

WEDGWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1st MARKING PERIOD NEWSLETTER – 2009-2010

THE MUSTANG

PRINCIPAL'S NEWS



Dear Parents:

The teaching staff of Wedgwood School prepared the majority of this newsletter. We hope that it helps to highlight for you some of the activities and learning experiences in which your children are involved.

There are a couple of reminders that I wanted to take a moment to review with our school community.

Drop off and pick up procedures

If you are dropping off your children for school, please remember that students should be dropped off in the side parking lot, not in front of the building. Students can then enter through the side door, and parents should drive around the loop to exit. Please do not drop your children off in front where they would have to walk between the buses. The speed limit in the parking lot is 10 m.p.h. – please watch out for students. It is best to drop off between 8:55 and 9:00 am. That is when supervision is available. Also, for parents that pick up their children at 3:20 pm, please meet them in the side parking lot so that they are not involved in bus traffic. **We ask that parents get out of their cars and escort their children through the parking lot.** Please arrange your schedule to pick up students on time at the end of the day.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 12/1-2/09 - PTO Holiday Shop – 6-8pm
All Purpose Room
- 12/2/09 – Family Night
- 12/4/09 – Grade 2 – TD Bank Center
“Junie B. Jones”
- 12/4/09 – Market Day Orders Due
- 12/7/09 – Report Cards
- 12/7-8/09 – Early Dismissal 1:40 pm
Lunch Served
Parent Conferences
- 12/9/09 – School Closed
Parent Conferences
- 12/11/09 – Market Day Pick Up
- 12/23/09 – Early Dismissal – 1:40 pm
Lunch Served
- 12/24/09-1/3/10 – School Closed
Winter Break
- 1/4/10 – School Re-opens
- 1/5/10 – Market Day Orders Due
- 1/5/10 – Grade 1 – Hoops for Heart
Assembly
- 1/11/09 – Market Day Pick Up
- 1/12/10 – Family Night
- 1/18/10 – School Closed
Martin Luther King day
- 1/19/10 – Progress Reports
- 1/19/10 – Gr. 2 – Practice Test – OLSAT
- 1/20-21/10 – Grade 2 – OLSAT

FIRST GRADE NEWS



Greetings from all of Wedgwood's first grade classrooms! The students are doing an excellent job as they learn the daily routines and expectations of their new, longer day of school. They are now able to choose a bought lunch, successfully enter their pin numbers, locate classrooms, the gym and the library and board their bus each day. We are proud of their independence!

First Graders are excited about reading and have learned many new skills and strategies. Our students' "word study" program is called Foundations. This program teaches letter sounds and letter formation, capitalization, punctuation, sentence dictation and proofreading procedures, and many rules of spelling. You might hear your child talk about "trick words" (words that cannot be sounded out), digraphs (two consonants that stand together and make one sound), bonus letters (ff, ll, ss and zz words) and "glued sounds" (word families such as am, an all.) This is an exciting approach and we are amazed at how well it is working in each classroom. Children continue to point as they read from left to right, they "get their mouths ready" for beginning sounds and they look for picture clues. As high frequency words, sentences and books go home, we appreciate the wonderful work parents are doing to reinforce these building blocks of reading. Our students are gaining self-confidence and seem to be able to take risks with their learning.

During our math lessons, we have been introducing and reviewing counting by ones, twos, fives and tens, counting money and telling time. We are using many tools to help bring abstract concepts to a concrete

understanding, such as: number lines, number grids, analog clocks, coins, templates and calculators. We appreciate parents working with their children at home in reviewing these skills and in completing homework.

Our first grade students have participated in several school-wide activities. The Book Fair was a great success and many children bought books to read to parents and siblings. During Fire Prevention Week, the children participated in an assembly and were taught how to remain safe if they are ever in a fire situation. The children met a new fire department mascot and got to submit a possible name for this mascot! Our classes went outside to see and hear about a Washington Township fire truck. They were very impressed with the fire equipment, especially the huge fire ladder!

In October, children studied the life of Christopher Columbus and his voyage to the new world. Historical and biographical accounts were read and writing projects were used to reinforce this knowledge. Around this time, Wedgwood First Graders enjoyed celebrating Halloween, too! Our school parade was fun for all and the students proudly walked throughout the school and school grounds. They loved having family members and friends see their awesome costumes. Teachers in classrooms emphasized the safety aspects of the holiday and first graders learned the rules of having a safe but enjoyable holiday. Our students did a fabulous job decorating our halls with their Thanksgiving turkey projects. Each project is unique and special- just like each child!

