



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!



www.PEPnonprofit.org



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The Positive Engagement Project understands the value of family and what an important role parents play for the success and wellbeing of their children. In an attempt to let brevity be our friend, we are going to keep the introduction to **Family Work** short and simple. Here are some facts:

1. A survey of 1,000 K-12 teachers found that high school teachers on average assign about 3.5 hours of homework each week. Middle school teachers assign about 3.2 hours of homework each week and kindergarten through fifth grade teachers assign about 2.9 hours each week. **THAT'S A LOT OF TIME ON HOMEWORK!**
2. After decades spent trying to assess the value of homework, researchers still argue over the simplest findings. In other words, there is no clear evidence that it makes a huge impact.
3. The Harvard Family Research Project, among numerous other research findings, clearly indicates that family time and involvement have a massive impact on students and school success.
4. A typical working parent spends just nineteen minutes a day looking after their children and less than four minutes in meaningful conversation. **THAT'S NOT A LOT OF TIME TALKING WITH OUR KIDS!**

To summarize, research shows that parental involvement has a great impact on a student's success in school, but parents spend less than four to five minutes a day actually talking with their children. On the other hand, hours upon hours are spent each week (sometimes each day!) on homework and there is no clear research that shows it benefits our students.

Maybe it's being a father of three school-aged daughters who deals with a ton of homework on a nightly basis, but it seems to me that our current system is a wee bit backwards. Why do we assign hours of work that may or may not benefit our students? Why are families being held hostage doing homework and not utilizing that time interacting with one another? The purpose of **Family Work** is to flip the time usually allocated for homework with the time used for true family activities. With **Family Work**, you still give as much homework as your colleagues, but you do it in a way that promotes quality family time...not busy work and worksheets. The homework in **Family Work** consists of activities for students to do with their families, with a written synopsis of the activities to be turned in at the end of the week by the student. **Family Work** is designed to give families time to focus on the things that truly bring out the best in our students.

How does Family Work look in a classroom?

As stated previously, the main homework assignment **for the week** is one of the activities from this packet do be done at home with family members. By removing the hour a day for math, spelling, science, etc...we have allocated time for families to invest more than the national average of less than twenty minutes a day. Spending quality family time is a wise investment for our kids.

Can I still do regular homework on top of Family Work?

The idea of **Family Work** is to provide more time for families at home, not add to the list of things to do. With that said, how you allocate your assignments is up to you. **Family Work** does have a written piece incorporated into each weekly assignment and reading at home with family members is a nonnegotiable that must remain (visit www.PEPnonprofit.org to see how we record reading for students).

Do I have to follow the order of the Family Work assignments?

There are only a few assignments in this packet that are associated with certain times of the year. The Make Something out of Nothing assignment, for example, ties in with Earth Day and we suggest you do that the week Earth Day is recognized in April. Pick and choose the activities that you want your students to do for homework.



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. School Likes and Dislikes
2. Favorite Books and Library Field Trip
3. Games Week
4. Easy Fun – Hard Fun
5. Dinner Discussion Questions
6. Math Games
7. Ancestors
8. Get Outside
9. Cooking Class
10. Family Values
11. Quotes
12. Movies
13. Family Art Project
14. Search and Enjoy Scavenger Hunt
15. ZOOM – Storytelling with Pictures
16. Have a STAYcation
17. Favorite Music
18. Letters to Someone Important
19. Create a Game
20. Hour of Code (Usually first weeks of December)
21. Twenty Questions
22. Lights Out
23. Fort Building
24. What's in a Name?
25. Hobbies
26. Do Something for Someone
27. Conduct a Scientific Experiment
28. Thoughts and Opinions
29. Iron Chef Family Edition
30. Create Self Portraits
31. Have a Dance Party
32. Family Traditions...Make a New One!



