

Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION®

May 2004

SHORT NOTES



Picture this!

When your youngster is studying for tests, suggest that she draw pictures to improve her memory. For example, to help her remember Abraham Lincoln, she could draw a stovepipe hat and log cabin.

Share and share alike

Does borrowing clothes or other items cause tension between your children? If so, try this idea. Have the borrower put up “collateral” for whatever he wants to use. He must lend a valuable item to his sibling in order to borrow one.

Map fun

Many parts of the country are named for their unique shapes and features. Have your child look on a map and find interesting places. *Examples:* Snake River, Idaho; Boulder, Colorado. It's a great way to pass time while traveling!

Worth quoting

“It is easier to go down a hill than up, but the view is from the top.”

Arnold Bennett

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What's green and can jump a mile a minute?

A: A frog with hiccups!



Active summer reading

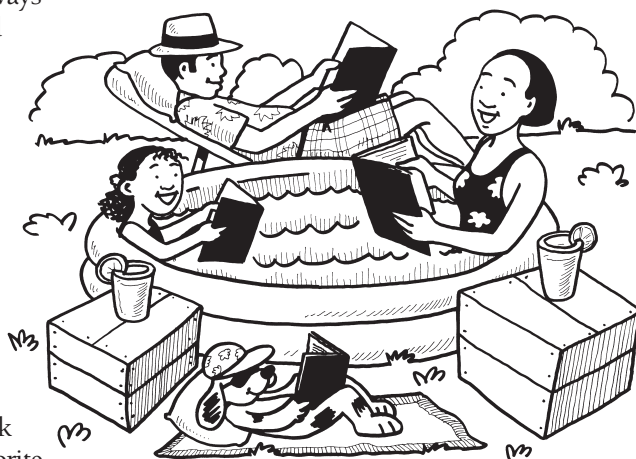
Reading is one of the best ways to keep your youngster's mind active over the summer. Try these ideas to encourage your child to read for fun—and learning.

Read-a-thon. Challenge everyone in your family to read at least a half hour every day. See who can go the longest without missing a day. To generate enthusiasm, agree on a prize for the winner ahead of time. *Examples:* a week without chores, dinner at a favorite restaurant, a gift certificate from the bookstore.

Book swap. Talk to family members and the parents of your youngster's friends, and arrange for the kids to trade books. Once they've read a few of each other's books, you could get together for a book party. For instance, have everyone meet for a picnic, and let the kids talk about the stories. *Idea:* Put questions about the books in a hat, and have them take turns selecting one to answer.

Fund-raisers.

Encourage your child to raise money for reading materials. First, help her brainstorm money-making activities. *Examples:* washing Dad's car, walking Grandma's dogs, weeding the garden. You



might also give her a few dollars a week as a “reading allowance.” She can spend the money on a magazine subscription or books. ♥

Celebrate learning

Want to let your child know how proud you are of his efforts this school year? Hold a learning celebration. Here are some suggestions:

- Help your child make a scrapbook to remember this school year. He can fill a three-ring binder with samples of his artwork, creative writing, or other projects. He may want to also include several blank pages and ask friends and school staff to sign them.
- Compare work from previous years. Pull out samples of her homework or projects from the past. She'll enjoy seeing how much she has learned and improved over time.
- Suggest that your youngster think about the school year and pick one or two of his favorite moments. Have him make a thank-you card for his teacher to share those moments. ♥



Cure the chore blues

Getting your child to do chores may feel like a chore itself! Use these tips to end the chore wars with your youngster.

Be specific about your child's chores

Explain how and when chores should be done. Post a checklist of jobs and their due dates where your youngster can read it.

Limit the chores you assign

Make sure your child has time for all the chores. When



kids feel overwhelmed by responsibilities, they may not do any of them.

Keep track of chores

Notice when your child completes his chores, and reward him with praise! If chores have been neglected, discipline may be necessary. For example, you might take away a privilege until the chores are done.

Give your child a say

Talk about jobs that need to be done. Then, ask your child to volunteer for some of them.

Asking rather than telling can make all the difference. ♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

Cool science treat

Whip up some science and math practice by making ice cream.

Materials: small glass jar with lid, chocolate milk, rock or table salt, crushed ice, 1-lb. coffee can with plastic lid, spoon, gloves



Together with your child, fill the jar $\frac{3}{4}$ full with the milk. Screw the lid on tight. Pack salt and ice in the bottom quarter of the coffee can—one part ice to two parts salt.

Put the jar in the middle of the can. Then, with the spoon, fill the space around the jar with ice. Place the lid on the can. Go outside and take turns shaking the can for 10 to 15 minutes. If your hands get cold, put on the gloves.

Once the milk gets cold enough, it will change from a liquid to a solid, and you'll have ice cream! ♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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PARENT TO PARENT

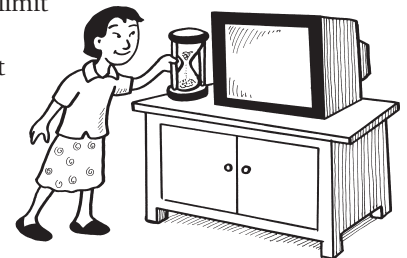
Tough TV questions

I knew my family watched a lot of television. But I didn't realize how much until I took a quiz I saw in a magazine. Two questions really opened my eyes: How much TV do you watch? Is the television on when no one is watching?

I asked my family to write down when they turned the TV on and off each day. I couldn't believe that altogether we spent more than five hours a day watching TV! We agreed to turn it off during mealtimes and limit our viewing to no more than two hours a day.

The second question made me think about how often we leave the TV on—simply for background noise. We vowed to turn it off when we finish watching a program.

Becoming more aware of our TV viewing is helping us break the television habit. ♥



Q & A

Summer travel tips

Q: My family will be traveling this summer. How can I make the car trip easier on my young children?

A: There are several items you can take in the car to keep your kids satisfied and occupied during the drive:

■ Encourage each child to pack a small bag of games and activities to have handy when boredom strikes. They might include books, puzzles, crayons, and coloring books. Consider picking up a few

inexpensive goodies at your neighborhood dollar store or drugstore to add to their bags. Examples: stickers, small notebooks, playing cards.

■ Stock up on bottled water and healthy snacks like raisins, celery and carrot sticks, and peanut butter and crackers. You'll save money and time on stops.

■ Take along books-on-tape as well as music on tapes or CDs to help pass the time. You may be able to check some out from your local library. ♥

