of a tree on paper. He can place red pom-pom apples on his tree and then use tweezers to "pick" them up.

Leaf rubbing. Together, gather leaves from the ground outside. Encourage your child to tape one to a table, place a sheet of paper on top, and rub the side of an unwrapped crayon over it. The leaf's outline will appear!

Seed signs. Ask your youngster to create a sign for your door by gluing apple or pumpkin seeds onto paper to spell "W-E-L-C-O-M-E."♥



Working with the reading specialist

Q My daughter meets with the school reading teacher each week. How can I work with the teacher to help my child do her best?

A Start by asking the reading specialist what you and your daughter can do at home. For example, the teacher might suggest specific cues to give your child when she reads a word incorrectly. Or maybe she'll have ideas for word games that are

especially helpful for students who struggle with reading.

The specialist may also tell you what your daughter is doing well and where they're working on ways to improve.

Finally, be sure to attend all IEP (Individualized Education Program) meetings. The teacher will answer your questions, explain anything that you don't understand, and help you plan for your daughter's reading success.♥



Reading Connection

Working Together for Learning Success

October 2019

Book Picks

■ *H is for Haiku: A Treasury of Haiku from A to Z* (Sydell Rosenberg)

Organized alphabetically, this book full of haiku is the perfect inspiration to get readers to write their own poems. Each three-line poem starts with a different letter of the alphabet and covers a familiar topic like toys, weather, or pets.



■ *The Hyena Scientist* (Sy Montgomery)

Hyenas get a bad rap, but scientists who study them want to change your mind. With this

nonfiction book, readers will learn about the hyenas at a wildlife reserve in Kenya—types of breeds, how they hunt, and even how they play!

■ *Out of Left Field* (Ellen Klages)

Set in the 1950s, this story is about a young baseball player who wouldn't take no for an answer. Katy Gordon is the best pitcher in her neighborhood, yet she can't play Little League because she's a girl. So she heads to the library and uses research to argue that girls belong in baseball.



■ *Knight Kyle and the Magic Silver Lance* (*Adventures Beyond Dragon Mountain*) (Oliver Pötzsch)

Wearing his suit of armor, Knight Kyle joins his helpful band of friends to search for his great-grandfather's missing silver lance. These 13 short stories of joyful journeys in faraway lands will lead your youngster to one exciting ending.



Words in every subject

You know your child needs a strong vocabulary to do well in reading and writing. But did you know that vocabulary is important in math, science, and social studies, too? She can explore words in every subject with these three activities.

1. Find words

Whenever your youngster reads, suggest that she look for words related to school subjects. She might spot science words like *metamorphosis* in a comic book, *sodium* in a food advertisement, and *precipitation* in a weather report. Seeing how the words are used in real life will help her recognize and understand them in her textbooks.

2. Use words

Give your child reasons to say vocabulary words aloud—that will make it easier for her to identify them in textbooks. If she's studying state history, you could visit a state park and talk to a ranger. ("What tribes are *native* to this area?") Or she might practice economics terms



while shopping. ("There must be a high *demand* for these sweaters. They need to increase their *supply*.")

3. Play with words

Games can make words a permanent part of your youngster's vocabulary. Take turns picking a letter (say, C) and a school subject (perhaps math), and set a timer for three minutes. Each player lists terms that begin with the letter and fit the category (*centimeter*, *calculate*). Compare your lists. The winner is the person with the most words that no one else has.

What should I read?

One key to reading a lot is finding a steady supply of great books! Try these ideas with your youngster:

- Suggest that your child swap favorite books with a friend. He can lend books he liked or recommend that his friend get them from the library. Then, his friend could do the same thing.
- Ask your youngster to list a few books he loves. He can ask the librarian to help him choose similar books to read next.
- Give your child books you enjoyed at his age. You might even reread them so you can discuss them together.



Ways to overcome writer's block

"I don't know what to write. I'm stuck!" If your child's story stalls out, help him get his pencil moving again with these tips.

Keep writing. For 10 minutes, have him write nonstop about anything that pops into his mind. When he reads his "free writing," a possibility for his story may jump out at him.



Add something new. Remind your youngster that a first draft is a "playground" for ideas. He could add another character to the story or give one of his existing characters a new problem to solve. The changes he makes might help him get unstuck.

Skip ahead. Encourage him to fast-forward and write another part of the story. Sometimes taking a detour will trigger an idea about the section that has him stumped.

Take a break. Suggest that your child set the story aside for a little while to go for a walk or read a book. Once he stops thinking so hard, the perfect solution may appear. ■

Learning to study

My daughter Corina struggled with studying last year. She would read her textbook and then say she was done. This year, I reached out to her teacher for advice.



