



***My Child's  
Favorite Teacher  
Is Me!***

*Getting the most out of home learning for  
pre-school, elementary, middle,  
secondary, and special education*

**Mary Hughes-Tutass, Ed.D.  
and  
Jennifer M. Tutass, M.A. Ed**

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This is a companion book for

*Ten Minutes of Information*

***Teacher Say and Do***

Written by Mary Hughes-Tutass, Ed.D.

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pre-school, elementary, middle,  
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Mary Hughes-Tutass, Ed.D.  
Jennifer Tutass, M.A.

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*Dedicated to all those willing to follow  
Two Minutes of Information  
to make positive changes.*

*Dear Parent,*

*Congratulations! You are active in your child's learning and that's the number one factor in his academic success.*

*Who is your child's favorite teacher? Make it you! Read two minutes of information from My Child's Favorite Teacher is Me!*

*You'll encourage cooperation and motivation by knowing what to say or do. You'll maximize your child's learning while you build good parent-child relations.*

*Go ahead. Skip randomly through these pages. Find what works best. Then, feel free to adjust any of the activities to match your child's skills or maturity level. Don't have the materials? Use what you do have.*

*Want more ideas? Subscribe at **TeacherTMI.com**. You'll get Two Minutes of Information sent to your email regularly. TMI supports student learning, one teacher at a time! Parents are always teachers!*

*Happy Learning!  
Mary and Jennifer*

## ***Contents***

### ***Part One: Getting Your Mind Set***

Parents are always Teachers, too!	10
Parents, Teachers, Child, Students	14
Making a positive emotional connection	19
First impressions shall rule	21
The Five Senses: Information Detectives	23
M&Ms Motivate Learning	26
A Teacher's Inner Conflicts and Contradictions	29
Students who say, "I can't" and "I won't"	36
Each human has multiple intelligences	39
Readiness and maturity	40
Repetition, repeat, and re-do	41
Tell your child what to do	42
The power of fewer words	43
Always say, "No..."	44
Choice and the illusion	45
Most of the time	46
What do you think about this?	47



## ***Contents***

### ***Part Two: Everyday Learning Activities***

Reading Comprehension	53
Writing	55
Language Arts	57
Listening	59
Speaking	61
Interpretation and Expression	63
Math Concepts and Computation	65
History	67
Social Science	69
General Science	71
Biology	73
Chemistry	75
Physics	77
Physical Education	79
Music	81
Art	83
Foreign Language	85
<i>Credit Card</i>	<i>88</i>
<i>Criteria for a good learning session</i>	<i>89</i>
<i>About the Authors</i>	<i>90</i>

**Part One:**  
**Getting Your Mind Set**

## **Parents are always Teachers, too!**

As a parent, you are always the teacher. When you are the teacher, you are also the student. When you are the student, you are also the teacher.

A teacher chooses content order, content depth, techniques, and strategies because of who her students are. Students respond to their teacher's plan whether or not the plan was effective. That is, the student constantly teaches the teacher how to teach. The student behavior is the feedback to the teacher about the effectiveness of her techniques and strategies. If the student turns off, the technique, strategy, or content was not appropriate and therefore, not effective. If the student lights up, the technique, strategy, or content was appropriate and therefore, effective. The teacher learns.

The student-teacher relationship is two-way no matter what. Within a series of teaching-learning activities, both the teacher and the student become more familiar with each other. As the partnership becomes familiar, the learning increases. The teacher becomes more effective in choosing methods, and the student becomes more efficient with learning.

As a parent or guardian, you have the advantage of already having a relationship with your child-student. You already know what topics inspire cooperation or which inspire sabotage of a learning activity.

As a parent or guardian, you have the disadvantage of already having a relationship with your child-student. You already know what topics inspire cooperation or inspire sabotage of a learning activity.

Don't worry. This book has plenty of ideas for you to become your own child's favorite teacher. Whether you use TMI or your own ideas, you can become your own favorite teacher.

Think of a favorite teacher you have had. Chances are that the teacher provided lessons in a manner of your liking and you experienced positive emotions in the learning process. You experienced pleasure or achievement or satisfaction or flattery or social acceptance. In any case, you had a positive experience and were willing and wanting to return for more. You learned more.

Some of that learning was planned and with purpose. Some of that learning was an unintentional byproduct. Some of it was implicit, some explicit.

*My Favorite Teacher is Me!* Is a guide for your intuition and shows you how to teach your own children with planned, purposeful, and productive learning activities. Everything in this guide is the underpinning of learning. Focus on experiences, positivity, and self-esteem.

Experiences provide the foundation of understanding for new concepts and facts. Positivity is the affirmation of whatever is appropriate, desired, or within the target goals. Experiences with positive growth assures a healthy self-esteem.

Positivity is progress, no matter how small the increment. It is success, no matter how short the duration. It is the feeling good about the process no matter how the product turns out. It is the approximation of your overall goals.

Self-esteem is an essential component of happy and healthy living. Self-esteem is the “steam energy” that propels us forward. Self-esteem is essential to the child and to the parent individually and can be a unifying anchor when acting as partners.

Self-esteem has five components worth developing: sense of self, sense of worth, sense of belonging, sense of power, and sense of safety.

A deficit or falsification of any of these self-esteem components can reduce or block personal progress. Therefore, self-esteem is the path you choose when you want to get your child to choose wisely in life and when you want to keep a loving parent-child relationship.

### **Teacher Homework**

Take a picture with you and your student working together. Treasure this.

## Parents, Guardians, Teachers, and Child, Students, Learners...

The standards of English restrict our intention for this guide to be easily read and understood. The rules of grammar are cumbersome and hinder our effort to be universal and inclusive when addressing learning as a human condition.

So, to avoid awkward writing and to eliminate any confusion in reading, at times, this **guide for parents for happy home learning** will use the following nouns and pronouns.

We trust that the reader will accept these assigned role definitions to enable the clarity of content and not experience them as an attempt to stereotype or to undervalue any teacher or any student or any human being.

In addition, we defined the roles in the learning partnership. Recognizing your role can guide your choice of words and activity.

A *Professional Teacher* (she, her) is a formally trained professional whose responsibility lies within the academic or intellectual development of students. Her duties are governed by the expectations of the state and by the negotiations of her local union. She is obliged to renew her knowledge throughout her career. She chooses teaching

voluntarily but must represent the philosophy, politics, and pedagogy of her institution, not her own. Her title and responsibilities are specified and constant. The intent of her professional role is to develop students who will contribute to society. The teacher may go by other titles: Mr., Miss, Ms., Mrs., Professor, Doctor, Coach, Master, etc. (as determined by the institution of hire).

A *Teacher* (she, her) is any individual who enables any human being to learn. Her contributions to the learning process might be intentional or non-intentional but she initiates or inspires the learning. There are no contracts, rules, or mandates in the organic teacher. She might be trained or not, but she imposes learning in any of the human realms: intellect realm; spirit and psychological realm; physical being; and different levels of the social realm. She just teaches. She can go by other titles or no title: coach, master, mentor, guide, tutor, minister, guru, friend, etc. Her responsibilities and her role are organic.

