

October 2019
Vol. 31, No. 2

Elementary School Parents[®]

make the difference!

Frazier School District
Title I Program



Regular exercise boosts your child's health and academics

Physical fitness provides many benefits for children. Studies show that regular physical activity is linked to higher self-esteem and attentiveness in school. It also lowers the chance of health problems such as type 2 diabetes.

Here are some ways to increase your child's activity level:

- **Plan family outings.** Pick activities your family enjoys and create some new healthy traditions. You might go for a walk after dinner or head to a park every Sunday afternoon.
- **Make suggestions.** When your child has a friend over, suggest they play games that involve movement, such as tag, soccer and jumping rope. Indoors, try games such as Simon Says and Red Light, Green Light.
- **Add movement to screen time.** Encourage your child to take breaks that involve activity when she watches TV or plays video games.
- **Be creative.** You can find lots of ways to sneak in exercise. During chore time, play music or race to finish a job. While doing errands, park a few blocks away from a store and walk. Or, make a quick stop at a playground on the way home.
- **Set an example.** If your child sees you staying fit (stretching, biking, walking with a friend, etc.), she is more likely to be active herself.

Source: A. McPherson and others, "Physical activity, cognition and academic performance: an analysis of mediating and confounding relationships in primary school children," *BMC Public Health*, BioMed Central, nswc.com/elem_activity.

This four-step process can end procrastination



At one time or another, most kids put off doing their homework.

But when procrastination becomes a habit, it can affect school performance.

To help your child break the procrastination habit, have him:

1. **Select just one thing to do.** Sometimes kids put things off when they feel overwhelmed. Tell your child to focus on one assignment at a time.
2. **Set a timer for 30 minutes** and begin working on the assignment. While the timer is ticking, he should focus only on that assignment.
3. **Avoid breaks.** Your child should get water or a snack *before* he starts the timer so he doesn't interrupt his work flow.
4. **Reward himself.** Once the timer goes off, encourage your child to do something he likes, such as playing an online game for a few minutes.

Have your child repeat this process until his homework is complete!

Source: R. Emmett, *The Procrastinating Child: A Handbook for Adults to Help Children Stop Putting Things Off*, Walker & Company.

Manage your child's screen time by creating a family media plan



Digital devices are an important part of our world—and can be very appealing to kids.

Technology helps your child discover new ideas, connect with others and access educational information for school.

However, too much recreational screen time can negatively affect his schoolwork, health, activity levels and face-to-face communication skills.

To help your child strike a healthy balance, experts recommend creating a personalized family media plan that answers the following questions:

- **What devices** do I want my child to have access to?
- **Where will devices** be allowed and where will they be off-limits?
- **How much time** will my child be allowed to use them?

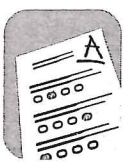
- **Will the same rules** apply during weekends and school breaks?
- **What content** is appropriate for my child to access?
- **How will I maintain** consistency?
- **What consequences** will there be for misusing devices?
- **What example** am I setting through my own use of technology?

Source: *Ways Parents Can Manage Kids' Technology Use*, QuickTip Brochure, The Parent Institute.

"Sometimes you have to disconnect to stay connected. We've become so focused on that tiny screen that we forget the big picture, the people right in front of us."

—Regina Brett

Teach your child how to become a more confident test-taker



Test anxiety often comes from self-doubt. If your child doesn't think she will succeed on a test, she probably won't.

To help her become more confident before a test:

- **Take off the pressure.** Tell your child that tests just show the teacher what she's learned so far, and what she needs help with.
- **Make sure your child knows** what the test will cover. Encourage her to listen carefully when her teacher talks about the test—and to ask any questions she may have.
- **Avoid last-minute panic.** Your child should begin to study several days before the test. Cramming the night before a test rarely works.

- **Teach efficient studying.** Help your child focus on the material she hasn't mastered yet.
- **Help your child connect** new material to information she already knows. These connections can help her recall the material during the test.
- **Encourage positive self-talk.** If she gets stuck during a test, she can quietly say to herself, "I know this. The answer will come to me."
- **Remind your child** of her strengths.
- **Help your child visualize** success. Have her close her eyes and picture herself answering the questions correctly.

Source: S.M. DeBroff, *The Mom Book Goes to School: Insider Tips to Ensure Your Child Thrives in Elementary and Middle School*, Free Press.

Are you building a bridge between home and school?



Studies consistently show that when families and schools form a strong team, children are more likely to succeed. They learn more and do better in school.

School has been underway for a couple of months, so it's time to make sure you are doing your part to build a relationship with the school. Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

- ___ **1. Have you met** with your child's teacher at least once this year?
- ___ **2. Do you talk** with your child about school each day and review all of the information he brings home?
- ___ **3. Do you monitor** your child's homework? If he struggles with an assignment, do you ask the teacher how you can help at home?
- ___ **4. Do you make sure** your child gets to school on time each day?
- ___ **5. Have you reviewed** the school handbook with your child? Do you expect him to follow all school rules?

How well are you doing?

If most of your answers were *yes*, you are building a strong school-family team. For each *no* answer, try that idea from the quiz.

Elementary School
Parents
make the difference!

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Here's how to make the most of your parent-teacher conference



Preparation is the key to a successful parent-teacher conference. Here's how to get the most benefit from your meeting:

Before the conference:

- **Make a list** of things you'd like to tell the teacher, such as your child's favorite subjects and activities, difficulties in school, medical needs and any sensitive issues.
- **Make a list** of things to ask the teacher about, such as your child's work habits, attitude, behavior, strengths and weaknesses.
- **Let your child know** you are having a conference. Ask if there's anything you and the teacher should discuss.

During the conference:

- **Be on time.** Teachers have many conferences, and a five-minute delay can throw off the schedule.
- **Listen carefully** and take notes about your child's progress.
- **Be positive.** Remember: You and your child's teacher both want what's best for your child.
- **Make a plan** with the teacher to address any concerns and schedule a time to follow up.

