



# Parent Resource Newsletter



## Tips and Activities to Help Your Child Succeed In School

November 2014

Parent Resource Newsletter

### Parents Are a Child's First and Most Important Teacher

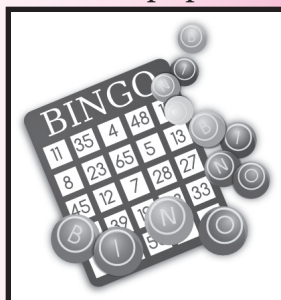
#### How to Get Your Kids to Love Math

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

Students of all ages play games on the Internet, on their computers, and their cell phones. There have been many studies done on the use of academic games on learning in many subject areas and all the studies show a gain in student achievement.

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

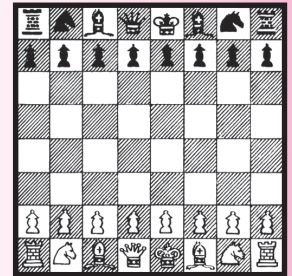
- Using blocks or snap together cubes to develop spatial reasoning.
- Puzzles of any kind can also develop spatial reasoning, a basic math foundation.
- Finding numbers and patterns all around you, such as house numbers, floor patterns, etc.



- Encouraging your child to look for shapes in the house and outdoors.
- Reading books with a math theme with your child.

*For older children you can:*

- Practice basic facts with board games to make repetitive practice more interesting. Games such as "Life" can be used with a set of addition, subtraction or multiplication flash cards. Children cannot move their marker unless they answer the question correctly.
- There are many free math related computer games for children. For example:



[www.math-play.com](http://www.math-play.com)

[www.mathplayground.com](http://www.mathplayground.com)

[www.coolmath-games.com](http://www.coolmath-games.com)

The key to motivating children to learn math is to make it fun, not boring. Just practicing the basic facts with a set of flash cards can be very boring.

**"A child educated only at school  
is an uneducated child."  
By George Santayana**

## If I Had My Child to Raise Over Again

By Diane Loumans

If I had my child to raise over again,  
I'd build self-esteem first, and the house later.  
I'd finger-paint more, and point the finger less.  
I would do less correcting and more connecting.  
I'd take more hikes and fly more kites.  
I'd stop playing serious, and seriously play.  
I would run through more fields and gaze at more stars.  
I'd do more hugging and less tugging.



### Improve Reading Comprehension

Here are some tips to help improve reading comprehension in early readers. It is one thing to be able to read the words, but quite another to be able to understand what you are reading. By third grade, students are asked to read to learn from textbooks and other printed matter. Comprehension is very important.

**1. Have your child read aloud to you.** She will not only see the words, but hear them

also. It also slows down their reading so they aren't skimming over words without trying to decode them.

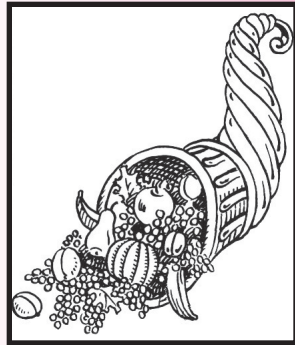
- 2. Use books on your child's ability level.** If your child is struggling to decode too many words, the comprehension is lost. Start with books that your child can read with just a little help.
- 3. Add to what your child is doing in school.** If your child is working on a particular topic in school in science, social studies, or if his class is working on a theme, choose books that can add to what they are learning.
- 4. Reread the same book for fluency.** Your child will get practice reading quickly and smoothly by rereading a book.
- 5. Talk to your child's teacher.** The teacher can let you know the specific reading problems your child might be having so you can focus on sounding out words or vocabulary.
- 6. Ask questions.** When your child is reading out loud, or you are reading to your child ask questions about what is happening, what something means, or what they think will happen next. What made you think this? This will help in comprehension.