Her teacher said that to study effectively, Corina needs to be an "active reader." That means she should take notes while she reads, talk about the information to help her learn and remember it, and write down the answers to practice tests in textbooks.

Now at dinner, I ask Corina what she studied that day, and then we discuss it. That has led to some interesting family talks.

Also, her teacher recommended that she study a little each night. So Corina starts each session by reviewing what she read the night before and then moves on to that day's material. I feel confident that this will be a better school year for Corina! ■



Fun
with
Words

Awesome adjectives!

There's a whole world full of adjectives out there for your youngster to use when she writes. Help her discover the awesomeness of adjectives with this twist on "I Spy."

The first player picks any object she sees and uses one adjective to describe it. ("I spy a big ball.") The next person repeats the sentence, adding another adjective that is a synonym (a word with a similar meaning): "I spy a big, huge ball." Continue adding synonyms, such as *large*, *whopping*, *enormous*, *immense*, and *giant*.

When you run out of words, the last player who thought of one chooses the next object and starts another round. *Idea:* Have your child keep track of the adjectives in a notebook. She'll have a personal thesaurus to use when she writes! ■



Q&A Reading models

Q I know it's important for our son to see us reading, but my husband and I can't seem to find time to read. What should we do?

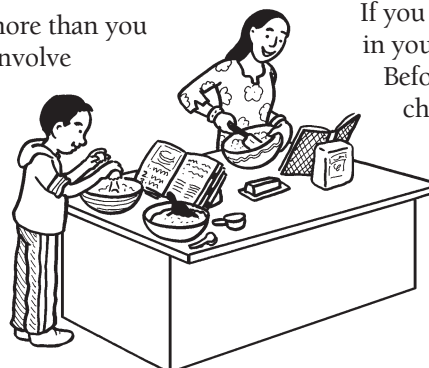
A You probably read more than you think. Most daily tasks involve some reading. Be on the lookout for them, and take every opportunity to let your son notice you reading.

When preparing meals, read recipes

and package directions aloud. During drives, point out road signs or billboards. Let your son see both of you reading the newspaper, magazines, mail, or email.

If you can, find a little time in your day for books.

Before reading to your child every night, you could each read a book silently. Seeing you read may motivate him to follow your example. ■



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BUILDING READERS®

How Families Can Help Children Become Better Readers

Dennis-Yarmouth School District Title I
Virginia Stewart, Title I Coordinator

Engage your child in frequent conversations to build vocabulary

When you have regular conversations with your child and use advanced vocabulary, you can teach her new words—and she may begin using them on her own! That's great because having a large vocabulary makes reading easier.

When using words your child doesn't know:

- **Provide a definition** that she will understand. "It's a *brisk* fall day! The weather is getting cooler, but it's not cold enough for snow yet."
- **Help her think** of a way to make connections to the word. "Can you remember another time when we were outside in the *brisk* fall air?"
- **Keep using the word** in your conversations. "It's another *brisk* day today. Let's be sure to wear an extra layer for our walk!"



Play October-themed word games

Use the month as inspiration for word games! With your child, you can:

- **Create words** using the letters in the word *October*. How many can he come up with?
- **Brainstorm** a list of words that begin with the letter *O*. Ask your child to put them in alphabetical order. Then have him write a sentence for each word and read it to you.



Suggest fun ways to read

In addition to the reading your child does for school, it's important for her to read for fun, too! Suggest that she:

- **Read aloud** to her younger siblings or friends.
- **Play word games** and board games that include reading and wordplay.
- **Read the Sunday comics** while you eat breakfast together.



Find reading inspiration in autumn

Use time outdoors with your child to guide your reading and writing activities. Here are a few ideas:

- **Collect leaves** and label them in a scrapbook.
- **Observe wildlife** in a park or in your neighborhood. Ask your child to record what he sees in a special journal.
- **Do some research** together to learn more about the plants and animals your child has observed.



Ask reading-related questions at your parent-teacher conference

Parent-teacher conferences are a great time to check on your child's reading progress. Ask questions such as:

- "What are my child's strengths and weaknesses in reading?"
- "How can I support my child's literacy development at home?"
- "What types of material does my child enjoy reading in school?"
- "How are my child's writing skills developing?"
- "What reading strategies are you using with my child?"
- "Are there resources you can suggest that would be helpful to improve my child's reading?"

"A room without books is like a body without a soul."

—Marcus Tullius Cicero

Encourage your child to write to music

Let your child use music as writing inspiration! Have her select one of her favorite songs. Listen to it together. Then, encourage your child to:

1. **Draw one or more pictures** that describe the song as you listen to it again.
2. **Write captions below the pictures.** The captions can tell the story in the song but your child should use words that are different from the lyrics. Encourage her to use synonyms to replace some of the lyrics.
3. **Listen to different genres of music.** Have your child think about how her stories could be different for pop, jazz, classical and rock music.



