

APPLETON VILLAGE SCHOOL

Wildcat News



First Grade
Page 5



Third Grade
Page 4

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- Dec. 8 Progress Reports go home
- Dec. 9 Holiday Craft Fair, 9-2
- Dec. 11 Basketball vs Lincolnville
- Dec. 13 Family Lunch Day
- Dec. 13 Basketball @ Hope
- Dec. 15 Chewonki, grades 3-5
- Dec. 15 Basketball vs Islesboro
- Dec. 15 Dance, grades 6-8, see page 10
- Dec. 18 Basketball vs St. George
- Dec. 18 School Comm. Meeting, 5pm
- Dec. 22 No School
- Dec. 25 thru Jan. 1 No School

PLEASE NOTE:

No students are to be dropped off before 8:10, unless prior arrangements have been made.

Family Lunch

We cordially invite you to our Family Lunch on Wednesday December 13, 2023!

Please join us at the following times based on your child's last name:

A-J and all Pre-K: 11:50-12:25
K-Z: 12:30-1:00

We're serving a delicious turkey dinner for this gathering. The cost is \$5.00 per adult and \$2.00 for children not attending school. We hope to see you there!

Please call the office or email annie.kunzinger@fivetowns.net with a count of adults and children not attending school.



Health

Follow Five Steps to Wash Your Hands the Right Way

Washing your hands is easy, and it's one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. Clean hands can help stop germs from spreading from one person to another and in our communities—including your home, workplace, schools, and childcare facilities.

Follow these five steps every time.

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or an air dryer.



Thank You!

A heartfelt thank you to the greater Appleton community, for coming out last weekend, to attend our benefit supper. It was a successful fundraiser, and your generosity will go a long way toward helping a colleague in need. Please stop by the AVS craft fair this Saturday, as we will continue to sell raffle tickets for the gift baskets.

SIMPLY SECOND

GOBBLE TIL YOU WOBBLE! Simply Second had a fun time waddling and running through our AVS course for our annual Turkey Trot! When we finished racing through the course, we eagerly cheered on the rest of the turkey trotters!!! WAY TO GO AVS WADDLERS!



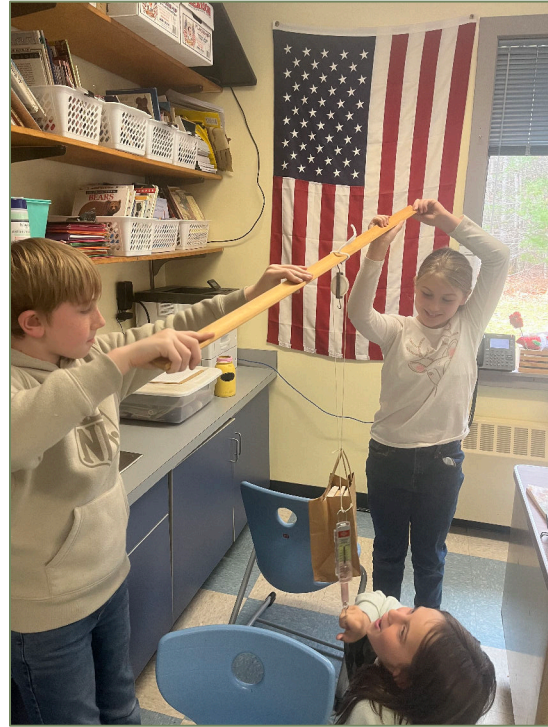
Lost and Found

There are many items in our Lost and Found. Let us know if you see anything familiar in the picture. Contact us with a description and we will be happy to check for you.



Fifth Grade

Fifth graders learned about fixed and movable pulleys during science last week. In social studies we are writing in our journals about the happenings in our colonies in the 1700s. Fifth grade has been full of action. It is so much fun! Wish List: Dry Erase Markers

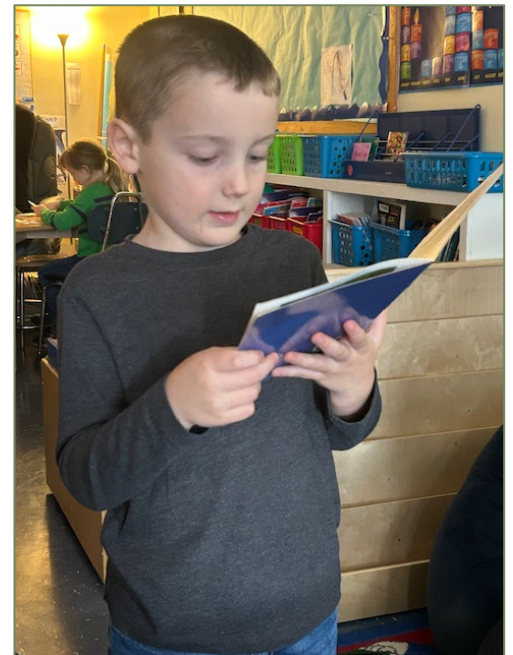
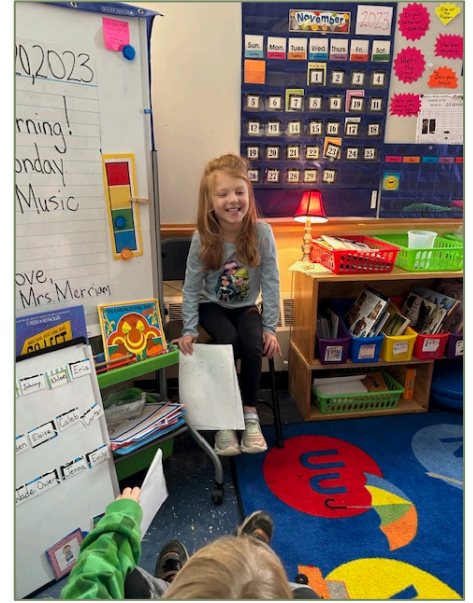


Third Grade News

We are enjoying some 1:1 reading with big buddies from our middle school!



