

Working with Your Child's Teacher to Identify and Address Math Difficulties

Parents can play an active role in helping to identify and address their child's math difficulties. You can work with your child's teacher by:

- Sharing information and observations about any difficulties your child has completing homework.
- Being aware of the school's assessment process.
- Asking questions about instructional (teaching) practices.



Noting your child's responses to the questions and sharing this information with the classroom teacher may provide insight into the particular difficulties your child is experiencing. Additionally, when talking with your child's math teacher, ask some of the following questions:

- What math skills will you teach during the next report card grading period?
- How do you use small group work and peer support to provide extra math assistance?
- What types of adaptations will you provide if my child struggles learning the math skills and concepts?
- How can a calculator be used to help my child perform basic calculations to solve more advanced math problems?
- What strategies or steps will you provide to help my child learn and solve math problems? Do you use manipulatives to teach math concepts?
- What math vocabulary is included in classroom lessons that we can reinforce at home?
- Is there math software that would help my child practice math skills?

To address your child's math difficulties at home, you can develop a sense of their frustrations by the questions they ask you while doing their homework. You can also ask your child some questions to help you understand how to approach their math homework assignments:

- Did you do any math problems like this in class today?
- Did your teacher explain the steps for solving this type of problem?
- How can you break the problem into smaller chunks to help you solve it?

By working with your child's teacher, you can help ensure that your child's math needs are being identified and addressed. Remember that your observations and input as a parent are valuable to the process of helping your child succeed in school.

Excerpted from:

<http://www.idonline.org/article/35980>

March Dates to Remember:

3...Peace Corps Day

20...First Day of Spring

14...Daylight Savings

17...St. Patrick's Day

Tips to Help your Child Develop Good Writing Skills

- **Provide a quiet place.** Writing requires thought and an environment free of distraction, noise and conversation. A quiet place to write will enable your child to concentrate.
- **Have the materials.** Be sure to provide a desk or table with good lighting, as well as plenty of paper, and writing utensils.
- **Be patient.** Good writers spend a lot of time thinking and preparing (i.e. getting comfortable, looking up the spelling of words, etc.) Be patient and allow your child to have quality time to think.
- **Review your child's writing.** Good writers need feedback. When giving feedback, focus on the writing itself not "how" it is written.
- **Praise your writer.** Be sure to point out the best aspects of your child's writing, especially areas where you see that he or she has made improvement.
- **Never write for your child.** It is your job to help your child develop his or her own writing style. Children feel proud when turning in a project all their own.
- **Develop your child's vocabulary.** Children increase their vocabulary by reading and listening to those around them. Talk to your child. Read aloud together, and point out new words and concepts. Try introducing a new word every day.
- **Be a writing role model.** Let your child see you write to-do lists, thank-you notes and grocery lists. Ask for his or her help.



10 Tips to Overcoming Test Anxiety

1. Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep before the test.
2. Encourage and provide a wholesome breakfast—including water. Drinking water provides a jump-start to the brain.
3. Inspire your child to think positively about the test and their ability to succeed.
4. Prepare your child to listen, read and follow directions.
5. Remind your child to answer the easiest questions first. Make sure they know that it's okay to skip a question if they get stuck and come back to it later.
6. Prompt your child to use the "process of elimination" when answering tough multiple-choice questions. They can eliminate the one or two choices they know are wrong and then make a best guess for their final answer.
7. Tell your child to check their answers carefully if they finish the test before the time limit.
8. Teach relaxations techniques like counting to 10 or repeating "I can do it."
9. Encourage your child to do the best that they can do on the test.
10. Let your child know that the results of the test will tell you what your child knows and what he still needs to learn.