



Pirate News

Upcoming Events

School Item Pick Up 4:00–6:00 p.m.	5/14
School Item Pick up 10:00 am–12:00 pm	5/15
Last Day of School	5/15

This Week's Attachments:

- ◆ Middle years
- ◆ Nutrition Nuggets
- ◆ Reading Connection
- ◆ Home & School Connection



GRADUATION NEWS

KINDERGARTEN GRADUATION: Will be held Monday, June 29th @ 7:00 p.m. in the school cafeteria.

8TH GRADE GRADUATION: will be held on Tuesday, June 30th @ 7:00 p.m. in the school cafeteria.



RAFFLE WINNER!

Congratulations to Karen Farrell of Gerald, MO. She is the winner of the Pit Boss Pro Series Mahogany Pellet Smoker.

Thanks to all that participated and students that sold tickets.

BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION

\$39.20 has been raised from Box Tops collected!

Keep up the good work and please keep collecting.

You can clip and send in Box Tops to our school or use the Box Tops app to scan your store receipt within 14 days of purchase. When you download the app, it will ask for the zip code then choose Spring Bluff. The app will automatically find the products and instantly add Box Tops to our school's earnings online.



Thank you for your support!

SUMMER SCHOOL

Summer School will be held July 13th thru July 31st for students who will be in grades 1st-8th in August.

Summer School will only be offered to Spring Bluff Students.



Middle Years

Working Together for School Success



Short Stops

What's fair?

"That's not fair!" If you hear your tween say this, take the opportunity to discuss what fair actually means. Say her brother gets to stay up late, but she can't because she has swim practice early in the morning. Point out that everyone has different needs, so what's fair for one may not be fair for another.

Thanking teachers

As the school year winds down, encourage your child to show appreciation for his teachers. He could make bookmarks and list favorite memories or topics he enjoyed in class. Or he might fill a jar with dry ingredients to bake cookies. Simply saying thank you in person or writing a heartfelt note means a lot, too.

A head start on next year

Get your middle grader excited about next year's electives by planning outings related to what she'll study. If she's taking woodworking, maybe your family could attend a workshop at a local home improvement store. Or look for a summer concert series if she signed up for band or chorus.

Worth quoting

"If you have good thoughts, they will shine out of your face like sunbeams, and you will always look lovely."
Roald Dahl

Just for fun

Q: What's blue and smells like red paint?

A: Blue paint.



Olympic-sized learning

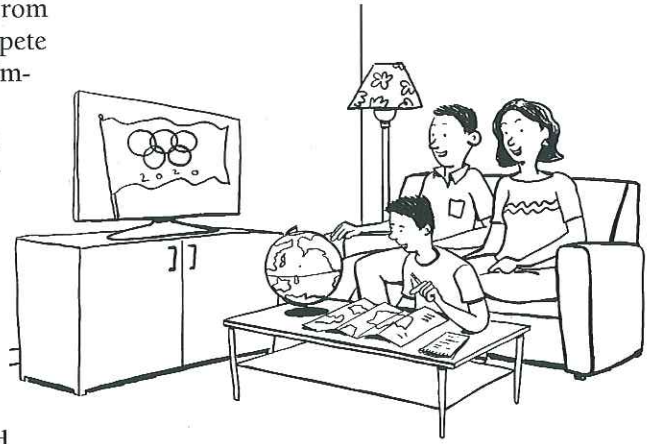
This summer, athletes from around the world will compete in sports ranging from swimming and cycling to dressage and judo. Your middle grader can enjoy the Olympic Games and learn at the same time with these activities.

Math

Encourage your tween to find the countries represented in the Olympics on a map or globe. He could use the scale of miles to calculate which team traveled the farthest to get there. How many time zones did they cross?

Language

The Games will be held in Tokyo, Japan. How do you say *athlete*, *medal*, and *team* in Japanese? Have your child think of words that are used frequently during the Olympics and look up their Japanese translations online. He can listen to how the words are pronounced, then try using them when you talk about the events.



Science

Have your tween observe the science behind Olympic sports. For instance, divers lose points if they make a big splash. That's why they try to keep their bodies straight, which minimizes contact with the water's surface. Suggest that your tween see how this works by dropping a heavy pen into water at different angles. More science: Why do archers pull the bow back so far? When does a gymnast let go of the bar for a high-flying dismount? 👍

Safely home alone

As your child gets older, there will be times when she's home by herself. Whether that's now or later, it's never too early to start talking about household safety. Here's how.