First Grade Fun in November!





Wildcat Basketball Schedule

Thursday 12/7- Appleton @ Searsport
Monday - 12/11- Appleton vs. Lincolnville
Wednesday - 12/13- Appleton @ Hope
Friday -12/15 -Appleton vs. Isleboro **(boys only)**
Monday - 12/18- Appleton vs. St. George
Wednesday- 1/3- Appleton vs. Searsport
Monday - 1/8- Appleton @ Lincolnville
Wednesday - 1/10- Appleton vs. Hope
Monday- 1/15- Appleton vs. Vinalhaven **(11:30am & 1pm games)**
Wednesday - 1/17- Appleton @ Isleboro **(boys only)**
Monday - 1/22 -Appleton @ St.George

Wednesday-1/31-Quarterfinals
Wednesday 2/7- North Division Championships
Saturday 2/10- Busline League Championships

The first game starts at 3:45 and the second game starts at 5pm.
Boys play first in December and girls play first in January.



Raffle

We will be selling raffle tickets for gift baskets at this Saturday's craft fair here at AVS, from 9-2. The proceeds will benefit our staff member, Missy Darling, who's been diagnosed with cancer. \$1 each, or \$5 for 6 tickets. Drawings to be held December 18. Please stop by and help support this wonderful lady! The baskets and their contents are listed below:

Beverage Basket

Swiss Miss Variety Pack
 CharBrew Tea Assortment
 Nestle Cocoa Mug Gift Set
 Celestial Teas: Raspberry Zinger
 Celestial Teas: Lemon Zinger
 Green Tea
 Venus Hot Cocoa
 Venus Peppermint Hot Chocolate
 Venus Salted Caramel Cocoa
 Honey
 Chocolate Stirring Spoons
 Starlight Mints

Cozy, Comfy Basket

Complete Mani/Pedi – Wendy Pelletier \$35
 Sleepytime Tea
 Loose Tea Infuser
 Small Candle
 Midcoast Candle Soy Blend Wax Melt, Apple Cider
 Midcoast Candle Soy Wax Candle, Lemon
 Shea Butter Mask
 Traditional English Tea, Set of Three Tins
 Hand and Body Wash, Sandalwood Sage
 Wooden Maine Ornament
 Chocolate Chip Butter Cookies
 Facial Masks, 2 – Aloe and Vitamin C
 Little Korboose, Woven Throw Blanket
 Candy Cane Spoon Rest

Chef Basket

Pampered Chef Panini Press
 Shaw's Gift Card \$35

Maine Basket

Scone Goddess Tote
 Scone Goddess Ginger, Lemon Scone Mix
 Scone Goddess Ginger, Mocha Chip Mix
 Stonewall Kitchen Bloody Mary Mixer
 Maine Scented Candle
 Maine Zucchini Relish
 Beth's Farm Market Gift Card \$25

Photo Shoot

Candid Captures by Chelsea – Gift Card \$199
 Assorted Picture Frames

Happy Holiday Table

Red Glass Bowls – 2
 Holiday Napkins
 Rectangular Christmas Tree Plate
 Stemless Wine Glasses – 4
 Christmas Tree Candles – 2
 Noisy Crackers – set of 6
 Jefferson Market & General Store - \$20

Holiday Basket

Spatula and Cookie Cutter
 Storage Containers
 Cranberry, Orange Scone Mix
 Beth's Apple Cider Jam
 Dark Chocolate Truffles
 Godiva Chocolate Domes
 Shortbread Teddies
 Gingerbread Man Cookie Cutters
 Holiday Plates
 Andes Variety, One Seafood Basket

Lavender Linen Gift Set (Worth \$60)

Lavender Room Spray
 Lavender Essential Oils
 Lavender Sachet
 Dryer Ball
 Lavender Detergent
 Lavender

Maine Basket #2

Ocean Breeze Soy Wax Candle
 Blueberry Scented Soap
 Hand painted Oil Dispenser
 Lighthouse Cards, blank
 Handmade Snowman Pot Holders
 Handmade Mittens Pot Holder
 Chickadee Ornament
 Lake St. George Brewing Company \$25 Gift Cert.
 AVS T-shirt, Adult large

Midcoast Athletics Center

Benteer Basketball is offering a 4 Class Package
 (1 class per week for 4 weeks)
 Spalding Basketball - 28.5
 \$25.00 Moody Diner

continued...

