

Home & School CONNECTION[®]

Working Together for School Success

April 2018



Merkel Elementary School
Mrs. Nall, Principal

SHORT NOTES

"I remember that!"

Your child may recall information better if she uses strategies to cement facts and details in her mind. For example, she might close her eyes and visualize each type of coin with its value written on it. Or she could silently repeat instructions immediately after the teacher gives them.

Learn about birds

Making a bird feeder will encourage your youngster to observe nature. Have him coat an empty toilet paper tube with peanut butter and roll it in birdseed. Hang it from a tree branch. Then, your child can sketch his feathered visitors and try to identify them using a library book or website.

DID YOU KNOW?

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day is April 26. If your employer allows it, give your youngster an on-site glimpse of your job. Show her what you do, and try to assign her a special job. She might help with a window display or organize your files, for instance.

Worth quoting

"We all live with the objective of being happy; our lives are all different and yet the same." *Anne Frank*

JUST FOR FUN

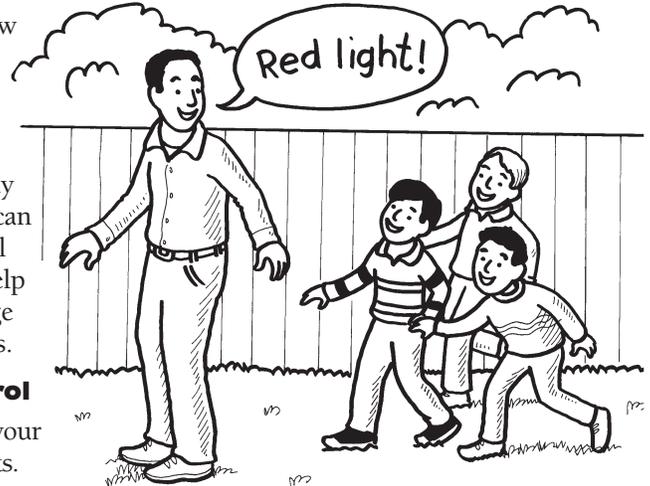
Q: You can see me in water, but I never get wet. What am I?

A: My reflection.



In charge of me

If your child knows how to manage his emotions and behavior, he'll do better at getting along with others and handling the ups and downs of everyday life. These skills, in turn, can make him more successful in school and at home. Help your youngster take charge of himself with these ideas.



Encourage self-control

- Play games that require your child to think before he acts. For instance, try Red Light, Green Light. Name a way for him to cross the room or yard (skip, hop, tiptoe). He'll have to resist the urge to move unless you give him the "Green light" and make himself stop when you say "Red light."
- Tell your youngster what you expect before heading into situations that are hard for him. Maybe he tends to put random items in the grocery cart. Describe what you want him to do instead, such as getting permission before taking groceries off a shelf. Then, let him know you notice when he does what you asked.

Be a coach

- Ask questions or make gentle suggestions when your child is frustrated. Say he's upset because he can't solve a math problem for homework. You could ask, "Where could you find help?" Or recommend that he take a break or temporarily switch to another assignment.
- Talk about how you deal with your own feelings. You might say, "I'm aggravated about this notice from the cable company. I'll call customer service once I've had a chance to calm down."♥

Play it safe

Visiting playgrounds gives your youngster a chance to be active and social. Keep her safe with these precautions.

Supervision. Watch your child closely as she plays. Or consider taking turns with a neighbor who has kids—that gives your youngster the added benefit of having a playmate.

Equipment use. Remind her to go down the slide instead of up it and to swing from monkey bars rather than climbing on top of them. Also, she should stand or walk a safe distance away from swings that other children are using.

Note: Tell your youngster never to chase after a ball that rolls into the street. She can ask you or another adult to get it for her.♥



Kindness: Spring into action

Being kind is always in season—and it can give your child a more positive outlook and help her think of others. Try these tips for encouraging kindness.

Surprise, surprise! Together, brainstorm ways your youngster could surprise someone with kindness. She might leave a cheerful message for a neighbor (“You



brighten my day”) with sidewalk chalk and sign her name. Or perhaps she’ll make a list of things she admires about a sibling and put it where he will find it. At school, maybe she’ll let a classmate go ahead of her at the water fountain.

Reach out. As a family, think about how to show

kindness in your community. Deliver Meals on Wheels, and have your child decorate place mats to include. Or save spare change in a jar—when it’s full, buy crayons and coloring books from the dollar store and donate them to a children’s hospital.♥

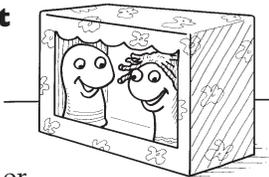
ACTIVITY CORNER

A passion for hobbies

Having a hobby gives your youngster a productive way to spend free time while building skills he can apply in school. Encourage him to develop a hobby with this advice.

Find a good fit

Notice what your child is interested in. If he likes putting on puppet shows or building things, look for supplies at home or visit a craft store. He might discover odds and ends to make a puppet theater or discover a robot-building kit.



Provide opportunity

Make sure your youngster has time to explore his hobby—limiting screen time can help! Also, give him a portable container for storing supplies or his collection of trading cards or stamps. He’ll have an easy way to enjoy his hobby wherever he goes.

Boost knowledge

Suggest that your child read books or watch how-to videos. A hobby shop may offer free classes. Or the school, library, or community center might have a club or class related to his hobby.♥



PARENT TO PARENT

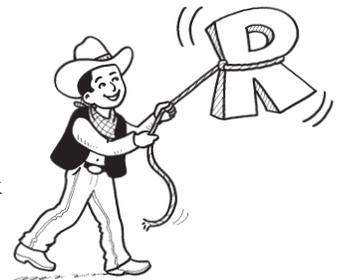
How to give effective feedback

My third grader, Jack, gets speech therapy to help him say his Rs. His therapist shared ideas for giving him feedback when I work with him at home—and her suggestions are useful for more than just speech practice.

First, she recommended that I be specific so Jack knows exactly what he did well. I might tell him, “You said your Rs correctly at the beginning *and* the end of river.” I’ve been trying out the therapist’s advice in other situations, too. Recently, I said, “It was nice of you to help your brother reach that toy,” instead of, “You’re a good brother.”

I also encourage Jack by being positive. When he mispronounces a word, I’ll say something like, “You’ve almost got it! Try again.” That strategy also comes in handy when he wipes down the kitchen table but leaves a few crumbs, for example.

The more I use these techniques, the more natural they feel. Jack’s speech is improving, and I feel like my parenting is, too.♥



Q & A Reading between the lines

Q: My daughter’s teacher said the class is learning to make inferences—or, as Sadie explained it, “read between the lines.” What are fun ways to work on this at home?

A: Try using everyday situations to let your child practice inferring. You might have family members put umbrellas and rain boots by the door before bed and ask, “What can you infer?” (It’s supposed to rain

tomorrow.) Or set out a colander, and boil a pot of water. She might infer that you’re making macaroni for dinner.

When your daughter makes a statement like “The dog sure doesn’t like thunder!” say, “How can you tell?” She may point out that he hides under the table or is glued to your side during storms.

Ask these same questions when you read together: “What can you infer?” and “How can you tell?” Her real-life practice is sure to come in handy.♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

Resources for Educators,
a division of CCH Incorporated
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630
800-394-5052 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com
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