

Daily Learning Planner

*Ideas families can use to help students
do well in school*

Gadsden City Schools



THE
PARENT
INSTITUTE®

September • October • November 2024

September 2024

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Students Do Well in School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- 1. Help your child set a school-related goal. Write down the goal and the steps your student will take to reach it. Post in a visible spot.
- 2. Teach your child to record all activities, events, test dates and project due dates on a family calendar.
- 3. Role-play meeting new people together. Help your child practice smiling and making eye contact when saying hello.
- 4. Explain that learning often takes effort, and that you expect your child's best effort on schoolwork.
- 5. Help your child decide how to organize notebooks and folders (paper or online) to make finding handouts, schoolwork and tests easier.
- 6. Establish a digital curfew. Devices should be turned off at least one hour before your child's bedtime.
- 7. Have your child clean out school bags each weekend.
- 8. Learn about school events for families. Make plans to attend at least one.
- 9. Ask your child to play a favorite song for you. Then, play a song you loved at your middle schooler's age.
- 10. Ask your child questions about the school day. "What was the topic in math class today?" "Who did you sit with at lunch?"
- 11. Have your child keep an "emotions" journal. When and why did strong feelings occur? How did your child handle them? What happened?
- 12. Encourage your child to keep paper handy when reading. Your student can jot down unfamiliar words and look them up later.
- 13. Show your child that you value education by talking about something you learned recently.
- 14. Ask your child's opinion about something.
- 15. Have your child research the state flag. What do its elements represent?
- 16. Reduce distractions during study time. Have your child turn off the TV, loud music and any devices not needed to complete schoolwork.
- 17. Give your child a new responsibility. Say how proud you are that your middle schooler is mature enough to handle it.
- 18. Peer pressure can be positive. Encourage group activities like sports and volunteering.
- 19. Discuss social media use with your child. Review privacy settings, and talk about what is appropriate to post and what's not.
- 20. Ask your child to tell you about the similarities and the differences among this year's classes.
- 21. Have family members take funny photos of each other. Ask your child to write captions.
- 22. Let your child see you reading regularly for pleasure as well as for information. This teaches that reading is important and fun.
- 23. Discuss each day's assignments with your child.
- 24. Have your child teach you something that might be on the next test. It's an effective way to reinforce learning.
- 25. Display a world map. Have your child look up places in the news.
- 26. Encourage your child to find out when teachers are available to answer questions or give extra help.
- 27. Make today dictionary day. Talk with your child about new words that should be in the dictionary.
- 28. Together, make a time line of your child's life.
- 29. Ask family members to pick one bad habit they'd like to replace with a better one. Practice the new habit for several weeks to help it "stick."
- 30. Play a board game with your child.

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- 1. Ask who your child's role models are and why.
- 2. Students who read regularly earn higher grades. Start a daily reading time for the entire family.
- 3. At dinner, list reasons you appreciate your middle schooler.
- 4. When your child tells you something important, restate it to make sure you understood.
- 5. Invent a recipe together. If it doesn't work, brainstorm ways to fix it.
- 6. Share a joke with your child today.
- 7. Tell your child about your day—in as much detail as you'd like to hear about your child's.
- 8. When reviewing schoolwork, comment on things your child did correctly before giving constructive feedback.
- 9. Discuss the character traits your child has that will eventually help in the workplace.
- 10. If dawdling is a problem for your middle schooler, set a timer and challenge your child to "beat the clock."
- 11. As a family, create a routine that will make mornings easier.
- 12. Before your middle schooler attends a party, make sure it will be supervised by an adult.
- 13. Teach your child how to sew on a button today.
- 14. How would your child handle peer pressure to try drugs or alcohol? Role-play ways to say *no*.
- 15. Test observation skills. Can your child describe someone you both just passed on the street? Challenge each other!
- 16. Read a history or science reading assignment with your child. Ask, "Can you tell me about what this said in your own words?"
- 17. Give your child a houseplant and the responsibility for taking care of it.
- 18. "Because I said so!" is frustrating for middle schoolers to hear. Explain your reasoning.
- 19. Talk with your child about ways to resolve conflicts peacefully.
- 20. Encourage your child to read during quiet times at home. Before bed is a perfect time to read.
- 21. Share a photo with your child of yourself at the same age. Tell some stories about what that age was like for you.
- 22. Talk with your child about mistakes. What are some ways people can learn from their mistakes?
- 23. Encourage your child to get to know at least three new people at school outside of the usual group of friends.
- 24. Remind your child that washing hands often is an important way to prevent the spread of illness.
- 25. Do something you and your child have never done before. Try a new food. Listen to a new type of music. Visit a new place.
- 26. Play Math Jeopardy at dinner. Say a number. Who can come up with a problem for which it is the answer?
- 27. Ask how your child feels the school year is going so far.
- 28. Remind your child that there are no stupid questions. Students who really want to learn should ask questions in class.
- 29. With your child, try to list things you each did two days ago.
- 30. Encourage your child to combine physical activity and learning by listening to an audiobook while exercising.
- 31. Ask your child, "If you could change one thing in the entire world what would it be?"

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November 2024

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- 1. Take turns with your child making statements and deciding whether each one is *fact* or *opinion*.
- 2. Teach your child about investing. Create an imaginary stock portfolio, and have your child track the value over time.
- 3. Ask your child to make graphs of family habits. How long does each person sleep? Who reads the most?
- 4. Talk about stereotypes with your child. Discuss why they're unfair.
- 5. See how many words you and your child can use to describe the day's weather. For example, *foggy*, *cloudy*, *wet*, *dreary*.
- 6. Discuss an international news event with your child. How is it affecting the nation?
- 7. Make up a story with your child. Take turns adding sentences.
- 8. Reach out to your child's teachers and counselor throughout the year with questions you have about how your student is doing in school.
- 9. Plan a weekend family activity. Let your child invite a friend.
- 10. At the grocery store, have your child estimate how many apples are in two pounds. Use the scales to check.
- 11. It's Veterans Day in the U.S. and Remembrance Day in Canada. Talk with your child about showing respect for veterans and their service.
- 12. Ask your child, "What does the word *happiness* mean to you?"
- 13. Practice estimating together. How many popped popcorn kernels will fit in your child's hand? How many oranges are in a bag?
- 14. Help your child use small chunks of time as opportunities to study or review.
- 15. Ask your child: "Do you think honesty is always the best policy? Why or why not?"
- 16. Have your child spend 10 minutes at night getting ready for the next day. Mornings will be calmer.
- 17. Help your child think of ways to help others.
- 18. Learn a tongue twister. At dinner, challenge everyone to repeat it three times fast.
- 19. Start a family journal of highlights and accomplishments.
- 20. Review what your child should do in an emergency, such as a house fire.
- 21. Address misbehavior by applying consequences that teach, rather than punish.
- 22. Tell your child a family story. Try to think of one that teaches a lesson.
- 23. Spend a few minutes talking with your child at bedtime. Mention something positive your middle schooler did during the day.
- 24. Help your child prioritize assignments and do them in that order.
- 25. Sort through family photos together. Let your child pick some to put on display.
- 26. Play a game with your child that builds thinking skills, such as chess.
- 27. Have your child pretend to be mayor for the day. What three ideas would make your community a better place?
- 28. At the dinner table, have each family member share something they're thankful for.
- 29. Ask your child to write a thank-you note to someone who's been helpful.
- 30. Take a walk or enjoy some physical activity with your child.

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