1. Make sure your tween knows not to answer the door unless she can see who's knocking—and it is someone you've agreed she can let in.
2. Show her where you keep the first-aid kit, and explain how to use what's inside.
3. Go over which household appliances your middle grader may use and how to operate them safely.
4. Have your child put emergency contacts in her phone or post a list on the refrigerator. Point out that she should always keep her phone or your landline receiver charged. 👍



Talking to your tween

Does the phrase “mum’s the word” remind you of your middle grader? Tweens tend to share less information with their parents as they become more independent. Consider these strategies for staying close.

Vary the approach. Your tween may be more likely to open up if you talk while doing something else. Invite her along on errands and chat as you drive. Or talk during a walk or run. If you need to discuss a sticky topic (say, she got a zero for a missing homework assignment), give her a heads-up rather than diving right



in. (“Let’s set aside a time to talk about grades. Do you want to chat while I cook dinner or before bed?”)

Keep it light. Regular, casual conversations may make heavier discussions easier. If your child is laughing at a video, ask her to show it to you. Mention good news you hear about her favorite celebrities.

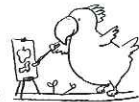
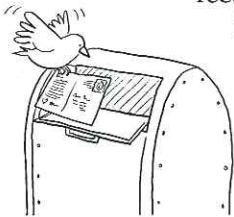
(“Her latest movie got great reviews!”) Also, bring up little things that happen in your day, like being happy about a compliment from your boss. She may respond by telling you something about her day, too. 👍

Micro writing

Tweets, texts, instant messages ... tweens may not realize it, but all that writing in short bursts lets them practice choosing words carefully and being concise. Help your child practice micro writing offline with these ideas.

Postcard review. Encourage your tween to mail a postcard with a book recommendation to a friend or relative.

In the small space available, he’ll need to concisely make his case for why the person should read the book.



Q & A Prepare for final exams

Q My son has final exams for the first time. How are these different from other tests, and how can I help him do his best?

A Finals typically cover material from the entire semester or school year. And an exam grade is usually worth a higher percentage of your child’s overall grade than a score on a regular test.

Have your tween set aside time to complete any review packets the teacher gives him. Also, encourage him to look at the table of contents in each textbook. He may find that chapters he studied earlier in the year aren’t as fresh in his memory. He should spend extra time studying those topics and ask his teacher about anything he doesn’t understand.

Finally, suggest that your child plan study sessions with friends. You might offer to host the group at your home or drive them to the library. 👍



Mini-autobiography. Challenge family members to write Tweet-sized autobiographies. You’ll need to weigh every word to sum up your life in 280 characters or less.

Today’s headlines. Suggest that your middle grader write five headlines that could appear in a news recap of his day. Example: “A muddy start: Morning dog-walk mishap.” 👍

Parent to Parent Nature: A natural mood booster

Our daughter Avery was diagnosed with depression. After a recent therapy appointment, she shared something interesting that she learned: Enjoying nature can improve people’s mental health, whether they have depression or not. So we decided that our whole family could benefit from appreciating nature more often.

We found a nearby nature center with creeks, woodland trails, and a butterfly garden. It was very peaceful, and Avery seemed content there. A

ranger even gave us a tour of the garden and pointed out the flowers that butterflies prefer. On the way out, we noticed a sign asking for teen volunteers for children’s summer programs, and my daughter decided to sign up.

Avery seems hopeful about the summer. She’ll be spending time in nature—while helping others and gaining volunteer experience. In the

meantime, we’ve been taking regular walks at our regional park, and we’ve planned a camping trip for Memorial Day weekend. 👍



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Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

May 2020



BEST BITES

Guess that food

Turn healthy eating into a guessing game for your child. Secretly put a different bite-sized food in each section of a muffin tin. *Examples:* raspberry, avocado chunk, pepper-jack cheese cube, edamame, pitted olive. Let her close her eyes and try each one. How many can she identify?

Cards + cardio = win!

Add physical activity to your next game of Go Fish or Crazy Eights. How? By doing a heart-healthy exercise every time you lay down a heart. The number on the card tells you how many reps to do (ace = 1, jack = 11, queen = 12, king = 13).



You pick the activity. So if your youngster plays a 9 of hearts, he might do 9 push-ups or 9 sit-ups.

