Home & School CONNECTION®

Working Together for School Success

February 2015

Bible Center School
Mr. Garland Elmore, Principal

SHORT NOTES

What could it be?
Use magazine pictures to sharpen your child's powers of observation. Cut a small circle from the center of a photo. Have him look closely at the circle. What does he think it's showing? Let him glue the circle to paper, draw a scene around it, and compare his picture to the original.

Appreciate thoughtfulness
Encourage your youngster to consider the thought that goes into gifts she receives. *Example:* "Aunt Lisa must have noticed your dollhouse didn't have patio furniture. How thoughtful of her to give you some." This will help her know what to say in a thank-you note—and how to make others happy when she gives gifts.

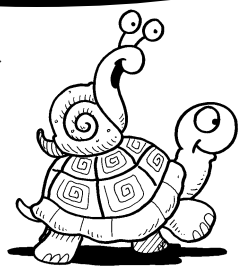
Talking about current events
If a scary event is in the news, you may wonder whether to discuss it with your child. In general, wait for him to bring up the topic. Concerned he'll hear about it in school? Try starting a conversation by asking what people are saying. Then, stick to the facts, and talk about what you're doing to help him stay safe.

Worth quoting
"There are many little ways to enlarge your child's world. Love of books is the best of all."
Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What does a snail say when it's riding on a turtle's back?

A: "Whee!"



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Conversations about school

When you think of parent involvement, do you picture moms and dads volunteering in classrooms? That's one way to help—but research shows that supporting your child's education at home is even more important. Here are four conversations that will help you stay involved.

"Let's see what you brought home."
Look at completed work to find out what your youngster is learning and how well she's doing. You could comment on her geography report or pottery project, for instance. ("You know a lot about our state's history!") Also, respond to notes from her teacher, and sign her weekly folder or daily planner if required.

"Show me what you have for homework."
It's your child's job to do her homework, but you play a role, too. Make sure she knows what she's supposed to do by having her explain the assignments to you. After she's done, glance over the work to see that it's complete.

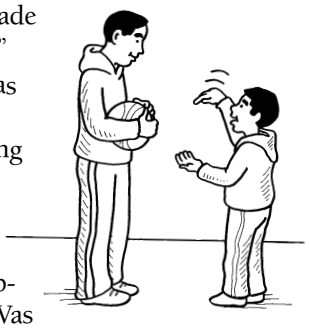
"Describe a book you enjoyed today."
This gives you an idea of what your youngster prefers to read. Then, build a daily reading habit by asking what she'd like to read tonight. Encourage her reading and listening skills by reading aloud to her and letting her read to you.

"Tell me what you learned that you'd like to know more about."
Use her interests as jumping-off points for activities to share. If she likes geometry, you might do tangrams together. If she's fascinated by how animals adapt to winter, take her to the library to research the subject or to the zoo to see live animals.♥

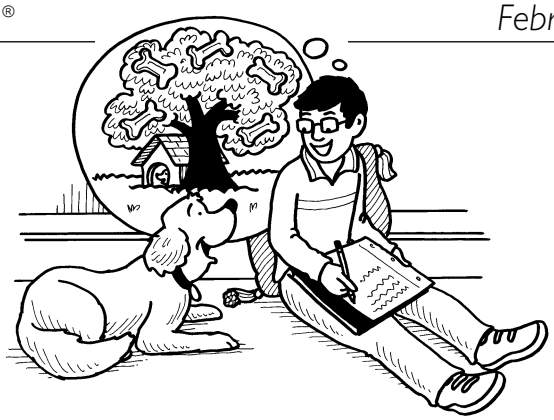
After-school questions

Asking "How was school today?" might not get you very far. Instead, try these questions for a better picture of your youngster's day:

- "What's the coolest thing that happened? What wasn't so cool?"
- "Pretend you're the teacher—how would you describe the day?"
- "What made you laugh?"
- "What was the most creative thing you did?"
- "How were you kind or helpful today? Was anyone kind or helpful to you?"
- "What new word did you hear today?"♥



Finding a story topic



"But I don't know what to write about!" If this is your youngster's response when he has a creative writing assignment, share these ideas.

Think of an audience. What kind of story would his dog or his best friend want to read? Your child might come up with an idea for a tree that grows dog biscuits or one about the baseball game where he and his friend each hit a home run.

Catch your dreams. Sometimes good ideas come to writers in their sleep. Encourage your youngster to keep a pencil and a notepad by his bed and write down his dreams as soon as he wakes up. That dream about driving an ice cream truck may spark an interesting tale!

Get inspired by books. Suggest that your child browse through books at home or at the library—a topic or an idea could jump out at him. For instance, a funny school story might remind him of the time the class guinea pig escaped from its cage. Or a book about Mars can get him thinking about an outer space adventure.♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

Collecting objects… and more

Children who collect rocks, stuffed giraffes, or just about anything also collect a lot of personal skills along the way. Here are three.

1. Organization. Will your youngster arrange her key chains alphabetically by where they came from? Should she group her erasers according to color or size? As she decides how to store or display her collection, she'll practice sorting and organizational skills.

2. Responsibility. Your child won't want her snow globes to get dusty or her marbles to roll off her dresser and get lost. Keeping her collection in good condition will encourage her to be responsible for her possessions.

3. Personal finance. It's fun to watch a collection grow. If your youngster gets birthday money or an allowance, she could budget for additions. Also, you can help her research how much the items she owns are worth.♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

Resources for Educators,
a division of CCH Incorporated
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630
540-636-4280 • rfecustomer@wolterskluwer.com
www.rfeonline.com

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Q & A

Peer pressure concerns

Q: *As my daughter gets older, I'm worrying more about peer pressure. How can I help her handle it?*

A: It's true that friends' opinions become more important each year. But your values and beliefs will continue to influence her, whether she shows it or not.

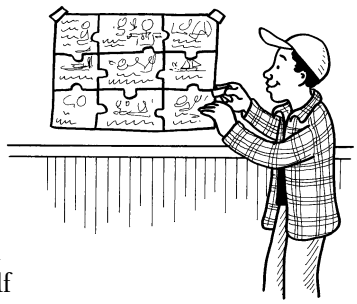
Look for regular opportunities to talk about what matters to you, such as staying healthy and being kind to others. If she sees someone smoking, you could quietly say, "I hope you choose not to smoke when you grow up." Or if you hear a mean remark on TV, you might say, "It's sad when people make fun of others." Knowing where you stand can help her withstand peer pressure.

If she mentions a friend is pressuring her, help her practice how to respond. ("I'm not going to cheat on homework. I'll see you later.") Remind her that friends should make her feel good about herself—if they don't, it's time to find friends who do.♥

PARENT TO PARENT

A perfect fit

My son William told me about a project his class did to celebrate differences. His teacher cut a big sheet of paper into puzzle pieces, and each child decorated one to show what makes him interesting or different. Then, they put the puzzle back together.



William thought this would be fun to do with our family. He cut up a poster board and mailed pieces with instructions to relatives. Meanwhile, we drew and wrote on our own pieces. William drew himself doing a science experiment with his guitar nearby. My husband wrote that he has a birthday only every four years because he was born on February 29. And I put that I travel a lot for work and have been to 45 states.

Once everyone mailed back their pieces, William taped the puzzle together so we could hang it up. It's a great reminder of how we are all different—and yet still "fit" together as a family!♥