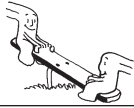


Home & School CONNECTION[®]

Working Together for School Success

April 2010

Toluca Lake Elementary School
Parent Center - 818-980-4980



SHORT NOTES

Memory tip

When your youngster needs to remember facts (dates in history, elements in science) for a test or quiz, suggest that he write them down in different-colored pencils. At test time, picturing his colorful list may help him remember the right answers.

Family talent show

Stage a talent show to help family members appreciate one another's skills. Each person can choose something he likes to do (singing, juggling). Encourage practice time, and choose a night for your event. *Tip:* Hand out awards such as Best Actress and Silliest Jokester.

DID YOU KNOW?

Kids with TVs in their bedrooms are more likely to be overweight. That's because they tend to be less active, watch more food commercials, and eat during shows. If your child has a set in her room, consider taking it out—her TV habit will probably drop.

Worth quoting

"My future starts when I wake up every morning. Every day I find something creative to do with my life."

Miles Davis

JUST FOR FUN

Teacher: Why were you late for school?

Natalie: Because of the sign outside.

Teacher: Which sign?

Natalie: The one that says "School ahead. Go slow!"



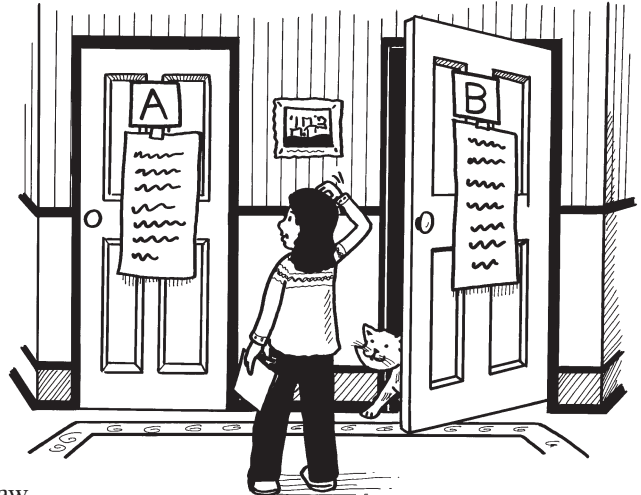
Good choice!

Your child faces dozens of choices every day. Should she wear jeans or a skirt? Will she get chicken or pizza for lunch? Talking to her about how to make daily decisions can help her handle bigger, more important choices as she gets older. Here's how.

Door A or B?

When your youngster must choose between two options, suggest that she draw two large doors on a sheet of paper.

Say she's deciding which state to write her geography report on. She might label one door "Vermont" and the other "Hawaii." Then, she can jot down the benefits of each option on its door. For Vermont, she could write, "I know more about it since my cousins live there." And for Hawaii, she might write, "I've always wanted to learn about Hawaiian volcanoes." After she has filled out both doors, she can choose the one she likes best.



Pros and cons

If your child is making a "yes" or "no" decision, have her list the pros on the front of a piece of paper and the cons on the back.

Perhaps she is deciding whether to try out for the school musical. A pro might be "good experience for becoming a singer," while a con might be "less time for homework." When her list is complete, suggest that she circle the reasons that matter most to her. She can add up the pros and cons, counting the circled ones twice. Which choice looks better? ♥

Reading on the road

Whether you're running a quick errand or driving to Grandma's, you can use time in the car to let your youngster practice reading.

- Have each passenger try to find all 26 letters—in order—on signs (road signs, billboards, store signs). The player names the letter and then reads the sign aloud. ("Azalea Lane," "Buy One, Get One Free.") Continue until someone reaches Z.

- Pack a special "reading bag" to keep in the car. Your youngster might put a book of fairy tales, a collection of short stories, and a few chapter books into a canvas bag. Suggest that he read a different story or chapter on each outing. ♥



A strong finish

As your youngster heads into the final stretch of the school year, keep him motivated to do well. Try these three suggestions:

1. Show your child that you take his “job” as student seriously. You might discuss things your jobs have in common (he counts pretend money in math class, and you count real money as a bank teller). Explain that his schoolwork is preparing him for the workplace.



2. Remind your youngster of his accomplishments. Maybe he got Bs in social studies the first two quarters and a C the third quarter. Suggest that he set a goal for his final report card (“I want to bring my grade back up to a B”).

3. Encourage your child to find one new way to get involved at school before the year ends.

Maybe he could help out in the library or with the spring

picnic. You might also plan to volunteer before the year ends. Your youngster will be proud to see you at school hanging artwork in the hallway or chaperoning a class party.♥

ACTIVITY CORNER



Cut-out art projects

With this activity, your child can have fun making “cut-paper art” while learning about famous artists and illustrators.

■ Show your youngster the work of Henri Matisse in a book like *Oooh! Matisse* (Mil Niepold and Jeanyves Verdu) or *Henri Matisse: Drawing with Scissors* (Jane O’Connor). Then, she can make a Matisse-inspired project by cutting out colorful shapes from construction paper and gluing them onto white paper. She might spread them out or overlap them into objects like butterflies or flowers.



■ Read books by Lois Ehlert and notice the cut-paper illustrations (try *Leaf Man* or *Nuts to You!*). Let your youngster choose a subject for her own cut-paper project. For example, she might design a playground. She could draw and cut out a slide, a sandbox, and a swing, and glue them onto paper.♥

Q & A

Everyday writing

Q: I think my daughter would be more comfortable writing if she did it more often. How can I encourage her?

A: Start by thinking about how you use writing in everyday life. Perhaps you keep a to-do list or communicate with friends by e-mail. Show your daughter the ways you write, and help her find reasons to write, too.

First, consider creating a family message center. Place a notepad, pens, and pushpins near a bulletin board, and encourage family members to post events (“Piano recital Saturday at 6”) and fun notes (“Happy Friday!”).

Then, suggest other ways for your daughter to write. She could put a list of snack ideas on the refrigerator, add personal notes to birthday cards, or write a letter to the editor. Or she might like writing in a diary at bedtime. Writing more often will help her gain confidence—and find reasons to enjoy writing!♥

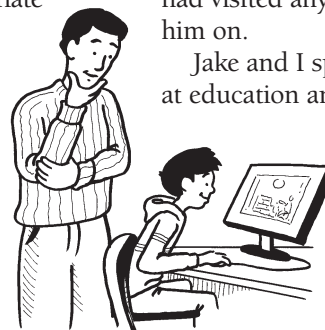


PARENT TO PARENT

Internet safety

Lately I’ve noticed that more and more Web sites offer advertisements that I don’t want my son Jake to see. I was having trouble finding appropriate sites, so I asked the school media specialist for help.

She recommended sites run by educational organizations or government agencies and explained that the Web addresses would end in .edu or .gov. She also showed me how



feature to set parental controls that block mature sites. Finally, she suggested that I review the browser’s history from time to time and talk to my son if he had visited any sites that I didn’t want him on.

Jake and I spent some time looking at education and government sites, and we found some he really

liked. He’s having fun playing educational games, and I’m happy knowing that he’s visiting safe sites.♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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