DID YOU KNOW?

While the best source of vitamin D is sunlight, it's hard for your child to get enough that way. That's because she needs sunscreen to protect her skin, blocking rays that would help her body make vitamin D. So be sure she eats plenty of vitamin-D rich foods like tuna, salmon, and eggs. Vitamin D-fortified milk, yogurt, and cereal are also good options.

Just for fun

Q: What kind of tree fits in your hand?

A: A palm tree!



Playtime nutrition

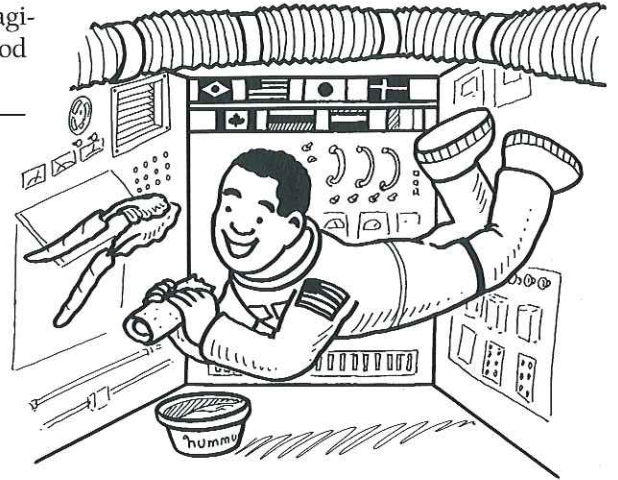
Kids learn a lot through imaginary play, and learning about good nutrition is no exception. These pretend roles mix food with fun—and give your youngster inspiration for healthy things to eat this summer.

Astronaut

Aboard the International Space Station, astronauts make sandwiches using tortillas, since bread falls apart in space. Suggest that your child imagine he's an astronaut and make a list of out-of-this-world sandwiches to try. What nutritious ingredients could he roll up in a whole-wheat tortilla? *Examples:* hummus and shredded carrots, nut or seed butter with banana slices.

Veterinarian

Let your youngster pretend he's a vet and you're a pet owner. Bring him a stuffed animal, and help him research what it eats. Then, he can write it a "prescription" for healthy meals and snacks. He might prescribe berries and sprouts for a hamster and spinach and papayas for a parrot. Now serve some of the foods



he read about—if they're good for humans, of course!

Chef

Encourage your child to write and illustrate a menu for a restaurant that serves healthy foods. Maybe his "Polka-Dot Pizza" has a cauliflower crust topped with diced tomato and green pepper. Instead of french fries, he could sell "Garden Taters"—baked potato wedges with broccoli and cheddar. Then, let him help you cook his menu items for your family. 🍷

Splash, splash!

"Marco!" "Polo!" Playing in water is a great way for your child to be physically active. Try these ideas.

- **Pool games.** Get a whole-body workout while splashing around. Teach your youngster a game you enjoyed as a child, such as Marco Polo or Sharks and Minnows. Or take a beach ball to the pool for a game of volleyball.
- **Water adventures.** Look for activities through the parks and recreation department. Your family might kayak (builds arm strength), paddle-board (improves balance), or sail in pedal-powered boats (strengthens legs).

Note: Always supervise your youngster in and around water. 🍷



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Healthy ways to stay hydrated

Water, fat-free milk, and fresh fruit are your child's best bets for staying hydrated. Consider these thirst-quenching tips.

Keep it interesting. Let your youngster develop her own liquid creations. She might drop lemon slices in her water or sprinkle nutmeg into her milk. Or together, brew unsweetened herbal iced tea, perhaps



peppermint or mango, and add a sprig of fresh mint.

Offer fruit, not juice.

Fruit helps your child hydrate, and it provides her with fiber that juice does not. Set out watermelon wedges for a snack rather than giving her fruit punch. Let her munch on crisp apple slices if she asks for apple juice.

Involve the whole family.

Make it easier for your youngster to drink healthy beverages by joining her. Don't keep soda or sports drinks in the house. Also, have everyone take a refillable water bottle when you go out so you're not tempted by vending machines or convenience stores. ♡

ACTIVITY CORNER

I'm an Olympian!

Celebrate the 2020 Summer Olympics by letting your youngster bring the games into your own backyard. Here are two for your family to enjoy.

