



Use grocery store ads to help your child practice math skills

Those grocery store ads that come every week are a great way for your child to practice math facts. With their bright pictures and large numbers, they are easy even for young children to use.

Look through the ads together. Help your child find pictures of a few foods he likes. Cut out these pictures along with their prices.

Now have him create math word problems using the pictures he's cut out. "Emma bought one pound of bananas for 50 cents. How much would two pounds of bananas cost?"

You could ask an older child what

half a pound of bananas would cost. Or you could ask him to tell you how much change he'd get from a dollar. Later, use the word problems your child developed to create flash cards with the picture and the problem on the front and the answer on the back.

Check the ads as you prepare your shopping list. Choose a few items for your child to buy. Have him estimate how much it will cost to purchase all these items. This teaches him the important skill of estimation.

Printed with permission from the November 2010 issue of *Parents make the difference!*® (Elementary School Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2010 The Parent Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: Judi Hechtman and Deborah Ellermeyer, *Teaching Math with Favorite Picture Books*, ISBN: 0-5907-6250-8, Scholastic Professional Books.

Questions and Answers

Q: My fourth grader has an explosive temper. His teacher says it is a problem at school, and it can also cause trouble at home. When he loses his temper, he sometimes hits other children. How can I help him get his emotions under control?

A: Anger is a normal emotion. But the way your son expresses his anger is clearly creating problems for him at home and at school.

No one wants to be friends with a child who flies off the handle and hits others. No school will tolerate the behavior of a student who hurts others.

Start by explaining to your son that while anger is a normal emotion, there are healthy and unhealthy ways to express it. You are going to help him learn and practice the healthy ways.

The first step is to use words. Insist that your child name his feelings. "I'm angry that Jake took my toy."

When he does use words, that still doesn't mean he'll always get his way. "I know you're upset that rain cancelled your game. But you still can't be mean to your brother."

Whenever possible, both you and the teacher should try to recognize times when your child does not get angry. "Boy, it was boring waiting in that line, but you were very patient." It's important for him to see that he can control his behavior--and that people notice when he does.

Not all adults have learned these lessons. Your son will ultimately be happier if he learns to handle his anger.

Kristen Amundson, The Parent Institute. Reprinted with permission from the November 2010 issue of *Parents make the difference!*® (Elementary School Edition) newsletter.

Parent Quiz

Do you know how your child uses social media?

Social media, such as the website Facebook, play a big role in the way many middle schoolers socialize. Are you aware of your child's use of these kinds of sites? Answer yes or no to the questions below to find out:

___ 1. Do you know if your child has an account on a social media site?

___ 2. Do you monitor your child's accounts? Do you have her passwords, or are you her "friend" on Facebook?

___ 3. Have you made it clear that she is never to communicate online with someone she doesn't already know?

___ 4. Do you talk to your child about the public nature of these sites? Her postings may be meant for one person, but will be seen by many.

___ 5. Do you talk to your child about never posting anything hurtful about another person? Does your child know this is a form of bullying?

How well are you doing?

Mostly yes answers mean you are staying on top of your child's use of social media. For each no answer, try that idea.

Reprinted with permission from the November 2010 issue of *Parents Still make the difference!*® (Middle School Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2010 The Parent Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc.

Your Child and You

Set an example for your child; be a respectful role model

To help your child understand respect, set an example. Show respect for her, yourself and others. Try to:

- Be a good listener. During conversations with your child, focus solely on her. Look at her while she's talking. Avoid interrupting.
- Take responsibility. Parents are human. They make mistakes. They should also apologize. "I'm sorry I raised my voice. Let me try saying that again."
- Follow the Golden Rule. Emphasize the importance of treating others the way you want to be treated. Match your actions to your beliefs.

Talking and Listening

Use empathy, attention when talking with your daughter

Preteens can be tough to talk to—especially girls. Ironically, though, GIRLS may be the secret to talking to your preteen so she'll listen. Here's what it means:

G Get to know her. Learn who your preteen is by spending time with her. Ask her to share her favorite music with you. She may be more willing to listen to you if you care about the things she cares about.

I Ignore stereotypes. Your preteen is a dynamic individual, not a "tomboy" or a "bookworm." Labeling her will shut down communication. So, embrace the notion that she's a complex, ever-changing young person.