A *Parent* (she, her) is the adult in charge of the long-range development of her child. She is on duty 24/7 and has the responsibility to nurture her child's mind, body, spirit/psyche, and social components



until the child becomes an autonomous adult. The typical parent has no formal training about nurturing others. The target realm of child development is ever changing while she, herself, is changing. She may parent in partnership with others or she may parent independently. She may or may not have planned for parenthood, but the role does not change once she has accepted the role. A parent can go by other titles: mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, aunt, uncle, big sister, big brother, guardian, step-mom, step-dad, or caring other.

*A Child* (he, him) is a human being, born to this world without consent, without knowledge, without skills, and without concepts. At first, a child is all about potential. He is an empty slate. A child grows and learns from what he lives. A child is always learning how he is valued or worthy; how he belongs and has power; and if he is safe or vulnerable. All of his experiences lead to learning whether the learning is incidental, by chance or whether the learning is intentional and planned. A child learns how to be an autonomous adult year-by-year and experience-by-experience. His learning is highly organic. A child can also go by other titles: son, daughter, sibling, neighbor, kid, dependent, family, extended family, etc.

*A Student* (he, him) is a child targeted for learning. A child becomes a student by self-nomination or by recruitment or by assignment, or by a mandate of law. A student learns specific knowledge, skills, or concepts under the tutelage of a designated teacher. The lessons of student learning intentionally encourage the development of a contributing member of society. A student is still a child, learning from his environmental influences and from every human encounter. A student can also go by other titles: tutee, learner, teammate, classmate, sibling, group member, apprentice, etc.

With these definitions of roles in place, please recognize that we change roles constantly throughout the day. When we are clear about which role we are in, we maximize the opportunity for learning.

Anecdote: One year when I was teaching kindergarten, my daughter's school had a holiday. Jennifer was also in kindergarten and the school principal gave permission for her to attend my class for the day. Everything went fine. That night, at our dinner table, my husband asked our daughter how her day at mommy's school was. She replied that Mrs. Tutass taught about vowels and then she and Mommy went to lunch. Hearing this, I was perplexed and amused.

She had differentiated my personas. For her that day I had been her teacher and then, mother.

I am grateful for having had that experience. I am grateful for my daughter having said what she said. I was the learner. Although I might have known instinctively before, but the role of parent and the role of teacher are similar and simultaneously different.

Each role requires owning the role. When I mother, I nurture a whole child. When I teach, I foster contributing members of society by promoting knowledge, skills, and concepts. Yes, I teach students, but I am keenly aware that these students are still children.

I affirm the behaviors that are desired. I minimize the attention and energy given to behaviors that are not desired. I encourage positive self-esteem and a healthy self-concept in motivating students to learn.

### **Teacher Homework**

Search the Internet for a poem written by an insightful teacher. Read it. Reflect on your own life. Consider how you are influencing the learning and the development of your student, your child.

## **Making a positive emotional connection...**

Teachers and Parents have more success getting a child to participate in learning when we make a positive emotional connection to the learning.

Home is the place we live and where we love. Home is the primary place for learning. As we don the role of teacher, we must be intentional with the content of what we teach and with the methods we use. We must choose wisely so that we can resume our roles as parents at any time.

We must be intentional and less incidental about our child's learning. We can organize and be more formal where we are otherwise haphazard and casual. We are teachers of students when, at the same time, we are the parent to our child. We can keep the experience positive while in either role.

A positive experience does not always mean a happy experience or a pleasurable experience. We have many more positive emotions and experiences that can encourage a child to be a willing participant or student:

Satisfaction, achievement, pride, hope, belonging, self-worth, contribution, pleasure, awe, reciprocation, growth, understanding, affirmation, purpose, acknowledgement,

curiosity, social acceptance, love, curiosity, growth, personal expression, completion, progress, recognition, gratitude, relief, anticipation, serenity, amusement, inspiration, inspiration, and... other.

### **Teacher Homework**

Consider how you plan for learning.

1. What can you integrate into a session so that learning is a positive experience for your **student**?
2. What activities need modification so you trigger cooperation from your **student**?
3. What activities would cause a rift between you and your **child**?

## **First impressions shall rule...**

A child who does not have a positive experience at the onset of learning will resist at the next opportunity. However, if the first experience is positive, the child will look forward to the next activity or to a repeat.

Think of a first time experience with ice cream. Would a student want that experience again? Was it positive or negative? Did the ice cream melt all over and the child got yelled at for making a mess?

The way an adult defines the moment is also important. Was the ice cream a mess? Funny? Expensive? Refreshing?

Once a child becomes a willing student, he will be forgiving at the first imperfect experience. Take care to make the first few learning experiences positive.

Take note that you do not have to offer a free-for all or a bribe. Just connect the experience in a positive way.

In the traditional classroom, the wise professional teacher plans a fun, but purposeful activity for the first day of class. She affirms appropriate behaviors with privilege and extinguishes inappropriate behaviors by ignoring them.

The activity is universally liked. The finished product is useful for future class

sessions. Possibility: Students paint signs of their own name. The signs will be used for grouping the display of student work next week.

At home, a student tracks how many minutes of cooperative learning occur during a learning period and has that many credits to exchange for minutes on the computer or watching T.V. or other choice activity.

At home or in a traditional class, a student uses the vocabulary to write a song and then, records the song.

Ultimately, effective teachers are sure to allow students to express themselves and to feel that they have a say in their world. Keep in mind that to do so, children might need guidelines on how to do so respectfully. Five senses are five detectives.

## **The Five Senses: Information Detectives...**

Our brains are forever collecting and organizing information. Sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell are the five senses that act as the brain's detectives. The five senses collect and interpret and file information received from the environment and experiences.

Our student's five senses developed in utero, during infancy, and continue to develop throughout life. However, early practice using any one of the senses will develop into a child's preference of using that sense. For example, an infant who watches the movement of an overhead mobile, trains his eyes while tracking the movement. Chances are that this infant will grow to be a visual learner. A child who falls asleep to singing, might become stronger in audial learning.

In a traditional classroom, perhaps the first exemplified infant will prefer to read a story and the second infant will perhaps want to hear the story read aloud. Of course, this is an example only, not a guaranteed preference. Other senses and factors are involved.

A student finds comfort in the familiar, but he finds satisfaction in conquering or



learning in new territory. An effective teacher maximizes learning when presenting new knowledge, a new skill, or new concepts using her student's preferred sense. Likewise, she uses a non-dominant sense to review and extend learning. Ultimately, her student will experience the learning process via several of the five senses. This provides the brain with a deeper and broader understanding of what is learned. There are a variety of sensory-memory paths that can retrieve the target information. In addition, providing her student with repetition and practice, she makes those retrieval paths clear of interference.

Imagine a big field. You walk across it. Your feet get tangled with all the weeds and grasses. Then you walk back and forth on the same path. Soon you will have a path without weeds or overgrowth that tangled your feet. This is the dynamic of the brain experience. New information tangles with existing information. With practice, the synapses create easy remembering or at-will retrieval of the information.

If the new information is not utilized or not practiced, there is a chance that the information remains lost in a field full of other information; there is no path made.