Nature's Magic Products (Worth \$120)

Peace, Love and Flowers Body Butter
 Hair Pomade, Tobacco Bay Leaf
 Magnesium, Goodnight Foot Butter
 Root Chakra, Grounding Foot Salve
 Glow Face Balm
 Peace, Essential Oil Roller
 Happiness, Essential Oil Roller
 New Beginnings, Essential Oil Roller
 Six Piece Bath Set
 Liquid Hand Soap – First Snow
 Candle – Peppermint & Hot Chocolate
 Hope General Store Gift Card- \$25

Thirty-One Bag

Sweet Holiday Activity Book
 I Love My Socks (signed)
 The Bear's Halloween Ball (signed)
 The Snowman Choir (signed)
 Magic Treehouse Books- 16, 22, 24, 45
 How to be a Pirate
 The Bad Guys
 Arthur and the New Kid
 Smile
 Narwhal Unicorn of the Sea
 A is for Donkeys (signed)
 Chicka, Chicka, Sticka, Sticka
 A House for Hermit Crab
 The Healthy Air-Fryer Cookbook
 Special Delivery Coloring and Activity Book
 Arthur Breaks the Bank
 AVS T-shirt, Adult Large

I Love Sports Basket

\$75.00 Midcoast Recreation Center certificate
 Backpack
 Appleton Village School T-shirt
 Tennis Balls
 Athletic Towel
 Game Day Paper Cups with Lids
 Baby Basketball
 Water Bottle
 Bombas (6 pairs)
 Let's Go Patriots Sign

Americana

Americana Side Table
 \$35.00 Flatbread Gift Certificate
 Appleton Village T-Shirt

Get Artsy and Crafty With This Basket

Appleton Village School T-shirt
 Poster Board and Stickers
 Tissue Paper & Gemstone Stickers
 Harmonica
 Scribble Pad and Sketch Book
 Cra-Z-Art Markers & Pencils & Crayons
 Graphic Arts Pencil Kit
 Watercolor Paper, Paints & Brushes
 Gingerbread & Whirligig Kits
 Craft Bucket & ABC Stencils
 Wooden Popsicles & Cubes
 Glue Gun and Sticks
 Colored Felt

What's Cooking in the Kitchen?

\$25.00 Hannaford Gift Card
 2 Kitchen Towels
 2 Drying Mats - Ralph Lauren
 4 Water Goblets
 Fancy Mug Kitchen Artwork
 20 Piece Flatware
 2 Coffee Mugs
 Mrs. Meyer's Dish Soap
 Measuring Cup and Spoon Set
 1 Cookie Cutter
 Christmas Tumbler
 Wine Stopper
 1 Yankee Candle
 Holiday Tray
 Paper Cups and Napkin
 4 Christmas Ramekins

Happy Animal Basket

\$25.00 Moody Diner
 \$25.00 Common Market
 Appleton Village School T-shirt
 Dog Kong Toy
 Pet Bowl Placemat
 Fleece Pet Throw
 Sift & Toss Cat Box Liners
 Cat Window Loungers
 Trader Joe's Dog Treats
 Tennis Balls
 Dog Trivet
 Tea Towel
 Chicken Dog Toy
 Huggable Massager
 Dog Poop Bags

APPLETON VILLAGE SCHOOL PRESENTS

**HOLIDAY
CRAFT FAIR**

DEC 9TH
9AM - 2PM

MUSIC ✦ SHOPPING ✦ FOOD

.....

737 UNION ROAD, APPLETON

MIDDLE SCHOOL



CHRISTMAS
DANCE

DEC. 15 FRIDAY

6PM-8PM

ADMISSION - \$3

CONCESSIONS - MUSIC - GAMES

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MAD SCIENCE STEM ENRICHMENT

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

-Getting Kids Back To Curiosity, Collaboration, & Creativity-

Energize It

Hop on board the Mad Science express for a high-speed, hands-on science experience guaranteed to energize your mind! Explore the many facets of energy, forces, motion, potions, and yes...slime! Reach for your potential and ramp up your thinking about energy with gadgets, cars, and catapults. Discover how to make objects disappear and reappear as we unravel the mysteries of magic using science. Slide down the colorful pH scale and make liquids bubble, fizz, and pop. Learn the physics of optical illusions and build your very own periscope. Ooze into a gooey hour of sliming around as you discover the slimy properties of your favorite polymer. Act out hot molecule movements and discover some unusual applications of glow-in-the dark technology. Explore forces by making centrifuges, spinning gyroscopes, and building your own center of gravity game to take home. This program is so energizing, even gravity can't keep you down! Put your seat belt on...these energetic classes are going to make you have a blast! Classes: Energy Burst, Optical Illusions, PH Phactor, The



For more program information please visit
maine.madscience.org

WINTER AfterSchool Program

Dates:

Jan 11,2024-Mar 7,2024

LOCATION: Appleton Village School

Address: 737 Union Road, Appleton, ME 04862

Program Day: Thursday

Number of Classes: 8

Time: 3:00pm-4:00pm

All Dates: 1/11, 1/18, 1/25, 2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 2/29, 3/7

Skip Dates: 2/22

Room: Art Room

Grades: 2nd - 3rd

Price: \$ 105.00

PH: 207-785-4504

REGISTER ONLINE:

[Mad Science Maine](http://maine.madscience.org)



MAD SCIENCE STEM ENRICHMENT

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

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WINTER AfterSchool Program

Dates:

Jan 10,2024-Mar 6,2024

LOCATION: Appleton Village School
Address: 737 Union Road, Appleton, ME 04862

Program Day: Wednesday

Number of Classes: 8

Time: 2:00pm - 3:00pm

All Dates: 1/10, 1/17, 1/24, 1/31, 2/7, 2/14, 2/28, 5/6

Skip Dates: 2/21

Room: Art Room

Grades: 4th-5th

Price: \$ 105.00

PH: 207-785-4504



For more program information please visit
maine.madscience.org

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[Mad Science Maine](http://maine.madscience.org)

Helping Children Learn®

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School
Appleton Village School



December 2023

Help your elementary schooler prepare to do well on tests

"We will have a test on this next week." When teachers announce a test several days in advance, they expect students to use the time to prepare for it. But how should your child get ready?