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

33. Where Do I Hope to be in 1 year...10 years...20 years
34. Make Something Out of Nothing (Third week of April)
35. Fears
36. Walks and Talks
37. Minus Twenty Things
38. Hopes and Dreams
39. Make a Scrapbook Page
40. Friends Then and Now
41. Paper Airplane Contest
42. Inspiration
43. Play Outside
44. Thankful
45. Make a Mat – Design Dinner Placemat





FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

1. School Likes and Dislikes

Interaction Type: Discussion

For Family Work this week, learn as much as you can about your families likes and dislikes about school when they were in elementary, middle, and high school. If family members went to college, ask as many questions as possible about their experience. Do not ask all of the questions on the same day...spread them out over a couple of days.

Questions to Ask:

What did you like most about school in elementary? Middle school? High school?

What did you not like about school in elementary? Middle school? High school?

How many different schools did you attend? If you went to a lot of different schools, how come?

Which school did you like the best? Why?

Who were some of your favorite teachers? What made them special?

If you could redo your school experience, what would you do differently?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about a family member's responses to the questions above.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

2. Favorite Books and Library Field Trip

Interaction Type: Discussion and Destination Activity

For Family Work this week, learn as much as you can about your families favorite books. Also, take a day and go to either your local library or bookstore and try to find one of the book titles discussed. Take turns reading out loud, alternating from adults to kids.

Questions to Ask:

What was your favorite book as a kid? Why?

What is your favorite book as an adult? Why?

What genre do you enjoy reading the most? Why?

READ TOGETHER THIS WEEK...talk about your reading each night.

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about a family member's responses to the questions above or about your trip to the library/bookstore. What book did you read together this week? If you don't usually read together with a family member, what was that experience like?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

3. Games Week

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, your job is to play, play, play, and play some more. The whole idea surrounding game night is to get your family together to play games so that you can focus on having fun and being together. Try to play a different game each night.

Some board games to consider playing are: Monopoly, Pictionary, Life, and/or Trivia Pursuit.

Some card games to consider playing are: Go Fish!, Uno, Crazy Eights, and/or Old Maid.

Maybe your family has some other types of games you love to play...there are no restrictions, just spend time each night this week and PLAY!

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about games week. Give some details on what it was like to 'play' with your family this week, not necessarily how the games were played. Focus on your time as a family (funny, goofy, emotional, memorable).

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

4. Easy Fun – Hard Fun

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, your job is to create lists of things that can be considered easy fun and hard fun. The whole idea with easy fun and hard fun is to spend more time doing things on the hard list. Once you have created your lists, try some of the things on the hard fun list.

Easy Fun: (ee-zee fuhn) adjective 1. not hard or difficult; requiring no great labor or effort:

Easy Fun are things that are fun, but do not take any real effort to do. You don't get better at something doing Easy Fun.

Hard Fun: (hahrd fuhn) adjective 1. difficult to do or accomplish

Hard Fun are things that are fun, but take skill and can be challenging. The more you do Hard Fun, the better you will get at it.

Make two lists, one for Easy Fun activities, and a second for Hard Fun activities. Choose some Hard Fun things to try this week!

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about Easy Fun and Hard Fun. Turn in a copy of the lists you created (be sure to keep a copy for your family). What Hard Fun things did you try this week? How did it go? What was it like spending more time doing Hard Fun than Easy Fun?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

5. Dinner Discussion Questions

Interaction Type: Discussion

For Family Work this week, learn as much as you can about your families via Dinner Discussion Questions. Students will write a handful of questions in class to ask at dinner this week. Dinner may be the only time of the day when families can reconnect, leaving behind their individual hobbies, like playing video games, emailing and doing homework. Dinner is a time to relax, recharge, laugh, tell stories and catch up on the day's ups and downs, while developing a sense of who we are as a family. The questions for this activity will be written in class by the students and asked at dinner.