We enjoyed our exciting class trip to the Philadelphia Zoo. It was a wonderful day with parent helpers and classmates. We observed many animals in their natural habitats-from apes to zebras. Our next class trip will be on February 3rd, when we go to the Performing Arts Center to see "Henry and Mudge."

Thank you for all that you do to help your child succeed in school. From signing test papers, to helping with homework, to turning off the TV and reading with your child each evening, YOU make the difference. We appreciate all the extras you do each day to enrich and educate your child!

SECOND GRADE NEWS

Greetings from all second grade classrooms! As the season has changed from summer to autumn, our second graders are growing into independent students. Autumn has been a time of great learning. We, as teachers, are amazed by how much your children have accomplished in such a short period of time.

The children have done an excellent job of adjusting to writing in their assignment books daily. Please continue to sign these homework books each night. This is an important link between home and school and it also teaches your child the importance of being responsible for homework assignments. This is an example of being an independent student.

Our classrooms have been very active and busy. The growth that is taking place in your child's reading everyday is amazing. The skills that were learned last year are beginning to grow and we are certain that you are enjoying the love of reading that your child is showing. Foster this love at home by reading together, frequenting the library and turning off the television to enjoy a good book. When you are sharing books together concentrate on vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension.

Math is full of new and exciting concepts. Everyday is packed full of learning. Please continue to oversee your child's nightly homework, practice counting money, telling time on an analog clock and play some of the wonderful games that your child has learned in class. Take the opportunity to reinforce basic addition and subtraction facts. Playing games such as Dominoes, War and Dice will help to reinforce these facts in a fun way. Also, it gives your child and you some quality time together.

Social Studies and Science are the highlights of many second graders' days. Our curriculum is full of challenging vocabulary and concepts. It is exciting to learn about our

government, voting, famous Americans, animals, light and sound. These are just a few of the many areas that your child will learn about this year. We hope that you have had the opportunity to talk about these areas at your dinner table.

November brought an opportunity for our second graders to celebrate a Thanksgiving Feast. The children gathered together to sing, eat and to focus on thankfulness. This is one of the favorite memories of the year! We often find ourselves humming a little tune "We are thankful..."

On a final note, we would like to thank you parents for all that you do to make our job, as educators so much easier. We appreciate all of the "little things" even down to making sure that your child is well rested and fed a healthy breakfast before coming to school. We are looking forward to an awesome year together!

THIRD GRADE NEWS

The third graders are off to a wonderful start! We are so proud of how easily the students have adapted to third grade! There are so many exciting and interesting activities planned for them this school year!

Most of us start our day with Word Study. We enjoy the various games and activities which help us learn our new words and spelling patterns. Thanks to our second grade teachers, we know how to write in lower case cursive letters. We are currently learning upper case letters. Extra practice at home always helps.

Third grade has been busy exploring math in an exciting way through the Everyday Math program. This program uses various strategies to develop critical thinking. It provides the students with practice of basic skills through games and routines. In Unit 1, the class established routines and reviewed number patterns. In Unit 2, the class added and subtracted whole numbers, with special emphasis placed on basic facts and their extensions. The students learned about measurement, area, and perimeter in Unit 3. The children are currently working on multiplication and division in Unit 4.

Please feel free to assist your child in studying their fact triangles every night. Your child can also benefit from playing Everyday Math games and computer games. This will make learning math concepts much easier and, not to mention, a whole lot of fun!

We are reading many different genres of literature this year: realistic fiction, historical fiction, traditional literature, fantasy, mysteries, and nonfiction. The students have just completed their first book report with great success. We really enjoyed listening to their mystery book reports! They will be assigned a different book report for each marking period. We encourage your child to read chapter books and nonfiction books at home and in school. Reading nonfiction and reading for longer durations of time are important skills in third grade.

Third graders love our new writing program! In “Being a Writer”, the students are exposed to different genres of literature. This year we will read and write personal narratives, fiction stories, expository nonfiction, and functional essays. The children can improve their writing skills by keeping journals/response logs at home. You and your child can write to each other daily. This is a great form of communication!

Social Studies is so much fun! After learning about how to use, read, and write maps, we learned about the Anasazi and Plain Indian tribe. We wrote our own third grade constitutions in honor of Constitution Day. The First Thanksgiving unit was a blast! Our culminating activity for the unit was a traditional Thanksgiving feast. We even dressed like the Pilgrims and the Native Americans! There are many other interesting topics to explore the American Revolution, Washington D.C., immigration, and holidays. We are also learning about the customs and cultures of various countries through our country project. Thus far, the students have done a wonderful job with the first phase of the project. We

cannot wait to hear their final presentations in the second marking period!