Help your elementary schooler:

- **Clarify what the test** will cover. If your child is unsure about the topics that will be on the test, suggest asking the teacher. Your child can also ask about the format (fill in the blanks, multiple choice, short answer, etc.).
- **Create a study plan.** Studying works best when it's done repeatedly in short sessions spread out over time. Help your child block out study time on a calendar.
- **Practice recalling the material.** Your child could work with flash cards or think of questions the teacher might ask and then answer them. You could quiz each other on the material.
- **Arrive at school on time every day.** Students who are absent or arrive late will not get the benefit of in-class review sessions. On test day, arriving on time will help your child stay relaxed.
- **Keep up healthy habits.** In addition to studying, your child needs enough rest and nutrition to perform well on tests. Maintaining a regular bedtime and making sure your child eats breakfast will help.



Let your child practice making choices

Making lots of little decisions now will ensure your child has the skills to make more important ones later, about school and life. To help:

- **Show that you trust** your child with decisions. Regularly offer choices you believe your child can handle. Set guidelines, then accept your child's decision.
- **Ask questions.** If your child has a big project due soon and wants to go to a friend's house, look at a calendar together. Ask, "Do you have enough free nights left to finish your work?" "Would you have more fun together if your project were already finished?"
- **Ask if your child** wants help deciding before giving advice. If not, help your child learn from the consequences of a poor choice.
- **Do activities together** that involve decision-making. Play board games, discuss book characters' choices, and hold friendly family debates.

Sources: W. Stixrud, Ph.D. and N. Johnson, "Teach Your Kids How to Make Their Own Decisions," *Our Children*, National PTA; "Teaching Youth Decision-Making Skills through Activities," Rachel's Challenge.

Conduct a daily review

Reviewing your child's schoolwork and talking about it together every day is important in every grade. It sends the message that learning is important. When you review:

- **Ask questions.** Which work did your child most enjoy doing? Was it easy or challenging?
- **Praise effort.** Compliment work that is neat, complete and accurate.

Help your child be a giver

Children love *receiving* gifts. If your family celebrates a holiday with gifts, help your child experience the pleasure that also comes from *giving* them. Explain that the most meaningful gifts are made with love. Your child could:

- **Make and decorate a list**, such as "My 10 Favorite Things about Grandpa."
- **Bake cookies** and deliver them to someone who may not receive many homemade gifts.
- **Create a calendar** for 2024, including artwork geared to the seasons.



Check up on attendance

How has your child's attendance been so far this year? If you are unsure, contact the school to find out. Students who miss too much school are at risk academically. That's because:



- **Absences add up** to lost learning.
- **Missing school** becomes a habit.
- **Students who are** frequently absent in the early grades are less likely to do well in middle and high school.

It's not too late to get your student back on track for a strong year—and school career.

Helping Children Learn

Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

December 2023

Q&A Should I get my child tested for reading disorders?

Q: My second grader has been having trouble reading, but I haven't been too worried. Yesterday, the teacher called to suggest some testing. I don't want my child to be labeled as having learning issues. Will my student outgrow reading problems if we just wait?

A: The teacher has your child's best interests at heart. The earlier reading issues are addressed, the better. Second grade is an important year. By third and fourth grade, schools expect that instead of *learning to read*, students can shift to *reading to learn*. Figuring out what may be causing difficulties now will help your child be ready.



Research shows most struggling readers can make significant gains if they get effective help early enough. The testing will help identify if your child has specific learning challenges. If they are found, the school can design a program to address them and help your student read better.

The longer you wait, the harder it will be for your elementary schooler to master reading and the longer it will take. By then, your child may have missed important learning in subjects like math, science and social studies.

The goal of these tests is to help your child. The results will help you and the school work together to meet your child's needs.

Parent Quiz Are you modeling listening skills?

Attentive listening helps students get the most from their class time. Are you showing your child how to be a good listener? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

- ___ 1. **Do you concentrate** on listening when your child is talking? If you're busy, do you suggest a time when you can give your full attention?
- ___ 2. **Do you listen** patiently? It can take children time to find the words they want to say.
- ___ 3. **Do you hear** your child out without interrupting? Do you ask your child not to interrupt you?
- ___ 4. **Do you "listen"** to your child's body language and behavior?
- ___ 5. **Do you resist** jumping in with answers when your child is thinking something through?

How well are you doing?
More yes answers mean you are demonstrating attentive listening for your child. For each no, try that idea.

"Children will listen to you after they feel listened to."
 —Jane Nelsen

Ask for a reading summary

Summarizing boosts reading comprehension. After your child has finished reading, say you'd like to know what the material was about and what your child learned. Ask your student to write down the main points.

Suggest that your child think about the answers to questions like *Who, What, When, Where, Why* and *How*. It's OK if your child has to reread the material to answer them—more carefully this time. Over time, kids get the knack of summarizing—and a better understanding of what they read.

Grow learning motivation

Having a desire to learn makes a big difference to your child's success in school. To encourage inner motivation:

- **Say often** that you know your child has what it takes to achieve in school.
- **Encourage curiosity.** Welcome questions and look together for answers.
- **Phrase corrections** in a positive way. "You spelled everything right except these two words. I bet you can learn them, too."
- **Extend learning.** Build on school lessons by visiting educational places. Help your child do a science experiment or plant a windowsill garden.



Use report cards to review progress and plan ahead

A report card can't tell you everything about how your elementary schooler is doing, but the teachers spend a lot of time making sure that it shows a snapshot of where your student is now. Read report cards carefully and calmly discuss progress, accomplishments and goals for improvement with your child. If you or your child have any questions about a report card, contact the teacher.