Questions to Ask:

Use your list of questions created in class to discuss at the dinner table this week. If you forgot your questions, here is one for the first night:

1. Imagine that you could meet either an historical figure or an imaginary character (from film, literature or TV). Who would you want to meet and why? What would you want to ask him or her? If you could plan a day together, what would you do?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about any of your family member's responses to your questions. Also, include a little what you enjoy about eating dinner as a family at the table with no distractions.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

6. Math Games

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, play some math games using a deck of cards. The math games will be taught in class by the teacher and the students will teach the games to the families. For a list of rules and games, check out Acing Math at www.PEPnonprofit.org . Use this time to practice and play with math in a non-worksheet method. Play a different game each day, or play multiple games a day...JUST BE SURE TO PLAY MATH GAMES THIS WEEK!

If parents have math games they know, be sure to teach those to your kids and play those as well. The game itself doesn't matter as much as the time you spend playing the games and interacting with your kids do.

*Addition Squares via Acing Math (page 68) is a great game for just about any grade level.

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about the math games this week. Which games did you play? Did you take it easy on your family or did you play to win? Be sure to add whom you played with and what your favorite games were to play.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

7. Ancestors

Interaction Type: Discussion and Research

For Family Work this week, learn as much as you can about your ancestors. The questions this week aren't your typical family tree type of questions, but rather, questions that ask why? Use your time this week to find as many answers as you can. For some families, this may be a very challenging task, but please try your best find some answers. If needed, use familysearch.org to help with some of the unknown answers.

Questions to Ask:

Why did our family pick this town or state to live?

How did you (parents) meet? Where?

How did your parents (grandparents) meet? Where?

Do you know how your grandparents (great grandparents) met? Where?

Which countries do our ancestors come from?

When did our ancestors first come to this country? Why did they come here?

How old is/was the oldest member of our family?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about some of the things you learned about your ancestors. Choose the most interesting facts and really show me what you were able to learn.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

8. Get Outside

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, try to get outside and do something each day. Getting outside and enjoying the fresh air is a great way to enjoy nature and just talk. You can take a walk around your neighborhood, go to a local park or hiking trail, or eat dinner in the backyard.

Fun Facts About Walking:

Walking can make you feel good and more relaxed by relieving stress.

Walking can cut your risk of heart disease by up to 50%, reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes and the risk of some cancers.

Walking boosts your immune system for 24 hours

Questions to Ask:

What were your favorite things to do/play outside when you were a kid?

Do you think kids spend more time inside or outside playing? Why?

When you were my age, did you spend more time inside or outside playing?

Did you ever go on family walks as a kid? Why or why not?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about some of the things you learned and experienced during your outside activities. What did you enjoy this week about spending time with your family?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

9. Cooking Class

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, spend your time in the kitchen. The kitchen is the heart of a home and spending time together in the kitchen makes it so much easier to create the kind of memories that last a lifetime. Learn to cook something new with your family this week. Learn to cook a family meal passed down from your ancestors. Try to get everyone involved with the cooking this week; from making a salad to start off the meal, to the main course, finally a nice little dessert to finish things off. Take some time to understand the math and science needed to create meals!

Questions to Ask:

What is your favorite thing to eat? Why?

What is something you wished you knew how to cook better?

What is your least favorite thing to eat? Why?

Do you enjoy cooking? Why or why not?

What kind of meals did you cook as a kid?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about your cooking experiences this week. What were some meals that you made? What were some of your favorite memories from learning to cook new things?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

10. Family Values

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, it will be your task to make a family values document. It doesn't matter if your family values the same things as the family next door, what matters is that your family is clear on what it values, and knows what those values look like in action.

As a family, brainstorm a list of the things that are important to you and your loved ones. For example, telling the truth, being considerate of other people's feelings, and sharing whatever you have.

Look at the list of values you created together as a family. Pick between three to five values to define as a family. Write each one on the top of a page.

Make two columns under the value. On one side, write **Looks Like** and on the other write **Sounds Like**. Brainstorm together what that value looks like in your family and what it sounds like in your family. This is what your family values look like and sound like in daily life.

Once you have your list of Family Values and what they look and sound like, put it all together in a document declaring things that your family truly values.

Writing Assignment:

Bring in a completed Family Values document completing the criteria from above. This document will be given back so you can display it in your home for your family to see everyday.