After the conference:

- **Let your child know** how the conference went.
- **Start with positive comments.** Then, talk about any suggestions the teacher made—and how you plan to help your child carry these out.

Make sure your child is on the road to reading success



Ask any educator to name the single most important thing parents can do at home to help children learn and do well in school

and they will likely say, "Encourage your child to read!"

Here are some ways to make reading a priority for your family:

- **Read together.** Your child may enjoy reading to you or taking turns reading chapters aloud.
- **Go to the public library.** Help your child sign up for a library card. Each week, have him browse and check out new books.
- **Offer suggestions.** Think about your child's interests. Find books or articles about them. Ask the librarian for help.
- **Start a family book club.** It doesn't have to be formal. Just set aside one night each week to talk about something you've all read. Better yet, do it during dinner—you'll get the benefit of one another's company and a good discussion.
- **Create a reading nook.** Some kids love to read anywhere. But a cozy reading spot can make reading more appealing.
- **Suggest a series.** When there are several books about a character they like, kids often keep reading, book after book.
- **Let your child see you reading.** If your child sees you with your nose in a book, he'll be more likely to want to read himself. Be sure to talk to him about what you're reading: "I just read the strangest story in the newspaper."
- **Talk with the teacher.** Ask about your child's reading progress and strategies you can use at home to strengthen his reading skills.

Q: My daughter struggled with math last year and now she says she hates it. I can't really blame her, because I'm not good at math either. How can I help her develop a better attitude?

Questions & Answers

A: Parents' attitudes about math have a lot to do with how well their children do in math. Kids whose parents tell them they didn't like math when they were in school, often struggle with math as well. Likewise, children whose parents instill a sense of enjoyment about math tend to perform better.

To help your child develop a positive attitude about math:

- **Set the tone.** Let your child know you believe *everyone* can be successful in math. If you say this often to your child, she'll start to believe it!
- **Avoid stereotypes.** Women can be engineers. Children of all races can be successful in school. In fact, students who are successful in math can go a long way toward breaking the stereotypes that others may hold.
- **Talk about careers.** Young children may decide that being a Ninja Turtle or an Avenger is a great career choice. Expand their horizons. Talk about people who use math in their jobs—an airline pilot, a weather forecaster, an architect, an astronaut, a researcher, an engineer, etc.
- **Connect math** to the real world. When you and your child go to the store, bank, restaurant, etc., point out all of the ways people use math. At dinner, challenge family members to tell one way they used math that day.

It Matters: Building Responsibility

Responsibility leads to success in the classroom



Children who learn to be responsible do better in school. They get along better with teachers and peers.

They make better decisions. They're more apt to try, follow through and succeed.

To strengthen your child's sense of responsibility:

- **Revamp her chore list.** Are you still packing your child's lunch? How about making her bed? If so, pass the torch. Most elementary schoolers are capable of handling such tasks. Don't overload her with too many chores, but work toward giving her meaningful responsibilities.
- **Teach lessons about money.** If she does not have an allowance, consider giving her one. If you let your child manage her own money, she may develop more respect for it. Include her when you're working on your budget. Don't share specific financial details, but let her see what budgeting looks like. Say things like, "I'd love to order pizza tonight, too, but it'll have to wait. Payday isn't until Friday."
- **Use consequences to teach.** When your child makes a mistake, don't swoop in to save her (unless she's in true danger). If she experiences the consequences of her actions, she's more likely to learn not to make the same mistake again. If you're always running to her rescue, she'll learn that she doesn't have to take responsibility for anything.

Encourage your child to do more than the bare minimum

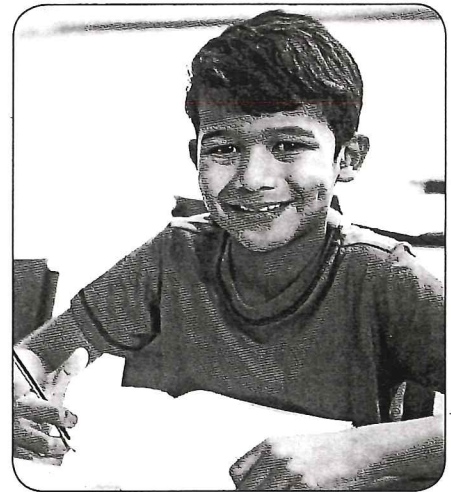
You asked your child to take the recycling to the curb. It's a windy evening, so he placed a rock on the papers in the bin so they wouldn't blow all over the neighborhood. Congratulations! Your child just demonstrated responsibility and maturity by doing more than the bare minimum.

Talk to your child about other areas where he can go above and beyond. For example, when he:

- **Makes a snack** after school, he can leave the kitchen clean.
- **Uses the last** of the peanut butter, he can add it to the grocery list.
- **Pours the rest** of the water out of a pitcher, he can refill it.

Encourage your child to do more than what's required at school, too. He could:

- **Read a few extra pages** of an assigned reading.



- **Take time** to make sure his report is written in neat handwriting.
- **Start a project early**, and go beyond what is expected, by including a detailed illustration or adding a colorful cover page.
- **Work a few extra math problems** to make sure he grasps a concept.

Help your child set goals and take responsibility for learning



Setting weekly goals helps your child take control of her learning. To help her set goals and achieve them:

1. **Ask your child to identify** one goal at the beginning of the week, such as finishing a book she has been reading for school.
2. **Have your child write** the goal on a piece of paper and post it on the refrigerator or bulletin board.
3. **Talk about how to accomplish** the goal. Help your child break the goal down into smaller steps.

For example, "You could read two chapters every day."

4. **Check your child's progress** in a few days. If problems arise, talk about possible solutions. If your child falls behind in reading, delaying bedtime by 10 minutes might help her catch up.
5. **Help your child evaluate** how she did at the end of the week. Did she achieve her goal? Why or why not? Regardless of the outcome, praise your child for trying. Then set a new goal for next week.

Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION®

October 2019

Frazier Elementary Schools - Kelly Lombard, Principal
Title 1

SHORT NOTES

Estimate everything!