1. Hurdle jumping. Gather items of different heights to use as hurdles. *Examples:* lawn chair placed on its side, recycling bin, small step stool. Let your child line them up in a grassy area with enough space in between to run and gain momentum. Take turns timing each other jumping over all the hurdles, and subtract 3 seconds for any you touch. Fastest time wins.



2. Javelin throw. Place two sticks on the ground, about 10 feet apart. Holding a "javelin" (pool noodle), run from one stick to the other. When you reach the second stick, throw the javelin as far as you can. The player whose javelin travels farthest wins. ♡

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Nutrition Nuggets™ is reviewed by a registered dietitian. Consult a physician before beginning any major change in diet or exercise.

ISSN 1935-4630



Q&A Controlling portions

Q: My son tends to put too much food on his plate. How can I help him eat smaller portions?

A: A few tried-and-true strategies will make your child (and your whole family) less likely to overeat.

First, set out a healthy appetizer, like celery and carrot sticks, for your child to munch on while you cook. When dinner is served, he won't be starving and ready to pile on huge portions.

Also, downsize your dishes. Use kid-sized plates and bowls, or eat on salad plates. Put regular spoons (not ladles) into serving dishes so your son naturally scoops up smaller amounts. Finally, make it a tad harder to take seconds by leaving any extra food on the counter. That way your youngster has to get up from the table for seconds if he's still hungry. ♡



IN THE KITCHEN

Fruity homemade ice pops

A frozen treat on a hot day is one of the joys of childhood. Keep your youngster cool with these recipes that contain less sugar than regular store-bought pops.

Note: Pour each mixture into paper cups. Freeze until slushy (about 2 hours), then add craft sticks and freeze until solid. Peel off cups before eating.

Peaches galore

Chop 4 peeled peaches and blend until smooth. Add the juice of 1 lemon, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup orange juice, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. vanilla extract, and 1 tbs. sugar.



Melon-lime treats

In a small pot, heat $\frac{1}{4}$ cup each of water and sugar to make a syrup. In a blender, puree chunks from 1 medium honeydew melon with $\frac{2}{3}$ cup fresh lime juice and the cooled syrup.

Berry pops

In a blender, puree 1 cup blueberries and 1 cup nonfat Greek yogurt. Stir in sliced strawberries and more blueberries. ♡

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

May 2020

Spring Bluff Elementary School

Mrs. Jeannie Jenkins, Superintendent

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ **Say Something!** (Peter H. Reynolds)

Every voice matters. This picture book shows how kids can make a difference in the world—through words and actions. Readers will be inspired to do good deeds, stand up to bullying, and more. (Also available in Spanish.)

■ **Little Owl's Night**

(Divya Srinivasan)

Little Owl is happy in the forest at night. He and his animal friends gaze at the moon and stars. But he's curious about daytime, so one night, he tries to stay awake until the sun comes up. Will he get to see what happens when night ends?

■ **The Post Office Book: Mail and How It Moves** (Gail Gibbons)

Everyone knows that mail starts its journey at the post office and gets delivered to its destination. But what happens in between? Your youngster will discover what it takes to move mail from place to place and get it in the correct mailbox.

■ **Tap the Magic Tree**

(Christie Matheson)

This story asks your child to tap the pictures, shake the book, clap his hands, and more. After he does each movement and turns the page, "magic" happens—the bare tree grows leaves, apples drop to the ground, and snowflakes fall from the branches!



A fairy tale summer

Castles and giants and talking animals, oh my! Fairy tales invite your child into magical worlds—and they're filled with opportunities to strengthen her reading comprehension. Enjoy these activities together.

Design a house

What kind of house would be best for the three bears? Read a fairy tale to your youngster, and let her design a home for the characters using recyclables and craft supplies. What was the problem in the story? What design features could solve it? For example, the bears had an uninvited visitor (Goldilocks), so your child might make a home security system using string and a bell.

Create a map

After reading a fairy tale, suggest that your youngster draw a giant map of its setting on the sidewalk or driveway. She could draw the Gingerbread Man's path through the countryside or map Hansel and Gretel's route through the forest. Invite her to walk through the map, retelling the story as she goes.



Read and compare

Together, ask a librarian to help you find multiple versions of fairy tales like *Cinderella* or *Jack and the Beanstalk*. Read them with your child, and talk about how they're similar and different. Maybe they take place in different countries or an author retold a story from the villain's point of view. *Idea:* Suggest that your youngster pick a fairy tale and write her own version. ♥

Write a story for a pet

This fun idea gives your youngster practice writing for a specific audience: pets!

