



Parent Resource Newsletter

Standardized Tests – How can you help your child prepare? What you should know before your child sharpens his #2 pencil

Teachers tell us that successful test-takers tend to be students with good attendance, homework, and study habits; therefore, your daily assistance with homework and attitude toward school have the biggest impact on your child's performance. However, there are key ways you can develop his test-taking ability.

• Optimize brain power.

Teachers say the students who struggle the most on testing days are the ones who didn't have *enough sleep* or a *good breakfast* the day of the test. Also, students who are physically or mentally unprepared often encounter problems. Make sure she has every tool she needs — pencils, an eraser, paper, a calculator, etc. laid out the night before.

• Encourage good study habits and challenge critical-thinking skills.

Reviewing *test-taking strategies* is important, but monitoring overall academic progress and staying in good communication with the teacher will help you ward off potential problems. Good reading skills factor heavily in a timed test, so encourage reading as much as possible. Testing also measures *critical-thinking* ability, so ask him to discuss ideas or voice his opinion often to stimulate these thought processes.

• Know what to expect.

Most teachers will send home information about the test schedule and class preparation plans well before the test date. However, if you don't hear from your child's teacher you should contact her and find out:

- ✓ What is the name of the test and what will it measure?
- ✓ What's the format? (multiple choice, essay, short answer, etc.)
- ✓ How will the class prepare in school?
- ✓ How is it scored? Will students be penalized for incorrect answers or should they guess randomly when stumped on a question?
- ✓ When will you receive the results?
- ✓ What are the test's implications? Will it affect your child, school, or both?
- ✓ Are there any specific ways you can help your child prepare?

• Provide practice opportunities.

You may be able to request sample or practice tests from your child's school or find them at the library. Start practicing several weeks before the date and keep study sessions short. Setting small goals, such as learning five new words each session, will help him measure his progress and boost his confidence. Make sure he takes the night before the test off — cramming can increase his stress level.

• Relax and remain positive.

The best test-takers are confident, committed, and at ease. Even if you are nervous about her performance, be wary of transferring that concern to your child. You never know, some kids actually enjoy tests! If she is likely to get nervous, practice a few relaxation techniques, such as counting from one to ten or taking deep breaths, which can help her relieve tension during the test.

Resource: Scholastic.com/parents; article by Shama Narang

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO Helping Your Child Succeed in School

More Test Taking Tips:

Practice Skills at Home

There are a number of skills that you can easily incorporate into your home routine.



Reading

When reading a book or watching a television show or a movie, ask your child to repeat the plot, the story's characters (including the main character), and the setting. Ask him to retell what happens in the beginning, middle, and end. After you read a book together, ask him questions about what happened.

Language Arts

Work on increasing your child's vocabulary by using and defining more difficult words in everyday speech. Use a dictionary to check meaning. Practice using antonyms and synonyms. Have your child become proficient at alphabetical order by organizing materials that way—books, kitchen supplies, videos, etc.

Writing

The writing portion of standardized tests usually asks children to respond to a writing "prompt." This prompt is meant to structure their ideas. You may also want to review basic punctuation and capitalization.

Math

Rather than concentrating solely on computation, standardized math tests usually involve spatial skills, patterns, and sequencing. Encourage your child to learn to count by twos, threes, and fives. Create graphs based on family activities and practice reading graphs together. Practice time and money concepts.

Put the Test in Context

Remind your young learner that these kinds of tests are part of the educational routine. You took them when you were in school and your child, no doubt, will face them a number of times throughout his or her school--and post-school career. Filling in those little boxes or circles with #2 lead pencils is something they'll have to do for years to come!

Important Testing Dates:

Grades 3, 4 and 5 Ohio Achievement Testing

Grade 3 Reading – Thursday, April 22
Math – Wednesday, April 28

Grade 4 Reading – Wednesday, April 21
Math – Tuesday, April 27

Grade 5 Reading – Tuesday, April 30
Math-Friday – April 23
Science – Thursday, April 29

This Month's Family Activity

Plan Family Focused Events for Earth Day Celebrate & Educate with Green Themed Family Outings & Activities



Getting kids involved in recycling, reusing and caring for the planet, needs to start with the very young. What better way than with fun events on Earth Day 2010?

April 22nd, 2010 marks the 40th anniversary of the hugely influential Earth Day. As its name suggests, Earth Day provides a great opportunity to get outdoors with the family and ultimately better appreciate this beautiful world.

🌱 Make Reasonable (Age Appropriate) Day Plans

On Earth Day, it's practically a given that people should be outdoors enjoying the spring weather. On sunny days, the possibilities are endless - rock climbing, hiking, canoeing, or a simple trip to the park - but rainy days will require a little more thought. A trip to a natural history museum can be a great Earth Day activity.

Also, be mindful of the ages of all participants. Planting trees is a great way to celebrate Earth Day and better the planet - but if trees are going to be planted in an area that requires a two mile hike to get there, it may be too much for preschool aged children. Keep in mind that planting a tree in the family backyard can be equally as meaningful and an important contribution.

🌱 Plan in Advance for Necessities and Supplies

Making plans for an activity is the first step, but the next vital part is to make sure that all the items necessary to perform that activity are available. Even a simple outing like hiking requires a map of hiking trails, sturdy shoes, and sunscreen, for example. Being properly prepared before heading out on an adventure will result in more fun and less stress for everyone involved.

🌱 Keep it Fun but Affordable

An important part of planning is the ability to work within a budget. For those who don't wish to spend too much, a simple trip to the park is a great choice. It's not necessary to spend a lot of money to celebrate Earth Day with a family outing.

There are just three really important steps to planning a great outdoor adventure with the family: keep within a budget; make appropriate plans given the weather; and make sure to procure all the necessary gear in advance. With these steps complete, the rest will easily fall into place, and the family will be sure to enjoy time spent with each other and with nature.

Resource: March 2010, Tracy Drake; Suite101.com; Insightful writers, Informed readers

Expo Family Night

To parents and families that attended our school's Expo and Family Night held at Franklin and Longcoy schools; we hope you found time to stop by and visit at our Title I Expo Table. We were very excited that we were able to share resources and/or materials geared toward reading and math and aimed at helping you better enable your child to succeed in school. If you did pick up any of the helpful handouts, fun activities, strategies, or cookbooks; we hope you enjoyed them.

All material is available at your request if you find you would like more of them. Please notify your child's Reading Consultant at your school. Again, thanks for stopping by to say hello, visiting with the Title I staff or looking at what materials were offered. We were happy to see all of you!

Davey, Holden and Walls Schools Expo and Family Night are approaching. Check your school calendar or refer to our Title I invitations for the time and date. We are looking forward to seeing more of our Title I families then.

Here are our 2009-2010 Title I Contacts:

Davey School – Consultant, Mrs. Jeanie Hiestand (330-676-7462)

Holden School – Consultant, Mrs. Katrina Kelling (330-676-8433)

Longcoy School– Consultant, Ms. Georgia Darrah (330-676-8377)

Walls School – Consultant, Ms. Tracy Foreman (330-676-8323)


Franklin School – Consultant, Mrs. Caren Young (330-676-8450)

Parent Involvement Coordinator – Ms. Pam Bose (330-676-7425)

Federal Grants Coordinator – Mrs. Lori Slattery, Director of Instructional Program (330-676-7600)

Site Review

Resources available for Parents and Families:

Just a reminder.....We're online!  Our *Title I Connections* newsletter is posted on the Kent City Schools website. To find us go to: <http://kentschools.net>. Click on your School Link and then the Title I link!

April Showers !



Parents
plus
Schools
equals
Success