

Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION®

March 2013

English Catholic Central School
Catholic School Parent Council

SHORT NOTES

Last-quarter goals

What does your child want to accomplish before the end of the school year? Have her list several goals on a sheet of paper (memorize continents and oceans, finish a series of books). Encourage her to keep the list inside her desk or agenda and to check off each goal as she meets it.

At work

Help your youngster understand why school is important by explaining how you use different subjects at work. You might tell him that you need strong writing skills to send emails in your office, math skills to calculate shipment sizes for your store, or science knowledge to cook in a restaurant or run medical tests in a lab.

Fly a kite

Kite-flying is a fun family activity for a windy March day. Many communities have kite festivals or competitions this time of year. Keep an eye on your local newspaper, or search for events online. Or fly kites in a nearby field. *Idea:* Make your own kite—follow the instructions at kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/activities/crafts/kite-craft.

Worth quoting

"Start by doing what's necessary; then what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible."

Francis of Assisi

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What never asks questions but has to be answered?

A: The telephone.



Testing 1-2-3

There's more to preparing for a test than just studying. Whether your child is taking a classroom test or a standardized exam, you can help him become a better test-taker with these three tips.

1. Learn the lingo. Test questions are easier to read if your youngster is familiar with the words used. *Examples:* *describe, characterize, summarize.* Together, look over old tests, or find sample tests online. Let him circle words that appear frequently. Can he explain what they mean? Have him look up the ones he's not sure about.

2. Use strategies. Suggest that your child avoid spending too much time on any particular item. If he can't answer a question, he can mark it, skip it, and come back to it at the end. It's also a good idea to cross out unreasonable answers on multiple-choice tests so he has fewer options to consider. If more

than one answer seems possible, he should look closely at those that include "never" or "always." Those words are often clues to a wrong answer.

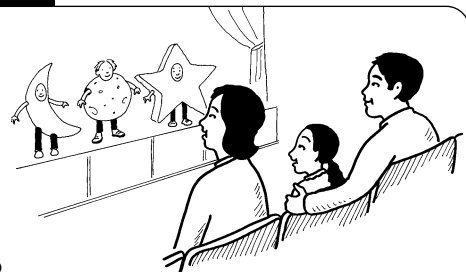
3. Stay relaxed. Feeling good and having a positive attitude can help your youngster do his best. The night before a quiz or test, mention it, but don't put pressure on him. In the morning, create a calm, pleasant atmosphere, and make sure he eats a balanced breakfast. Also, remind him to take the supplies he needs, such as sharpened pencils with erasers and a calculator (if allowed).♥



Let's go to school tonight!

Attending evening events at school is a good way for you and your youngster to get more involved. Plus, she'll be happy to show you the place where she spends her day. Consider these suggestions:

- Spring usually brings talent shows, musicals, and plays. Try to go whether or not your child is in the show. She'll get to see her friends perform and perhaps be inspired to join in next year.
- Keep an eye out for parent education nights. Special programs on Internet safety or ADHD, for example, can help you with difficult issues.
- Go to a curriculum event. A literacy or math night, science fair, or cultural celebration lets your youngster show you what she is studying in school—and the two of you can learn something new together.♥



Limit screen time

When your child wakes up or gets home from school, is the TV or computer the first thing on her mind? If so, you're not alone. Here are some benefits of limiting her usage, along with strategies for cutting back.

More play time

Your youngster's imagination can get rusty when she spends too much time being entertained by video games and apps. Also, she might avoid favorite activities so she can have screen time. Together, make a list of alternatives (dancing to music, doing jigsaw puzzles,



reading books). If she complains there's "nothing to do," point to the list. **Tip:** Make her bedroom a TV- and computer-free zone so she'll do other things when she's there.

Better social skills

If your child and her friends watch TV or play games on a tablet when they're together, they'll interact less. Consider a ban on

these devices when friends are over. Instead, encourage them to do things that involve talking and sharing, like playing board games or catch. **Tip:** Schedule screen time so that it doesn't interfere with school work. For instance, you might restrict usage on weeknights and allow more on weekends. ♥

A picture history

Your youngster probably comes across time lines in social studies textbooks or handouts. Let him make his own picture time line to put important events in order and show the passage of time.



First, have him choose a theme and 5–10 events to go along with it. A time line for "My Family" might have births, weddings, graduations, and vacations. Or "Things I Have Learned" could include reading, swimming, riding a two-wheeler, and multiplication.

Help your child find a photo of each milestone, or he could draw pictures to represent the events. Then, he can glue each photo or drawing on a sheet of paper, add the date, and write a brief description.

To display his time line, have him stretch a length of ribbon or yarn across his bedroom wall and secure both ends with tape or push pins. Let him use clothespins or paper clips to attach the pictures in order. **Idea:** Leave his time line up so he can add new events as they occur. ♥

Q & A

When your child is bullied

Q: My son told me he doesn't want to go to school because kids bully him for being the shortest kid in his class. What should I do?

A: Start by calling or emailing his teacher. Most bullying takes place when adults aren't looking, so she might not be aware of the situation. And she will want to know so that she can help.

In the meantime, talk to your son about bullying "hot spots," or places where bullies tend to strike (back of the bus, playground, cafeteria, hall, restroom). He should try to stay with friends or adults in those areas.

Also, let him know that while he may be short, he has other things going for him. For instance, maybe he can do math in his head, or perhaps he's a good pitcher. And no matter what, it's not okay for kids to make fun of him. Go over ways he can respond to bullies. It's best to say as little as possible—he can simply shrug or say, "Whatever," and walk away. ♥



ACTIVITY CORNER

Write like Dr. Seuss

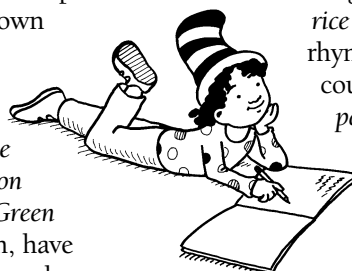
Dr. Seuss's birthday is March 2, and students across America celebrate by reading his books. Your youngster can take the celebration a step further by writing her own Seuss-style story.

Start by reading several Dr. Seuss books like *The Cat in the Hat*, *Horton Hears a Who!*, and *Green Eggs and Ham*. Then, have her choose one to base her

story on. For example, she could decide to write *Blue Beans and Rice*.

Next, ask your child to brainstorm a list of rhyming words and phrases to use. She might write words that rhyme with *rice* (*nice, twice, mice*) and pairs of rhyming phrases that tell where she could eat blue beans and rice (*at the park, in the dark*).

Finally, she can use the rhymes to write her story. When she's finished, let her read it aloud as a bedtime story for your entire family! ♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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