

# Home & School CONNECTION<sup>®</sup>

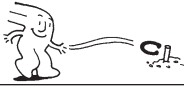
Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION<sup>®</sup>

May 2009

Blanco Elementary School

www.blancoisd.org



## SHORT NOTES

### Worksheets on the go

Your child can pass the time in the car this summer while keeping skills sharp. Print free worksheets from <http://printables.familyeducation.com> or [www.edhelper.com](http://www.edhelper.com), and place them in sheet protectors in a binder. Keep them in the car along with washable markers and wet wipes—your youngster can do them as often as he likes.

### Stick with it

The end of the school year is a good time to reflect on the power of persistence. Ask your child to list things she couldn't do at the beginning of the year but can do now. *Examples:* read a book, add fractions, run a lap around the track. Save the list for whenever she needs extra motivation.

### Newspaper challenge

When you finish with the morning paper, turn it into a learning tool. Cut the front page apart into headlines, articles, and photographs, and divide the clippings into three stacks. Ask your youngster to try to match them up. He'll need to use reading and critical-thinking skills to complete the task.

### Worth quoting

"An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest."  
*Benjamin Franklin*

## JUST FOR FUN

**Q:** How do you stop a skunk from smelling?

**A:** Put a clothespin on his nose.



## My world

Teach your youngster about people, places, and customs around the world. You'll make social studies more meaningful and help her appreciate diversity.

### Learn about people

Does your child know that Australian kids have summer vacation from December through February? Or that many youngsters in Kenya help out at home instead of going to school? Let her read about the lives of children in other countries. She'll build research skills and learn about differences—and similarities—among people. Try *Children from Australia to Zimbabwe* (Maya Ajmera and Anna Rhesa Versola) and <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/Place>.

### Explore geography

Creating a beach ball globe will help your youngster remember continents and oceans. With a permanent marker, have her draw a line (equator) around the middle of a ball. Let her cut out



continents from an old map and trace around them with a marker on her globe. Then, have her label the continents and the oceans.

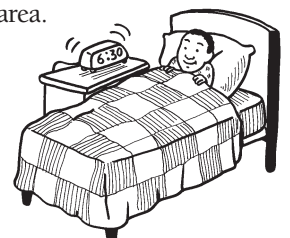
### Experiment with customs

First-hand experiences can help your child understand other cultures. For instance, your family might learn to eat with chopsticks. Read *The Story of Chopsticks* (Ying Chang Compentine). Race to see who can be the first to move a dozen cotton balls from one bowl to another using chopsticks. When your youngster is comfortable with them, move on to food (cheese cubes, orange slices, Chinese food).♥

## Ready for back to school

Help your child get off to a great start in the fall with these summertime suggestions:

- Shop for school supplies early. You'll find a better selection and less-crowded aisles. *Tip:* If paying for supplies is a concern, or if you have items to donate, call your youngster's school about supply drives in your area.
- Schedule a school physical now. Doctors are busy in August, and it may be hard to get an appointment at the last minute.
- Ease into an earlier bedtime a few weeks before school starts. Have your child practice waking up with an alarm clock so he can learn to get up on his own.♥



# Being polite

Summer offers many chances for socializing. Be sure your child knows good manners with these tips:

- When your youngster gets a party invitation, put him in charge of calling the host to accept or decline. Tell him not to talk about the invitation in front of others—they may feel bad if they weren't included. On the day of the party, remind him to thank the host and his parents before he leaves.



- Talk about playground etiquette. For example, your child should wait for the person in front of him to finish sliding before he takes his turn. If another child is waiting for a swing, suggest that he limit his time on it. And he'll need to be considerate of smaller children—they may take longer to climb ladders or cross monkey bars.

- Ask your youngster to sit with you for a little while when you have friends over. He can see you offer guests a seat, give them something to eat and drink, and start a conversation. Watching your polite behavior will give him ideas for how he should act.♥

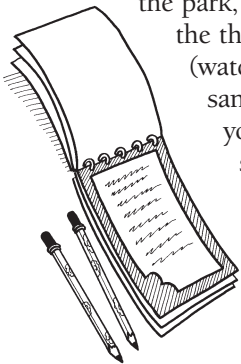


## ACTIVITY CORNER

### A list a day

Want your child to write more? Suggest that she make lists. They're quick and fun, and they help your youngster learn to brainstorm.

Give your child a spiral notebook where she can make a new list each day. For example, if you're taking a trip to the park, she might write all the things to do there (watch ducks, build a sand castle). While you paint a room, she could write down every color she can think of (lavender, burnt sienna). *More ideas:* jobs she might want when she grows up, all the dinosaurs she knows, states she has visited, fairy-tale characters, ways to recycle.



*Tip:* Have your youngster use her lists for ideas when she is writing a story. Any item, or several items, can make a great story topic.♥

## Q & A

### Family game time

**Q:** *When I was growing up, my family set aside one night a week to do something fun together. I want to do the same thing, but I'm not sure how to find an activity everyone will enjoy.*

**A.** Playing board games is a great tradition because all ages can participate. If you start while your children are young and continue the ritual, you'll have a good way to stay close to your kids as they grow up. Board games also help with skills like math and logic and teach kids to follow directions.

Pick a night when everyone is usually home, and take turns choosing games to play. You can add rules to make games more competitive for everyone. For instance, maybe an adult can jump only one checker per turn.

You can also bring new life to old games. Ask your child to write silly instructions on index cards (run around the table, recite the alphabet backward). When players land on certain spaces, they draw a card and follow the directions to earn an extra turn.♥



## PARENT TO PARENT

### Cool summer snacks

It's hard to get my kids to eat right during the summer. They like to snack a lot, and sometimes they complain that it's just too hot to eat.

My neighbor had some good advice. She said her kids are more willing to eat five small meals than three big ones when it's hot outside. She often puts out a snack tray in the afternoon with pickup foods like apple

slices, celery with peanut butter, or sandwich triangles. Then, for lunch and dinner, she serves light meals like grilled chicken, cold potato soup, or even cereal with fruit. For treats, she gets fruit juice pops.

I'm going to try my neighbor's plan this summer. It sounds like I'll spend less time in the kitchen—and I hope my kids will eat healthier food.♥



## OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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