R Remember who she is. That ranting creature who just slammed her bedroom door is a child struggling

- Stay positive. Give plenty of genuine, specific compliments. Criticism should be rare and helpful—not hurtful.
- Appreciate individuality. Every person has something special to offer. Make the most of life by choosing a healthy lifestyle and using your strengths.
- Build independence. Trust your child with age-appropriate responsibilities. Believe in her.
- Show love. Gestures, such as hugs and pats on the back, go a long way toward helping kids feel worthwhile, which helps them feel both respected and respectful.

Reprinted with permission from the November 2010 issue of *Parents make the difference!*® (Elementary School Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2010 The Parent Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: J. Shakeel, "Teaching Children Respect," [More4Kids](http://More4Kids.com), www.more4kids.info/702/teaching-children-respect/.

to mature. So keep that in mind whenever you witness one of her not-so-flattering moments. And be willing to remind her of better times when she's feeling particularly overwhelmed.

L Listen. Don't expect your preteen to listen if you won't. So the next time she has something to say? Pay attention. Preteens don't often open up, so when they do, it's crucial to tune in.

S Share yourself. Let your preteen see the real you, warts and all. Show her that you're a real person who has real triumphs and makes real mistakes.

Reprinted with permission from the November 2010 issue of *Parents Still make the difference!*® (Middle School Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2010 The Parent Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: Nancy Gruver, *How to Say It to Girls: Communicating with Your Growing*

Don't let your middle schooler be disrespectful

A disrespectful child will have trouble in school. A disrespectful adult may not be able to hold onto a job. It is important to remember this as your child goes through middle school.

Your child's newfound sense of independence and separation may make him prone to backtalk and disrespect. Do not allow yourself--or him--to get used to it. Instead:

- Call him out. Label disrespectful talk and behavior as such. "Your tone of voice is not appropriate." "Making faces is rude. I won't tolerate it." "Do not curse. It is disrespectful."
- Don't stoop to disrespect. Your child's disrespectful words, tone, or actions deserve nothing from you. Simply say, "I won't deal with you at all when you speak that way. I am your parent and I deserve your politeness. When you are ready to speak respectfully, come back and we will try again."
- Use consequences if necessary. "Instead of telling me your feelings calmly and with respect, you have chosen to shout and throw a tantrum. You are acting like a much younger child and I will have to treat you like one. You will be staying in this weekend. You will have another chance next weekend if you can show more maturity this coming week."

Reprinted with permission from the November 2010 issue of *Parents Still make the difference!*® (Middle School Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2010 The Parent Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: Michele Borba, *Building Moral Intelligence: The Seven Essential Virtues that Teach Kids to Do the Right Thing*, ISBN: 0-7879-6226-0, Jossey-Bass.

Ready to Learn

Research shows it's important for teens to get enough sleep

Sleepy students have trouble learning, are less likely to join sports teams and are more likely to feel depressed. Research shows it's just as important to get a good night's rest after a day of learning as it is the night before a test--learning continues to take place while you sleep!

But the sleepest students--teens--have trouble getting enough sleep. Their natural rhythm is to sleep late and stay up later--the exact opposite of the typical school day.

That doesn't mean your tired teen is doomed to yawning until he's thirty. Here's what you can do to re-set that clock and help your teen wake up ready to learn:

- Encourage your teen to stick to a bedtime routine. Experts say dimming the lights at night and avoiding computers right before bed can make it easier to fall asleep.
- Don't let your teen sleep all weekend. Your teen shouldn't sleep more than two hours past his normal wake-up time. His body will be too confused when he has to wake up early again on Monday--and that'll kick off another weary week.
- Suggest exercise. Sports, running and other activities--at least a few hours before bedtime--will help your teen sleep soundly.

Reprinted with permission from the November 2010 issue of *Parents Still make the difference!*® (High School Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2010 The Parent Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: Sarah Spinks, "Adolescents and Sleep: A summary of what research knows about teenagers' need for sleep and why sleep affects memory and learning," PBS, www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/teenbrain/from/sleep.html.

Encouraging Reading

Discover creative ways to get your high schooler reading

You may feel like you've tried everything to get your teen to read--without a lot of success. Part of the struggle can be blamed on the book's rival for your teen's attention: the TV. Over the course of a month, children see an average of 1000 commercials. Out of those commercials, maybe one or two will be advertising books or reading.