Weave estimation into daily life to build your youngster's math skills. While cooking, you might ask, "How many cherry tomatoes do you think are in that container?" Or in a waiting room, challenge her to estimate the number of ceiling tiles. Have her count to check. The more she practices, the better she'll get at estimating.

Take initiative

Part of developing initiative is learning to recognize what needs to be done. Instead of guiding your child through each step in a task, get him in the routine of figuring out what to do next. If he's clearing the table and forgets to wipe it off, say, "Take a look at the table—what's the last step?"

Family fire drills

Use National Fire Prevention Week (October 6–12) to create a fire escape plan with your youngster. Encourage her to draw a map of your home with two exits per room and a meeting place outside. Then, hold a fire drill. *Note:* Studies show that many kids sleep through smoke alarms, so be sure your plan includes waking everyone up.

Worth quoting

"Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere."
Chinese proverb

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What do you get when you cross a stream and a brook?

A: Wet feet.



Secrets of better behavior

It's no secret that parents want their children to behave appropriately. But what really works? Try focusing on teaching your child to behave rather than punishing him for misbehavior, and you're likely to see better results. Consider these tips.

Be a mirror

Your youngster looks to you for guidance, so model the behavior you expect. For example, if he sees you staying calm when you're angry, he'll be less likely to throw fits when he's upset. Talk through your actions, too. You might say, "I had a stressful day at work. I'm going to relax with my book for a little while so I'm not cranky."

Make rules together

Children find it easier to remember and follow rules that they have a role in creating. Sit down together, and write a list. Be sure your youngster understands the reason behind each rule. For instance, ask, "Why shouldn't we leave things on the stairs?" (Because someone could trip



and fall.) *Tip:* If you need to add or change a rule, include him in that discussion, too.

Highlight success

When you praise your child, emphasize the good feelings he gets from behaving well. Saying "You must be proud of yourself for waiting so patiently" gives him a sense of accomplishment. That feeling of pride will motivate him to repeat the behavior in the future.♥

Mistakes make your brain grow

Did you know that mistakes actually help kids learn more? Use these ideas to encourage your youngster to make the most of her mistakes:

- Give your child room to "mess up." You might suspect that masking tape isn't strong enough to hold her project together. But she'll gain more from the experience if she tries, fails, and comes up with a new solution all by herself.

- Help your youngster put mistakes in perspective. Perhaps she forgot to include an important point during her class presentation. Ask her what part went well—maybe her graphics were cool and her classmates seemed interested in her topic.♥

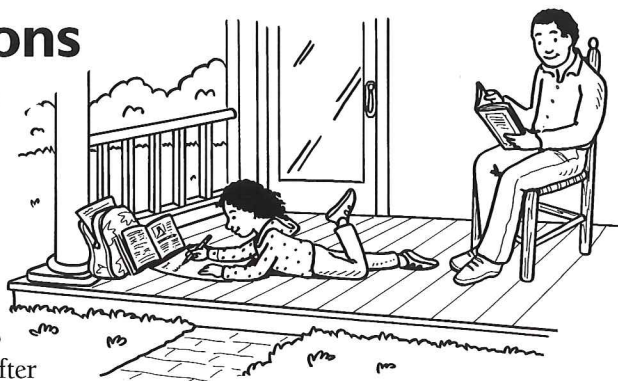


Homework solutions

Whether your child is new to homework or has been doing it for years, your support can help her do her best. That's important, because homework reinforces what she's learning in school. Here's how to set her up for success.

Find a good schedule

Set aside a specific time for homework so it becomes a habit, perhaps right before or after dinner. Also, suggest that she figure out a plan that works best for her. She could start with the easiest assignment to gain momentum or get the hardest one out of the way first.



Eliminate distractions

Make sure your child turns off electronics before she starts homework. Also, you might encourage everyone in the house to have "quiet time" while she does her assignments. Maybe you'll read or pay bills while younger siblings color, for instance.

Troubleshoot problems

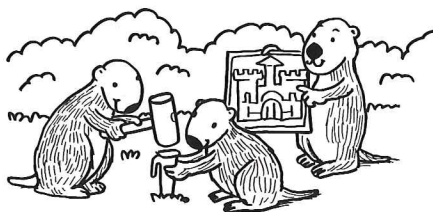
When your youngster gets stuck, offer to help—but avoid telling her the answers. If she's confused by the directions, try reading them together. Or if she's struggling with an addition problem, offer to walk her through a few sample problems in the back of her math book. ♥



PARENT TO PARENT

Engineer a maze

Ever get lost in a corn maze? That's what happened to our family last week at a fall festival. When we made our way out, the farmer explained that engineering and technology were used to create the maze.



My son Mason was fascinated. We learned that a designer drew the maze on a computer. Then, an engineer generated GPS coordinates, which guided the farmer as he mowed the corn into the maze.

At home, Mason decided to create his own maze. He drew a castle-shaped design and plotted it out in the yard with tent stakes. Next, he arranged pool noodles, lawn chairs, and other outdoor items between the stakes. When it was ready, he invited friends over to go through his maze.

Now Mason is busy planning his next maze. I can't wait to see what it is! ♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

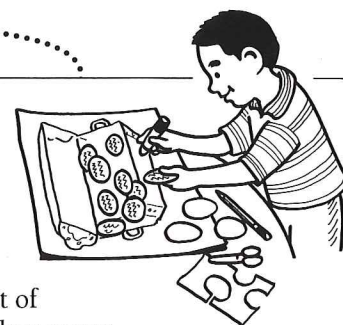
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ACTIVITY CORNER

Be a true friend

Children who form friendships with classmates tend to do better in school. Inspire your youngster to "treasure" his friends with this writing activity.



- 1. Draw:** Have him draw a treasure chest on a sheet of paper and make "coins" by cutting circles out of yellow paper.
- 2. Identify:** Take turns naming things you each value in a friendship. *Examples:* Being loyal, enjoying the same things, helping each other. Your child can write each idea on a separate coin.
- 3. Discuss:** Let him glue the coins onto his treasure chest. As he adds each one, you can both share real-life examples from your own friendships. Your youngster might say, "Raul and I like to read together at language arts time," and you could say, "My friend Jess helped us by bringing meals over after your sister was born."