Helping Children Learn®

Published in English and Spanish, September through May.
 Publisher: Doris McLaughlin.
 Publisher Emeritus: John H. Wherry, Ed.D.
 Editor: Alison McLean.
 Translations Editor: Victoria Gaviola.
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 a division of PaperClip Media, Inc.
 P.O. Box 7474, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7474
 1-800-756-5525 • www.parent-institute.com

Elementary School

Daily Learning Planner

Ideas families can use to help children do well in school

Appleton Village School



THE PARENT INSTITUTE®

December • January • February 2023-2024

December 2023

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Children Do Well in School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- 1. Read a book of folktales with your child today.
- 2. Set aside time to work on craft projects together. Perhaps your child can give these as gifts.
- 3. Talk with your child about what it means to be courageous. Look for examples of people who demonstrate courage.
- 4. Make your own seasonal greeting cards. With your child, read some cards in stores for ideas, then write your own messages.
- 5. Make a paper chain to count down the number of days left until January 1. Have your child count the links and remove one each day.
- 6. Recreate a tradition from your own childhood. Share it with your child.
- 7. Put several items in a bag. Have your child and a friend or sibling reach in and choose three to use as props for a five-minute skit.
- 8. Plan a screen-free evening. Play Simon Says together instead.
- 9. Talk with your child about a choice you've made and the consequence of that choice.
- 10. Have your child replace the adjectives on a printed ad with their opposites.
- 11. Ask what your child would do if friends suggested stealing a candy bar.
- 12. Many people celebrate holidays in December. What holidays can your child name? Talk about why they are special.
- 13. Show your child which direction is *north*, *south*, *east* and *west*.
- 14. What is the coldest place in the nation today? The warmest? What's the difference between the two temperatures? Find out together.
- 15. Look through family photos together. Tell stories about the pictures.
- 16. Bake cookies with your child. If you're doubling a recipe, have your child do the math.
- 17. At dinner, ask family members to pick five words to describe themselves.
- 18. Talk with your child about how animals survive the winter months. What do bears do? How about birds?
- 19. Have your child make a list of things to do when there's nothing to do.
- 20. Take a walk with your child. Look for things you only see in December.
- 21. Ask your child to write your shopping list before you go to the market.
- 22. Have a family sing-along. Ask family members to share their favorite songs.
- 23. Have your child make a snowman picture using cotton balls and glue.
- 24. Ask what your child's favorite winter activity is. If possible, make plans to do it together.
- 25. Tuck a loving note under a pillow for your child to find at bedtime.
- 26. Talk to your child about the importance of writing thank-you notes for gifts.
- 27. Begin telling a story. When you get to an exciting part, stop talking and let your child make up the rest.
- 28. Ask about the very best present your child ever received. What made it special?
- 29. With your child, listen to music in the dark. Concentrate on the sounds.
- 30. Post a vocabulary word and its definition on the bathroom mirror. Change it every three or four days.
- 31. Measure your child. How much did your student grow this year?

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January 2024

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Children Do Well in School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- 1. Plan to spend some one-on-one time with your child this month. Write your "appointment" on the family calendar.
- 2. After you read aloud, ask your child to retell the story from memory.
- 3. Ask your child to help you organize something, such as a closet.
- 4. Create a family logbook. Everyone can jot down and read thoughts, reminders and accomplishments.
- 5. Teach your child a life skill, such as preparing a simple meal, washing clothes or washing dishes.
- 6. Take the family to the library. Have everyone check out some books.
- 7. Play a board game that involves math with your child.
- 8. It's National Clean Off Your Desk Day. Make it Clean Up Your Study Area Day, too!
- 9. If you don't have time to read to your child at night, read in the morning. It's a real "power breakfast."
- 10. Have your child draw a picture of something that happened in school. Talk about it.
- 11. Ask your child, "Why do you think we have laws in our society? What would happen if we didn't?"
- 12. Make a pretend clock using a paper plate and two strips of paper. Help your child practice telling time.
- 13. Ask your child to name places where water is found.
- 14. Play I Spy with your child. Say "I spy something orange." Let your child guess what it is.
- 15. With your child, try to name an animal that starts with every letter of the alphabet. (You can leave out X.)
- 16. Pick a category. Ask your child to pick a letter. How many items from the category begin with that letter?
- 17. Help your child set up dominos in a row and then knock them down. How long a trail can your child make?
- 18. Watch a TV show or video with the sound muted. Ask family members to make up the dialogue.
- 19. Make a list of three new things you'd like to do or try as a family. Then make plans to do them!
- 20. Sometime today, exchange notes with your child instead of talking.
- 21. Compliment your child on a recent accomplishment.
- 22. Ask your child to use a ruler or measuring tape to measure and record the dimensions of six objects in your home.
- 23. In the car, have your child add the numbers on license plates you see.
- 24. Let your child help you with a chore today. Be sure to say thank you.
- 25. Ask your child to spell the names of favorite foods.
- 26. Play a card game with your child that reinforces number sense, such as Crazy Eights or Go Fish.
- 27. Have your child look for certain letters or words on a cereal box or soup can.
- 28. Teach your child how to sew on a button today.
- 29. Help your child set a goal for this week.
- 30. Watch the news on TV with your child. Choose one story and have your child compare it with a news article on the same topic.
- 31. Talk about new words that your elementary schooler thinks should be in the dictionary. Have your child write the definitions.

