

WHAT DID YOU DO AT SCHOOL TODAY?

Do your kids say “*nothing*” when you ask them what they did at today? Try these tricks to get your kids to talking about school.

? WHY? ?

Children need to hear specific questions in order to give specific answers. Open ended questions like “What did you do?” may be too general to get the desired response. Try asking specific questions that require your child to answer with more than one word.

PLAY

Did you know that play is an important part of the learning process? When they play, children are learning and developing cognitive, language, physical, social, and emotional skills. It is in your child's best interest to have as much time to play as possible each day to promote healthy development.



QUESTIONS TO ASK

- ✓ Tell me about a story you listened to.
- ✓ What songs did you sing?
- ✓ Who did you play with?
- ✓ What did you have for snack?
- ✓ Where did you play?
- ✓ Did you do anything nice for somebody?
- ✓ What are you looking forward to tomorrow?
- ✓ Were you a good friend?
- ✓ Did you laugh today?



LET'S READ!

Did you know that reading aloud is the single most important thing you can do with your child to support language development and early literacy skills?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Reading aloud:

- ✓ Builds motivation, curiosity and memory
- ✓ Helps calm children experiencing stress or anxiety
- ✓ Introduces children to new ideas, words, and vocabulary
- ✓ Creates positive feelings about books and reading



WHEN TO READ

Research shows that reading aloud to your child **at least once a day** can help build crucial language and literacy skills.

Bedtime is the perfect time for reading aloud because it can be calming for the child. Reading also helps strengthen the bond between you and your child.



WHAT TO READ?

Read books about things your child likes. Does your child like dinosaurs? What about horses or princesses? When you involve your child in the process of selecting the books you will read together, your child will be more likely to enjoy listening to the story.



READING TIPS

Incorporate these simple tips below to help your child get more out of the reading experience:

- ✓ Point to the words as you read them.
- ✓ Encourage your child to join in when reading familiar stories.
- ✓ Read your child's favorite stories often.
- ✓ Talk about the pictures



READY, SET, GO!

Is your child ready for potty training?

Here are some potty training tips and advice to help!

WHAT AGE?

The ability to control both the bowel and bladder are necessary for children to physically be able to use the toilet. Most children develop control of their bowel and bladder between 18-24 months. Some children may be ready at 18 months, while others may not be ready until they are 3. While every child is different, about 22% of children are out of diapers by 2½, and 88% of children are out of diapers by 3½.

BOOKS

Here are some books about potty training you may want to look for at your local library:

- ✓ *Once Upon a Potty* by Alona Frankel
- ✓ *Diapers are Not Forever* by Elizabeth Verdick
- ✓ *No More Diapers for Ducky* by Bernette Ford



IS MY CHILD READY?

Your child may be ready to learn how to use the toilet when he or she:

- ✓ Stays dry for at least 2 hours in a row.
- ✓ Recognizes when he or she is urinating or having a bowel movement.
- ✓ Is developing the physical skills necessary for potty training—walking, pulling pants up and down, and getting on/off the potty (with some help)
- ✓ Copies toileting behavior
- ✓ Can follow simple instructions
- ✓ Shows an interest in potty training

Typically, when children are ready to begin toilet training they will show an interest.



MAKING MATH FUN

Math skills are important to your child's success in school and in everyday life. Here are a few ways you can help your child develop math concepts at home.

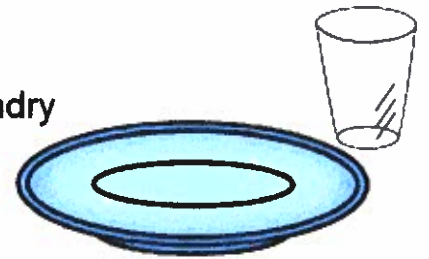
NUMBERS AT HOME

Explore the ways in which numbers are used in and around your home. Take your child on a "number hunt" in your home or neighborhood. Point out how numbers are used on the TV remote, microwave, and phone. Locate numbers in books and newspapers. Look for numbers on signs in your neighborhood. Encourage your child to tell you whenever he or she discovers a new way in which numbers are used.