## **Teacher Homework**

Let's remember to add the power of positive emotional experience to the training of the senses:

Describe a great date using the five senses. Where did you go? What did you eat? What could you smell? What did you see? What did you feel? What did you hear? Chances are that several of your senses provided a positive emotional response during your date. That's what made it a great date. Compare the sensory experience of your great date to one that was not so great.

## **M&Ms Motivate Learning...**

No. Not the candy. M&Ms. refer to multiple methods, multiple modalities, and the multiple senses. Keep to the same learning objective and use a variety of methods, modalities, and multiple senses to increase a student's positive emotional response. Add a variety of experiences for curiosity, novelty, and perspective—all positive emotions.

Use multiple senses increases learning and the retention of material. During learning, material that is introduced via a listening activity can be explored further in a writing activity or via verbal discussion.

Skills level and maturity are the guide to how long the material is presented in each sense. A toddler listening to a story might not last as long as a nine-year-old or a thirteen-year-old child. On the other hand, if a toddler is accustomed to listening to stories on a regular basis, he will engage longer in the listening session compared to the nine year old who does not have as much practice at listening for any prolonged time.

The teacher manipulates the length of time for an activity to optimize cooperative learning.

Example: A student hears the definitions of new vocabulary. Then, he shares sentences aloud to show he understands the meanings. Then he reads a prescribed article that contains those words. Later he takes a quiz. He readily remembers the word meanings.

Using multiple methods is also a motivation strategy. Sometimes a teacher will ask for memorization. Other times it's repetition. There could also be fill-in-the-blank, tell-more writing, or acting it out.

A student can be active or passive. He can be creative or intellectual. He can be formal or informal. He can create a song or a dramatization. He can make a poster or write a report. The teacher chooses the most appropriate method for the material, the student, and the time.

The teacher also chooses the method of instruction. Will it be a PowerPoint? A projection? A chalkboard? A whiteboard? A CD? A film? A website? A recording? Pen and paper?

Variety is helpful, but can also confuse. The wise teacher will use one particular method, mode, or sense to engage students and to gain momentum in learning. She will shift and change method, mode, or sense before satiation sets in and after

understanding is in place. She knows that a student's cooperation and willingness fades in a lesson if the activity becomes too rote, too familiar, or too easy. She keeps the learning connected to a positive emotional experience by modifying her plan and staying to her objectives.

Routine offers confidence to a student. He can anticipate what comes next. Routine offers clarity of sequence in the lesson. Routine guarantees a beginning, a learning segment, and a closure to each lesson. Routine encourages the student to participate willingly.

The effective teacher keeps a schedule using a variety of modes, methods, and senses. She keeps the momentum of learning.

## **A Teacher's Inner Conflicts and Contradictions...**

Most teachers experience inner conflicts. A teacher is the intellectual guide for her student, yet she nurtures his self-concept and self-esteem. Finding clarity about her ultimate goal, a teacher knows what to say and do.

### *Intention vs. Intuition*

A teacher has a purposeful role in the life of a child. She might be tempted to go about the day using intuition—after all, she was once a child and remembers what that was like. Then again, she is responsible for the learning of her student—after all, she is now the adult and in charge.

The effective teacher sets criteria so that she knows when to follow her intuition or when to act with intent.

Her sense of purpose creates a lesson plan. What is the goal? What is the content? How long to we have?

Her intuition guides the responses to that plan. What will motivate? What mode is effective? How long should this take?

When building a teacher-student relationship, the purpose must be clear. Is

she teaching content, or is she building self-esteem? Why are they together?

The answers prescribe the balance of intuition vs. intention.

### *Product vs. Process*

Sometimes the learning lesson is all about the product, but sometimes it is about the process. The process trains a student in how to learn. The product demonstrates what a student learned.

For example, a teacher assigns an essay. The purpose of the writing might be to practice getting thoughts onto paper. The process counts. Alternatively, the essay might be judged for its components: clarity, organization, word choice, etc. The product counts.

A teacher can declare the purpose and the criteria of the assignment when it is given to provide clarity of purpose.

Ultimately, the product is what learning is about. However, the process of learning is equally important or we would never get to the product. Knowing the purpose of the activity will guide a teacher to know what to say and to do that encourages, affirms, and advances her student's learning. She keeps it clear to him what he must do to gain success.

### *Expectation vs. Explanation*

Are these the behavioral expectations you have for your child? Behave! Clean up! Pay attention! Each of these terms is abstract and difficult for your child to understand. These short commands are adult terms and have adult meaning. Explaining can get you closer to the results you want.

Specific action words and describing words guide a student in what to do. Clarify by telling him exactly what to say or do.

Keep your hands to yourself and remember to say, "Thank you."

Please put supplies back where they belong. Sweep the floor. Wash the dishes.

Look and listen to the speaker. Add what you are hearing to what you already know.

Once a student has the explanation of behavioral expectations, he can understand the shorter commands.

In the learning situation, the word, "study" has little meaning. However, the action words, *memorize*, *explain*, and *list* provide meaningful instruction. These words tell exactly what to do. It guides the process of learning.

If the teacher describes what is expected in good work and in better work, her student has the criteria for a successful



learning product that goes along with the process.

### *Praise vs. Encouragement*

When a student is in the process of learning, encouragement is important to acknowledge effort, achievement, and personal growth. However, premature praise or praise of the product can stifle further progress.

If someone tells a student that his painting is “the best,” what does that say to future attempts? Can he do the “best” again? If he is already the “best,” what more is there for him to do? What does his being “best” do to his relationships with classmates and siblings?

The student hooked on praise for products often turns into the bossy, needy child. The overly praised child wants to be the best, the first, always. If they are not the best, they might get frustrated, learn to whine, and pester others for accolades. Peers often do not want “the best” as a partner. Finally, students who get hooked on “the best,” can become insecure about taking initiative for fear that praise is not possible.

If the learning activity is part of the process of the learning, encouragement is more appropriate than praise. Instead of

declaring that the painting is the “best,” the wise teacher addresses the process that produced the final project. “I like the colors you chose. They make me feel happy.” “The details make it look real.” “Hey, you filled the entire page!”

In these comments about the painting process, the teacher has offered authentic human response and criteria that can be repeated. Her student knows what he did and what he can do to have success. He can also figure out what to change for improvement. He can retrace his steps toward the product. He can file the options for further endeavors.

### *Discipline vs. Punishment*

Discipline comes from the word *disciple*, which means *to follow*. A teacher disciplines her student by providing a path, a guide, or a rule to follow. She leads the way, providing a model, instructions, and encouragement.

Punishment is used to punify. Punify means *to make small*. Punishment is a penalty, reprimand, or penance given for an intentional wrongdoing or to prevent immediate harm. Punishment intends to readjust the power level of the child to a situational appropriateness.

Adults define what is appropriate and inappropriate in society. Appropriateness is defined by many factors: environment, time in history, culture, audience, age, gender, or whatever critical factors make up the social culture. Teachers apply discipline or punishment in accordance with the adult defined expectations of student behavior.

Generally speaking, most misbehavior comes from a student's internal discomfort. He could feel inadequate, unworthy, or awkward. His effective teacher assumes that he wants to please and to do well. So, she watches and listens for clues to determine the cause of his inappropriate behavior. She is careful to redirect behaviors rather than taking punitive action. She reserves punitive action for behaviors with mal intent.

