



A Spotlight for Parents

Fostering your Child's Interests

Children have so many interests beyond legos, video games, tablets and smart phones. Some are “in to” history or geography, robotics or chemistry, languages or writing. Teachers have a set of standards that need to be met, so sometimes the depth and breadth of a child’s interest can not be met within the school day. There are lots of great free resources to get started, consider taking a few minutes a week to cultivate your child’s interests with some quick, simple, and free online resources.

- <http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/>
- <http://pbskids.org/games/social-studies/>
- <https://kids.usa.gov/parents/social-studies/index.shtml>
- <http://www.factmonster.com/homework/hwscience.html>— Science help!
- <http://www.pbs.org/parents/experts/archive/2012/04/how-to-help-children-with-science.html> - Help with science projects without doing the work.
- <http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/howtohelpenglish>—Becoming a better writer
- <http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/helping-young-children-develop-strong-writing-skills>—Developing

How can I help my child **SUCCEED in school?**

- Stay involved and feel free to contact your child's teacher with any questions or concerns.
- Ask your children about school and encourage them to talk about their day.
- Do not talk negatively about your child's teacher or school.
- Read with your child every night.**
- Make sure your child is getting plenty of sleep and is ready for school each day.
- Help your child with his/her homework every night.
- Teach your children to be responsible for their actions and their schoolwork.

fun-in-first.blogspot.com



Get a Clue... Word Problems



Addition	Subtraction	Multiplication	Division
in all	fewer	product	quotient
sum	left	times	half
total	less than	twice	dividend
more than	take away	each	divided
plus	minus	factor	shared
altogether	difference	altogether	equally
increased by	remain	in all	same
add	decreased	multiply	grouped
	how many more	total	separated

6 Sneaky Ways to Help Kids Learn

By Kate Leary

Go to <http://time.com/3677430/6-sneaky-but-scientific-ways-to-help-kids-learn/> to read the full article

- 1. Play games backwards.** For example, “Simon Says, Do the Opposite.” It’s the classic with a twist. If Simon says, “Be quiet,” the kids should be loud. This helps kids practice inhibitory control, an important executive function. Executive functions also include focus, cognitive flexibility, and working memory.
- 2. Talk about feelings.** Encourage your kids to talk about how they feel. This helps kids learn the skill of empathy. Kids who are able to understand what others are feeling and understand their intentions have smoother transitions to school, college and beyond because they can see others’ point of view.
- 3. Tell Stories.** If you go to a friend’s house, encourage the kids to tell the story of the visit later. It promotes good communication skills.
- 4. Choose toys that have no point.** Lego bricks, not sets, for example. This kind of play promotes object, space, and number sense, skills that help kids make connections. Information is easy to come by in the age of Google, but it’s of limited use if you can’t make creative connections.
- 5. Write Out the Fights.** Collaborate with your family to:
 - Identify the dilemma.
 - Determine the goal
 - Generate a list of solutions. Go beyond your typical solutions.
 - Think about how these solutions might work, and not just the ones that were your idea.
 - Pick one and try it.
 - After you’ve tried it, discuss how the solution is working and either tweak or change the plan.

This process models critical thinking. Life is packed with decisions to make and problems to solve, but in the short term, good critical thinking skills might help your kid judge when a friend is influencing him to make a mean-spirited or dangerous choice.
- 6. Praise effort — not talent or intelligence.** Instead of saying, “You got that problem right. You’re so smart,” say “You worked hard on those problems and you figured them out. That’s great.” Talk through how they deal with challenges and praise persistence. Kids who receive this kind of praise are more likely to take on challenges. They have a “[growth mindset](#),” which means that they see their abilities as something they can develop. This sets the stage for a lifelong interest in learning.