

Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION®

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West Salem Elementary School

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SHORT NOTES

Practice patience

Patience is a lifelong skill that will help your youngster in school—and in life. The key is knowing how to pass time pleasantly while waiting so he doesn't feel anxious or frustrated. Together, come up with special "waiting activities" like saying the alphabet backward or counting down with the crosswalk sign.

A future job

Help your child make the connection between school and the career she could have someday. Point out workers using school subjects like a nurse writing on a chart or a TV weather forecaster describing a cold front. Also, friends and relatives might tell your child what they studied in school and how it's related to their jobs.

See that illustration?

Understanding the meaning of images in books, magazines, and newspapers will boost your youngster's reading comprehension. To build *visual literacy*, ask your youngster to explain what's happening in illustrations and graphics. He might even enjoy making up his own captions.

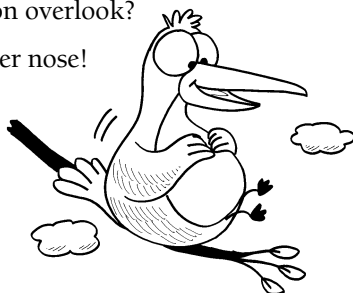
Worth quoting

"Adventure is worthwhile in itself."
Amelia Earhart

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What does even the most careful person overlook?

A: Her nose!



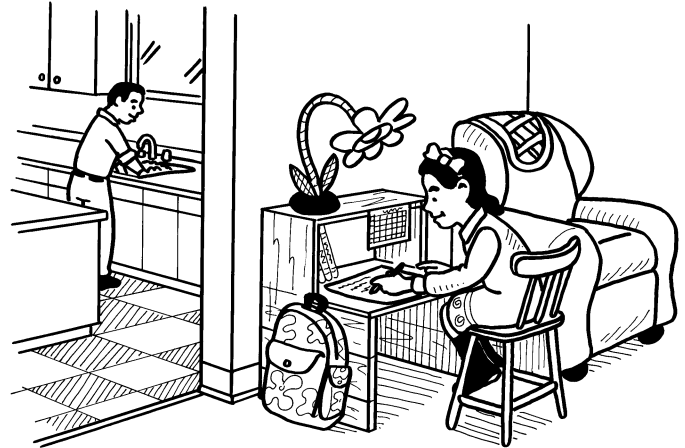
Doing my own homework

When your child is the one responsible for her homework, she will form good habits that will benefit her throughout her school career. Use these tips to help your youngster be independent at homework time.

Your child's job: Let her choose a usual place and time for homework. That will make her more likely to stick with her routine. She may want to work at the kitchen table after school or at her desk after dinner.

How to help: Make sure your family's evening activities don't interfere with homework time. From time to time, ask your youngster whether she needs more supplies, such as pencils, erasers, markers, or glue.

Your child's job: She should tackle homework on her own. Not only will this help her learn, it will also show the teacher how well she understands the material.



How to help: If your youngster gets stuck, suggest that she reread the directions or look for similar examples in her book. Offer to play study games with her. Also, check to see that her homework is finished.

Your child's job: It's up to her to hand in completed work. She can find a way to remind herself, maybe by posting a note on her backpack.

How to help: Together, choose a visible spot to keep her backpack and anything else she needs for school. ♥

An attitude of gratitude

Around Thanksgiving, people often talk about what they're thankful for. These activities can inspire your youngster to express gratitude now—and all year long.

On the calendar. Brainstorm categories of things to be grateful for, such as people and nature. On a calendar, list one category per day for a week. Then each day, have family members name something they're grateful for in that category (a healthy grandparent, a beautiful fall day).

Behind the gift. When your child receives a gift, ask him to think about what the giver put into it. For instance, if his aunt sends him a sweater that he doesn't like, he might say it was nice that she took the time to find out what style is popular with kids his age. ♥

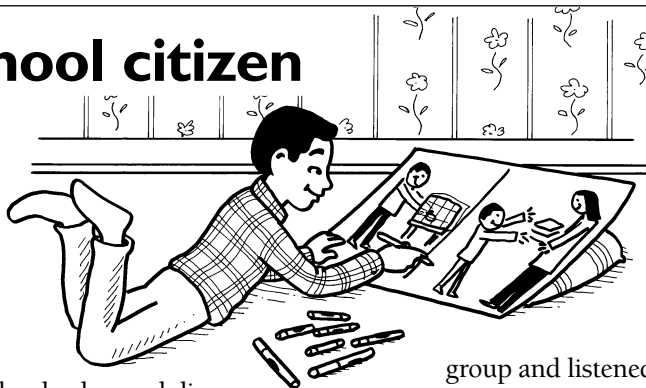


Be a good school citizen

Your child can make his school a better place to learn and play by following school rules and being considerate of his fellow students. Encourage him to be a good school citizen with these ideas.

Follow rules

Have your youngster name school rules, and discuss what would happen if they didn't exist. What if no one had assigned seats? (People might waste time deciding where to sit.) What if students could run in the hallways? (They might get hurt.) He'll see why it's important to follow the rules—just like people must obey laws.



group and listened to others without interrupting.

Do your part

Every school citizen has an important role to play, and helping teachers and classmates is a part of that role. Suggest that your youngster draw himself doing classroom jobs like feeding the class guinea pig or delivering papers to the office.♥

Be considerate

Part of good citizenship is treating others the way you want to be treated. Ask your child to share examples of considerate things he did today. Maybe he got off a playground swing so another student could have a turn. Or perhaps he waited quietly before speaking up in a



PARENT TO PARENT

Sparking curiosity

My daughter Hailey used to be curious about everything from whether butterflies dream to why she has curly hair. As she grew older, she didn't ask as many questions. I wanted to keep her curiosity alive—so I decided to start asking *her* questions.

For example, when we saw ants carrying big leaves, I wondered aloud how they can hold stuff that's bigger than they are. Hailey looked it up, and she was proud to teach me that ants' muscles are thicker than ours compared to their body size. And these muscles don't have to support much body weight, freeing them up to hold other things.

Hailey enjoys telling me facts I don't know. We are both learning new things, and she's discovering that you're never too old to be curious and ask questions!♥



ACTIVITY CORNER

Design a city

If your youngster could create her own city, what would it look like? Suggest that she pretend to be an urban planner. She'll use thinking, planning, math, and engineering skills as she follows these steps.



- 1. Pick a location.** Have your child decide where her city will be located. It could be near an ocean, in a desert, or even in outer space.
- 2. Add services.** Encourage her to consider where people will live, work, grow food, and spend free time. Also, how would they get around? They might travel by car, subway, bike, hovercraft, spaceship—or use an entirely new form of transportation.
- 3. Make a plan.** Let her draw a map of her city, revising it until she's satisfied.
- 4. Build and play.** Suggest that your youngster make a model using household materials (construction paper, empty boxes, paper towel tubes, plastic cups, string). She can see how her city functions by adding toy people, animals, and vehicles.♥

Q & A

A successful parent-teacher conference

Q: I'm attending the parent-teacher conference for my son this month. How can I get the most out of it?

A: First, write down what you want to say before you go. List any questions you have. Also, include information to help the teacher learn more about your child, such as the kinds of books he reads or activities he's involved in.

Then, be sure to arrive on time, and set a friendly tone by mentioning something

your son likes about school. Example: "Dylan loves science. He especially enjoyed learning about polar bears."

Listen closely to find out where your youngster is doing well or where he needs to improve. Ask how to support his learning at home—perhaps by helping him review math facts.

Finally, agree on how to follow up throughout the school year so you can stay connected and help your child do his best.♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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