Meanwhile, the effective teacher affirms as many of her student's appropriate behaviors to build his confidence and comfort in the learning process.

In the case of intentional wrongdoing or intentional harm the effective teacher responds as immediately as possible. She states the desired behavior and applies a fitting punishment. The punishment might include requiring the student to remedy the harm caused, a reduction in privilege, or an added chore. She adds discipline to the

consequences. She asks him to reflect on the expectations and asks for a commitment to act in accordance with the expectations.

Later, the wise teacher will acknowledge her student's efforts to be appropriate. She will affirm his good decision-making and efforts. She will instruct him in alternative ways to relieve his discomforts and insecurities.

### **Teacher Homework**

List appropriate behaviors that you will affirm. What words will you say?

List inappropriate behaviors that you will discourage, ignore, and redirect. What words will you use?

## **Students who say, “I can’t” and “I won’t...”**

Students want to achieve and they want to please. Their level of willingness to participate and perform is dependent upon prior learning experiences.

A student who has felt safe to take risks is more likely to participate willingly in the learning experience. A student who has been ridiculed or shamed for failure will not be so willing.

Answering questions and trying a new skill is a risk. Saying what you are thinking is a risk. Making your own cereal is a risk. Any new experience puts the child up for judgment.

The student who says, “I can’t do math” has suffered the judgment of others. He can learn to like and do well at math with some strategic guidance.

A wise teacher will expose him to experiences of successful, intuitive math. He can make change at a store ( $x - y$ ). He can keep score in a basketball game ( $2x + y$ ). He can play Pick-up-sticks  $[(3x + 10y + 6w + 4z)]$ . He can share a pack of M&Ms ( $42/2$ ). He can fold origami characters. He can play tangrams and put together jigsaw puzzles.

Similarly, a student can become a good writer by putting his natural speech

onto paper. Most human beings speak in full, complete, descriptive sentences, paragraphs, and essays. Just tell your five-year-old or your teenager that he cannot go to the movies with friends. He'll respond with an organized thesis. He'll tell you the main idea (I want to go.). Then he'll give you several reasons why he should be allowed to go (body). Finally, he'll make a big plea for understanding (conclusion). Voila! Sensible essay.

A student who fears any subject needs to experience smaller steps of success within the subject. He also needs to access his natural intelligence to build belief and confidence that he can have success. His wise teacher will expose his abilities explicitly and repeatedly.

The "I won't" student might be saying, "I won't be humiliated again by letting people see that I am not as good as they want me to be." His wise teacher will find ways to redefine success. Maybe running one lap is a sign that he is on his way to the success others expect of him. Maybe singing one song with an audience is what gets him to believe that others appreciate his voice.

At the other end of the spectrum is a student who fears that success in any subject will change his relationships with others. It

might not be “cool” to be successful; he risks his sense of belonging. So, he reduces and controls his own success, doesn’t perform to his best. The wise teacher has to show how students who have different skills and ability still fit in as a valuable part of a team. Each team needs different talents.

### **Teacher Homework**

List your own talents and intelligences. When do you access and use them? When do you minimize them or hide them? Can you figure out why you do that? Does that serve you well?

## **Each human has multiple intelligences...**

Psychologist, Howard Gardner names eight types of intelligence. Everyone has all of these. Some areas are stronger than others.

- Logical-mathematical intelligence
- Linguistic intelligence
- Spatial Intelligence
- Musical Intelligence
- Bodily-kinesthetic Intelligence
- Intrapersonal Intelligence
- Interpersonal Intelligence
- Naturalistic intelligence

Identify your intelligences. You learn best via that intelligence. Next, identify your child's intelligences. Then, lead with the student's strength to make learning flow more easily. Once learning takes hold, you can switch to another intelligence to enrich the learning.

**Teacher Homework:** Do you switch to your style of intelligence when learning?



## **Readiness and maturity...**

Readiness and maturity are not the same thing. The effective teacher recognizes the difference, then plans and acts accordingly.

Children mature at their own pace. Maturity is a natural process of satiating one stage of human development and moving into the next stage. Maturity cannot be taught. We must wait for maturity.

Readiness can be accelerated with repetition and multiple and varied sensory experiences...if the child is mature enough.

Consider the child who is learning to read. Does he understand that the scribbly ink is a communicative code? Are his eye muscles developed and strong enough to track words? Does he have the physical stamina and the intellectual attention span for a learning task? Can he share? Can he ask questions?

An effective teacher paces each learning experience within maturity level of her student. She guides him steadily forward.

## **Repetition, repeat, and re-do...**

There is nothing wrong with repetition. Repetition is essential for remembering knowledge, for understanding depth of concepts, and the mastering of skills.

The first exposure to material makes a student generally aware. A repeated opportunity brings familiarity. With further repetition there is orientation to the finer details. The more repetition there is, the more insight into concepts, skills, and knowledge there can be. Then, after learning takes hold, your student can use what was learned. He now owns the knowledge, skill, or concept.

How well do you know the way to work? At first, the road was unfamiliar, so you followed directions. Every turn was intentional. With repetition, getting to work is so familiar; you have an intuition about traffic and road conditions and use what you know to your advantage.

No, there is nothing wrong with repetition.

## **Tell your child what to do...**

Telling your student what *to do* instead of *what not to do* gets him to do more of what you want him to do.

“Put your math paper into your folder” is more effective than, “Do not throw out your paper!”

A negative command requires your student to eliminate images that are already emerging in his brain. He also has to come up with what he is supposed to do or what he is allowed to do. So, please, tell him *what to do*.

Any negation of a command is a mature and sophisticated skill. The effective teacher knows this and takes one more step. She adds exact descriptive words to her commands. “Don’t leave a mess” converts to, “Please put the markers back into the box as soon as your are done.”

The teacher’s words are insistent and instructional. Her student knows exactly what he is supposed to do. He finds comfort in knowing what to do.

## **The power of fewer words...**

When giving a command to her student a teacher is clear about the desired behavior. Each time she finds a need to repeat her command, she shortens the command.

“Now, go brush your teeth so that they do not rot and get ugly.”

She shortens the command, “You need to brush your teeth.” Then again shortens the command, “Go brush your teeth!” Then, “Brush!” Finally, she simply points in the direction of the bathroom and makes no visual or verbal engagement.

The more words in her command, the more room for him to negotiate.

Words like “now,” “rot,” and “ugly” are extreme and not convincing. “Ah, if I miss one brushing, it won’t hurt.” “Who cares if my teeth get ugly?” “I can do it later.”

Instead of opening herself to negotiation, the wise teacher reduces her *apparent* engagement reducing the command to a simple hand gesture.

## **Always say, “No...”**

At least during a defined learning activity, always say, “No.” Saying “no” saves a lot of time, discussion, and flack. The effective teacher knows that her student is an expert at getting off task. She keeps him on task by accommodating his curiosity and creativity within the lesson. She is not mean. She maximizes learning time.

Student: May I sharpen my pencil”

Teacher: No. Do that at break.

Student: May I sit on the floor?

Teacher: No. That won’t help learning.

Student: May I take this call?

