



# November 2011



## Early Intervention

### Active Parenting Promotes Successful Child Development (Part 2)

by Amber Swearingen, MOT, OTR/L

Super Duper Handy Handouts #124

### Incorporate Fun Into Functional Play

There are various opportunities throughout the day to expand simple routines into effective teaching opportunities.

Use some of the following activities that include many teachable moments that you and your child can enjoy together.

• **Bath-Time-** Narrate the routine as you go, or sing songs during the task. Count toys reinforce important vocabulary and concepts.

• **Working in the Kitchen-**The tasks of counting, sorting, and carrying dinnerware to the table develops balance, coordination, and thinking skills.

• **Visiting the Park-**Talk about the sounds you hear, name the colors and shapes you see, and identify smells in the air. Increase strength and stability by showing your child how to skip, jump rope, or play follow-the-leader.

• **Coloring or Molding Clay-**Demonstrate a correct writing grasp using appropriately-sized crayons/pencils and encourage your child to color "up and down" or "side to side." Draw circles and smiley faces. Expand your child's imagination and creativity with clay/Playdough® as you both push, roll, and pull the clay. This develops hand and finger

strength and coordination.

• **Helping Around the House-**Children can help with laundry by sorting clothes, placing clothes into the washer/dryer, and matching and folding them. These tasks improve motor skills while strengthening muscles for upper body development. Helping around the house promotes responsibility and working as a family.

Remember to have fun and involve your child during your daily routines whenever possible. Find new topics to talk about and activities to do together by looking at your environment through the eyes of your child. Demonstrate active

parenting by sharing your knowledge, skills, and abilities and engaging your child in memorable and positive experiences.



## PREKINDERGARTEN

We would like to share with you some ideas for parents from "A Child Becomes a Reader" by Armbruster, Lehr & Osborn.

### Talk and Listen

• When you do something together - eating, shopping, taking a walk, visiting a relative - talk about it.

• Take your child to new places and introduce him/her to new experiences. Talk about new, interesting, and unusual things you see and do.

• Teach your child the meaning of new words. Say the name of things around the house. Label and talk about things in pictures. Explain, in simple ways, how to use familiar objects and how they work.

• Help your child follow directions. Use short, clear sentences to tell them what you want them to do.

• Play with words. Have fun with tongue twisters and nonsense rhymes.

### Read Together

• Keep reading to your child. Read him/her a lot of different kinds of books. Re-read the favorite books.

• Read predictable books. Your child will begin to recognize the repeated words and phrases and have fun saying them with you.

• Read poetry and other rhyming books to your child. When reading a familiar rhyme, stop before a rhyming word and ask your child to provide the word.

• Ask your child what she thinks will happen next in the

story. Get excited when he/she finds out whether her/his guess was right.

• Talk about books. Ask about favorite parts. Help your child relate the story to his/her own life. Answer their questions about characters and events.

• Build a library or book collection for your child. Suggest that your people give books to your child as a gift.

Next month we will provide some research on teaching your children about print and letters.

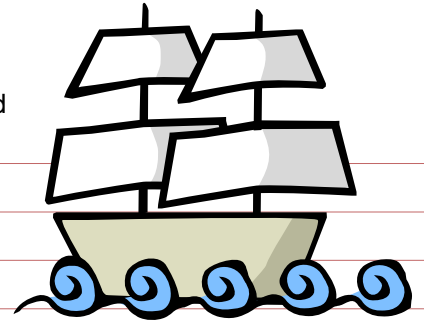
## KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten is ready to take a trip on the Mayflower and learn about the Native Americans and Pilgrims. Stories about the first Thanksgiving have us thinking of the people, places and things that are important to us.

The children have been trying to identify letter sounds. We have been using these skills to read new two and three sound words using the short /a/ sound, like the a sound in cat. You will start to see your child sounding out more and more

words at home as they practice their reading.

We have been working on patterns. The children should be able to identify and extend patterns. Try using objects at home to make a pattern and have your child continue it. For example spoon, spoon, fork, spoon, spoon, fork. You can also look for patterns on shirts and other clothing. We are also working on counting to and identifying numbers up to twenty. The teen numbers have been tricky for some of us. If you see your child is having



trouble, practice these numbers both in and out of order. Use fun or edible counters such as cheerios or m&m's to keep your child's interest.



