

# High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### A conference plan

Meeting with your high schooler's teachers offers you a chance to review his progress and address any concerns. If you can't make your scheduled parent-teacher conference time, call or email teachers to ask about alternatives. You might be able to come at another time or set up a phone meeting.

### Math words

*Coefficient, x-axis, quotient ...* math has its own language! Understanding it is key to doing well in math class. Encourage your teenager to post a large piece of construction paper where she studies and label it "Math Word Wall." She can add terms and definitions she comes across and consult the guide when she does math assignments.

### Mind your manners

Use Thanksgiving get-togethers as an opportunity for your teen to brush up on his manners. For example, quietly remind him to let guests and older relatives serve themselves first. Also have him put away his phone so he gives his full attention to the family members he's with.

### Worth quoting

"If we did all the things we are capable of, we would literally astound ourselves." *Thomas Edison*

### Just for fun

**Q:** Why was history class shorter for cave children?

**A:** Because there was a lot less to study!



## Handling homework challenges

Knowing how to do an assignment is only part of the equation when it comes to being productive at homework time. Share these strategies your teen can use to overcome common homework challenges.

### Challenge: Remembering

**Solution:** Set up a system. In class, write assignments in your planner as soon as they're given. Before leaving school, check your planner, and pack up books and materials you'll need. At home, as you complete each assignment, immediately slide it into the correct folder in your backpack so you can turn it in.

### Challenge: Getting started

**Solution:** Make homework time automatic. At the beginning of each week, create a homework schedule that takes into account other commitments (chorus,



grocery shopping for Grandma). Soon, sitting down at 4 p.m. every Monday or 7 p.m. every Tuesday will be a habit.

### Challenge: Sticking with it

**Solution:** Set timed goals for different subjects. *Example:* 30 minutes for a chemistry chapter, 1 hour for a French project. Plan breaks, too. You'll be finished before you know it! *Tip:* Pick an "accountability buddy" for each class. Text each other your to-do lists. Then, check in at night. Did you finish? 🍀

## What's your teen learning?

Staying in touch with what your teenager learns in school is one secret to his success. Try these suggestions.

■ **Focus on his interests.** If he loves science, find out what he thinks about a possible mission to Mars. What did he learn in science class that would help him survive in a space colony? Or if he enjoys literature, invite him to recommend a book for you to read.

■ **Offer your help.** Volunteer to talk through your high schooler's research paper ideas. Or share a technique you use to memorize information, then try it together with his government notes. 🍀



# The truth about consequences

When your teen faces consequences from breaking a rule or making a poor decision, it helps him learn to make better choices next time. Consider these ideas for using natural and logical consequences.

**Allow for natural outcomes.** To let your high schooler learn from mistakes, resist the urge to fix things for him. If he leaves his dirty uniform on his bedroom floor, don't wash it for him. If he has to wear a dirty



uniform or sit out a game, he'll be more inclined to take care of his responsibilities in the future.

## Set logical consequences.

Some choices, such as not wearing his bike helmet, may not have a result that bothers your teen (he still had fun). In that case, give him a consequence that's directly related to his poor decision. *Example:* No biking for a week. Remembering how he felt without his bike may remind him to wear his helmet when he rides. 🍌

## Parent to Parent

### Word swaps

My son Evan told me about a vocabulary game he played in English class called "Synonym Swap." Everyone got a note card with a song title, and students had to "rename that tune" by replacing words with synonyms. Then, classmates tried to guess the original title. Evan, for example, changed "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" to "Glimmer, Glimmer, Miniature Nova."



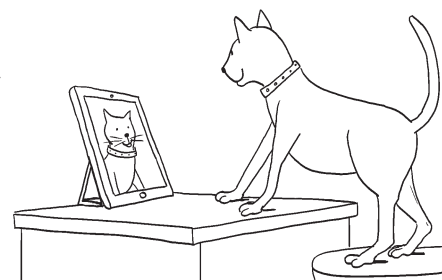
We decided to play the game at dinner. We each shared one fact about our day, swapping in several synonyms. The first person to decode the sentence got to go next. I said, "I motored to the retail establishment to purchase rations," and Evan figured out that I meant, "I drove to the store to buy food." Then he said, "I felt sanguine about my examination today," and my daughter guessed that Evan was optimistic about his test.

Next, we plan to play with movie titles. 🍌

## Make a how-to video

Your teenager can practice public speaking and presentation skills by making a video to share with family and friends. Here's how.

- 1. Pick a subject.** What would your teen like to teach others to do? Perhaps she interviewed for jobs last summer and learned strategies to prepare for interviews.
- 2. Create an outline.** Write an introduction that summarizes what viewers will learn. Then, list steps they should take. *Examples:* Research the company. Write sample questions and answers. Do a mock interview. Choose a professional-looking outfit.
- 3. Find props and actors.** Get a computer, folder, and resume. Recruit a friend to help you conduct the mock interview.
- 4. Record!** Prop up your smartphone or tablet, or perform in front of a laptop.
- 5. Share.** Show your video to friends and family members who might need to interview for a job. 🍌



## Q & A A social media contract

**Q** My daughter is a computer whiz. But I worry she's not prepared to handle issues like cyberbullying and sexting. How can I help?

**A** Consider making a social media contract with your child. The act of writing one up lets you discuss your concerns in a nonjudgmental way.

Start by sharing your thoughts and asking for her input. What does she think cyberbullying includes? How would she react if someone sent her an inappropriate photo or asked her to send one to him?

Then, list the terms of the contract, such as:

- "Friend" parents on any account you open.
- Use privacy settings so only friends have permission to view posts.
- Only post photos you'd be okay with your parents seeing.

■ Stick to positive comments about others.

Finally, both of you should sign the contract. Make it clear that her online privileges depend on her honoring its terms. 🍌



## OUR PURPOSE

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

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