Hang up his treasure chest as a reminder of qualities he'll look for in his classmates—and will remember to show in himself. ♥



The parent-teacher team

Q: I want to be more involved in my daughter's education. Where should I start?

A: Teaming up with your child's teacher is a great way to get started. Send the teacher a nice email, perhaps about a classroom activity your daughter enjoyed, and let him know you'd like to stay in touch throughout

the year. You might ask if you can volunteer in the classroom or from home.

Also, look over papers the teacher sends home. You'll see how your child is doing in various subjects. Then, if she's struggling with anything, you can reach out to the teacher for advice.

Finally, tell your daughter that you and her teacher are a team, with the same goal—helping her succeed in school. ♥



Math+Science Connection

Building Excitement and Success for Young Children

October 2019

Frazier Elementary Schools - Kelly Lombard, Principal

Title 1

TOOLS & TIDBITS

Number "hat trick"

Score a "win" with this sequencing game. Have

your child number slips of paper 1–20 and place them in a hat. Take turns pulling out three numbers and arranging them from smallest to largest.

Choose one number to keep, and put the rest back. The first person to get three numbers in a row (4, 5, 6) calls out, "Hat trick!"



Earth's path in space

Give your youngster an idea of how Earth orbits the sun. Let her stick a big ball of play dough (the sun) on the middle of a pie plate. Then, help her tilt the plate to roll a smaller play dough ball (Earth) around the edge. Although Earth's orbit isn't a perfect circle, this model helps her understand how we travel around the sun.

Book picks

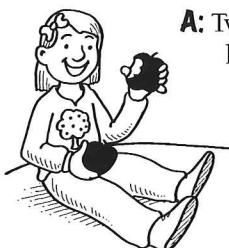
■ Your child will learn pumpkin facts as he skip counts with Charlie and his classmates in *How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin?* (Margaret McNamara).

■ The story of *Magnet Max* (Monica Lozano Hughes) will inspire your youngster to figure out what's magnetic and what's not.

Just for fun

Q: If a tree has 10 apples and you pick two, how many apples do you have?

A: Two, because that's how many you picked.



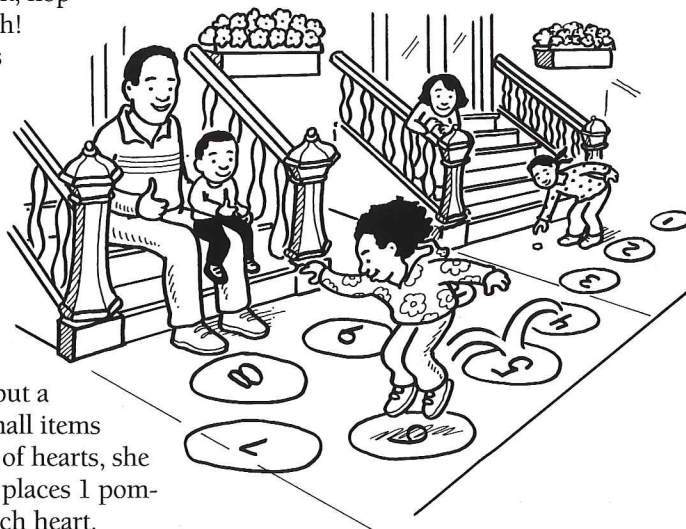
Fun with number sense

Play cards, eat a snack, hop like a frog—and do math!

Here are hands-on ideas for building your child's number sense.

1-to-1 matching

Playing cards are ideal for matching up objects 1-to-1. Let your youngster arrange cards faceup on the table (face cards removed, ace = 1) and put a matching number of small items on each card. For the 6 of hearts, she could count to 6 as she places 1 pom-pom or jelly bean on each heart.



Snacks at a glance

As an adult, you can probably tell how many objects are in a small group without counting. Help your child practice this skill. Arrange 1–10 small snacks (pretzels, raisins) on a plate, and give her a few seconds to look before you cover the plate with a napkin. Ask her to tell you how many snacks there are, then count to check. Now it's time to eat!

Lily pad hop

Your youngster can pretend she's a frog while counting from numbers other than 1. Let her use green chalk to draw 10 lily pads, numbered 1–10, on a sidewalk. She should roll a die and stand on the number rolled (say, 4). Ask her to hop and count on to 10 (5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) or backward to 1 (3, 2, 1). *Challenge:* Erase the numbers—can she count the circles without them? 🐸

My science station

Inspire your junior scientist to make discoveries by helping him set up a science station.

First, let your youngster gather science tools he can use to investigate and explore. *Examples:* magnifying glass, flashlight, tweezers, cups, spoons, paper, pencils, crayons.

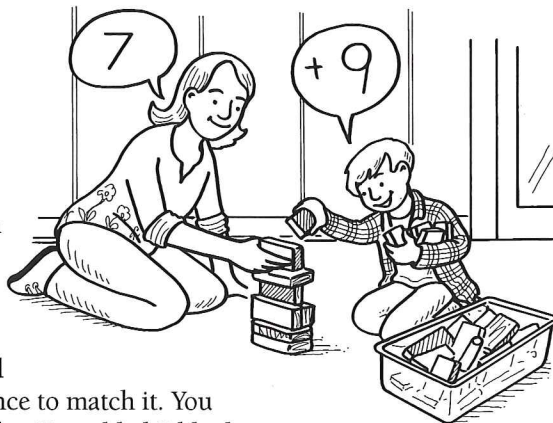
Then, encourage your child to collect natural objects, or "specimens," from the ground outside (bark, rocks, dirt, sticks, flower petals). He can label and display them, then use his tools to observe them closely. Have him draw what he sees. 🐞



Let's build story problems

Your youngster builds a tower with 30 blocks. The dog knocks down 15 of them. What a problem—a math story problem, that is! ($30 - 15 = 15$) Solve story problems together with these activities.