First, let your child choose a pet, such as his goldfish or a neighbor's puppy. Next, help him decide what the animal might like to read about. The fish would probably appreciate a story about a sunny lake, while the puppy may enjoy a how-to book on walking his person.

Remind your youngster to think about his audience as he writes. What other fish live in the lake that the goldfish could play with? What important rules does the puppy need to know? Now have him read his story aloud to the pet—and to you. ♥



Have a ball with wordplay

Throw, catch, and shoot! Get a ball, and head outside with your child for these games that combine wordplay with physical activity.

Word catch. Work on beginning and ending sounds. Say a random word (*fireworks*), and toss a ball to your youngster. If he catches the ball and says a word starting with the last letter of your word (*sunshine*), the game keeps going. How many words can you string together before someone misses the ball or can't think of a word?



Spelling basketball. Play H-O-R-S-E with these twists. Take turns trying to sink a basket, but instead of getting a letter for missed shots, earn one for each shot you make. Start by using any six-letter word. For a game of F-R-I-E-N-D, players would get an F for the first shot made, R for the second, and so on. The first player to collect every letter picks the word for the next game.♥

My puppet show

Putting on a puppet show lets your youngster work on speaking and telling stories. Here's how.

First, let your child choose a familiar story to act out, such as *The Tortoise and the Hare*, and make a puppet for each character. He could draw faces on paper lunch bags or construction paper taped to craft sticks.



Now your youngster can hide behind a couch or chair and hold up his puppets to put on a show for your family. Encourage him to use a different

voice for each character—and for a narrator. When the tortoise crosses the finish line, the fox puppet can announce, "Slow and steady wins the race!"

Idea: Suggest that your child keep his puppet theater open all summer and put on shows using other stories.♥

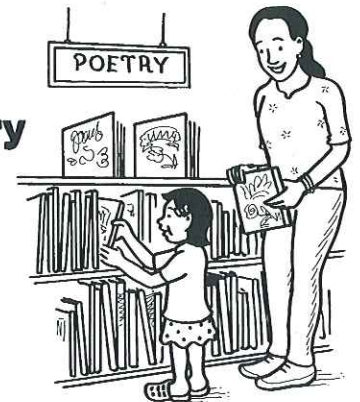
Q&A Read and write poetry

Q My daughter is excited about the poetry unit her class is doing. How can we enjoy exploring poetry outside of school?

A It's no wonder your child is excited—poetry is a lot of fun! Start at the library, and check out volumes of children's poetry. Then, hold a family poetry night where you take turns reading poems aloud. Work together to write your own poem, and your daughter can read it to everyone.

When you pick out greeting cards, look for ones that contain poems, and let your youngster read them aloud. Suggest that she make cards and write poems inside for friends and relatives.

Finally, listen to music in the car—can your child hear that song lyrics are often poems, too? Say your favorite lines or verses. Your daughter might even be inspired to write lyrics that rhyme.♥

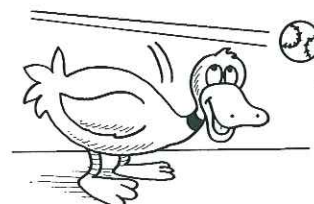


Fun with Words One word, two meanings

"Duck!" That's a word your youngster can say if she's pointing out a duck swimming in a pond—or warning someone to dodge a flying object. Strengthen her vocabulary by having her make a comic book about words with two meanings.

2. Have your child draw two comic panels for each word—with the illustration and caption showing the word in different ways. For *play*, she could draw an actress on stage and write "This girl starred in the school *play*." Then she might draw a checkerboard and write "I like to *play* checkers."

1. Together, list words that can be both a noun (person, place, or thing) and a verb (action word). For instance, trees have *bark* (noun), and dogs *bark* (verb). Other examples: *play, fly, run, jam, wave, color.*



3. Staple the pages together to make a book, and let her read it to you. Encourage her to keep an eye out for new words to add.♥

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Reading Connection

Working Together for Learning Success

May 2020

Spring Bluff Elementary School
Mrs. Jeannie Jenkins, Superintendent

Book Picks

■ *Straight Talk: The Truth About Food*

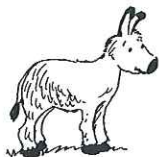
(Stephanie Paris)

This book explores food from many different angles. Charts, diagrams, and detailed photos combine with entertaining facts to help your child learn about and choose nutritious foods. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *Saving Winslow* (Sharon Creech)

When Louie's dad brings home a sick baby donkey, Louie takes responsibility for nursing his new buddy Winslow back to health. Then, the tables are turned when Winslow winds up being a comfort to Louie after the boy's older brother leaves home to join the military.