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

11. Quotes

Interaction Type: Discussion

For Family Work this week, spend your time reading and discussing some famous quotes. There will be handful of quotes for you to discuss, but feel free to share some memorable quotes you have cherished over the years.

Questions to Ask:

The poet Maya Angelou once said, "If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude." What do you think she meant by this? Have you ever had to do this?

"Don't judge a man until you have walked a mile in his shoes." What does that quote mean to you?

Steven Spielberg is quoted as saying, "All of us every single year, we're a different person. I don't think we're the same person all our lives." Do you agree? Why?

Former United States President, Teddy Roosevelt, once said "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are." What does that mean to you?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about any of your family member's responses to the quotes discussed this week. Which quote, or quotes, did you like the best?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

12. Movies

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, spend your time learning about some movies that are special to family members. Everything from choosing the movie to making the snacks to snuggling up and watching a movie will give your family the opportunity to chat and just be together. After discussing some of the questions below, try to find one of the movies mentioned (as long as you think it is appropriate for your child).

Here is a list of several fun family movies to check out:

The Incredibles, Finding Nemo, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (original), Wall-E

Questions to Ask:

What was your favorite movie as a kid? Why?

What is your favorite movie of all time? Why?

What is your favorite movie that was first a book? Which one was better...the book or the movie?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about your time learning about and watching movies this week. Write about the experience, not about the movie itself. What did you learn about your family this week?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

13. Family Art Project

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be creating a Family Art Project. Art comes in many shapes, sizes, and mediums. Your task this week will be to create a piece of art as a family. Be as creative as possible. There are no rules, other than each family member must contribute to the overall work of art. You can draw, paint, sculpt, or build your project.

Everyone can work on the same piece of art or each family member can create a piece of art based on the same theme. For example, the theme could be creating a piece of art based on nature. With the second option, each family member can create their own interpretation of nature through art. Just be sure to do your projects at the same time with one another.

Questions to Ask:

Who is your favorite artist?

Is there a piece of art that is meaningful to you?

Did you ever take any art classes when you were younger?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about the piece of art created by your family. Give details on how you made it and any symbolism that your project may have.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

14. Search and Enjoy Scavenger Hunt

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be going on a scavenger hunt as a family, either through your home, neighborhood, or both. Try a different type of scavenger hunt each day. You can use the lists below, or an even better idea is to have the adults create a hunt for the kids and the kids create a hunt for the adults. This is not a competition, but rather an opportunity to explore as a family.

Home:

How many windows, doors, and TVs are in your home?

Can you find the following: aluminum foil, grocery bag, candle, houseplant, Kleenex, red t-shirt, belt, bubble bath, q tip, dental floss, bike, laundry soap, bucket, garden hose, screwdriver, mop, doormat, cell phone charger, paper clip, and a Ziploc bag.

Neighborhood:

How many trucks, white fences, and beware of dog signs are in your neighborhood?

Can you find the following: stop sign, speed bump, leaves from three different types of trees, something that is yellow, feather, newspaper not from the current day, something shiny, black dog, car with an out of state or country license plate, seeds, pinecone, Y-shaped twig, and something made out of plastic.

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about the scavenger hunts you did this week. What were some unique things you noticed as you searched the neighborhood or home?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

15. ZOOM – Storytelling with Pictures

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be playing a storytelling game entitled ZOOM. Simply form family members into a circle (or around the dinner table) and give each a unique picture. You begin a story that incorporates whatever happens to be on your assigned photo. The next family member continues the story, incorporating their photo, and so on.

We have included pictures for you to use for ZOOM. Don't use them all on the same night. Once you have gone through them all, mix them up to play a different night or go unique picture hunting through some magazines to create your own group.

Pictures for ZOOM – Storytelling with Pictures are on the next two pages.

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph from one of the stories created by your family through ZOOM. The reader should be able to tell which pictures your family used by the description in your writing.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).