Build it. Make up a story problem, and have your child write a number sentence to match it. You might say, “I built a house with 7 blocks. You added 9 blocks.”



How many blocks did we use in all?” ($7 + 9 = \underline{\quad}$) Now use blocks to act out the problem so he can find the answer. You would stack 7 blocks, then he’d add 9 and count the total (16 blocks, because $7 + 9 = 16$).

Take it apart. Once you have several buildings, use them to create subtraction problems. You could say, “Our tower is 35 blocks tall. A friend wants to use 12 of the blocks for her tower. How many blocks will we have left?” Your youngster can write the number sentence ($35 - 12 = \underline{\quad}$), remove 12 blocks, and count to get the answer (23 blocks, because $35 - 12 = 23$).

Q & A What can we measure with?

Q: My daughter is learning about measurement in school, but she’s not using a ruler. Why is this, and how can she practice measuring at home?

A: Children first explore the concept of measurement with familiar objects, such as pasta noodles or paper clips. Later, your daughter will move onto standard units like inches or centimeters.

Together, find fun items to measure with, and give your youngster “measurement challenges” she’ll enjoy. You might ask, “How many noodles long is your shoe?” or “How many pencils long is the table?” Then, help her line up the objects carefully, end to end, and count them to check. (Each object must be the same length, just like an inch is always the same. For example, brand-new pencils would work, but not used pencils.)

When your child learns to use a ruler, she’ll already know the importance of measuring with units that are all the same size.



MATH CORNER

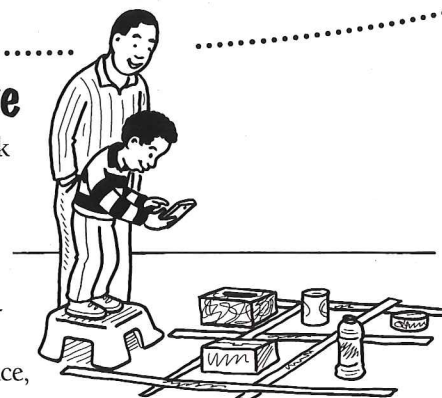
View from above

How does your child think your town looks to a bird flying high above it? With this map-making activity, he’ll find out—and develop spatial reasoning skills.

Encourage your youngster to create a miniature town with masking tape “streets” and “buildings” from the recycling bin. For instance, he might use a tissue box for his school and a soup can for a water tower. Now let him pretend he’s a bird—he can stand over his finished town and take a photo or draw a sketch.

Have your child use the picture to make a map. He’ll realize that birds see the tops of things, so he might simply draw a rectangle for his school and a circle for the water tower. Finally, hide a small toy person or animal in one of the buildings in his town, and mark an X in the matching spot on his map. Can he find the toy based on its location on the map?

Idea: The next time you visit a mall, park, or historic place, let him use a map to locate attractions.



SCIENCE LAB

“See” the oxygen

Your youngster will gasp when this experiment shows her how plants give off oxygen!

You’ll need: lettuce, two bowls, measuring cup, water

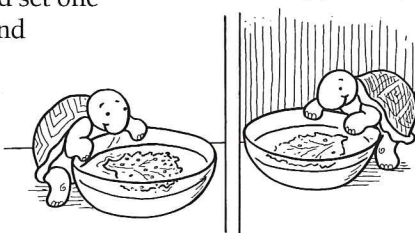
Here’s how: In each bowl, have your child place a lettuce leaf and add 2 cups warm water. She should set one bowl in a sunny spot and the other in a dark room, then check the leaves in 1 hour.

What happens?
Tiny bubbles form on

the surface of each leaf. The leaf in the sun, however, has more bubbles.

Why? Plants, such as lettuce, make their own food with the help of water and sunlight. Water contains oxygen, which plants don’t need (but humans do), so as plants make food, they let out the oxygen they got from the water. The

plant in the shade couldn’t release as much oxygen because it didn’t have sunlight to help it start the food-making process.



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Math+Science Connection

Intermediate Edition

Building Understanding and Excitement for Children

October 2019

Frazier School District

Title I

INFO BITS

Take a perimeter walk

Build your child's "measurement sense" with this outdoor activity. Let her estimate the number of heel-to-toe steps it will take her to walk the perimeter of your yard or a playground. Then, she can count her steps to check. To calculate the perimeter in inches, she could measure her step size in inches and multiply that by her number of steps.

Nature's carvings

Water and wind gradually erode, or wear away, rocks and soil to create amazing natural wonders. Outdoors or in photographs, help your youngster find examples (caves, canyons, river gorges). Then, have him model erosion by making a "mountain" of dirt and



gently blowing on it through a straw or pouring water over it. How does it change?

Book picks

■ The Number Investigators are gearing up for their school math bee, which is in 14 days—or 1,209,600 seconds—in the story of *Charlotte Morgan and the Great Big Math Problem* (Martin Tiller).

■ Your child will discover interesting ways to combine science and art in *STEAM Lab for Kids: 52 Creative Hands-On Projects for Exploring Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math* (Liz Lee Heinecke).

Just for fun

Q: How does a monster count to 100?

A: On his fingers and toes.



Everyday fractions

Does your child know why a 25-cent coin is called a quarter? It's one quarter, or $\frac{1}{4}$, of a dollar. Help him discover fractions like that all around him with these ideas.

Spot 'em

Challenge your youngster to look (and listen) for fractions at home and on the go. He might pour juice from a $\frac{1}{2}$ -gallon carton, attend a game with four quarters, or see a freeway sign for an exit in $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. Or perhaps he'll hear you say, "It's a quarter to seven" or "I'm a third of the way through my book."

Fold 'em

Turn laundry time into fraction time. Let your child fold a towel in half and then in half again. Ask him how it's folded now (into fourths). What happens if he folds a towel into thirds and then in half? (It's folded into sixths.) To see the fractions more easily, suggest that he make the same folds in paper. Then,

he can unfold to see the creases. How could he fold and get eighths? Twelfths?