Take your child on a reading adventure!

Looking for an educational activity that's fun for the whole family? A visit to a child-friendly museum can strengthen your child's reading skills, observation skills and curiosity.

Before you go:

- **Build excitement** by viewing the museum's website together.
- **Read museum brochures** and maps with your child in order to plan your trip.
- **Check out books** from the library related to the museum's exhibits.

During and after your visit:

- **Read the museum notes** about the exhibits with your child.
- **Challenge your child** to find things he saw in the museum in books.



Q: My child picks books that are too challenging, then gives up after one chapter. How can I help her make better choices?

A: Ask the teacher or librarian to help you find books that are at your child's reading level. (Your child should be able to read one page without struggling with more than five words.) Then, let your child pick one to start reading. If she needs an extra boost, read part of it aloud. Consider taking turns reading to each other.

Combine reading and math

Want to get an extra boost out of reading time? Choose a book about math. Early readers enjoy books about counting, such as *Curious George Learns to Count from 1 to 100*, by H.A. Rey. Older readers can handle more complex material, such as *Math-terpieces: The Art of Problem-Solving* by Greg Tang.

For lower elementary readers:

- ***Calvin Can't Fly: The Story of a Bookworm Birdie*** by Jennifer Berne. When Calvin learns to read, he is consumed by his love of books—so much so that he forgets to learn to fly!
- ***Clink*** by Kelly DiPucchio. Clink is a rusty old robot. As he watches his friends leave with their new owners, he wonders if he will ever find a family who wants him.



For upper elementary readers:

- ***Kitchen Chaos: The Saturday Cooking Club*** by Deborah A. Levine and JillEllyn Riley. Liza, Frankie and Lillian start work on a group social studies assignment—and set off on exciting adventures.
- ***Guys Read: Funny Business*** edited by Jon Scieszka. This collection of humorous short stories is designed for boys—including those who avoid reading. But girls will enjoy it, too!

Building Readers®

How Families Can Help Children Become Better Readers

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Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

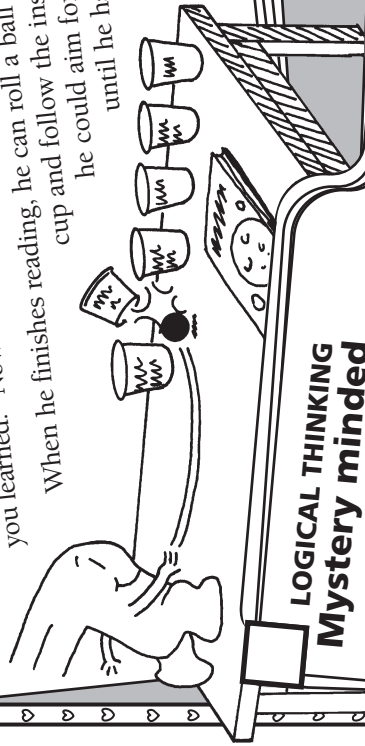
OCTOBER 2019

READING Bowling for facts

Here's a tabletop bowling game that encourages your child to read for information—and use what he learns.

Ingredients: six paper cups, marker or pen, nonfiction reading material, small ball
On each cup, have your youngster write an activity to do after reading a nonfiction book or article. Examples: "Illustrate a fact." "Teach another person something you learned." Now he should line up the cups in a row.

When he finishes reading, he can roll a ball to knock over a cup and follow the instruction. Then, he could aim for another cup until he has knocked them all down and tried all the activities.

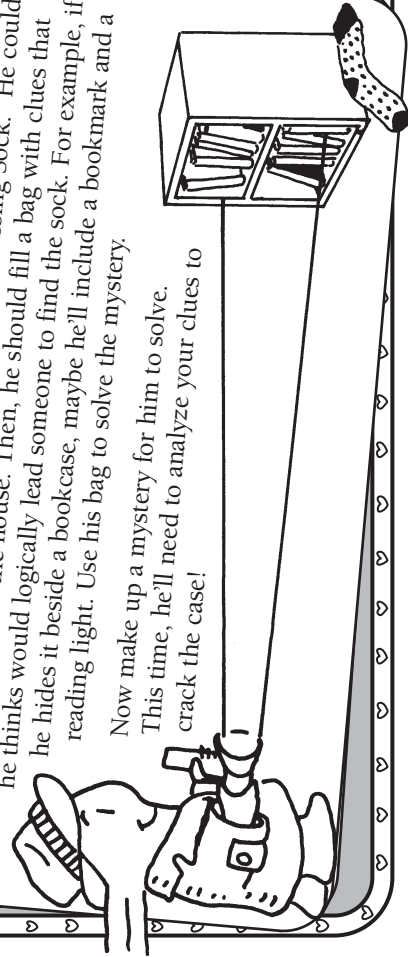


LOGICAL THINKING Mystery minded

With this idea, your youngster will use logic to create and crack "cases."
Ingredients: bags, household objects

Have your child invent a mystery like "The Case of the Missing Sock." He could hide a sock somewhere in the house. Then, he should fill a bag with clues that he hides it beside a bookcase, maybe he'll include a bookmark and a reading light. Use his bag to solve the mystery.