15. ZOOM – Storytelling with Pictures



15. ZOOM – Storytelling with Pictures





FAMILY WORK

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16. Have a STAYcation

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be partaking in a STAYcation (it's like a vacation without the travel and horrendous costs). A true STAYcation is more than just a week at home, it is an intentional time of fun and relaxation for your whole family. The point of a STAYcation is to make it feel as much like a real family getaway as possible, without leaving the comfort of your own home.

Here are a few ideas to guide you, but please expand on these to make it your own STAYcation:

Food and traditions from other parts of the world: Pick a place you would love to go and make some meals that celebrate that culture. Get creative...Little Cesar's Pizza doesn't count for Italy!

Go to the park: You may already go to the park on a regular basis, so make this STAYcation park experience different by making it a photo shoot or trying some new games and activities.

Have a family reunion: Pick a night and have a family reunion or a reunion of friends you haven't seen in a while.

Day trip: Just because you are not going on a real vacation doesn't mean you can't be tourists. Go sightseeing around your town or a nearby community. Visit some local landmarks or pick up guidebook of local attractions.

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about your STAYcation. How was it like a real vacation? What parts were better? What was something you learned about this experience?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

17. Favorite Music

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

Music plays a key role for families to bond with each other. You don't need to be a musical family for music to be a part of your family. This week let music guide your discussions, from memorable songs to first concerts. Adults should play some songs that have significant meaning and explain why they mean so much. Kids should also get an opportunity to share some of their favorite music (though this might be very painful to listen to music your kids enjoy...validate their interests). Take time each night to listen and discuss some memorable music this week!

Questions to Ask:

Who is your favorite artist/band? Why?

What is your all time favorite song/album? Why?

If you were stranded on an island and could only take five cds with you...what would they be? Why? NO GREATEST HITS OR LIVE ALBUMS....THAT'S CHEATING!

What was the first concert you ever attended?

What was the best concert you ever attended? What makes it the best?

What is song/band that you're most embarrassed to admit you LOVE?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about music week. Was there anything that surprised you about the songs you heard? Do you have a new appreciation for other types of music? Share some of the songs and bands that were discussed this week.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

18. Letters to Someone Important

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be writing letters to someone important in your life. When you think of people who made the biggest impact in your life, it probably wasn't their expertise or accomplishments that provided you with the direction, guidance and reassurance needed to accomplish your goals. Most likely, it was their sincere belief in you. They let you know through their words and actions that you mattered. Feeling like you matter is a common desire every single person you will ever meet has.

Discuss those people in your lives that matter. Maybe you haven't spoken to them in a while or never told them how much they mean to you. This is your opportunity to give them some validation that they matter...that they made a difference in your life.

Each family member should write a letter or email (not a text message) to a person that has made an important impact on their life, letting them know how much they mean to you.

Questions to Ask:

Who is someone that made a huge impact on your life? Why?

Writing Assignment:

Write a letter to someone who has made an important impact on your life. It can be a friend, family member, neighbor, teacher, or coach. Let them know what they mean to you and why they are important. Your teacher will provide you with an envelope to mail this letter from our school.

Letters must include: date, heading, introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, closing, signature, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

19. Create a Game

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be creating your own game as a family. Playing board or card games is fun, so why not make your own? Working together, family members need to decide what the game will look like, how it will be played, and what kinds of materials will be needed.

As a family, decide what kind of game will be created. Think about and share what kind of games you like to play and how you can make your own. Once the board or other materials have been created, write the game's instructions. Include a title, materials needed, how to play game steps, and any diagrams that will help people play your game. Once the game has been designed and created, play it to see if everything makes sense. If not, make adjustments until the game can be played.

Questions to Ask:

What will be the purpose of our game?

Will the winner capture the most pieces?

Do you want the highest score or the lowest to win the game?

Writing Assignment:

Write the game's instructions for your writing project this week. Include a title, materials needed, how to play game steps, and any diagrams that will help people play your game.

Bring both your game and written instructions to class.



