

When to Call Your Child's Teacher



Outside of Parent-Teacher Conferences, some parents are reluctant to contact their child's teacher. Don't be! A quick conversation or e-mail exchange can solve simple problems, or make it clear that a more formal conversation is needed.

Be sure to call your child's teacher if:

- You notice a change in your child's attitude toward school. A child who used to love going to school but now cries and no longer wants to go may be having trouble with classmates or on the playground. Your child's teacher can help you find out the problem. The teacher can rely on school specialists like the guidance counselor for additional help if needed.

- The reading material being used at school or for homework seems consistently too hard or too easy for your child. Your child should be reading books with at least 90% accuracy. While some reading of very easy books is great for building confidence and reading speed, readers also need some practice decoding new words. Books that are too difficult can be frustrating for your child.
- The comments on your child's paper are unclear to you. A teacher's notes in the margins of papers or on individual math problems often help parents understand what the teacher is trying to reinforce. For example, in math, your child's teacher may have a routine for teaching regrouping that she reinforces with certain notes. In writing assignments, the teacher expects words to be spelled correctly, however at times she may allow invented spelling for words.

A good working relationship between parents and teachers benefits everyone. Staying in touch, asking questions and addressing problems before they become too big are all ways to build a strong parent/teacher relationship.

Excerpted from:

<http://www.ldonline.org/article/35557>

February Dates to Remember:

2...Groundhog Day	14...Valentine's Day
7...Super Bowl XLIV	15...President's Day
12...Winter Olympics Begin	16...Mardi Gras

Ways to Boost Your Child's Reading Vocabulary

1. Help your child uncover the meaning of un-familiar words.

- Write unfamiliar words on cards as you read with your child. Discuss the spelling & meaning of the words and display the cards on a wall or table to review during the week.
- As your child reads aloud or watches a movie on TV, ask what specific words mean. Discuss words that you think your child may not fully understand.

2. Encourage your child to keep a vocabulary note-book that contains new words and their definitions.

- The pages should be divided with words on one side and the definitions on the other. Fold the page so that the child can just see the words.
- Now have your child recite the definitions to you. Make it fun.

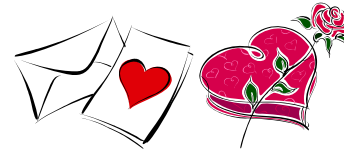
3. Help your child see connections between words.

- Point out variations of the same word.
 - School, scholar, scholastic, scholarly
 - Nation, national, international
 - Parent, parental, parenting
- Point out prefixes and their meanings in words.
 - Uni (one) – uniform, unicycle, united
 - Bi (two) – bicycle, binoculars, bisect
 - Sub (under) – subway, submarine, substandard

4. Play word games with your child.

- Play board games such as Scrabble, Upwords or Boggle.
- Have a "Word of the Day" activity for your family. Challenge your child to use the new word at least 3 times during the day.

Valentine's Day Traditions



One of the most commonly observed Valentine's Day customs is the exchange of notes of love called Valentines. Initially these were hand written notes but starting with the 19th century they were replaced with mass produced greeting cards. Valentines are gifted to teachers, students, parents, brothers, sisters, friends and loved ones. The most popular Valentine's symbols are red roses, hearts, cupids with bows and arrows



and tiny heart candies with affectionate messages printed on them.



Be Creative

Make Valentine's Day fun by creating a special gift from the heart such as heart-shaped cards, cakes, pictures and candies.

You and your family can create gifts together. All you need are a few sheets of construction paper, scissors, glue, crayons, markers, baking materials and your **imagination**. Enjoy!