## Writing Thanksgiving Notes

Children at school are learning to write starting in Kindergarten where the teacher models the writing, while the children come up with suggestions of what to write. Older students are writing independently on a much higher level than when we were young. Encourage your kids to write letters to thank people they know to show they appreciate them. It is a good habit to get into. Some of the people they might write to include:

- Grandparents
- Parents
- Aunts or uncles
- Sisters or brothers
- Teachers
- Neighbors
- Scout leaders
- Coaches



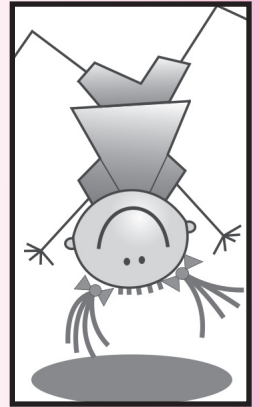
## Helping Your Child Get Organized

Research shows that helping your child get organized can help them to be prepared to learn. There is also research that shows students who get enough sleep do much better in school than those who are drowsy during the day from lack of sleep.

1. Start a family calendar with happenings at school. As soon as you find out the dates for Open House, Conferences, PTA Meetings, etc. put it on the calendar. It is

good to model good organization skills for your children.

2. Decide on a bedtime depending on your child's age. Try to keep to the schedule, especially on school nights. A tired child will not be able to concentrate in school, and many times behavior is affected as well.
3. Establish school day schedules for homework, TV watching, computer use, and bath time. Children give less trouble sticking to a schedule if they get used to a routine.



**“We worry about what a child will become tomorrow, yet we forget that he is someone today.”**  
**By Stacia Tauscher**

## Reading Suggestions for Younger Students

Corduroy At the Zoo by Don Freeman

Everything to Spend the Night from A to Z by Ann Whitford Paul

Letters and Sounds by Rosemary Wells

Swimmy by Leo Lionni

If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Numeroff

Flat Stanley by Jeff Brown

Mr. Popper's Penguins by Richard and Florence Atwater

## Reading Suggestions for Older Students

If You Were a Writer by Joan Lowery Nixon

Author: A True Story by Helen Lester

Miss Rumphius by Barbara Cooney

The New Kid on the Block by Jack Prelutsky

Freckle Juice by Judy Blume

Ramona Quimby, Age 8 by Beverly Cleary

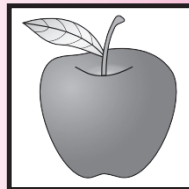
Fudge-A-Mania by Judy Blume

Where the Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein

## Healthy Snacks for Studying

Eating sweets before studying or doing homework can give your child a “sugar high”, but it is short lived. Try some healthy snacks that will give your children energy and keep their minds alert.

- Crackers and cheese slices
- A banana
- Homemade smoothie with milk, fruit, and crushed ice in a blender
- Berries in plain yogurt
- Carrots, cucumbers, and carrots with a low fat dipping sauce
- Homemade trail mix w/nuts, low sugar cereal, pretzel sticks, and a small amount of dried raisins or craisins.
- Jello with fruit
- Cut up apple slices with a small container of peanut butter to dip
- Baked potato with low fat cheese
- Low fat granola bar
- Seedless grapes frozen in a baggy



- Applesauce cups
- Fruit cups

Many of these snacks would also be a good idea to put in your child's lunch box.



## Helping Your Child with Homework

The purpose of homework is to reinforce and extend classroom learning and to help them learn study skills. By doing homework your children will:

1. Learn to read and follow directions.
2. Budget their time for a long term assignment.
3. Learn to stick to a task until it is done
4. Do the best that they can.

One way you can help your children with their homework is to make sure they have a well-lit, quiet area, stocked with the school supplies they may need, such as pencils, paper, ruler, and a calculator. It is a good idea to have children doing homework in a common area, so they won't be tempted to talk on the phone, play video games, or watch TV when they should be doing their homework.

It is important for a parent to be there for support for their child, to answer questions or help explain an assignment, but you don't want to do the work for them. When they are done check the work. You don't have to correct the work, but if they seem to be having a problem or misconception go over it with them so they will understand later. Try to be positive. If you are complaining that there is too much homework, or you don't see the importance of it, your child will mimic your negative attitude and that could cause him/her problems.