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February 2024

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Children Do Well in School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- 1. Ask your child, "What would you do with a million dollars?"
- 2. It's International Friendship Month. Have your child plan to do a good deed for a friend.
- 3. Talk together about what your child does right. List as many things as you can.
- 4. Help your child make a bookmark. On a piece of thin cardboard, have your child draw a scene or write a quotation from a favorite book.
- 5. Ask your child to read to you while you make dinner.
- 6. Be creative in the kitchen. See who can invent the greatest-tasting new pizza topping.
- 7. Create a board game with your child. Use poster board, markers, index cards, dice and coins for game pieces.
- 8. Have your child write a Valentine's message to someone who is sick or lonely. Mail it to that person.
- 9. Help your child plan ahead. Talk about the weekend. What needs to be done to prepare for a family activity?
- 10. February is Great American Pie Month. Celebrate by reading a children's book about pies, such as *Pie* by Sarah Weeks.
- 11. With your child, spend a half hour writing about a special day.
- 12. Ask if your child has ever seen or experienced bullying in school. If so, alert the school.
- 13. Challenge your child to create a comic strip of a familiar story.
- 14. Show and tell family members that you love them.
- 15. Let your child pick what to wear and where to read today.
- 16. Have a Predictions Day. Predict how long it will take to get to the store, to fill the bathtub, etc.
- 17. Discuss ways you work with numbers at home—for example, when setting an alarm clock or the oven timer.
- 18. Dissolve some salt and water in a glass. Watch for a few days. Talk about what happens.
- 19. Improved report card? High grade on a test? Make your achiever Head of the House for the day.
- 20. Make a crossword puzzle to help your child review vocabulary words.
- 21. Talk with your child about what it means to be a responsible member of a community.
- 22. It's the birthday of George Washington. Take a virtual tour together of his home, Mount Vernon, at <https://virtualtour.mountvernon.org/>.
- 23. Look in the books and articles for interesting words. Help your child look them up in a dictionary.
- 24. Challenge your child to look through the house and make a list of everything that comes from plants.
- 25. Let your child clean some dirty pennies with ketchup. Research together why this works.
- 26. Have your child write a poem or story from the point of view of a family pet.
- 27. Ask about people your elementary schooler admires. Why does your child admire them?
- 28. Put on music and spend 15 minutes drawing or writing with your child. Let the music be your inspiration.
- 29. Explain that people learn when they try new things. Today, try a new food with your child or take a new route home together.

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Helping Students Learn[®]

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School
 Appleton Village School

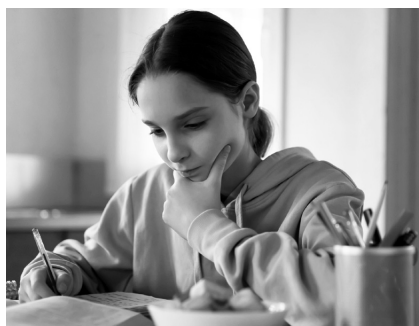


MIDDLE SCHOOL

December 2023

Reading actively will help your child become a better reader

Reading and thinking go hand in hand. To master complex or challenging reading material, your middle schooler must do more than stare at a page. Fortunately, this type of reading is a learned skill and can be improved with practice.



Three strategies can help your child get more out of reading assignments. Encourage your student to:

- 1. Take notes.** Many students' minds drift off when they read. To keep your child engaged with the content, suggest taking notes. Your child will have to think about which points are most important and how they connect. Just the act of notetaking often improves reading comprehension. Your child can also use sticky notes to mark key places in the text.
- 2. Think about vocabulary.** One reason middle school texts and fictional works are challenging is that they introduce students to new words and terms. On encountering an unfamiliar word, have your child stop and look up the definition and write it on an index card.
- 3. Read often for pleasure.** The more students read, the more they are able to read smoothly and accurately. This is called *fluency*, and it is an important step toward reading comprehension.

Source: "Middle School Reading: Improving Your Seventh and Eighth Grader's Reading Comprehension," Math & Reading Help, American Library Association.

Shift responsibilities onto your child

Middle schoolers don't morph into responsible young adults overnight. But with encouragement from their families to take responsibility for things kids this age can do for themselves, they get there.

- Students in the middle grades are generally capable of taking responsibility for:
- **Tracking assignment** due dates and scheduling time to do the work.
 - **Turning assignments** in on time.
 - **Reading for as much time** as they spend watching screens.
 - **Keeping track of supplies** and notifying parents when they are low.
 - **Waking up** to an alarm and getting ready on time. If your child is quick to hit the snooze button, put the clock across the room.
 - **Updating a family calendar** with test dates and other school commitments.

Speak up to support safety

Students have a key role to play in the safety of everyone at school. Rather than just standing by, it's essential for them to report information and concerns about violence and issues that affect classmates' well-being.

Talk with your child about the need to report concerns immediately. Topics to report include not just threats of school violence, but also bullying, drug use, self-harm, depression and suicide. Emphasize that reporting makes it possible to prevent tragedies and get people the help they need.

Source: "Improving School Safety Through Bystander Reporting: A Toolkit for Strengthening K-12 Reporting Programs," U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Avoid the friend trap

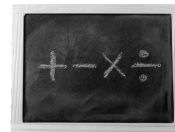
Middle schoolers are growing up, but they still need you to set limits and enforce rules about things like health, schoolwork and respectful behavior.

You are not just one of your child's friends. So don't try to be like "one of the kids" or base decisions solely on what would please your child. Instead, trust yourself as the adult and make decisions that are best for your child.



Share math success secrets

Promote the habits that help students do their best with middle school math. Encourage your child to:



- **Take notes** in math class and follow along with handouts.
- **Study class notes** every day.
- **Tackle sample problems** in the textbook. Your child can read how to solve them, then close the book and try it.
- **Ask for help** if a concept is confusing. Your child could ask a classmate to demonstrate problem-solving steps.

