

# Achievement Strategies To Help Your Child Shine



## A Guide for Parents

Provided by

FLEXIBLE  
CREATIVITY

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# **Language Arts Tips**

# Reading Tips

- ❖ Celebrate reading! Give your child a book to celebrate a special occasion.
- ❖ Library cards open a world of reading. Encourage all family members to go to their local public library and apply for a library card. Become a family of readers.
- ❖ Provide a quiet, comfortable, and inviting place for family members to read. Read books, magazines, newspapers, or cookbooks together. Demonstrate the importance of reading at home.
- ❖ All children enjoy being read to. Spend some time each day reading to your child (preferably 30 minutes). A letter, an article, or a chapter from a book are good places to begin the read aloud time.
- ❖ Be familiar with Children's Choice books and other high quality children's literature.
- ❖ Challenge your child to compare and contrast books. Compare and contrast video adaptations of the books you read with your child.
- ❖ For younger children, read the story while the child points to the pictures. Repeat interesting sounds and repetitive word patterns.
- ❖ Have your child retell parts of a story or book.
- ❖ Take turns reading pages
- ❖ Let your child see you read.

- ❖ Ask questions that require your child to predict what is likely to happen next or how the story might end.
- ❖ Let your child know that there are four main components to every story: characters, setting, problem(s), and solution(s). Talk about these components. Ask your child to find details that tell about the main idea or about the topic.



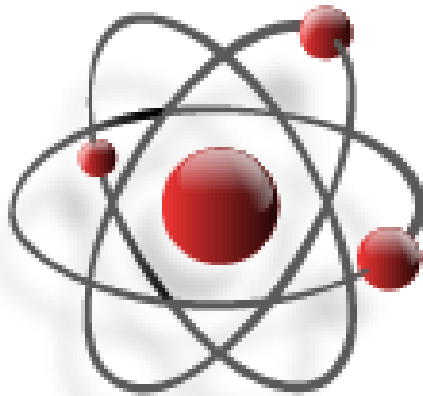
- ❖ Emphasize the meaning of words when reading, rather than just recognizing or pronouncing words.
- ❖ Use advanced vocabulary when speaking to your child and define unfamiliar words.
- ❖ Point out new words in the environment (when driving, shopping, or reading).
- ❖ Encourage your child to ask about the meaning of new, confusing, or unusual words as they encounter them.
- ❖ Ask your child to tell you synonyms and antonyms for words that are being discussed or studied.
- ❖ Have your child predict the definition of unknown words when reading, find clues in the passage that might help to guess their meaning.



## Writing Tips

- ❖ Show your child the importance of writing.
- ❖ Let your child make lists for you (i.e., grocery).
- ❖ Let your child see you write (i.e., letters, thank you notes).
- ❖ Encourage your child to write (i.e., letters, thank you notes).
- ❖ Provide a space for writing. Be sure lighting is adequate.
- ❖ Have fun and interesting materials (paper, pen, pencil) available.
- ❖ Allow your child time to think and write.
- ❖ Respond to your child's ideas verbally or in writing.
- ❖ Praise your child for his/her effort and progress.
- ❖ Use writing games (i.e., crossword puzzles, word games).
- ❖ Encourage keeping a journal.
- ❖ Write together.
- ❖ Use computer software that enhances writing skills.

# Science Tips



# General Tips

- ❖ Help your child sharpen his/her observation skills when outside.
- ❖ Encourage your child to think about objects according to size and color.
- ❖ Talk about the changes that take place in your surroundings.
- ❖ Take a nature walk with your child.
- ❖ Take your child to different places, such as the seashore, lakes, wetlands, and mountains, to make observations.
- ❖ Have your child chart the daily weather, collect data on cloud types, and record daily temperature and rainfall.
- ❖ Plant a small garden with your child.
- ❖ Watch science programs (i.e., Mr. Wizard's World, Bill Nye the Science Guy, National Geographic) with your child, and talk about what he/she learned from the program.
- ❖ Share cooking experiences with your child. Discuss how liquid and solid materials mix, dissolve, or otherwise change.
- ❖ Learn and talk about careers that involve science (i.e., park rangers, pharmacists, engineers, lab technicians, etc.).
- ❖ Get involved with groups that address science projects or studies (i.e., Girl/Boy Scouts, 4-H Clubs).
- ❖ Emphasize how the different organs of the body work together. Talk about the different parts of human and animal bodies (e.g., skeletal, cardiovascular, nervous).



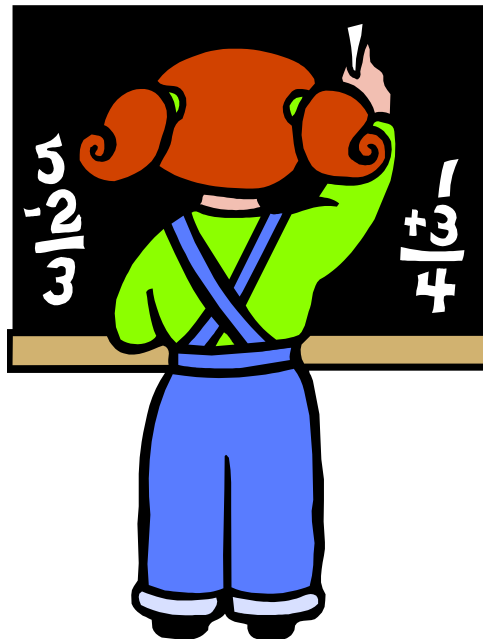
- ❖ Discuss cause-effect relationships in nature such as how weather and water erodes rocks into smaller rocks and sand, or how bees help to pollinate plants.
- ❖ Discuss weather and why the climate is different in different regions of the United States and the world.
- ❖ Encourage your child to ask “why” questions and to find answers by using the encyclopedia or asking people.
- ❖ Ask your child “what would happen if...” questions.
- ❖ Take an interest in what your child is doing in science.
- ❖ Have your child keep a science journal. In the journal have your child write observations and draw pictures about various things in the environment (i.e., weather changes, animal behavior, plant growth, etc.)
- ❖ Check out nonfiction books from the library.



*Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.*

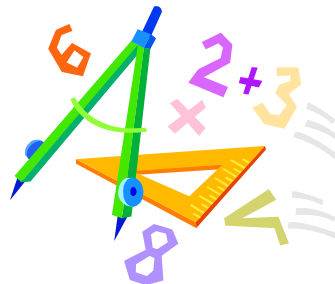
*Joseph Addison*

# Mathematics Tips



## General Tips

- ❖ Cut out a variety of numbers from the newspaper (including money, fractions, and decimals) and have your child place the numbers in sequence from smallest to largest or largest to smallest.
- ❖ Have your child estimate the length of a wall, table, or any object. Then measure it to verify the estimation.
- ❖ Encourage your child to look for patterns in the environment (colors, numbers, shapes, etc.) and have your child tell you about the pattern and what it was that made it a pattern.
- ❖ Have your child help you when cooking. Let your child help you read the recipe and talk about what the measurements mean. Let your child experiment with a variety of measuring devices (for example using a  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup measure, determine how many times it would take to fill a 1 cup measure).
- ❖ Make a game out of estimating quantities: beans in a cup, cotton balls in a bag, people on a bus, cars in a parking lot, or people in a movie theater.
- ❖ Use sports statistics or weather information in the newspaper or from television and have your child calculate averages or sequence numbers. Ask questions like which temperature was higher, what was the lowest score, how many points did the winning team win by?



- ❖ Have your child do a number search. The object is to look for numbers around you: on cars, buses, houses, signs, etc. Talk about the numbers your child has collected (what was the largest number found, are there any odd numbers, what would you get if you added/subtracted two of the numbers, etc.)
- ❖ Provide your child with toys and games that require thinking, problem solving, and are challenging (such as jigsaw puzzles, building blocks, trivia games, Rubic's cube, various computer games).
- ❖ Give your child various opportunities to collect data and create graphs (line graphs, bar graphs or picture graphs).
- ❖ Have your child use a deck of cards to learn about relationships of numbers (more/less) and about subtracting, adding, multiplying, and dividing numbers. Take out all face cards (kings, queens, jacks) and divide the remaining cards between two people. Place the cards face down. Each player turns one card and makes a comparison statement: Is it more or less? How much more? How much less? Added together they would equal \_\_\_\_\_. Subtracted they would equal \_\_\_\_\_.
- ❖ When your child is trying to solve a problem, encourage him/her to use the following steps: THINK – talk out and understand the problem and what may be required as a solution, PLAN – create a way of attacking the problem that may lead to a solution. SOLVE – carry out the plan, REFLECT – look back and see if the answer/solution seems possible or reasonable. If not, what might have to be changed in the plan?

*Good education is the essential foundation of a strong democracy.*  
*Barbara Bush*



# **History and Social Science Tips**

# General Tips

- ❖ Read newspapers, news magazines, and watch television news programs with your child. Discuss current events, your child's ideas and different points of view on issues.
- ❖ Show your child different kinds of maps, charts, tables, and graphs (i.e., road maps, shopping mall layouts, bus routes)
- ❖ Reinforce north, south, east, and west using your home as a reference point.
- ❖ Have your child become familiar with terms such as latitude, longitude, hemispheres, prime meridian, and equator, and be able to locate nations or colonies which he/she is studying using these terms.
- ❖ Let your child create his/her own maps with legends/keys.
- ❖ Provide your child with games and puzzles of the United States.
- ❖ Encourage your child to read and discuss explorers since the discovery of America, emphasizing their goals, motivations, obstacles, and achievements.
- ❖ Let your child research information on the ancient civilization of Greece, Rome, China, and Egypt.
- ❖ Have your child explain the fundamental ideals and principles that formed our government, as well as the rules, roles, and responsibilities in promoting them.
- ❖ Watch history channel programs.
- ❖ Share your family history with your child.
- ❖ Make the most of holidays, traditions, elections, symbols, etc.
- ❖ Take an interest in the information, projects, and reports your child covers in school.

- ❖ Have your child explain the development of money, savings, and credit. If possible, let him/her experience these concepts through savings.
- ❖ Use a globe or map and have your child find places talked about on television news programs, or to follow the travel of his/her favorite sports team.
- ❖ Take your child to visit the different political, residential, recreational, ethnic, and commercial regions of your city. Discuss how they are alike and different.
- ❖ Develop your child's skills in debate, discussion, and persuasive writing by analyzing historical situations and events.
- ❖ Encourage your child to distinguish between fact and opinion when describing events, listening to television news, or reading.
- ❖ Point out the different types of landforms (bodies of water, valleys, mountains, hills, plains) you see while traveling and ask your child to tell you about the kinds of natural resources that would be found there (fish, soil, trees, coal, etc.).
- ❖ Discuss what household products are made of and the natural resources that provide those materials (wood-trees, fabric-cotton, wool, etc.).
- ❖ Emphasize the relationship between landforms, altitude, climate, and weather when you travel or when the seasons change.
- ❖ Use grocery shopping as an opportunity to talk about the different types of sources of various food products and where they are farmed or produced. Have a contest with your child to guess the total value of items in the cart.
- ❖ Discuss current events and compare them to the past. Ask your child's viewpoints on issues.
- ❖ Allow your child to use the map when traveling to locate places, to determine the direction of travel, and to use map scales and symbols.