Teacher: No. That’s off task.

Remember that she reduces the command to a simple, “No,” if a repeat is necessary.

## **Teacher Homework**

Reread the Student-Teacher dialogue. What activities can a teacher ask the student to take care of before a learning session starts?

## **Choice and the illusion...**

Choice is power. A student feels power when he has choice. Choice points his energy in a direction. Choice allows him to take initiative toward the required activity.

Meanwhile, the student senses that his teacher trusts him. He knows that she believes he is able. She gave him power. A cooperative effort develops between them rather than a tug of war.

A wise teacher offers choice when it does not compromise the learning objective. Choice allows her student to lead with his strength: "Would you like to do the writing or the drawing first?"

This choice requires two activities: writing and drawing. However, the student initiates the process within his ability and comfort zone, therefore making him more willing to get it done. His teacher takes note about his preferences.

Ultimately, the choice given was an illusion of choice. The student gets his way; the teacher gets her way.

## **Most of the time...**

No one is perfect. Certainly, the most effective teacher and her most dedicated student are not perfect. Therefore, let's declare the "Most of the time..." Rule.

The effective teacher knows that plans are just plans. Plans are not predictions nor are they guarantees. Life happens.

If your student does what he can do...most of the time... he is ahead of those who aren't doing. That's a positive.

If you do what you can do...most of the time... you are ahead of those who aren't doing. That's a positive.

When we count the positive, the positive grows.

Count how many positive things you say or do. Compare today to yesterday and this morning to now. Are you progressively increasing your positivity?

We start by doing a good job. Then we get better. Soon, we are at our best. When we focus on progress, more progress happens. Progress grows from the energy we give it.

## **What do you think?**

The task of a parent is to turn their child into an autonomous adult. The task of a teacher is to turn her student into a contributing member of society.

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**Part Two**  
**Everyday Learning Opportunities**

## **Fortify the Main Objectives...**

The main learning objectives occur in everyday opportunities. These activities can make a positive emotional connection between your child and his learning. With a positive experience, your child learns more.

- Reading Comprehension
- Writing
- Language Arts
- Listening
- Speaking
- Interpretation and Expression
- Math Concepts and Computation
- History
- Social Science
- General Science
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Physical Education
- Music
- Art
- Foreign Language

## **Thoughts about Scheduling Activities...**

The activities in the upcoming pages are intentionally mixed. Some activities are independent. Some require a partner. Some activities are high energy. Others are quiet activities. Some require manipulation of materials. Some require observation. Some are abstract and some are ready experiences of daily life.

Most activities can be adjusted to any age or ability level. You can shorten the actual content or you can cut an activity into shorter steps. You can repeat these as often as you'd like. You can also extend the learning by flipping roles and allowing the student to teach you.

As the teacher, you decide on what fits your daily routine. You set the time, place, and attitude of the activities.

All materials that are required are usual household items, but all activities can be modified to what you have on hand.

When your student is learning facts, publishing a final writing, or computing math equations, the process is very important. Repetition of the process makes him more efficient at using standards and computing accurately.

Evaluations and grades express where in the learning process a student is. That is how teachers know what to teach next and what to review. It helps her to reflect on what she did or didn't do that made a difference.

Remember that a positive emotional experience attached to learning encourages more learning, eases the effort, and keeps a happy home.

In the next pages, we have declared a simplified purpose for learning each subject and listed the main learning objectives. Then, we pointed out where this knowledge, skill, or concept is found in everyday opportunities. Happy learning!

## Reading Comprehension...

The purpose of reading the written word is to comprehend an author's message. To do so, learn to break the written code using word meanings, word inferences, and context.

### *Main objectives...*

- Who, What, When, Where, Why, How
- Connect the Beginning, Middle, End
- Describe Characters, Setting, Plot, Problem, Resolve, End, Purpose
- Interpret vocabulary in context
- Recognize denotations and connotations
- Use punctuation to promote understanding
- Understand how grammar strengthens communication
- Standard vs. Non-standard English

### *Everyday opportunities...*

- TV commercials
- News broadcasts
- Online media
- Video
- Literature
- Conversations

## **Reading Activities...**

### **1. BOOK REPORT CONTRACT**

Modify for age, ability, and availability of materials. Change themes regularly. Reading in any language is powerful.

**Historic Novel.** Design a decorative timeline of historic events from the story. Illustrate.

**Read-Aloud.** Reread three children's books until you can read smoothly, dramatically, and with confidence. Record one book.

**Your choice of story.** Create an action portrait showing the main character. Write a character description under the portrait.

**Teach the teacher.** Read an informational book. Write a three-page report with illustrations so that the teacher can learn.

**Joke book or a riddle book.** Make up three riddles about what you have been learning.

**2. Read a map.**

**3. Read a recipe.**

**4. Read facial cues.**

## Writing...

The purpose of learning to write is to convey a message or an experience to another person. Writing also conveys ideas from one time in history to another.

### *Main objectives...*

- Who What When Where Why How
- Express ideas clearly standard English
- Relate details sensibly
- Order events or arguments strategically
- Create details in the context
- Use descriptive words
- Use active verbs
- Express yourself clearly

### *Everyday opportunities...*

- Post cards and letters
- Email and blogs
- Journals and diaries
- Shopping lists
- Creative writing



## Writing Activity...

**1. Recall a story** you already know or choose a T.V. show you just saw. Draw a comic strip with five frames to retell the important parts of the story. Illustrate with details of the setting. Use colors to convey the mood.

**2. Play with play dough** and building blocks and/or fold origami or do some braiding to increase dexterity and hand muscles.

**3. Use adjectives and details** to make writing vivid. Recreate this activity. Just change the vocabulary.

<p>Draw a <i>can of soda, spaghetti, a chair, a lamp, a carpet and a fork.</i></p>	<p>Fill in these blanks with adjectives. Then, in the box below, draw everything you wrote.</p> <p>a _____ <i>flower,</i> a _____ <i>house,</i> a _____ <i>sun,</i> _____ <i>trees,</i> a _____ <i>butterfly,</i> a _____ <i>car</i></p>
<p>What words describe what you drew?</p> <p>The can of soda? The spaghetti? The chair? The lamp? The carpet? The fork?</p>	<p>Draw here:</p>

## **Language Arts...**

The purpose of Language Arts is to agree on what words mean and how word order and punctuation modify the meaning of the words. Language rules clarify meaning in communication.

### *Main objectives...*

- Understand the parts of speech
- Identify different types of sentences
- Use standard punctuation
- Learn the origin of words
- Recognize variances in syntax
- Expand personal vocabulary

### *Everyday opportunities...*

- Pen pals
- Letter writing
- Using a dictionary or thesaurus
- Completing applications
- Free choice reading

## Language Art Activity...

Carefully **cut** on the lines. Place face down.

**Pick** one at a time to edit any paragraph you already wrote. **OR** Use these cards as cues to start a new description.

Add two adjectives.	Add two adverbs.
Add three prepositional phrases.	Add a descriptive comparison.
Exchange a weak noun for a specific, descriptive, vivid noun.	Exchange a passive verb for an active, descriptive, vivid verb.
Add an exclamation.	Make a compound sentence using a conjunction.

