

Home & School CONNECTION[®]

Working Together for School Success

May 2012

Torrance Unified School District
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SHORT NOTES

Teacher appreciation

Your youngster can make a practical gift to thank her teacher for a great year. She might arrange a “bouquet” of pens and dry-erase markers in a pretty mug. Or let her personalize a canvas bag with an iron-on patch (a book patch if the teacher likes to read, a boat if she enjoys sailing).

Library visits

Pick a time to visit the library regularly over the summer (say, every Saturday morning). Have your child sign up for the library’s summer reading program—that can motivate him to read new books each week. *Idea:* Let him take a friend along, and give them time to explore the shelves and read together.

Alternatives for time-out

A quiet-time basket can help your child calm down. Have her fill a basket with activities like a coloring book and crayons, books, and a small Lego set. Instead of giving her a time-out when she’s getting rowdy or isn’t listening, ask her to sit down with her basket and choose an activity.

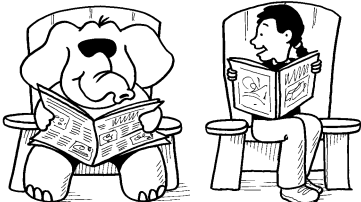
Worth quoting

“Life is an echo. What you send out comes back.” *Chinese proverb*

JUST FOR FUN

Q: Why do elephants wear sunglasses?

A: So no one will recognize them.



Young entrepreneurs

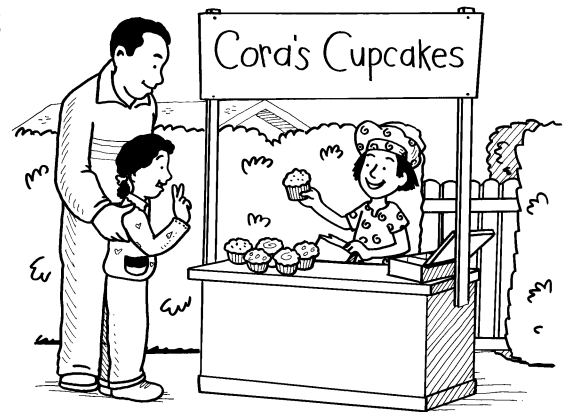
Whether your child is ordering an ice cream cone or setting up her own lemonade stand, summer is full of opportunities to see economics in action. Here are fun ways she can learn about buying and selling and supply and demand—while she practices writing and math.

Look around

Your youngster can see how businesses operate when you visit them with her. Try to stop by a small, family-owned place (ice cream shop, pizza parlor). Ask questions as you check out. Your child might discover how many scoops of ice cream or slices of pizza they sell each day, and how they make sure they have just the right amount of food to sell.

Write a business plan

Have your youngster brainstorm businesses she might like to start. She could think about what she enjoys, such as making jewelry or baking cupcakes. Then, she can write out a plan, including



what supplies she would need (cake mix, cupcake liners), who her customers would be (neighbors, relatives), and how she would sell her product (sidewalk stand).

Buy and sell

Your child can work on math skills by deciding how many products to sell and how much to charge for each item. Say she plans to make 20 friendship bracelets and she spends \$5 on embroidery floss. She’ll need to charge 25 cents per bracelet just to cover the cost of supplies ($\$5.00 \div 20 = .25$). Point out that she’ll probably want to charge more than that to cover her time and to profit from her business. ♥

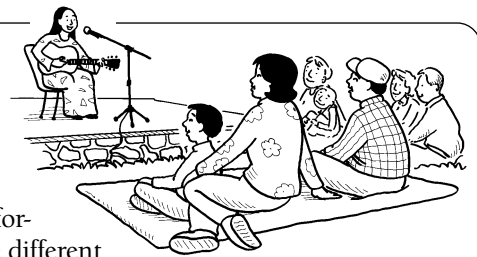
Special summer times

Would you like your family to spend more time together outdoors this summer? Try these ideas:

- Attend a summer concert series.

Check your local newspaper or town website to find out when and where performances are held. Your family can sample different kinds of music, such as bluegrass, jazz, and big band.