DAILY MATH

Make math a part of your child's daily life. Include your child in common activities that involve math such as:

- ✓ Making purchases at the store
- ✓ Measuring ingredients for a meal
- ✓ Counting out plates and utensils for dinner
- ✓ Sorting laundry

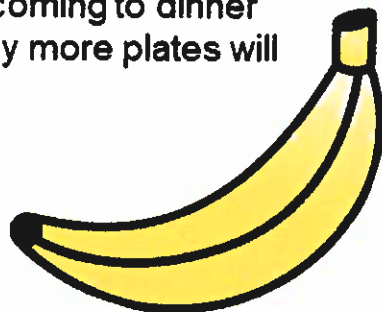


PROBLEM SOLVING

Ask your child to help you solve simple problems involving numbers in your home.

"We need six bananas to make banana bread, and we have only two. How many more do we need to buy?"

"Two guests are coming to dinner tonight. How many more plates will we need?"



MATH BOOKS

Chicka Chicka 123 by Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault

10 Black Dots by Donald Crews

One Big Building by Michael Dahl

The Doorbell Rang by Pat Hutchins

Round is a Mooncake by Rosanne Thong

Mouse Shapes by Ellen Stoll Walsh

Mouse Count by Ellen Stoll Walsh



WHAT'S FOR BREAKFAST?

Set your child up for a successful day with a healthy breakfast!

DID YOU KNOW?

The bodies of young children need to refuel each morning for the day ahead after going without food for 8 to 12 hours during sleep.

Without a proper breakfast, your child may feel tired, restless, or irritable.

These feelings can lead to decreased attention and energy necessary for learning.



BREAKFAST IDEAS

- ✓ Whole grain cereal + banana



- ✓ Egg + turkey bacon



- ✓ Yogurt + banana



BREAKFAST CHOICES

When it comes to young children and eating breakfast, it's important to provide foods that are rich in whole grains, fiber, and protein while low in added sugar.

These foods may help boost your child's attention span, concentration, and memory — which are necessary for optimal learning.

Doughnuts and breakfast pastries are high in calories, sugar, and fat. These types of foods don't contain the proper nutrients necessary for young children to start their day off right.

Children who eat a healthy breakfast are more likely to get the fiber, calcium, and other important nutrients they need in their diet. They are also more likely to keep their weight under control, have lower blood cholesterol levels and fewer absences from school.





READY TO WRITE



Did you know that before children can write they need to strengthen the small muscles in their hands necessary for writing?

FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Fine motor skills involve the small muscles of the body. These small muscles need to be developed because they are required for more advanced tasks such as writing, grasping small objects, and fastening clothing. When we refer to fine motor skills in the context of handwriting, we are typically referring to the small muscles in the hands and fingers used for writing.



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Young children benefit from daily practice to help develop fine motor skills in their fingers and hands. Children should have strength and dexterity in their hands and fingers before they can be expected to hold a pencil, or even master writing letters, children should develop the strength and dexterity in their hands and fingers to successfully accomplish these tasks without frustration or anxiety.

PRACTICING READY TO WRITE SKILLS



Play with play dough.



Use a rolling pin to roll play dough.



Roll "snakes" with play dough using palms of hands.



Roll play dough into tiny balls using only the finger tips.



Use a spray bottle filled with water to spray plants indoors or outside.



Cut yarn and invite your child to string cereal or macaroni.



Tear paper.



Pick up cotton balls using spring-loaded clothespins.



Cut junk mail. Cut play dough with plastic scissors.

PRINT IN OUR WORLD

Do your kids recognize the signs at the stores where you shop? Did you know that this "environmental print" can help your child become a reader?

ENVIRONMENTAL PRINT

Environmental print is the print that is found in the world around us and is usually the first print a young child recognizes. The print they see in their everyday lives holds great meaning for them, such as:

- ✓ Labels on food boxes, cans, and bags
- ✓ Signs for familiar restaurants or stores
- ✓ Traffic signs
- ✓ Logos



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Recognizing print we see everyday is one of the beginning stages of literacy. Children get excited when they feel like they can "read" the print they see around them. When they begin to understand that letters have meaning they feel confident and successful as "readers."

When children are confident and excited about reading, they will be more likely to become good readers.



LOOKING FOR PRINT

One way you can help your child develop strong literacy skills is to point out print when you are running errands.