Third grade would like to graciously thank the parents for all the things they do. We look forward to working with you this year and hope you enjoy third grade as much as we enjoy teaching it!

FOURTH GRADE NEWS

Fourth graders are off to a fantastic start this year! The students have become accustomed to the procedures and expectations of fourth grade. They are making tremendous strides toward becoming responsible and organized individuals.

In Language Arts this year, students will be learning many new concepts. We focus on small group instruction as well as large group lessons to reinforce skills. Novels are incorporated into the instruction as well as using the anthology. Students will complete book projects at home to reinforce the value of reading. Students will be exposed to different kinds of writing through various trade book examples of each genre through our “Being A Writer” Program. They will be intrinsically motivated to write and will learn to develop their writing through practice and mastering the writing process. Students work collaboratively to develop writing topics as well as revising and improving text. We are very excited to implement this new writing program into our curriculum.

In Math, we focus on problem solving and relating concepts to everyday life. The curriculum is very hands-on, enabling the students to grasp ideas easier. You can practice problem solving strategies at home by asking your child questions relating to everyday experiences (grocery store, paying bills, cooking, etc.). Our goal is have math become more meaningful to their everyday lives. It is a great motivator in the classroom for the student to appreciate the value of their efforts at home. In addition, math facts are essential this year and it would be very beneficial to have continued practice with basic facts.

Social Studies will be taught during the 1st and 4th marking periods. Our curriculum focuses on

the growth of New Jersey and its importance in United States history. Students will learn about the colonization and conflict in our state. The social studies curriculum provides the students with factual information relating to such an important part of our history.

Our Science curriculum is taught during the 2nd and 3rd marking periods. The units include Systems and Cycles, Forces and Motion, and Rocks and Minerals. A constructivist approach is utilized for added reinforcement in learning the concepts. Students are asked to predict, hypothesize, and draw conclusions based on the information provided.

As we look forward to meeting these new challenges with your children, we thank you so much for your efforts at home. The signing of the Friday Folders, monitoring of homework and signing of homework books and the priority you give to school are some of our greatest assets.

FIFTH GRADE NEWS



Fifth grade is off to an exciting and fun start this school year, and we are all getting settled into our routine of being back to school. Time is truly flying by, because we are so busy learning new and interesting things! Fifth grade would like to welcome Mrs. Donna McGough to our staff here at Wedgwood. She came over from Whitman Elementary School, and it is a true pleasure having her here at Wedgwood! In addition, we would also like to welcome Mrs. Mattera to our grade level. She came up from fourth grade, and fifth grade is so happy to have her join our grade level!

The entire fifth grade is hard at work creating young authors using the new writing program, "Being a Writer". Students are writing entries each day in their writers'

notebook, and also being exposed to great examples of good writing through mentor text. Students created a writing community within their classrooms and established a comfortable environment to share ideas and writing pieces. Students published a piece and are currently finishing up their Personal Narrative writing piece. Our main focus was adding sensory details so readers get a clear mental image while reading the piece of writing. Next we are on to writing fiction!

All the fifth graders are filling their days with lively literature! Ms. Gelzunas' class just completed Theme 1, and are currently reading the novel Holes. Students are having rich discussions about the novel, as well as making connections with the characters. To end the novel, Ms. Gelzunas' class will continue to discuss the novel in their "book talks". In Mrs. Mattera's class students completed the novel Maniac Magee by author Jerry Spinelli. During this novel students were introduced to Jerry Spinelli's unique style of writing. Mrs. Mattera's class is currently reading the novel Sees Behind Trees, in which they learn about a character who can see with more than just his eyes! Mrs. Evans' energized readers have just finished the novel Number the Stars. They concentrated on the theme of bravery and the importance of helping others. As they finished the novel, students interviewed family and friends their ideas about bravery. To demonstrate these ideas, they designed stars for a bulletin board display. Mrs. McGough's class is also very busy reading the novel The Indian in the Cupboard. Students are applying many comprehension strategies as they complete this novel! Mrs. Amendt's class has diligently finished up reading their class novel Charlie and the Chocolate Factory! The students are being introduced to many different characters with unique personalities, especially Mr. Wonka, a creative candy inventor. As a culminating activity, the students either created an ad to sell one of Mr. Wonka's special candies, a new candy invention, or students are creating a recipe that requires CHOCOLATE!