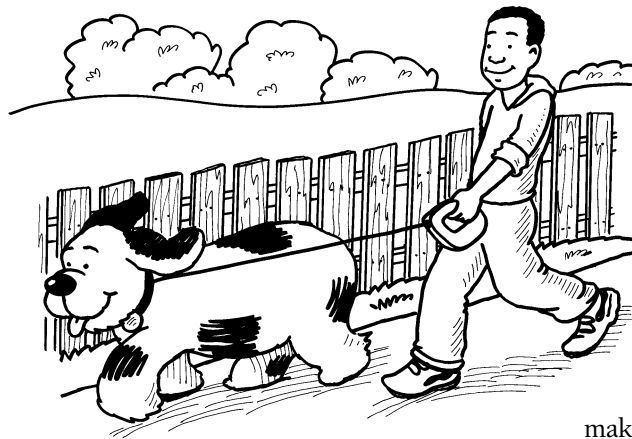
- Camp out in your backyard. Pitch a tent, and take out sleeping bags or pillows and blankets. You might play cards and eat snacks by flashlight. Then, ask everyone to listen quietly to nighttime sounds. Each person can tell what he hears (frogs croaking, crickets chirping). ♥



Smooth sailing

Although summer days can be more relaxed than school days, your youngster's vacation will go more smoothly if he knows what to expect. Consider these tips for following a routine:

- Keep your child in the habit of doing chores. Suggest that he take care of them first thing in the morning. He might water the plants, walk the dog, and take out the trash.



- Make sure your youngster has daily opportunities to exercise. Try signing him up for swimming lessons at your neighborhood pool, and go often so he can practice. Find another family, and plan to take a walk after dinner a couple nights a week.

● If your youngster has a later summer bedtime, try to make sure he still gets 9–11 hours of sleep each night. Then, about two weeks before school starts, move back his bedtime and wake-up time a little each day. That will make it easier for him to fall asleep and get up on time once school begins.♥

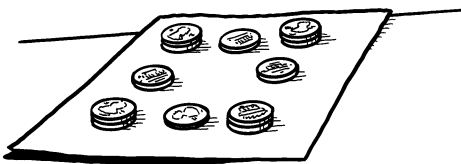
ACTIVITY CORNER



Tease your brain

Brainteasers are fun for children, and they're a great way to build logical-thinking skills. Challenge your youngster with puzzles like these:

1. Ask your child to arrange 12 pennies in a square, with 4 coins per side (the corners are shared). Can she rearrange them so each side has 5 pennies? 6 pennies? (*Hint:* Some coins must be stacked, and corners will still be shared.) Then, let her name a different number of pennies and have you make squares.



2. Put four playing cards facedown on a table. Challenge your child to get all four cards facing up. The catch? On each turn, he must flip over exactly three cards at a time. With each flip, he should leave the cards as they land—faceup or facedown. What is the fewest number of turns he needs to get all four cards faceup? (*Answer:* four.)♥



Keeping children safe

Q: My daughter spends a lot of time outdoors and at friends' houses during the summer. How can I make sure she stays safe?

A: The beginning of summer is a good time to review safety rules with your daughter. Talk about the importance of wearing a helmet every time she rides a bike or scooter. Then, help her check her helmet regularly to be sure it still fits. You might keep it in a box in your hall closet along with other outdoor gear (sunscreen, water bottles) so she'll remember all those things when she goes out to play.

Also, make sure your child is supervised outside. Consider starting a "neighborhood watch"—a different adult can watch a group of children each day while other parents make dinner or run errands.

Finally, explain to your child that your family's rules apply even when she's with friends. For instance, she must wear her seatbelt in other families' cars and never play in the street.♥



PARENT TO PARENT

A science table

My son Aidan loves learning new things in school, and he's actually a little disappointed when the year ends. Last year I asked him to tell me his favorite thing about the year, and he said the science table. He explained that the teacher had a special table where she kept items they were studying, such as magnets or plants.

I suggested that we make a science table at home. Aidan liked the idea, so we put a

small table in a corner of the kitchen, and he gathered tools like a magnifying glass, compass, and ruler.

Then, when we were outside, he looked for things for his table, such as rocks, leaves, and pinecones. We added a notebook, pencil, and crayons so he could draw pictures and diagrams. Now that summer is almost here again, we're going to pull out his science table. I wonder what he'll collect this year!♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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www.rfeonline.com
ISSN 1540-5621