Helping Students Learn

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School



MIDDLE SCHOOL

December 2023

Q&A A family trip conflicts with school. What should we do?

Q: I know that attendance is important, but we will be traveling over the holidays and my child will miss a week of school. How can I keep my middle schooler from falling behind?

A: The only way to ensure that your child won't miss out on essential learning is to plan your travel to fall within the school's winter break. Any time students are absent from class, they miss things that can't be made up, such as class discussions.

If your travel dates can't be changed, help your child stay on track by:

- **Contacting the teachers well in advance.** Explain the situation. If the teachers are planning to assign reading or other work while you'll be gone, ask if your child can get started now.
- **Planning for learning while you are away.** Explore historical and cultural sites. Look for other educational activities not available at home.
- **Scheduling time for reading and study.** Even if there are no assignments to complete while away, your child should read for pleasure and write about your trip. In addition, solving a few math problems a day will help keep your child's skills sharp.



Parent Quiz

Are you discussing sticky situations?

Thinking and talking through challenging situations before they happen helps your middle schooler be ready to react appropriately. Are you talking with your child about tough issues? Answer *yes* or *no* below:

___ **1. Do you bring up** a variety of difficult scenarios—being offered alcohol, being asked to share test answers, etc.) before they happen?

___ **2. Do you help** your child rehearse different ways to say *no*? "My parents would ground me forever" is a standby.

___ **3. Do you create** frequent opportunities for casual conversations? They often pave the way for more serious talks.

___ **4. Do you make** it easy for your child to be honest with you by listening calmly?

___ **5. Do you discuss** and demonstrate your values for your child?

How well are you doing?

More *yes* answers mean you are preparing your child to make good choices under pressure. For each *no*, try that idea.

"Life is a matter of choices, and every choice you make makes you."

—John C. Maxwell

Have a goal-setting session

By now, you probably have an idea of your student's academic strengths and where improvement is necessary. Over the winter break, take time together to establish goals for the rest of the year. Goals are more effective if students set them, so help your child:

- **Identify the most important areas** to improve.
- **Set specific, realistic goals** and write them down.
- **Plan what to do** to reach the goals.
- **Check on progress** every few weeks, and make changes if necessary.
- **Review at the end** of the quarter. Renew unmet goals and set new ones.

Source: "Student Goal Setting: An Evidence-Based Practice," Midwest Comprehensive Center, American Institutes for Research.

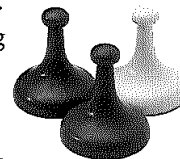
Connect to community

Feeling a connection to the surrounding community can help nurture your middle schooler's sense of responsibility to others. Encourage your child to write a letter of thanks to a public servant, such as a fire fighter. Your child will get writing practice—and learn how nice it feels when one responsible member of society applauds another.

Board games boost skills

For a fun and educational family activity during winter break, get out the board games! Board games let students practice skills like:

- **Following** directions.
- **Using** logic, reasoning and strategy.
- **Reading**, spelling and using vocabulary.
- **Recognizing** patterns.
- **Negotiating** and communicating.



Source: D.K. O'Neill and P.E. Holmes, "The Power of Board Games for Multidomain Learning in Young Children" *American Journal of Play*, The Strong.

Helping Students Learn®

Published in English and Spanish, September through May.
 Publisher: Doris McLaughlin.
 Publisher Emeritus: John H. Wherry, Ed.D.
 Editor: Alison McLean.
 Translations Editor: Victoria Gaviola.
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 P.O. Box 7474, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7474
 1-800-756-5525 • www.parent-institute.com

Middle School

Daily Learning Planner

Ideas families can use to help students do well in school

Appleton Village School



THE PARENT INSTITUTE®

December • January • February 2023-2024

December 2023

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Students Do Well in School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- 1. Get some exercise with your child today.
- 2. Don't try to do everything yourself this month. Ask your child to take the responsibility for one or two seasonal traditions.
- 3. Encourage your child to take photos during a family outing or event.
- 4. Look online or in the newspaper for a list of local free events. Plan to attend one this month as a family.
- 5. Don't let holiday plans derail your child's study routine.
- 6. What is the coldest place in the nation today? The warmest? Have your child calculate the difference between the two temperatures.
- 7. Review goals for the school year. Is your child making progress?
- 8. Ask your child to teach you something about a school subject—even if you already know the material.
- 9. Talk about your expectations with your child. Ask if there is a new responsibility your child feels ready to take on.
- 10. Books are great gifts for middle schoolers. Ask a librarian to recommend a popular series for your child.
- 11. Have your child choose a recipe to follow from a cookbook.
- 12. After dinner, have family members take photos of each other. Vote on who made the funniest face.
- 13. Help your child brainstorm fun things to do inside. Write each idea on an index card. When bad weather strikes, have your child pick a card.
- 14. Play Alphabet Mixup. Choose a word; rearrange the letters in alphabetical order. Can your child figure out the word?
- 15. Ask to see your child's most recent math assignment. Did your child think it was easy? Challenging?
- 16. Have dinner by flashlight tonight.
- 17. Before your child buys something, suggest comparing prices and return policies.
- 18. Be on the lookout for things your child does right. Praise effort and positive behavior.
- 19. Talk with your child about things you both could do to conserve energy and natural resources.
- 20. Remain positive when helping your child with schoolwork, even if your student is discouraged. "I know you can learn this."
- 21. One evening over winter break, watch your child's favorite show together and discuss it.
- 22. Encourage your child to talk to older relatives about their childhoods.
- 23. Ask each family member to put two items that have special meaning into a family time capsule. Plan to open it in 10 years.
- 24. Think your child is too old for reading aloud? Try it. Or try listening to audiobooks together.
- 25. Take turns telling about the kindest thing anyone has ever done for you.
- 26. Plan an indoor campout. Make a tent from a blanket. Eat s'mores and read scary stories.
- 27. Start a jigsaw puzzle with your child.
- 28. Keep the lines of communication open now with your middle schooler. It will help you both through the teen years.
- 29. Ask your child to look up a few new words in the dictionary and explain their meanings to you.
- 30. Play a screen-free game together tonight—a board game, cards, dominoes, charades—whatever your child would like.
- 31. Review the year with your child. Highlight accomplishments.