But reading is too important to give up on. Not only is it the backbone of school success, but it also impacts your teen's financial future. Studies show that people who read frequently make an average of \$100,000 more in their lifetimes than people who don't read. To make reading part of your teen's life:

- Listen to books in the car. If you see your teen stalling when it's time to get out of the car, suggest

she pick up the paper copy of the book she was listening to so she doesn't miss out on the action.

- Read a great classic--and then tell your teen that it is probably too difficult for her to read. Chances are good she'll be sneaking chapters whenever your back is turned!
- Resort to bribery. Call it "reading week" and offer your teen an additional \$1 on her allowance for every hour she spends reading instead of watching TV. She might just keep up the habit even after that week.

Reprinted with permission from the November 2010 issue of *Parents Still make the difference!*® (High School Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2010 The Parent Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: G. Spencer, "Getting Teens to Read," www.gwynnespencer.com/Articles/teens%20reading.pdf.

Is your high schooler grumbling or speaking disrespectfully



You've told Jack to take out the trash. As he puts it out, he mutters, "How did you keep the house clean before I was born?"

Is that grumbling--or is it more serious? One way to tell is by matching your teen's actions with his words.

If he's actually taking out the

trash, it's probably just grumbling. And in general, you can ignore it.

Or you can agree with him in a good-natured way. If your teen says, "I always have to walk the dog." Just say, "Yes, you do." As long as you don't get angry, this grumbling isn't likely to go anywhere.

But sometimes your teen's responses may be a little stronger. He may say, "You can't tell

me what to do," or "Just shut up already." That kind of talk is disrespectful, and it should be unacceptable.

Let your teen know that when he speaks to you disrespectfully there will be a consequence. Then be sure to enforce that consequence every time.

Reprinted with permission from the November 2010 issue of *Parents Still make the difference!*® (High School Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2010 The Parent Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: Ray Guarendi, *Discipline that Lasts a Lifetime: The Best Gift You Can Give Your Kids*, ISBN: 1-569-55368-8, St. Anthony Messenger Press.

Parents still make the difference

Building Respect

Remember the famous Aretha Franklin song? It tells teens all they need to know about the things they can do to demonstrate respect for themselves and others.

Reach out to others. Learn about their thoughts and beliefs. It is harder to disrespect someone once you understand what he believes.

Enjoy differences among people. They make life interesting.

Show respect for rules and laws by following them.

Put on your best manners. One of the easiest ways to show respect for other people is by treating them with courtesy.

Eat right, get plenty of sleep and exercise. All of these are ways to show respect for yourself.

Care for animals, plants and the environment. Respecting and protecting the environment is a responsibility we all share.

Treat property that does not belong to you the same way you would treat anything you own.

Reprinted with permission from the November 2010 issue of *Parents Still make the difference!*® (High School Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2010 The Parent Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: Barbara A. Lewis, *What Do You Stand For? For Kids*, ISBN: 1-575-42174-7, Free Spirit Publishing.

PARENTS: The Key Ingredient

Parent Involvement Newsletter

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Zoel Allen, Chairman
David Schaeffer, Vice Chairman
Kathleen Morris, Secretary
Don Bednorz, Member
Lawrence Bussard, Member
Sherry McCavit, Member
Ky Sherrod, Member

John Bass
Executive Director
Robin Adkins
Deputy Director for
Direct Services

Cole Cordell
CFO/Deputy Director for
Internal Operations

Gwen Hicks
Deputy Director Instructional Services
Ray Cogburn
Deputy Director of Administrative
Services

DIRECTORS OF SERVICES

Michelle Davidson
ECI Services
Karla Weatherly
Head Start
Greg Stockstill
Technology Services
Keila Sandridge
Human Resources and Quality
Planning

PARENTS: The Key Ingredient

is published three times a year for parent educators in the 63 school districts served by Region 16 Education Service Center.

EDITOR

Daphne Nazworth
Education Specialist, Title I/SCE,
Parental Involvement

5800 Bell Street
Amarillo, TX 79109-6230
phone: 806/677-5000
fax: 806/677-5001
www.esc16.net