In Math, fifth grade has successfully completed the first three chapters in the Everyday Math Program! We have learned how to use the

Geometry Template, which is a specialized tool for angle measure and construction. Next we are moving onto Unit 4 which focuses on division. Just a reminder, please keep the Family Letter that is sent home at the beginning of each chapter close at hand. The Family Letter has some answers to the Math homework, and should be used as a reference if your child is having trouble with their Math homework. We will continue to be working hard in Math, and using games to reinforce the skills taught! Also, continue to practice Math Facts!

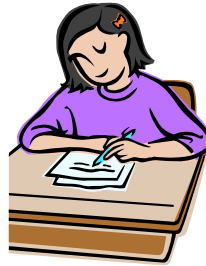
The big news in Social Studies class is that fifth grade has finished working on The Explorers Unit. Fifth grade also researched various Native American tribes and created posters to display all their information. Mrs. Evans' Social Studies students used the computer lab to research trade jobs and then selected the most interesting job. During American Education Week a Colonial Trade Job Fair was held in which students dressed the part and demonstrated the everyday work each job entailed. Students also created a sign for their shop and then wrote a report describing their trade job! Next, fifth grade will head into the American Revolution.

Sensational things are happening in the Science classes! All classes have been working on Ocean Explorations. Students have learned about the properties of salt water, ocean movement, and the ocean floor. As a culminating activity to oceans, students will also select a sea creature and research about the creature's habitat, special features, prey and predators using the computer program, "Field Trip to the Sea". Next, onto Space Exploration!

On a final note fifth graders participated in a community relations project in cooperation with Duffield's Farm Market. Each class created a scarecrow based on a particular person, literary character, or historical person. The teachers would like to thank all the parents and family members who

came to help us with this project! We would also like to congratulate Mrs. Finocchiaro's class on their win!!

LITERACY AT HOME



Providing a print rich home environment is an excellent way for parents to help their children become strong readers. It is more important than ever for children to see and hear the printed word as it competes with the wide expanse of technological gadgets and video games.

Here are some ways parents can instill the love of reading in their children at home:



Be a Role Model – Let your child see you reading books, magazines and/or the newspaper each day.



Time to Read – Set aside a 20-30 minute time frame for your child to read each day. Encourage your child to read a wide variety of books, magazines or articles of interest.



Reading as a Reward – When your child does something worthy of praise, provide them with a reward related to reading. For example, an extra story at bedtime or a special trip to the library or bookstore.



The Local Library – Become a member of your local library and let your child have his/her own library card. Children

who make frequent visits to the library often become avid lifelong readers.

RESOURCE ROOM NEWS



Read Aloud – Children who are read to often have a strong speaking vocabulary and are able to read with expression.



A Personal Library – Provide a special spot in your home where your child can go to choose various types of reading materials such as fiction books, nonfiction books, reference books, a children’s dictionary, and magazines for kids.



Writing Time – Encourage your child to use written expression in various ways such as keeping a journal, writing letters or creating stories.



Word of the Day – Have your child learn a new word every day. Keep the words in a special box and review all the words learned at the end of each month. Invent games using the words as a way to earn points for a special reward – perhaps a new book!



Holiday Traditions – Don’t forget to make reading a part of the holiday celebrations. If you don’t already read a special holiday story each year, why not start this year? Encourage your child to write thank you notes for the presents he/she receives. And remember to add books to your gift list!

As you plant the seeds of literacy in a print rich environment you will have the satisfaction of watching your child grow as reader.

The 1st and 2nd grade students in Mrs. Sanders’ Resource Room thoroughly enjoyed putting on a production of “Where the Wild Things Are” in October. The following week they were treated to an animated video of the book as well as a DVD of their work on the production. All the students are looking forward to participating in another Readers’ Theater drama. Thank you for making time to see our play.

Our read-aloud stories have been focused on various aspects of Thanksgiving. The students discussed the things they are thankful for and wrote about them. The classes have been polishing their fine motor skills by creating harvest items for the hallway display. They also enjoyed making “Thanksgiving Potatoes” after listening to the story, *Big Bob and the Thanksgiving Potatoes*.