Show 'em

Quarters are great tools for modeling fractions. Gather a few, and ask your youngster to show you $\frac{3}{4}$ of a dollar (3 quarters) or $1\frac{1}{2}$ dollars (6 quarters is $\frac{6}{4}$ or $\frac{3}{2}$ or $1\frac{1}{2}$). Now have him tell you a fraction to show in quarters. ▢



Good vibrations (for spiders)

A spider's web helps it gather food and stay safe from predators. Your youngster can learn how by building a model of a web.

Help her stretch yarn tightly between two chairs, weaving and tying the strands into a web. Have your child hold one strand and close her eyes while you pluck a different strand—first gently, and then harder. Does she feel the difference?

Spiders sense different vibrations in their webs. The vibrations may signal danger, rain, or even another spider. Other vibrations mean it's dinnertime—a bug has been caught in the web. And spiders know the difference! ▢




Shapes with a purpose

Engineers often use triangles as supports in bridges and buildings, while bees use hexagons to construct their honeycombs. These activities will encourage your youngster to explore the practical side of shapes.

Triangles. A triangle is considered a sturdy shape for building. To see why, let your child bend one drinking straw into a triangle and another into a square, taping each shape's ends together. Now have her try to carefully



sides with no wasted space between them, but the circles leave lots of gaps. 

transform each one into a different shape—without bending its sides. The square can become a parallelogram, but the triangle stays rigid.

Hexagons. Bees use hexagons to build their honeycombs so they can store the most honey possible. Your youngster can see how by drawing a few rows of hexagons linked together and then a few rows of circles side by side.

She'll see how the hexagons share sides with no wasted space between them, but the circles

MATH CORNER


In my head

Practicing mental math is fun with this variation on a popular road-trip game.



Take turns naming an item to take on a trip and telling how many you'd take. ("I'm going on a trip, and I'm taking 24 grapes. That's 24 items in all.") Your youngster repeats your item and adds her own. ("I'm going on a trip, and I'm taking 24 grapes and 6 shirts. That's 30 items.")

Keep playing until someone forgets an item or adds incorrectly. If you make it to 100 items without a mistake, everyone wins!

Variation: Include multiplication with statements like, "I'm going on a trip, and I'm taking 10 pairs of socks. $2 \times 10 = 20$. That's 20 items." 

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SCIENCE LAB


Fascinating friction

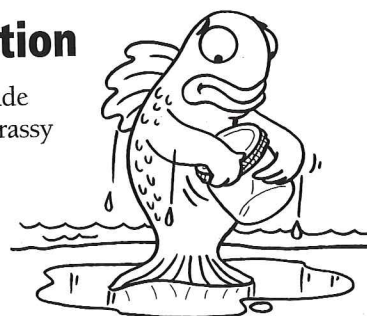
Your child can slide down a playground slide much more easily than he can slide down a grassy hill. That's because the smooth metal surface creates less friction—the resistance of movement when two surfaces rub together. Let him try this experiment to see how friction works.

You'll need: screw-top jar with lid, soap, water

Here's how: Screw the lid on the jar as tightly as you can. Then, your youngster should wet his hands with soap and water and try to unscrew the jar. Next, have him rinse and dry his hands and the jar—and try again.

What happens? The jar is easier to open when his hands are dry.

Why? The friction between his hands and the lid helps him unscrew it. The water and soap reduced that friction, so his hands slipped instead of gripping the lid to remove it. 



Q & A

Math and science extracurriculars


Q: My son is trying to choose an after-school activity. He loves math and science—any ideas for extracurriculars related to those subjects?

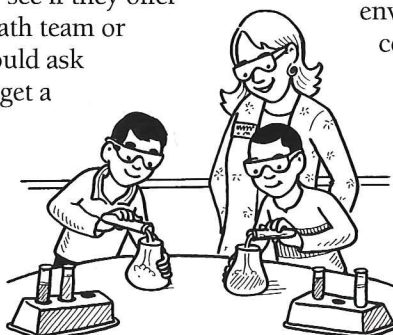
A: Start by calling your son's school or visiting the website to see if they offer any activities like a math team or science club. Or he could ask a teacher to help him get a new group started.

Also, check the public library, the parks and recreation department, and nature centers. You may find STEM

classes, chess clubs, or nature programs about plants or animals.

If he joins Scouts, he could earn merit badges in everything from astronomy to chemistry to forestry. Or consider your local 4-H club, where kids explore the environment, agriculture, computer science, and more.

Idea: Suggest that your child ask a friend or two to join a group or club with him. He'll have someone he knows there, and you may be able to carpool with the other parents. 



Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

October 2019

Frazier Elementary Schools - Kelly Lombard, Principal

Title 1

Book Picks

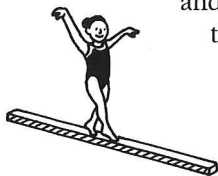
Read-aloud favorites

■ **Gymnastics Time!** (Brendan Flynn)

This nonfiction book takes readers inside a gym to see gymnasts in action. It explains basic facts about the sport, such as how to get started and what equipment the athletes use.

Part of the Sports Time series.

(Also available in Spanish.)



■ **We Don't Eat Our Classmates**

(Ryan T. Higgins)

Penelope Rex is a little dinosaur who ate her classmates on the first day of school. (Could she help it if they were delicious?) Now no one wants

to be friends with her. It takes a lesson from the class goldfish to put Penelope on the right track.



■ **Space Taxi: Archie Takes Flight**

(Wendy Mass and Michael Brawer)

Archie Morningstar is excited to spend Take Your Kid to Work Day in his dad's taxi. But when he climbs in the car, he discovers that his dad is a taxi driver for aliens from outer space. Instead of a trip around the city, Archie is on an intergalactic adventure! The first book in the Space Taxi series.

■ **A Full Moon is Rising**

(Marilyn Singer)

Poetry, geography, and culture come together in this volume. Each poem is about a full moon in a different part of the world. A special section offers interesting facts about each place mentioned in the poems.