■ *Clang! Ernst Chladni's Sound Experiments* (Darcy Pattison)

In 1806 the scientist Ernst Chladni went on the road with his sound experiments to raise money for his research. In this nonfiction book, learn how Chladni entertained his way through Europe, popularizing science and exploring acoustics along the way.

■ *Home Sweet Motel*

(Chris Grabenstein)

P.T. and his friend Gloria want to do everything they can to save P.T.'s family business, the Wonderland Motel. The duo combines P.T.'s creativity and Gloria's business ideas to try to keep the Wonderland open. The first book in the Welcome to Wonderland series.



Reading all summer long

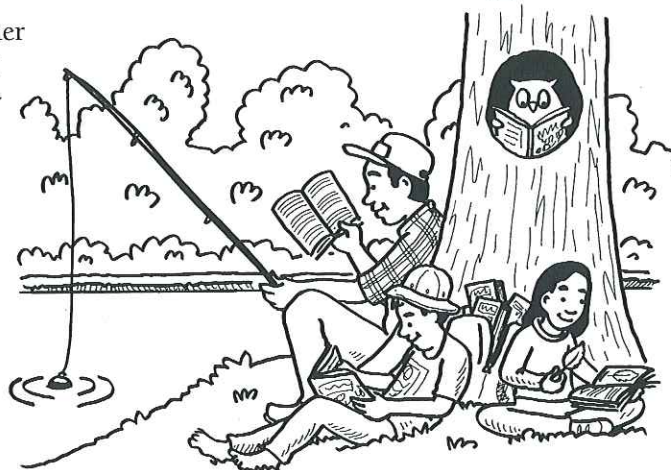
For some kids, summer reading comes naturally. Others need a little motivation. Either way, you can use these tips to make reading a big part of your child's life while school is out.

Take books along

Encourage reading on the go. Help your youngster fill a backpack with things to read. Along with novels, tuck in joke books, brainteasers, and comics. Complete the package with a word search or crossword puzzle book and a pencil. Taking the backpack on the road will make it easy for your child to read and play word games anytime.

Go outside

Find opportunities to read outdoors. Borrow nature books from the library, and take a neighborhood hike. Your child might start a leaf collection or list all the different bugs he can identify using a field guide. Read books about constellations and the solar system, and



stargaze together at night. Your youngster will see that books can help him enjoy and learn about nature.

Plan events

Show your child how reading makes it easier to plan summer fun. He can check newspaper listings for upcoming events or read your town's website to find places to visit. When you go to the pool or community center, have your youngster scan the bulletin boards for interesting flyers. ■

The power of persuasion

Advertising a summer business can help your youngster practice persuasive writing. Share these secrets for creating eye-catching ads:

- Have her look for convincing words in magazine ads and make a list for her business. For example, "ice cold" and "refreshing" are good choices for a lemonade stand.
- Teach your child persuasive techniques, like using logic or appealing to emotions. ("Don't have enough time to play with your cat or guinea pig? My pet-care service provides the attention your pets need!") *Tip:* Help her post flyers around the neighborhood to advertise her business. ■



Writing to communicate

The more your child writes, the more easily her words will flow. Try these activities that will encourage her to communicate with you and other family members on paper or via email.

Start a conversation journal.

Begin by writing a sentence or two in a notebook (“Guess who I saw at the store today”). Pass the journal to your child or leave it in an agreed-upon spot (kitchen counter, coffee table). She can respond (“Was



it one of my teachers?”) and give it back to you. Continue the discussion as long as possible. Encourage her to start your next conversation on a new page.

Have a pen pal.

Invite relatives to participate in a family pen-pal exchange. Your youngster could put names in a hat and each month draw one to be her pen pal. In her letters, she can ask about what’s going on in the person’s life (“Are you going to play hockey this year?”) and share her own news (“I have my first piano recital this week”).