In math the 1st graders continue to work on money; we will be introducing the dime very shortly. The students enjoy the games that help them practice the concepts and skills. They are learning some “cheers” to assist them in identifying even and odd numbers. They also are sorting dominoes by even and odd. In 2nd grade the students are learning about Frames and Arrows that have 2 arrows in the problems. They are telling and recording time to 5 minute intervals using analog and digital clocks. They are working on making change by “counting up.” They enjoy the math games that use real coins, spinners, and dice.

COMPUTER NEWS



Keyboarding is stressed in third, fourth, and fifth grades with the typing programs: Type-to-Learn and Type-for-Fun. Students learn to access their computer stations for a broad spectrum of skills. Each successive year, their knowledge base of Computer Literacy is strengthened through progressive lessons.

Students gain skills in word-processing. Third graders use Microsoft's Scholastic Keys as an introduction to the components of word-processing through acrostic poems, stories, and letters, and other projects. Introduction to Microsoft Word begins in fourth grade. Skill-building and familiarity with this program continues in fifth grade which culminates in creating PowerPoint Presentations using a MultiMedia approach.

Other aspects of Computer Literacy include the use of data-base and spreadsheet programs. Students also enjoy being creative in a popular drawing program - KidPix. In accessing the internet, they also learn about proper ethics and safety when navigating the web. They use safe internet sites to do research for projects.

The computer lab is also used for classes to come in with their teachers in the afternoon and type up reports, poems, letters or other creative activities and do research on the web to coordinate and enhance the classroom curriculum.

Students will have access to the Dell Laptops that were purchased with the grant from the New Jersey Governor's School of Excellence awarded to Wedgwood School. The

Computers On Wheels (COWS) will go into the classrooms with wireless connectivity so that research or projects can be accomplished in large group settings.

HEALTH OFFICE NEWS

Deborah Sernicola, RN
Wedgwood School Nurse



I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our families back to our school and to welcome our new families also. This is my third year at Wedgwood and I look forward to working with everyone. I invite you to feel free to contact me regarding any health questions/issues and I will try my best to accommodate all.

This is normally a very busy time of the year in the health office with screenings and reports, but on top of that we have seen an increase in illnesses in light of the recent flu situation. At this time I would like to reiterate what was in the letter sent home at the beginning of the school year:

- Teach your child good cough and hand hygiene etiquette, i.e. covering coughs/sneezes, wash hands frequently, etc.
- Monitor yourself and your child for flu-like symptoms (temp over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, chills, cough, &/or sore throat, muscle pain, fatigue and vomiting/diarrhea)
- If you suspect that you or your child is getting the flu, call your health care provider for advisement.
- Plan ahead for your child's care in the event your child becomes ill. Remember they are not to return to school unless fever free for 24 hours without medication and if they become ill in school, they need to be picked up in a timely fashion, i.e. within less than one hour.

I believe if we all adhere to these recommendations we can decrease the chances of a widespread outbreak. I recommend that you keep informed properly by only using the appropriate web sites for information. The following are a few:

Department of Health and Senior Services:
<http://nj.gov/health>

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention:
www.cdc.gov/flu

We are currently doing the annual health screenings. All children in grades 1 through 5 will have height, weight and blood pressure measured. In addition,, students in grade 2 will have vision and hearing, grade 3 hearing, grade 4 vision. Scoliosis will be done in grade 5 later in the school year. Please note that if a teacher or a parent feels any student is having vision or hearing difficulties and they do not fall into these grades, they need to notify the health office and they will be screened. You will be notified of any problems should they arise. I do look forward to this time of year because it gives me the opportunity to get to know the new students and get reacquainted with the returning students.

I would like to remind all parents that all medications (prescription and over-the-counter, i.e. Tylenol, cough drops, ambesol, etc.) that need to be administered during school hours may be done so only with compliance of our Board of Education Policy.

As a little housecleaning reminder, the lost and found is located in the attendance office outside the health office. The clothes are piling up. If your child is missing any items please take the time to come in and look through them. Also, to avoid this I would recommend labeling all personal belongings that tend to get misplaced to help insure their return.

Last, but surely not least, I want to take this opportunity to thank the PTO for purchasing the wonderful, much needed cabinets just installed in the health office. They are a beautiful addition. It has helped to organize the medical equipment. I am so grateful and the students like it also.

Once again, I thank you in advance for all your cooperation and support throughout the years. I wish you all a safe, happy, healthy holiday season!!!!

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

Cindy Volpin

Learning is Your Child's Responsibility

Your oldest child needs you to help her research information for a paper that's due tomorrow. Your middle child says he has to make a trip to the store for a science project-right now! Your youngest says that if you don't go over spelling words, she'll fail the test. How did your desire to help your kids make them think that their schoolwork was your responsibility? Put the responsibility for learning back where it belongs-on your children. Here are some suggestions from the Parent Institute.