## **Listening...**

Listening skills are important for human communication, social empathy, and personal safety. Listening requires an attentive body position, eye contact, and a mindful effort to make sense of the sounds we hear.

### *Main objectives....*

- Differentiate vowel sounds
- Order and sequence sounds
- Identify musical notes
- Recognize different voices
- Interact in conversation
- Understand information from lectures

### *Everyday opportunities...*

- Audio books
- Neighborhood noises
- Understanding song lyrics
- Dialogue
- Pod casts and online videos

## **Listening Activities...**

### **1. Play the song game, "Button, Button".**

One person in the room secretly hides a button in their hand while another person leaves the room. Upon returning to the room, the person re-entering keeps his back to the others. He sings or uses a disguised voice saying, "Button? Button? Who has the button?" The person with the button replies, "I do; I do. I have the button." The person with his back to the group guesses who has the button.

**2. Listen to a recording** of a folk song or love song that tells a story. Repeat the song to write the lyrics and to understand the story. Then, find out the inspiration for the song. Was it history? Was it love?

**3. Exchange clap rhythms.** One person makes up a rhythm by clapping hands, slapping thigh, snapping fingers, and stomping his feet. The other person listens to and copies the series. Take turns.

**4. Expand on the game, Simon Says.** Simon gives three commands at a time to increase retention of order and sequence.

## Speaking...

The reason we learn methods of speaking is to share thoughts, opinions, and knowledge. With practice, we can organize and stay on topic with what we want to convey.

### *Main objectives...*

- Use tone, attitude, and volume control
- Share thoughts, ideas, and opinions
- Convert thoughts to voice
- Develop facial, oral, and lingual muscles
- Communicate

### *Everyday opportunities...*

- Sing
- Read aloud
- Give directions
- Listen to the speech patterns of others
- Theatrical performance

## Speaking Activities...

**1. Write a commercial** about a book you read or a product you used. Then, record the commercial. **Bonus:** Write why you would NOT recommend the book or product.

**2. Explain to a family member** why you should be allowed to go to the movies today. Persuade them with your best arguments.

**3. Debate out loud** about whether you should have hot fudge for breakfast.

**4. Write a conversation** between you and a dog. Read it aloud using a different voice for you and for the dog. **Bonus:** Spend the day speaking in the voice of a coach or soldier.

**5. Change the words** to a song you already know. **Bonus:** Learn a song in a different language.

**6. Make up a skit** to act out for others.

**7. Read the cooking directions** out loud for whomever is cooking.

**8. Talk faster or slower** than usual all day long.

## **Interpretative and Expressive Skills...**

Colors, texture, and line formation contribute to meaning. Understanding their meaning allows us to understand what others convey, and it allows us to convey our thoughts, feeling, and emotions more clearly.

### *Main objectives...*

- Use font style to express tone
- Use font proportion for emphasis
- Use bold type to identify key words
- Use color to promote mood
- Develop overall presentation
- Format to effectively convey message

### *Everyday opportunities...*

- Make posters and signs
- Note the features of artwork
- Press designs onto cookies or pies
- Choose a coordinating outfit
- Sort and classify a junk drawer



## **Interpretive and expressive activities...**

**1. Make an invitation** to a family event. Be sure that the size and color of the font are clear and that the colors you choose represent the mood of the event. Add coordinating illustrations or images.

**2. Draw a comic strip** using thought bubbles or speech balloons. Instead of coloring the characters, use texture lines, squiggles, and dots. Emphasize words with bold color, size, and punctuation. Bonus: Read a color comic strip to find the method used to color.

**3. Prepare a plate** of vegetable snacks. Arrange decoratively.

**4. Organize the clothes** in your closet by color, shape, and texture.

**5. Notice the tile patterns** on the grocery store floor.

**6. Visit an art gallery** to decide if the artist was effective in choosing colors, textures, size, perspective, arrangement, and proportion.

**7. Whisper** all day long.

## **Mathematics...**

Mathematics is a world of patterns and connections. Accurately identifying math patterns and connections allows us to manage and manipulate our environment.

### **Main objectives...**

- Reason abstractly and quantitatively
- Recognize the reasoning of others
- Interpret data
- Use appropriate tools
- Use appropriate strategies
- Order of operations
- Speed and accuracy in computation
- Quantify and qualify

### **Everyday opportunities...**

- Keep score in sports or games
- Figure coding
- Write a daily schedule of activities
- Cook
- Sort and Classify items in a junk box
- Track and chart the weather
- Keep records of money you spend

## **Math Activity...**

### ***Color the Grid...***

Supplies: graph paper and colors. Cut the page if desired to shorten the game. This game develops hand muscles, eye-hand coordination, a concept of number, 1:1 correspondence, and left-to-right tracking. Simply, roll the die (or dice) and color that many connected squares on a page of graph paper. Bonus: Assign an equation to be solved. Ex: roll a 5 and apply it to  $5y + 7 = \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$ .

### ***Play a dice game: PIG***

Supplies: Pencil and paper. Two dice. This is a game of probability and addition. Bank the target score before others. Player rolls two dice. The dice represent actual number values, except for the ONE. The Player decides to "bank" the score or to risk it to roll for more points. His score grows until he declares, "Bank it," or until he rolls a one. If the player rolls a ONE, he loses his turn and loses his score for this turn. If the player rolls two ONES, he automatically ends his turn AND loses all score earned so far. This player will begin at zero on his next turn. Any die that falls off the playing area is automatically considered a ONE. Advanced play: assign alternate values to the dots on the dice.

## **History...**

Knowing history allows us to evaluate the activities of those who have come before us. History allows us to make informed decisions for our current society and environment so that we can maximize the quality of life we live.

### **Main objectives...**

- Track events on a timeline
- Read geography on maps
- Understand contributions of people
- Understand value of natural resources
- Learn biographical relevance
- Recognize relevance of individuals
- Identify cultural origins and influence
- Identify political perspectives, similarities, and differences

### **Everyday opportunities...**

- GPS (Global Positioning Systems)
- Religious services
- Community activities
- Voting
- Following the news

## History Activity...

Use this method for any subject when reading to collect information. It can be done orally, mentally, written, with a partner, or solo. SQRRRing only takes 3-5 minutes and increases curiosity and comprehension.

### **S.Q.R.R.R. + E.E.C.H.**

**Survey.** Notice every title, subtitle, picture, caption, graph, bold print word. Browse.

**Question.** Become curious about what you see, what you know, and do not know about what you see. Ask questions.

**Read.** Read titles, subtitles, captions, review questions, introduction, and concluding summary. Note: who, what, when, where, why, and how. Does this make sense?

**Recite.** Summarize your understanding of the main concepts, vocabulary, etc.

**Review.** Return to concepts that were not clear, or vocabulary that did not get defined.

**Bonus...**

**Examine** Compare what you know to what you did not know before this reading.

**Enrich** your knowledge by following up on any curiosities or inspirations.

**Celebrate** what you know. Make a souvenir.

**Highlight** what you know by sharing with others.

## **Social Studies...**

The purpose of studying social studies is to develop contributing community members. Social studies allows us to recognize and to understand the diverse democratic world of the United States and how we relate internationally.

