

# Daily Learning Planner

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

Gadsden City Schools



THE  
**PARENT**  
INSTITUTE®

December • January • February 2025-2026

## December 2025

- 1. Share the responsibility for holiday preparations. As kids help, they appreciate holidays even more.
- 2. Have your child use construction paper strips to make a chain. Remove one link every night to count down to a special day.
- 3. Talk with your child about the importance of telling an adult when someone is being bullied.
- 4. Make today "dictionary day." Talk together about new words that your child thinks should be in the dictionary.
- 5. Post a new vocabulary word and its definition on the bathroom mirror. Change it every three or four days.
- 6. Look online for free events for families in your area. Plan to attend one this month.
- 7. Make a jigsaw puzzle together. Glue a picture from a magazine onto cardboard. Cut it into puzzle pieces.
- 8. Brainstorm with your child about what would be a fun activity to make an annual tradition. Then, start it!
- 9. At the grocery store, ask your child to estimate the weights of different vegetables and fruits. Weigh them and compare.
- 10. Discuss different ways animals survive the winter months. What do bears do? How about birds?
- 11. Hold a family meeting. Decide on some goals as a family.
- 12. Together, list a few words your child uses often. Then, look up *synonyms* (words with similar meanings) for those words.
- 13. Talk with your child about times when it's important to say *no*, even to an adult.
- 14. Wash your hands with your child before each meal. Talk about why frequent handwashing is so important.

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

- 15. Exercise as a family. Choose an activity everyone will enjoy.
- 16. Ask your child *how* and *why* questions to provide practice in reasoning.
- 17. Make a "clock" by using a fastener to attach two strips of paper to a paper plate. Add the numbers and help your child practice telling time.
- 18. Ask your child to draw a picture about what happened in school today. Then, talk about it.
- 19. Ask your child to tell you a bedtime story tonight.
- 20. When you watch a show with your child, listen for new words. Later, help your child look up their meanings.
- 21. Together, make a list of fun things your child can do independently when boredom strikes.
- 22. Encourage your child to talk to older relatives about their childhoods.
- 23. Share an inspiring quote with your child.
- 24. Give your child a magnet to use to find out which things in your house are magnetic. What do those things have in common?
- 25. Have a family sing-along. Ask everyone to share their favorite songs.
- 26. Encourage gratitude. Have a family thank-you note writing day. Your child can thank people for gifts, teachers for help, a sibling for sharing.
- 27. Help your child think of something nice to do for a neighbor.
- 28. Challenge your child to design a new cover for a much-loved book.
- 29. Remove the headline of a news article. Have your child read the article and write a headline. Compare the two headlines.
- 30. Ask family members, "If you were an animal, which animal would you be and why?"
- 31. Help your child create a time line of the past year.

# January 2026

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- 1. Help your child set a goal and write a plan for achieving it this year.
- 2. Pick a word from the dictionary and draw a picture of it. See if your child can guess the word. Then, let your child pick a word.
- 3. Have your child name a favorite food. Together, learn more about where it comes from.
- 4. Encourage your child to start a journal this year.
- 5. Ask your child to help you plan three healthy breakfasts.
- 6. Make up trivia questions about your family. Quiz one another at the dinner table.
- 7. Play a card game such as Go Fish with your child.
- 8. Improved report card? High grade on a test? Reward your child with a favorite meal or one-on-one time with you.
- 9. Ask your child, "What is your favorite time of year? Why?"
- 10. School absences add up. Show your child that attendance is a family priority.
- 11. Ask about the qualities your child looks for in friends. Talk about why values are important.
- 12. Have everyone in the family spend 20 minutes picking up the house. Many hands make light work.
- 13. Compliment your child on a recent accomplishment.
- 14. When your child is unsuccessful, ask, "How would you do it differently next time?"
- 15. Watch a funny video together. Then, have your child draw a comic strip showing what it was about.
- 16. Have each family member make a list of his or her strengths. Read them aloud. Add to one another's lists.
- 17. Take your whole family to the library. Be sure everyone gets some books.
- 18. Make a recording of your child reading a story.
- 19. Teach your child to make paper snowflakes to decorate your windows.
- 20. Ask your child to give you a news report about what went on at school today. What's the "lead story"?
- 21. Help your child make an "I am special" scrapbook.
- 22. Name a city, state or river. Can your child locate it on a map or globe?
- 23. Plan a weekend activity the whole family will enjoy.
- 24. At the grocery store, help your child compare the prices of different brands of the same product.
- 25. Pretend to go back in time with your child. Reenact an event together.
- 26. Talk with your child about *courage*. Point out examples of people who demonstrate courage.
- 27. Have family members try doing activities with the hand they *don't* favor.
- 28. Go online together and research events that happened on your child's birthday.
- 29. Allow a few minutes after the light is off at bedtime for quiet conversation with your child.
- 30. Have your child estimate how many bowls of cereal can be poured from one box. Keep track until the box is empty.
- 31. Ask your child to help you organize something, such as a closet.

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# February 2026

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- 1. Try a new mode of transportation this month with your child, such as a train or bus.
- 2. Encourage your child to write a thank-you note to a favorite teacher or school staff member.
- 3. What are your child's academic interests? Talk about how those topics are useful outside of school.
- 4. Write down questions your child asks that you can't answer. Keep a list of questions to look up together later.
- 5. Review your child's schedule. Does it include enough "down time"?
- 6. Help your child interview people in various careers that seem interesting. What would a typical day be like?
- 7. Check out a joke book at the library. Take turns sharing jokes at dinner.
- 8. Challenge family members to get creative in the kitchen. See who can invent the greatest tasting new pizza topping.
- 9. Have your child dissolve some salt in a glass of water. Observe for a few days, and talk about what happens.
- 10. Make a design using five toothpicks. Let your child look at it, then cover it up. Can your student recreate it from memory?
- 11. Help your child practice division. Ask, "How many of your lifetimes has Grandma lived?"
- 12. Show your child how to fold paper to make different types of airplanes. Together, see which one flies the best.
- 13. Tonight, leave a valentine where your child will see it first thing in the morning.
- 14. Tell and show family members that you love them.
- 15. Put three items in a bag. Challenge your child to use them as props in an improvised skit.
- 16. Have each family member bring an interesting fact to dinner.
- 17. Read a favorite fairy tale to your child.
- 18. Discuss the meaning of a *dozen*. What things are often sold in dozens?
- 19. Offer praise when your child thinks through a decision and makes a positive choice.
- 20. Teach your child to consider other people's feelings. Have your child imagine how someone might feel in various situations.
- 21. Cheer your child on when a task is challenging. Say "I know you can figure this out!"
- 22. Take a walk with your child and use all five senses to observe the world around you.
- 23. Talk about the solar system. Teach your child to remember the order of the planets using "My Very Elegant Mother Just Served Us Noodles" (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune).
- 24. Learn the sign language alphabet with your child. Use it to spell words today.
- 25. Make math yummy today. Give your child raisins or popcorn to use as manipulatives when adding and subtracting.
- 26. Ask your child to complete this sentence: "If I had one wish, it would be \_\_\_\_."
- 27. Tie a string between two chairs. Use a balloon to play indoor volleyball with your child.
- 28. Have your child predict the results of flipping a coin 10 times. Then, try it.

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