Writing is practical

Show your youngster how useful writing can be by giving him real-life reasons to put pencil to paper. Here are a few ideas.

To-do lists

What does your child want or need to do this week? Help him make lists to keep track. He might list Lego structures he plans to build (castle, rocket) or chores he needs to complete (water plants, dust). Or maybe he'll list upcoming events, such as going to the book fair and eating dinner with Grandma. He can check off each item as he finishes it.

Reminders

Let your youngster be your secretary and write reminders for you. *Examples:* "Buy milk." "Sign field trip form." Provide a pad of sticky notes (and a little spelling help) for him to jot them down. Then, set up a place to leave the notes where you will see them. Encourage reading practice by leaving notes for him, too.



Memory book

Suggest that your child start a notebook of favorite memories. Each night before bed, he could write and illustrate three things he wants to remember about the day. *Examples:* Jumping in a pile of leaves, listening to his teacher read a good book, learning a funny joke.

Note: If your youngster is just learning to write, ask him to write letters or words he knows, and help him fill in the rest. ♥

A record of my reading

These ongoing craft projects will help your child keep track of books she reads this year—and show her how she's progressing as a reader.

● **Paper chain.** Help your youngster write each book title on a strip of construction paper. She can link the strips together to form a colorful chain that will get longer the more she reads. *Idea:* Suggest that she use different-color strips for different types of books (green for animal tales, purple for poetry).

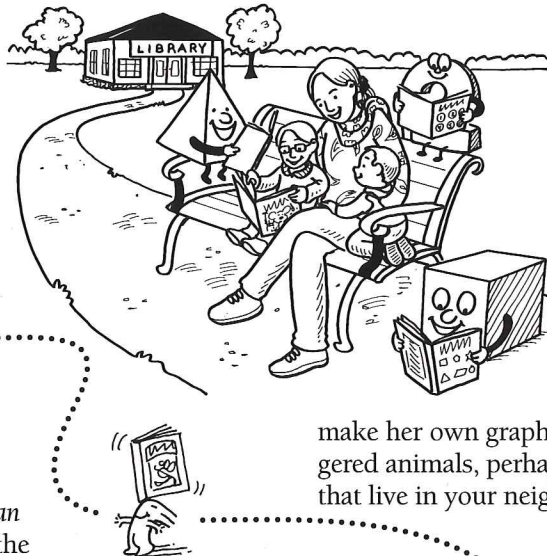
● **Patchwork quilt.** Have your child write book titles on separate construction-paper "quilt" squares. Encourage her to decorate each one—maybe she'll make a red-and-white striped square for *The Cat in the Hat* (Dr. Seuss). Now help her tape or staple the squares together in rows and columns for a quilt that grows throughout the year! ♥



I can learn from nonfiction!

Nonfiction books are fun for your youngster to read—and they build knowledge she needs in school now and later. Help her become a fan of nonfiction with these tips.

Explore school subjects. Let your child check out nonfiction library books that are related to topics she studies in school. As she learns about



numbers and shapes, for example, read math picture books. Or she could find a biography of a historical figure she's studying. She'll learn new facts and gain a deeper understanding of the topic.

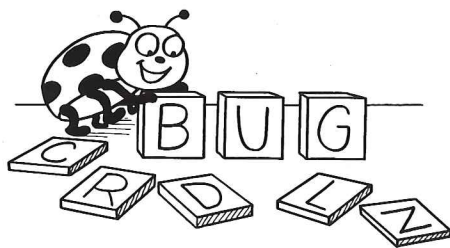
Read graphics. Many nonfiction books include charts, tables, maps, and diagrams like those your youngster will see in textbooks. When you read together, be sure to read the graphics, too, so she becomes comfortable with them. For instance, she'll learn to read the titles, captions, or data they contain. *Idea:* Suggest that she

make her own graphic. After reading a chart about endangered animals, perhaps she'll draw a chart showing animals that live in your neighborhood. ♥

Fun with Words

Real or nonsense?

How are the words *fan* and *can* related? They both belong to the *-an* word family! Give your youngster's reading and spelling skills a boost with this word family game.



1. Get a set of magnetic letters or letter tiles. Set aside the vowels, and mix up the consonants in a bowl.
2. Let your child choose a word family, such as *-an*, *-op*, *-ug*, or *-et*, and find the magnetic letters or tiles for his "family."
3. Take turns drawing a consonant from the bowl and saying it with the word family. Does it make a real word or a nonsense word? For instance, adding *b* to *-ug* makes *bug* (real). But adding *g* makes *gug* (nonsense).
4. If it's a real word, the player writes it down. When all the consonants have been used, the person with the longest list picks the next word family so you can play again. ♥

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Autumn fine-motor play

Your child's hands need to be strong and coordinated for tasks like writing and cutting with scissors. Try these fall-themed activities to give his little fingers a workout.

Pumpkin pincushion. Let your youngster stick pushpins all over a small pumpkin. Then, he could stretch colorful rubber bands between the pins to create designs.

Apple tree. Have him draw the outline of a tree on paper. He can place red pom-pom apples on his tree and then use tweezers to "pick" them up.

Leaf rubbing. Together, gather leaves from the ground outside. Encourage your child to tape one to a table, place a sheet of paper on top, and rub the side of an unwrapped crayon over it. The leaf's outline will appear!

Seed signs. Ask your youngster to create a sign for your door by gluing apple or pumpkin seeds onto paper to spell "W-E-L-C-O-M-E." ♥



Q&A Working with the reading specialist

Q My daughter meets with the school reading teacher each week. How can I work with the teacher to help my child do her best?

A Start by asking the reading specialist what you and your daughter can do at home. For example, the teacher might suggest specific cues to give your child when she reads a word incorrectly. Or maybe she'll have ideas for word games that are

especially helpful for students who struggle with reading.

The specialist may also tell you what your daughter is doing well and where they're working on ways to improve.