## FIRST GRADE

The students were really busy during the month of October. They were screened for dental and vision problems, and were busy working on units on: Fire Prevention, Columbus Day, and Halloween.

During the month of November the students are working in the second book of the reading series, Catch A Dream. In this book they will work on long vowels, digraphs, contractions, compound words

and initial blends. A digraph is a pair of letters used to write one sound. For example; kick, shop, chair. A blend is two or more letters that appear together and you can hear each sound. For example; grape, flag, snap

In math, we are working on improving our addition and subtraction facts and making progress with Mastering Math Facts. Practice facts that are

“stumping” you. Use homemade flash cards or write the fact family.



We also will be learning about Veteran's Day and the first Thanksgiving . We look forward to these activities.

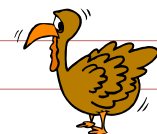
## SECOND GRADE

Second grade students have been signed up for an exciting math adventure online. Each child can personally access the website “First in Math” and choose from a variety of math puzzles and activities designed to encourage interest in math and opportunity to practice skills and concepts. The website can be accessed from school, or from any home computer with internet capability. Each child brought

home unique password information so that progress in the math activities can be tracked. Each day, a “Player of the Day” recognition is given to the child who achieved the highest score for the previous day.

“First in Math” is a terrific way to practice those math facts which are on the daily Rocket Math quiz. The website has many ways to practice addition

and subtraction. It also has problem solving and logic puzzles. You can find something for everyone by checking out the variety of games!



Thinking through directions

Handwriting needs practice

Author's purpose

Number sentences-fact families

Keep practicing basic facts

Sentences that are meaningful

Great short answers

Interaction in relationships between people

Very happy for the holiday

Interesting science activities

Nouns-common and proper

Geography and communities

October was another busy month for the third grade students. A program was presented to our students by the Waymart Volunteer Fire Department. The children were reminded about what to do in case of an emergency or fire. The volunteer firemen also discussed the importance of installing fire alarms throughout the house. Remember the battery in each fire alarm should be changed every six months. R.D. Wilson students also had the joy of attending our book fair held in October. Thank you to the PTA for hosting this event.

The children are continuing their formal cursive handwriting lessons. Cursive handwriting is a new skill that requires lots of prac-

tice. As we continue to practice in the classroom we ask that you also practice at home.

We are on our second theme in reading. This theme is titled "What A Team!" It explores ways that people and animals can work together to accomplish goals. The children discover that cooperation can make the difference in relationships. They are able to apply that concept to their own lives.

Mathematics is progressing. The children are continuing to work on their math facts. We are also working on subtraction with regrouping. Problem solving and written ex-

planations for problems are a part of our math lessons.

The children have completed the water unit. They have done activities about volume and weight. They also experimented with the concept of size and weight versus sink and float. What is the relationship between the two?

We are learning about ways to stay healthy. The children have completed the "Second Step Program" in health. Our children have learned about empathy, conflicting feelings, active listening, and accepting differences. The skills that we are learning promote a healthy environment here at RDW and also help our students outside of school.

# FOURTH GRADE

## What We Have Been Doing:

- *Science:* We are conducting experiments with water.
- *Social studies:* We are discovering why each part of Pennsylvania is unique as we study regions.
- *Health:* We are learning about the effects of alcohol so we are prepared to make good decisions.
- *Reading:* We are reading stories about cooperation in Theme Two.
- *Math:* We are multiplying and dividing.

*Writing:* We are organizing and writing narratives.

## What You Can Do At Home:

Encourage your child to practice multiplication facts for a few minutes each night. Ideas: Learn one new fact a night. Write it repeatedly. Say it aloud repeatedly. Before you know it, you will have mastered all of the facts! All fourth grade students must master their multiplication facts by the end of the second marking period.

Ensure that your child reads

nightly for 15 – 30 minutes. Record the reading on the reading log, which needs to be handed in at the end of the marking period.

Review with your child frequently. Science, social studies, and health tests in fourth grade are not open book; it is necessary for students to study.

Look for the homework folders in your child's backpack every night. Check it over to make sure that your child is filling out his or her Homework Assignment Booklet and completing homework assignments. Together, we can ensure that your child has a successful year!

# FIFTH GRADE

The students completed their unit on machines and force in science. They will begin their lab based studies of mixtures and solutions. Can you name any common solutions or mixtures?