Parent & Parent Play and read

My wife and I recently discovered a way to give our children extra reading practice. We let them take turns choosing a board game and being the official reader.

For example, when we play Trivial Pursuit Family Edition, the reader is in charge of asking the questions. In Apples to Apples, the reader reads the green apple cards aloud.



Playing games together has also inspired us to add to our collection. We shop at yard sales, flea markets, and thrift shops. And when we play a new game, the reader has a big job: reading the rules to the rest of us. Now I look forward to hearing one of the kids shout, “It’s my turn to read!”

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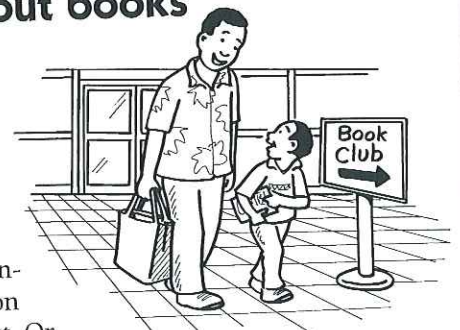
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Q&A Think critically about books

Q My son loves reading, but he struggles when he’s asked to do things like “analyze” or “evaluate.” How can I help him with this at home?

A When the teacher asks your child to analyze or evaluate what he reads, she’s asking him to think critically. For instance, he might have to give his opinion and back it up with details from the text. Or he may need to consider an article’s purpose and how the author’s viewpoint influenced his own thinking.

Over the summer, talk with your son about things you’re reading, and encourage him to do the same. Another idea is to suggest that he join a book club at the library. As he discusses books with others, he’ll work on reading critically.



Fun with Words Bowling for words

This homemade version of bowling will boost your child’s vocabulary and sentence-building skills.

Have your youngster cut 10 strips of masking tape. Then, he can flip through a book, pick 10 random words, and write one on each strip. Examples:

bear, mysterious, garden. He should stick the strips to the bottoms of half-filled water bottles. Then, let him set up the bottles like bowling pins.

Take turns “bowling” with a tennis ball or softball. Read the words on the pins you knock down, and try to say a sentence that includes as many of the words as possible. (“The *bear* discovered a *mysterious* new vegetable growing in his *garden*.”) Score 1 point for each

word you use, and set up the pins for the next player. After five rounds, the person with the highest score wins. Write new words, and play again!



Home & School

CONNECTION[®]

Working Together for School Success

May 2020

Spring Bluff R-XV School
Mrs. Jeannie Jenkins, Superintendent

SHORT NOTES

Family volunteering

Children who do community service with their parents learn compassion and are more likely to volunteer as adults. To find opportunities, search online, ask neighbors, or call libraries and community centers. Or strike out on your own. *Examples:* Pick up litter at the park. Donate outgrown books to a homeless shelter.

Tick season: Beware

Warm weather means tick season. Check your youngster's head after he plays in wooded or grassy areas, and help him check his body. If you spot a tick, use tweezers to remove it right away. Call his doctor if you can't get it all or if he develops a rash, fever, or headache.

Savvy school shopping

Save money on next year's school shopping by starting early. Let your child help you clip coupons and look for sales on basics like paper and pencils. When you get her supply list, shop for everything else (like binders of a specific size) as soon as possible before the best deals sell out.

Worth quoting

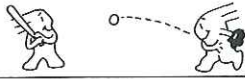
"First you have to dream, and then you have to believe in your dreams. That is the only way for them to come true."

Caroll Spinney

JUST FOR FUN

Q: When do you go at red and stop at green?

A: When you're eating watermelon.



Summer brain boosters

Fill summer break with fun activities that help your youngster remember what she learned during the school year—and lead to even more learning. Playing these roles will keep her skills sharp.

Reading athlete

Suggest that your child "run" a reading marathon and chart her progress on a map. Each hour of reading equals 1 mile. If she reads a chapter book for 30 minutes after lunch and you read her a bedtime story for 15 minutes, that's 45 minutes, or $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. Can she read "26.2 miles"—or more—by the end of the summer?

Math photographer

Your youngster can take photos and find the math in them. Perhaps she'll snap a shot of a quilt and tell you which shapes she sees. Or she could photograph part of a brick wall and multiply to find the number of bricks in the picture (6 rows of 8 bricks each = 48 bricks).

Show appreciation for teachers

Did you know that some of the best gifts you and your child can give his teacher don't cost a thing? Consider these suggestions.