For example, you might point to a stop sign while you're in the car and say, "I know I have to stop because that big red sign tells me so. Can you find more stop signs?"

Or when you're at the grocery store you may invite your child to help you look for certain items on your list that are their favorites.



OUR PROJECT

Please help your child collect a few examples of environmental print from their favorite foods. Some examples might be the fronts of cereal boxes or labels from cans. We will use the pieces of environmental print collected for classroom projects.



LEARNING THE ALPHABET

Research shows that when children can easily recognize letters, they will have more success reading. Here are a few ways you can help your child learn the alphabet at home.

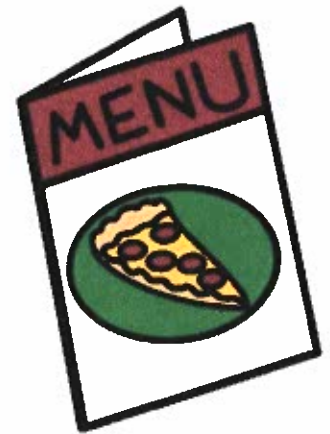
HIGHLIGHTER FUN

Show your child a letter in a book, then give your child a highlighter or marker and invite them to highlight as many of that particular letter as possible in a magazine or newspaper.



PRETEND PLAY

Encourage your child to play pretend with things like restaurant menus, lists, coupons, and magazines.



MAGNETIC LETTERS

Encourage your child to play with magnetic letters on a metal cookie tray, refrigerator, or other flat metal surface. Invite them to spell their names or names of family members with the letters.



ALPHABET BOOKS

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault

Alphabet Under Construction by Denise Fleming

Alphabet Rescue by Audrey Wood

Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert



HOW TO STOP THE BEDTIME BLUES

Do your kids go bananas at bedtime? Try these simple tricks to create a calm bedtime routine that both you, *and your kids*, will enjoy!

WHY BEDTIME MATTERS

Daily routines like bedtime, provide children with the repetition and structure they need to feel safe.

Bedtime is an opportunity to create, build, and nurture your relationship with your child.

For children, having a daily bedtime routine is comforting; it can help create a calm and relaxing feeling that gently eases them to sleep.



HOW MUCH SLEEP?

Pediatricians recommend the following hours of sleep by age:

- ✓ **Ages 2-3:** 13-14 hours per night
- ✓ **Ages 3-5:** 11-13 hours per night
- ✓ **Ages 6 and up:** 9-11 hours per night

Children may experience difficulty concentrating and following directions when tired.



CREATE A ROUTINE

To get started, set a consistent time for bedtime. Next, identify the things your child needs to do to prepare for bedtime. A successful routine might look like this:



take a bath



brush teeth



read a story



go to sleep

BEDTIME BOOKS

- Goodnight Moon** by Margaret Wise Brown
- Goodnight, Goodnight Construction Site** by Sherri Duskey Rinker
- Llama, Llama Red Pajama** by Anna Dewdney
- Good Night, Gorilla** by Peggy Rathmann



EDUCATIONAL GIFT GUIDE

Do your kids beg for toys related to movies? Are most of their toys electronic? Here are the best educational gifts for preschoolers.



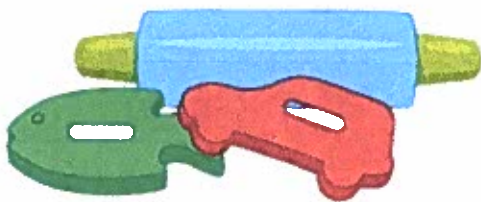
BOOKS



Did you know that books make great gifts for preschoolers? When you buy books as gifts you're teaching your child to value books and reading over toys or electronics. Look for our Scholastic book order in your child's folder each month.

PLAY DOUGH

Play Dough, cookie cutters, and dough tools like rolling pins are the perfect gift for children who have difficulty holding a pencil or cutting with scissors.



BEST GIFTS FOR PRESCHOOLERS

- ✓ Alphabet games
- ✓ Blocks
- ✓ Play-Doh
- ✓ Lego or Duplo
- ✓ Dress-up clothes
- ✓ Age-appropriate books
- ✓ Pretend play toys like fruits, vegetables, dishes, and dolls
- ✓ Art supplies like crayons, markers, paint, blank paper