Finally, be sure to attend all IEP (Individualized Education Program) meetings. The teacher will answer your questions, explain anything that you don't understand, and help you plan for your daughter's reading success. ♥



Reading Connection

INTERMEDIATE EDITION

Working Together for Learning Success

October 2019

Frazier Elementary Schools - Kelly Lombard, Principal
Title 1

Book Picks

■ *H is for Haiku: A Treasury of Haiku from A to Z* (Sydell Rosenberg)

Organized alphabetically, this book full of haiku is the perfect inspiration to get readers to write their own poems. Each three-line poem starts with a different letter of the alphabet and covers a familiar topic like toys, weather, or pets.



■ *The Hyena Scientist* (Sy Montgomery)

Hyenas get a bad rap, but scientists who study them want to change your mind. With this nonfiction book, readers will learn about the hyenas at a wildlife reserve in Kenya—types of breeds, how they hunt, and even how they play!

■ *Out of Left Field* (Ellen Klages)

Set in the 1950s, this story is about a young baseball player who wouldn't take no for an answer. Katy Gordon is the best pitcher in her neighborhood, yet she can't play Little League because she's a girl. So she heads to the library and uses research to argue that girls belong in baseball.



■ *Knight Kyle and the Magic Silver Lance* (*Adventures Beyond Dragon Mountain*) (Oliver Pötzsch)

Wearing his suit of armor, Knight Kyle joins his helpful band of friends to search for his great-grandfather's missing silver lance. These 13 short stories of joyful journeys in faraway lands will lead your youngster to one exciting ending.



Words in every subject

You know your child needs a strong vocabulary to do well in reading and writing. But did you know that vocabulary is important in math, science, and social studies, too? She can explore words in every subject with these three activities.

1. Find words

Whenever your youngster reads, suggest that she look for words related to school subjects. She might spot science words like *metamorphosis* in a comic book, *sodium* in a food advertisement, and *precipitation* in a weather report. Seeing how the words are used in real life will help her recognize and understand them in her textbooks.

2. Use words

Give your child reasons to say vocabulary words aloud—that will make it easier for her to identify them in textbooks. If she's studying state history, you could visit a state park and talk to a ranger. ("What tribes are *native* to this area?") Or she might practice economics terms

while shopping. ("There must be a high *demand* for these sweaters. They need to increase their *supply*.")

3. Play with words

Games can make words a permanent part of your youngster's vocabulary. Take turns picking a letter (say, C) and a school subject (perhaps math), and set a timer for three minutes. Each player lists terms that begin with the letter and fit the category (*centimeter*, *calculate*). Compare your lists. The winner is the person with the most words that no one else has.



What should I read?

One key to reading a lot is finding a steady supply of great books! Try these ideas with your youngster:

- Suggest that your child swap favorite books with a friend. He can lend books he liked or recommend that his friend get them from the library. Then, his friend could do the same thing.
- Ask your youngster to list a few books he loves. He can ask the librarian to help him choose similar books to read next.
- Give your child books you enjoyed at his age. You might even reread them so you can discuss them together.



Ways to overcome writer's block

"I don't know what to write. I'm stuck!" If your child's story stalls out, help him get his pencil moving again with these tips.

Keep writing. For 10 minutes, have him write nonstop about anything that pops into his mind. When he reads his "free writing," a possibility for his story may jump out at him.



Add something new. Remind your youngster that a first draft is a "playground" for ideas. He could add another character to the story or give one of his existing characters a new problem to solve. The changes he makes might help him get unstuck.

Skip ahead. Encourage him to fast-forward and write another part of the story. Sometimes taking a detour will trigger an idea about the section that has him stumped.

Take a break. Suggest that your child set the story aside for a little while to go for a walk or read a book. Once he stops thinking so hard, the perfect solution may appear. ■

Learning to study

My daughter Corina struggled with studying last year. She would read her textbook and then say she was done. This year, I reached out to her teacher for advice.



Her teacher said that to study effectively, Corina needs to be an "active reader." That means she should take notes while she reads, talk about the information to help her learn and remember it, and write down the answers to practice tests in textbooks.

Now at dinner, I ask Corina what she studied that day, and then we discuss it. That has led to some interesting family talks.

Also, her teacher recommended that she study a little each night. So Corina starts each session by reviewing what she read the night before and then moves on to that day's material. I feel confident that this will be a better school year for Corina! ■



Fun
with
Words

Awesome adjectives!

There's a whole world full of adjectives out there for your youngster to use when she writes. Help her discover the awesomeness of adjectives with this twist on "I Spy."

The first player picks any object she sees and uses one adjective to describe it. ("I spy a *big* ball.") The next person repeats the sentence, adding another adjective that is a synonym (a word with a similar meaning): "I spy a *big, huge* ball." Continue adding synonyms, such as *large*, *whopping*, *enormous*, *immense*, and *giant*.

When you run out of words, the last player who thought of one chooses the next object and starts another round. *Idea:* Have your child keep track of the adjectives in a notebook. She'll have a personal thesaurus to use when she writes! ■



Q&A

Reading models

Q I know it's important for our son to see us reading, but my husband and I can't seem to find time to read. What should we do?

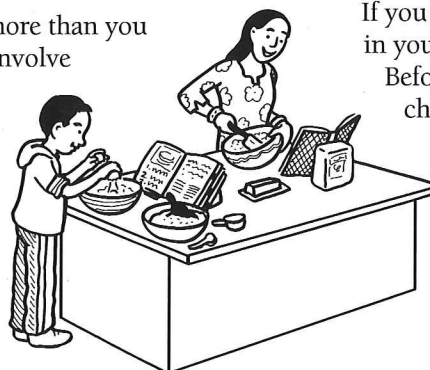
A You probably read more than you think. Most daily tasks involve some reading. Be on the lookout for them, and take every opportunity to let your son notice you reading.

When preparing meals, read recipes

and package directions aloud. During drives, point out road signs or billboards. Let your son see both of you reading the newspaper, magazines, mail, or email.

If you can, find a little time in your day for books.

Before reading to your child every night, you could each read a book silently. Seeing you read may motivate him to follow your example. ■



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