### **Main objectives...**

- Recognize and respect cultures
- Develop self knowledge
- Use resources responsibly
- Honor civil rights and responsibilities
- Participate in community events

### **Everyday opportunities...**

- Engage in community service
- Attend theatric production
- Join clubs or an athletic team
- Enjoy public parks
- Vote and express your opinion

## History and Social Studies Activity...

While reading an historic novel or watching a movie, fill in details representing these components of a **CIVILIZATION** represented in the story.

<b>Urban Society</b> (How do people live together or how are they organized in their communities?)	<b>Military</b> (How does the government protect its citizens?)	<b>Resources</b> (What natural or human resources are available and valued?)
<b>Religion,</b> (What philosophy or beliefs guide people's lives?)	<b>Communication</b> from place to another; from one time to another); <b>Literacy</b>	<b>Government/Leadership</b> (What is the government structure? Do citizens follow the government?)
<b>Specialization</b> (What special skills are needed or valued in the community?)	<b>Social Structure</b> (Who has power or status? How do citizens get power and status?)	<b>Technology</b> (What tools, weapons, or equipment is available?)
<b>Sciences</b> (Does this civilization value the sciences? For what purpose?)	<b>Education</b> (Does this civilization value education? How do children learn?)	<b>Leisure /Entertainment</b> (Does this civilization have time for entertainment at all levels of society?)

**Bonus:** Determine which components make a civilization strong or weak. Is our country strong? Our school? Our family? Explain.

## **General Science...**

The purpose of general science is to recognize the patterns and normalcies of our environment. Skills developed in general science support the deeper study of biology, chemistry, and physics.

### **Main objectives...**

- Develop observation skills
- Use the five senses
- Use specific note taking styles
- Categorize and Generalize
- Ask questions and be curious
- Notice growth and change

### **Everyday opportunities...**

- Track the weather
- Eat nutritious meals
- Exercise
- Grow a garden
- Listen to various sounds
- Mix colors for painting



## General Science Activities...

**1. Mummify an orange slice** (or lemon). Take one slice of orange. Salt it. Put in a clear plastic baggy and record deterioration each day for at least 7 days. Take second slice of orange and put into a baggy without salt. Each day, predict what will happen. What does this say about salt? How does time affect change?

**2. Make dirt.** Take an apple core and place in a baggy with a handful of dirt. Add a bit of water. What can you see? Smell? Record your observations each day for 7 days.

	Observations	Predictions	Queries (?)
Day 1			
Day 2			
Day 3			
Day 4			
Day 5			
Day 6			
Day 7			

**3. Make two batches** of flavored gelatin. Follow the directions on box for the first batch. For the second batch, only use half the liquid. Compare the difference. On what occasion would you use the first set of directions? When would you want to use the modified recipe?

## **Biology...**

Biology is the study of life. Biology allows us to understand our own bodies and the environments we live in. The more we know, the more we can monitor, manage, and manipulate living organisms.

### **Main objectives...**

- Identify cells and parts of cells
- Understand reproduction
- Classify plants and animals
- Name the systems of the human body
- Chart healthy growth
- Analyze mutation

### **Everyday opportunities...**

- Care for a plant
- Plant a garden
- Monitor growth of plants or persons
- Identify local species
- Measure heart rate

## **Biology activities...**

**1. Plant seeds** in an egg carton. Watch it grow. Pay attention to how much light and water the plant gets.

**2. Make mold.** Put a slice of bread or tortilla or naan into a baggie. Add a few drops of water. Place the open baggie in a window. Watch for changes each day. What happened?

**3. Dissect a flower.** Choose a tulip or poppy. Use a magnifying glass to discover the parts inside and outside. Find the stamen (the male part). Use a cotton swab to remove some pollen. Find the pistil (the female part). How would you describe the shapes and forms? Cut the pieces in half and observe.

**4. Spread a sheet of plastic** onto the ground in the yard. Gather a handful of dirt. Look closely. What is dirt made of? Did you find living (but now dead) creatures? Sort your dirt into small piles of decaying leaves, bugs, and other matter.

**5. Eat an apple.** Describe how it tastes, smells, feels, etc. Then, plug your nose and test with your senses again. Do your descriptions change?

## Chemistry...

Chemistry is the study of matter and the dynamics of matter. The properties of matter affect the dynamics of everything in our environment. So, the more we know, the more we can monitor, manage, and manipulate the chemistry of our environment.

### Main objectives...

- Name the elements
- Recognize properties of matter
- Observe reactions
- Calculate chemical formulas
- Practice safe use of chemicals
- Manipulate matter

### Everyday opportunities...

- Food preparation
- Washing and cleaning
- Removing nail polish
- Dying hair
- Taking prescribed medication

## Chemistry activities...

**1. Make a salad dressing** with oil, vinegar, and spices. Observe how water and oil resist mixing. Where do the spices go? How long will the dressing stay mixed?

**2. Turn water into an ice globe.** Put a half-cup of water into a small balloon and freeze. What happens to the water? How did temperature affect the changed shape of your water? Where can you find more information about crystals?

**Bonus:** Try this using a plastic glove.

**3. Make a dry shampoo.** In a bowl, mix a half-cup of baking soda with a half-cup of cornstarch or arrowroot. Shake a small amount onto oily hair at the roots. Then, with your fingers or a hairbrush, work it through the lengths of your hair. The dry mixture will absorb the oils, leaving your hair look freshly washed.

**4. Try different laundry soaps** on stained cloth. Decide which is most effective and why.

**5. Write a cookbook.** All cooking is chemistry.

## **Physics...**

Physics is the study of the dynamics of matter. The laws of physics follow mathematical patterns and quantitative reasoning. The more we know, the more we can monitor, manage, and manipulate the dynamics of matter in our environment.

### **Main objectives...**

- Apply friction
- Record speed and velocity
- Measure density and mass
- Observe energy and resistance
- Understand the solar system

### **Everyday activities...**

- Play with building blocks
- Build with cardboard, wood, or metal
- Participate in athletics or exercise
- Riding a bike or driving a car
- Look through a telescope

## Physics activities...

**1. Bridge tolerance.** Stack two piles of books to be the towers of your bridge. Make the road tucking a piece of tissue paper under the top books and between the towers. Gently place one penny on the bridge. How many pennies can the road hold before it falls? Does changing distance between towers change its strength?

**2. Move water without touch.** Blow up a balloon. Rub it repeatedly on your hair to create static. Wave the charged balloon near the flow of a water faucet and watch it dance. Bonus: Use two balloons.

**3. Paper clip races.** Hang a paper clip from a rubber band. Make another. Lean two broom sticks against a chair or couch. Dangle one rubber band on each broomstick. It's a race! Bonus: change the size and weight of your materials. Change the angle of the broomsticks. How does the motion change?

**4. Make a mobile** to decorate your room.

**5. Walk around** with a book on your head.

**6. Play ball.** All sports are physics.

## **Physical Education...**

The purpose of Physical Education is to get your mind and your body to work together. When our bodies and minds work together we can have happy, healthy and active lives.