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January 2024

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Students Do Well in School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- 1. Help your child set and write down goals for the coming year. Set some goals for yourself, as well.
- 2. Ask your child to name a few favorite family activities from last year. Make a plan to do them again this year, if possible.
- 3. Share a poem. How does your child interpret it?
- 4. How many *homophones* (words that sound alike, but mean different things) can your child think of? For example, *course* and *coarse*.
- 5. Ask to hear about one thing your child is looking forward to right now.
- 6. Encourage your child to jot down unfamiliar words while reading to look up later.
- 7. Leave sports coaching to the coach. Sideline coaching from families is distracting and will embarrass your child.
- 8. Today, talk to your child as you would to a friend or coworker.
- 9. Discuss what life was like 25 years ago. What was the same? What was different?
- 10. Encourage your child to read during quiet times at home. Before bed is a perfect time to read.
- 11. Ask what your child likes most about this year's classes.
- 12. Have your child select and read a news article to you, then share an opinion about it. Listen, then share your opinion.
- 13. Plan to attend as many school events for families as possible in the rest of the school year.
- 14. Ask your child to figure out the average of something: family members' ages, number of pairs of socks owned by family members, etc.
- 15. Have your child write frequently-used, hard-to-spell words in alphabetical order in an old address book. They'll be easy to look up.

- 16. Play Math Jeopardy. Say a number. Can your child come up with a problem for which it is the answer?
- 17. Look for a CPR class to take with your child.
- 18. Think of *synonyms* for words with your child. For example, a synonym for tired is *fatigued*.
- 19. Ask, "What one thing do you wish our family would do differently at home?" Be open to your child's suggestion.
- 20. Take turns making statements with your child. Identify each one as either *fact* or *opinion*.
- 21. Get up early this morning and take a walk around your neighborhood with your child. Does it seem different early in the morning?
- 22. Tell your child a story that teaches an important lesson.
- 23. Ask family members to describe ways they used math today.
- 24. Teach your child to ask *who, what, when, where, why* and *how* when doing research.
- 25. Talk together about your child's plans for the day.
- 26. Ask what conditions make it easier for your child to do assignments. Knowing how they learn helps students do better.
- 27. Play a math fact game. Get a deck of cards. Each player turns over one card. The player who correctly multiplies the cards first wins them.
- 28. Discuss a controversial issue with your child. Ask, "What do you think?"
- 29. Work on a hobby with your child.
- 30. Name a location anywhere in the world. Take turns with your child telling one thing you would like to see there.
- 31. Make pizza as a family tonight. Get creative with toppings.

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February 2024

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Students Do Well in School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- 1. Watch a TV commercial with your child. Talk about the techniques advertisers use to influence people.
- 2. Encourage your child to combine fitness and reading by listening to an audiobook while exercising.
- 3. Help your child set priorities when studying. Which assignment is most important? Due first? Most difficult?
- 4. Tell your child about something you did in middle school that you would do differently now.
- 5. If you hear a compliment about your child, be sure to pass it on. Middle schoolers need positive feedback.
- 6. Talk with your child about some ways people can learn from their mistakes.
- 7. Help your child see the good in others. Focus more on people's strengths than their weaknesses.
- 8. Have your child write a Valentine's Day message to someone who is sick or lonely and mail it to that person.
- 9. Does your child have assignments to do over the weekend? Make sure your student schedules time to complete them.
- 10. Visit a new place with your child, such as a marina or town hall.
- 11. Help your child research careers of interest. What skills or education are required for each?
- 12. Have your child estimate how many bowls of cereal can be poured from one box. Keep track until the box is empty.
- 13. Teach your child how to read a road map.
- 14. Serve your child's favorite breakfast today just to say, "I love you."

- 15. Ask your child to organize the books in your home.
- 16. Talk about stereotypes with your child. Discuss why they're unfair.
- 17. Ask your child to make a graph of family habits. How many hours does each person sleep in a week? Who reads the most?
- 18. Talk about a familiar place. Can your middle schooler figure out which direction it is from your home?
- 19. Exercise your child's memory. Ask, "Do you remember what you ate yesterday? The day before?"
- 20. Remind your child never to share passwords with friends.
- 21. Ask your child, "Is there anything you wish you understood?" Then, research the topic together.
- 22. Challenge your child to create an original cartoon character. What would it look like?
- 23. Set aside some time to spend one-on-one with your child today.
- 24. Enjoy an outdoor activity with the whole family today. Then, come inside for a cup of hot chocolate.
- 25. Ask about a book or article your child read recently.
- 26. If your child gets headaches when reading or holds books too close, schedule a vision check-up.
- 27. With your child, think of as many city nicknames as you can: Windy City (Chicago), Mile High City (Denver). Then, look up some more.
- 28. Listen to a piece of music that has no lyrics. Challenge your child to write some.
- 29. Let your child make a decision for the family today.

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