Problems arise when parents aren't involved with their children's learning, but being over-involved can cause problems, too. Over-involved parents end up assuming too much responsibility, and their kids assume little or none. To change this balance, hold your child accountable for his/her actions. For instance, does he/she wait until the very last minute to start a project? What do you do when he/she tells you he/she needs to make a trip to the store **right now** for a project due tomorrow?

If you're an over-involved parent, you may get in the car. Instead, try a different approach. Say something like, "I'm sorry. I can't go to the store today. I can do it tomorrow." "But I'll fail," your child will answer. "Tomorrow," you'll say. Several things may happen. First, your child may discover that he/she doesn't need to make that trip to the store to complete the project. Second, the lowered grade may teach him/her an important lesson about putting things off until the last minute. In any case, you've

made sure that he/she experiences the consequences of his/her behavior.

Sometimes parents try to shield children from the consequences of their actions. They return their library books. They finish their chores. They may even do homework for them!

All of that is really sending a message that parents don't think their children can do things for themselves. In the end, it doesn't help children grow up.

By holding your child accountable, you help them learn that actions do have consequences. If they forget a library book, they'll have to use their money to pay the fine. If they frequently leave their lunch on the kitchen table, they'll have to borrow lunch money or go hungry.

Until children accept responsibility for their own learning, success in school will be a struggle. Parents can help by showing interest but stopping short of doing the work. Children must experience the results of their actions.

Students are identified to us either through their classroom teacher or by parent referral. If your child is not already receiving speech services and your teacher has noticed possible speech concerns, she will be contacting you shortly. You will be invited to discuss these concerns with one of us and help determine if a speech evaluation is needed at this time.

Please note that although speech (articulation) errors are very common among students in elementary school, they are no longer developmentally appropriate once a child is 8 years of age. Children with multiple speech errors may need intervention earlier.

We are looking forward to another great year of providing fun, yet beneficial, Speech and Language Services to the children of Wedgwood School. If you have any concerns about your child's speech or language skills, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Mrs. D. Camporeale
Mrs. J. DuBray

DOES MY CHILD NEED SPEECH SERVICES?



As the Speech/Language Specialists at Wedgwood Elementary School, it is our job to help children develop age-appropriate communication skills. The areas we address include: fluency (such as stuttering), voice (such as hoarseness), language development (such as difficulty with listening or expressing themselves orally) and articulation (such as difficulty producing speech sounds like r, s, sh, etc.).

Enrichment Ideas from the Learning Lab

Students in the enrichment programs know thinking skills are 'caught and taught'. They need to both observe and practice to learn how to think critically and creatively. As we direct our children to pathways of success, parents can be teachers, too. Here are some research-based suggestions to help boost brainpower.

Asking 'Big' Questions – Guide your child to higher levels of thinking. Questions that begin with 'how' and 'why' produce deep thought. Try asking the following - *What connections can you make? Why did you make that choice? How does it remind you of...? How is this similar to what you have learned?*

Developing Reading and Language Skills – Include rich vocabulary, use of analogies and metaphors in speaking with your child. These work to stimulate brain neuron growth.

It increases endomorphs and oxygen, energizing the brain.

Be Active- Movement increase blood flow and oxygen levels, thereby boosting the capacity of the brain to learn.

Practice Patience- ‘Give me a minute’ allows for time lapse processing. Often the information is there, it just takes a moment to find it – just like the car keys!

Crack the Creativity Code- To increase creativity, develop creative habits of mind. Watch a comedian and you will notice that he/she looks for the "different angle" on everyday things. An activity that fits this category is finding more ways to use an existing object, or ways to minimize interruptions.

Show, don’t tell - Teaching others/immediate demonstration of what was learned increases retention up to 90% (*Instructor Magazine, 11-03*)

Dive into Directions – When playing a game at home, review the directions with your child. Remind them of the many ways you also follow directions throughout your daily routine. The #1 problem for missed standardized testing items is not lack of instruction, but failure to follow instructions.

Fly High! – Keep challenges high and threat of failure low.

Engage the Eyes- The brain naturally seeks to create patterns. Use of graphic organizers, such as lists, Venn Diagrams, and graphs, increases the retention of knowledge through following the brain’s natural pathway.

LOL ☺ - Studies have shown a 50 – 65% increase in learning when humor is used.