### **Main objectives...**

- Develop motor skills
- Develop confidence
- Practice social-emotional skills
- Effective interaction with others
- Decision making skills
- Establish a fitness routine
- Understand nutrition

### **Everyday opportunities...**

- Participate in structured activity
- Play
- Eat balanced and healthy meals
- Meditate
- Apologize
- Set goals



## Physical Education Activities...

**1.** Write five exercises on a separate pieces of paper. Post them around the house to create a par course. Complete the par course.

Bonus: Post your par course around the neighborhood (with neighbor's permission).

**2. Make a chart** to track your healthful activities for one month.: bathing, teeth brushing, flossing, hair grooming, drinking water, drinking hot beverages, sleeping, etc.

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat

**3.** Physical health depends upon good mental and social health. Find **John Wooden's Pyramid of Success**. Which characteristics do you have? Which do you need to develop?

**4. Do three good deeds** for other persons in your home today. Observe their response.

**5. Listen to soothing music.** Recognize how the slow beat slows down your processing. Then, listen to upbeat music and recognize how the fast beat energizes you. Bonus: Do in reverse.

## **Music...**

Music is ceremonial. Music is found in every cultural song and dance. Music is recreational. Music is the backdrop of entertainment. Music is therapeutic. Music connects emotion to intellect. The more we express ourselves through music the better our quality of life.

### **Main objectives...**

- Set a tone and tempo
- Develop rhythm and rhyme
- Encourage song and dance
- Play a musical instrument
- Perform for audience
- Practice self-expression
- Share cultural identities

### **Everyday opportunities...**

- Sing
- Dance
- Listen to music
- Tap your foot
- Read and recite poetry

## **Music activity...**

- 1. Make up a song** that shows what you learn. Write your own music or use music from a song you already know. Record it. Sing it.
- 2. Memorize the Morse Code** alphabet. Use sounds or lights to encode and send your name. Can you also read the signals of sound or light?
- 3. Follow an exercise program** to music OR make up your own routine.
- 4. Tap your foot** to any music you hear.
- 5. Record the odd sounds** around the house: trickling water, knocks at the door, snap of dental floss taken from the roll, the click of the microwave door, and any other sounds. Bonus: Quiz others. See how many of your sounds they can identify without clues.
- 6. Whistle** while you work.
- 7. Hum** a new song.
- 8. Sing** for everything today.

## **Art...**

Art is a real thing: a real expression, a real thought, a real feeling. From art, we learn about cultures and resources and the human value system. Art allows our other senses and intelligence to synthesize. Art is the manipulation and management of our environment and resources.

### **Main objectives...**

- Practice modes of personal expression
- Interpret the artist's message
- Understand attraction and appeal
- Manipulate different forms of media
- Identify elements of the artwork: color, spacing, texture, technique, perspective, and proportion

### **Everyday opportunities...**

- Arts and crafts
- Styling hair and applying make-up
- Rearranging your room
- Taking photos
- Arranging flowers in a vase

## **Art activities...**

**1. Find an item** of clothing you are ready to give away. Cut squares from the cloth. Cut fringe around the edges--the same way for each piece. Then, line them up and tie them together using the fringe to make a quilt or pillow.

**2. Use food coloring** and a bit of rubbing alcohol to dye rice or pasta. Glue them onto paper or wood to make a mosaic that represents something you've learned this week.

**3. Change the words** of a song you already know (Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star). Instead use words that tell what you have learned this week.

**4. Decorate** a cake.

**5. Tie-dye or paint** an old shirt.

**6. Make play dough.** Mix two cups flour, three quarter cups salt, 4 teaspoons of cream of tartar, 2 cups warm water, and two tablespoons of oil. Food coloring and scented oils are optional.

## **Foreign Language...**

The purpose of acquiring an additional language is to effectively communicate with others. Learning an additional language develops mental flexibility and memory. Ultimately, knowing another language expands cultural opportunity and allows global participation.

### **Main objective...**

- Communicate effectively
- Comprehend written and oral words
- Read and speak fluently
- Write fluidly
- Appreciate a culturally rich society

### **Everyday opportunities...**

- Watch TV in a different language
- Sing folk songs and children's songs
- Use translation dictionaries or devices
- Talk with your hands
- Try foods from around the world

## **Foreign Language activities...**

- 1. Play dice games** using only the new language numbers.
- 2. Make three posters** for a poem you want to learn in the new language. Hang one poster on your bedroom door, another copy on the refrigerator, and the third on the bathroom mirror.
- 3. Watch TV programs** in the new language OR find one on the Internet.
- 4. Record yourself reading** in the new language. Then, listen to yourself repeatedly. Gradually, you'll be able to correct any errors and gain in fluency. Start with a children's book or short poems or prayers.
- 5. Follow a recipe** in the new language.
- 6. Go to the ethnic foods aisle** at the grocery store. Read the packages.
- 7. Find a map** of a country that speaks the new language. Plan a fantasy vacation. Find the vocabulary you will need for your trip: travel, purchasing, food, emergencies, etc.

## **A final note...**

As you can see by the activities in this book, children are learning every day just by doing what they would normally do. When their teachers and parents say and do just the right things to encourage academic content, learning can be quick and painless, sometimes without kids even noticing.

So, keep your mind set on the objectives and on your relationship. Encourage learning in everyday opportunities or create purposeful activities to keep your child on track to being a contributing citizen and a capable, independent adult.

Here's to healthy, happy learning in your home. And, don't worry if home learning seems slow or odd. One step forward is one step forward, and you have already taken the first step. That's good...

*Good, Better, Best...*

*Never let it rest...*

*Until the good is better,*

*And the better is best!*



***This is a Good, Better, Best credit card...***

*Good, Better, Best...  
Never let it rest...  
Until the good is better,  
And the better is best!*

☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
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(Pssst! You could design your own card!)

1. *Clearly describe the desired behavior.*
2. *Decide who gives credit:*  
*Parent, Teacher, Partner, Student or other*
3. *Decide if credit is for perfection or effort.*
4. *Decide what a full credit card earns.*  
*A star? Minutes on the phone? Stay up late?*

### **Criteria for Learning Behavior**

- ☐ Studies at scheduled times
- ☐ Takes breaks only at break
- ☐ Keeps materials ready to use
- ☐ Reads and adheres to instruction
- ☐ Keeps upright posture during lessons
- ☐ Commits energy to learning activity
- ☐ Gets work done on time
- ☐ Keeps study area clean and organized
- ☐ Asks questions as appropriate
- ☐ Does best work at all times
- ☐ Is polite at all times
- ☐ Responds to corrections and critique
- ☐ Other

### **Criteria for Preparing to Learn**

- ☐ Time, place, and materials are planned
- ☐ Rested and is ready for leadership
- ☐ Clear about the learning objective (experience, skills, concepts, or facts)
- ☐ Affirms appropriate behaviors
- ☐ Gives timely response to learning
- ☐ Modifies activity but keeps objective
- ☐ Refers to *My Favorite Teacher is Me*
- ☐ Plans a positive emotional connection
- ☐ Other

My Child's Favorite Teacher is Me gets you into the mindset that **maximizes** your child's potential and **minimizes** the obstacles in or out of school... while maintaining healthy parent-child relations. Whether your student is in Pre-school, Elementary, Secondary, or Special Education, these techniques work.

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