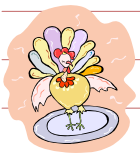
In health, the students have completed the Second Step Program on dealing with social problems, frustration and anger. They learned a variety of techniques they could use in situations to calm themselves

and successfully work through problems they may face. They will now be focusing on a drug and alcohol awareness unit.

The students have worked on many new math skills this last quarter. Some of them are long division, writing and solving algebraic equations, and working with decimals. Please continue to work on these skills at home as we expand on them here at school.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you at parent-teacher conferences. Please review your child's report card and if there are any questions or concerns bring them with you to discuss.

*As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them. ~ John Fitzgerald Kennedy*



# Learning Support

## TITLE 1

Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear, identify and manipulate individual sounds in spoken words. Phonemic awareness is important because children's word reading and comprehension improve as it improves. It also helps children learn to spell. Effective phonemic awareness instruction teaches children to notice, think about and work with sounds in spoken language.

When your children are beginning to learn to read they practice with the sounds that make up words. Children learn to put sounds together to make words and break words into their separate sounds, /b/ /a/ /t/ = bat. (/ / indicates the sound of the letter)

At home you can help by reciting tongue twisters with children and helping them focus on the repeated sounds. Reading books with rhymes, Dr. Seuss books, and teaching your children rhymes, short poems, and songs also helps. Playing word games and asking children to make up rhymes and hear sounds is also helpful.

### Example of "Playing With Words"

What is the first sound in man? The first sound is /m/.

What sound is the same in bug, ball, and bun? The first sound /b/ is the same.

Which word does not belong? Bus, ball or rug, rug does not belong. It does not begin with /b/. Make up some games of your own!

The students have been increasing their progress in the learning support classroom on the SRA Corrective Reading Program. They have been working in the Word Attack Skills, Reading Mastery Plus, and Decoding Strategies books. They complete one and two minute timed readings after each lesson to improve their reading fluency. The students monitor their progress in the back of their workbooks. They have been improving their skills in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. The students practice reading their stories at home and one minute fluency boxes, so they continue to increase reading rate, fluency, and vocabulary. Parents support at home is very helpful.

In mathematics, the students are working in the Saxon Mathematics program. The different areas they are working on are: single digit addition and subtraction facts, multi-digit addition and subtraction with and without regrouping, multiplication, division, fractions, measurement, perfect squares, reading problems, identifying ordinal positions, reading graphs, time/money, continuing shape patterns and much more. Fact and written assessments are given after every five lessons. They also take test preparation and practice tests.



## Autistic Support

As we get further into the school year, our students will begin practicing their writing skills more and more. The following activities are simple ones that you can do at home with your child to help them develop fine motor strength, which is essential when it comes to writing.

- **Squeezing Activities**
- Toys and activities that involve squeezing not only build hand and finger strength, but they also provide the sensory stimulation that children with autism seek. Show your child how to use play dough or putty to roll snake coils, squeeze it inside a garlic press or pinch off little pieces to make "blueberries." Squeezing clothespins to hang doll clothes or connect matching playing cards also strengthens the fingers. Older children may enjoy the sensory feedback offered by squeezing

hole punchers and pushing down on staplers. One hand-strengthening game is called "Feeding Hungry Harry." Cut a slit in a tennis ball; this will be the mouth. Next, draw the eyes and nose. Children can squeeze the ball to open Harry's mouth while feeding him pennies.

- **Developing Pencil Grasp**
- Young children can prepare for writing by drawing lines, circles and letters on a tray covered with whipped cream or shaving cream. Toys that require grasping a stylus to "draw" on a magnetic board help develop the grasp required to control a pencil. Preschool-aged children should use the large cone-shaped crayons that fit inside the whole hand. Older children might enjoy using a motorized pen that provides sensory stimulation when used to make wiggly lines.

- **Adapting Activities**
- Children with autism, like all children, will become quickly discouraged when they're unsuccessful with activities that require eye-hand coordination, such as lacing boards and stringing beads. Homemade activities are easier to use than those commercially available. Cut three or four large (1 inch in diameter) holes along the perimeter of a piece of cardboard. This "lacing board" has larger and fewer holes than the ones sold in stores. And instead of stringing beads, use container lids with holes cut out of the centers and replace flimsy string with cord.

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