Now make up a mystery for him to solve. This time, he'll need to analyze your clues to crack the case!



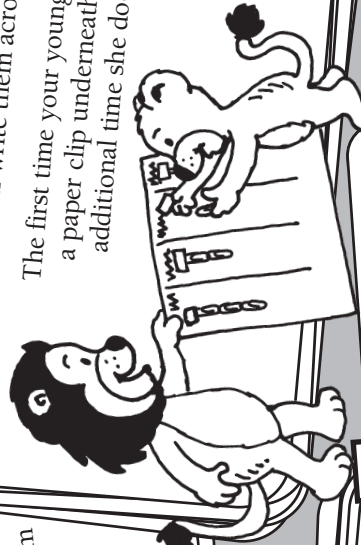
MATH

Graphing your week

Play checkers, get a paper clip. Draw a picture, get a paper clip. With this creative math challenge, your youngster can graph her daily activities.

Ingredients: cardboard, pencil, paper clips, tape
Ask your child to choose several of her regular activities (homework, playing games, drawing). She can write them across the top of a piece of cardboard.

The first time your youngster does each activity, have her tape a paper clip underneath its name on the cardboard. Each additional time she does it, she can link another paper clip to the one above. After a week, the clips will form a graph showing how she spends her time. The more paper clips, the more often she did an activity.



MUSIC

Show your child how different materials produce different sounds. He could tap a fork with a spoon or remove the label from a metal can and run the spoon along its ridges. Suggest that he tap out a "song" with these sounds. How does the sound change if he uses a wooden spoon?



MEMORY

Sit beside your youngster, and use your finger to trace a random word in the air while she watches closely. When you finish, have her say the word. She'll need to recall the letters in the correct order to spell the word. Next, ask her to "write" a word for you to figure out.



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."

Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

OCTOBER 2019

Character Corner

GRAMMAR Parts-of-speech poetry

Your youngster can review parts of speech and understand how they fit together by writing a poem.

Ingredients: paper, pen or pencil

Let your child divide a sheet of paper into four columns (Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Adverbs). Next, she should write five random words that belong in each column. She might put *bats* and *go-karts* in the Nouns column, *float* and *squeal* under Verbs, *slippery* and *green* under Adjectives, and *quietly* and *happily* under Adverbs.

Challenge your youngster to write a poem using two words from each column, and listen while she reads it aloud to you. Can she write another poem using all the words?

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

At the library, ask your child to choose a picture book in a language he doesn't speak. Suggest that he "read" the book using the illustrations as clues. Afterward, look up words together in a bilingual dictionary or on a translation website. How close was his story to the real one?



DIVISION

Your youngster can "herd animals" into equal groups to practice division. Have her use small objects like beans or dry noodles as "animals," and say, "Herd 56 animals into 7 groups." She would make 7 groups of 8 and say the problem ($56 \div 7 = 8$).



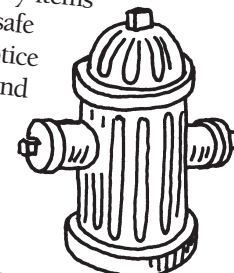
LISTENING

Build your child's listening skills with this activity. Choose a children's book that repeats a word throughout the story. Read the book aloud, and have her clap every time she hears the word. Then, let her read to you while you listen for a certain word.



SAFETY

Take a walk around the neighborhood with your child. How many items that help to keep people safe can he spot? He might notice fire hydrants, stop signs, and crosswalks, for example. Talk about why each one is important.



AMBITION



Can your child name a person who worked hard and accomplished something? Maybe his uncle studied every night after work to get a GED. Talk about how that ambition paid off—perhaps his uncle got a better job.

FAMILY UNITY

Learn more about each other with this activity. As a family, list six questions, numbered 1–6. Examples: "What's your favorite season?" "What did you eat for lunch today?" Take turns rolling a die and answering the matching question.



HUMOR

Help your youngster see the lighter side of life. Every day, share something funny from your week with each other. It might be a joke she heard or a silly mistake she made. Having a good laugh together is healthy for everyone!



Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)