● **Send kudos.** Have him write a letter telling the teacher what he liked about school this year. He might mention an interesting history lesson or the cozy classroom writer's den. Then, you could email the principal to let her know what you appreciated about the teacher.

● **Collect memories.** Gather any photos you took during classroom or school events, and ask other parents to share theirs. Your youngster can compile them into a binder and add captions. ("Our class STEM fair had some creative inventions!")

Tip: Also use these ideas for specialists like art, music, and PE teachers. ♥



Backyard scientist

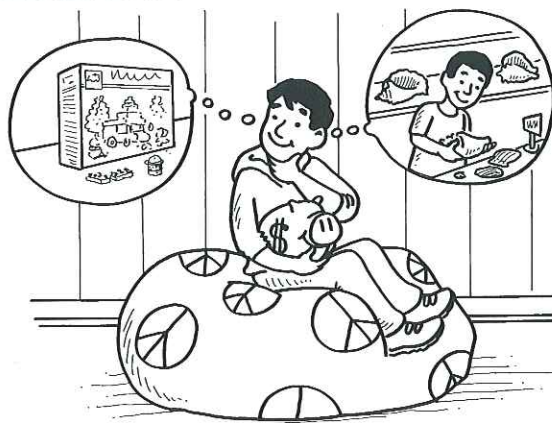
Let your child use science to make outdoor summer activities more fun. She might experiment to create a bubble solution that produces bigger or longer-lasting bubbles. Or maybe she'll cook s'mores in her very own solar oven. *Note:* Make sure she chooses safe experiments, and provide supervision. ♥



What a smart decision!

Your child is still learning the strategies it takes to make good choices. Teach him to ask himself the following questions when he's faced with a decision.

What might happen? Have your youngster imagine possible outcomes of a choice. You could ask, "What will happen if you spend your allowance on Legos?" He may say that he wouldn't have souvenir money for an upcoming trip.



Or he can think to himself, "If I borrow my sister's toy without permission, what could happen?" Maybe he'll realize that would make her angry—and less apt to share with him in the future.

Is it right for me? Is your child considering watching a scary movie because his friend asked him to? Does he want to quit soccer because his teammate did? Suggest that he pause and think about what's right for him.

This will lead to better decisions—

and arm him against peer pressure, too. *Idea:* Brainstorm what to say if he's presented with an option that's not right for him. ("I like funny movies better. Want to watch one and laugh together?")♥

Outside-the-box thinking

Thinking flexibly will help your child do well in school, whether she's using a vocabulary word in different ways or coming up with a new approach to a math problem. Try these ideas to stretch her thinking.

Tell jokes and riddles

Ask your youngster, "What has four wheels and flies?" She'll need to consider that "flies" might mean "insects" or "travels fast." The answer? A garbage truck! Or try, "What has one eye but can't see?" She should think of non-living things that have an eye, such as a needle or a hurricane. Are there any other possibilities?



ACTIVITY CORNER

Outdoor art studio

Doing art projects outside can supercharge your youngster's creativity. Head outside together for these painting projects.

Nature prints. Have your child collect leaves, flowers, and other natural objects from the ground. She can dip them in paint and press them on paper to make colorful prints.

Rock sculptures. Suggest that your youngster brush paint on rocks. When they dry, she might stack them in different ways to create sculptures.

Toe painting. Instead of finger painting, your child could take off her socks and shoes and paint with her feet!♥



Find new uses for objects

Take turns choosing a household object and thinking of different ways to use it. Your child might say a spatula could be a golf club, and you could suggest using it as a flyswatter. What can she do with a game board? Perhaps she'll unfold it halfway and prop it upside-down—it's a tunnel for her toy trains.♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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Q & A

The give-and-take of conversation

Q: How can I teach my son to carry on a good conversation?

A: Here's an easy way for your child to remember what makes a good conversation. Encourage him to think of it like Ping-Pong—the ball goes back and forth, and the game wouldn't work if one player kept the ball on his side of the net.

To help your son practice, bounce a

small ball across the table to "serve" a conversation starter. ("On my way to work this morning, I saw a mother deer with her fawns.") Now he can bounce the ball back and pose a "Ping-Pong question"—one that will keep the conversation going. *Example:* "Wow, how many fawns were there?"

Go back and forth a few times. Then it's your child's turn to serve, and you ask him a question to keep the ball bouncing.♥