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

20. Hour of Code

Interaction Type: Discussion and Technology Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be participating in a worldwide event...Hour of Code. The Hour of Code is an introduction to computer science, designed to demystify code and show that anybody can learn the basics. Every student should have the opportunity to learn computer science. It helps nurture problem-solving skills, logic and creativity.

Computers, smartphones, and tablets can all be used to participate in the Hour of Code. Take an hour a day this week and go to <http://hourofcode.com> or <http://code.org> and choose from a variety of self-guided tutorials. Kids have an innate feel for technology, so use this time to learn some new skills as a family.

Questions to Ask:

How comfortable do you feel with computers?

What was technology like when you were my age?

Do you think knowing code will be a skill needed in the future? Why?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about your experience with the Hour of Code. Was there anything that surprised you about how your family is with technology? Do you have a new appreciation for computer science? Share some of your experiences using technology this week writing your own codes.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

21. Twenty Questions

Interaction Type: Discussion

For Family Work this week, you will be playing a classic game of Twenty Questions that has been played since the 19th century. Twenty Questions involves zero equipment or technology and no batteries are required!

Play the game each night this week, letting a different person play the role of answering questions. One person thinks of an object or subject, and the other family members playing have twenty chances to guess what it is.

The *questioners* each take turns asking a question, which the *answerer* must respond to with a simple "Yes" or "No." Sample questions could be anything: "Is it an animal?" or, "Is it bigger than a toaster?" — any question that will help the *questioner* deduce the answer. If 20 questions are asked without a correct guess, then the *answerer* has stumped the *questioners*!

Questions to Ask:

Did you ever play twenty questions with your family when you were my age?

What are some other games that can be played without materials or batteries?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about playing twenty questions this week. What were some of the items used as the answer to twenty questions? Were family members stumped by any of the objects?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

22. Lights Out

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be doing things with the lights out. You can do any of the suggested activities from our list or anything you can think of. The lights out time is an opportunity to enjoy family time without the distractions of technology.

Hide and Seek (with the lights out): Play a real game of hide and seek in the dark!

Spotlight Charades: One person acts out their favorite show or book, while the other family members try to guess what it is while using flashlights to shine a spotlight on the actor. The actor has to incorporate shadows into their pantomime.

Sing Name That Tune: One person hums or whistles a tune and the rest of the family tries to guess the name of the song.

Candlelit Dinner: Sit around the table with the lights off and enjoy conversation and a meal in the glow of candles.

Stargazing: Go outside with some blankets and just enjoy the night sky. Look for any planets that may be visible. Can you make out any constellations?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about what it was like doing things as a family with the lights out. What were some of the things your family did? What were some of your most memorable moments from the past week?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

23. Fort Building

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be creating a mess. Seriously...but it will be a creative mess! Your task for this week is to make forts, built with every cushion, pillow, tablecloth and sheet from your closet that you can find! This is going to be some good old fashion family fun! Try a different type of a fort each night this week. Try some of these ideas or get crazy on your own.

Sheet Fort: A little rope or string and a bed sheet are all you need to create this fort.

Table Fort: The kitchen table, some pillows, and a few blankets can transform your area for eating into one pretty awesome fort.

Hula Hoop Fort: Hula hoops aren't just for exercise...you can use them to build a circular fort with the help of some rope and bed sheets.

Cardboard Fort: Grab some large cardboard boxes and create an amazing fort! If you don't have large cardboard boxes on hand, head over to your local grocery store, they are usually very willing to give their used boxes to those who can use them.

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about building forts with your family. What were some of the forts your family built? Which fort was your favorite? Why?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

24. What's in a Name?

Interaction Type: Discussion

For Family Work this week, you will be learning about family members' names. Did you get your name simply because your family liked it or was there some deeper reasoning? Take some time this week to learn how family members got their names and what their names mean. Try to learn as much as you can about the naming process for your family.

Questions to Ask:

What does your first name mean? What about your middle name?

Why did your family choose that name?

What does our last name mean?

Do you like your name?

If you could change your name, what would you choose?

How did you choose my name?

What does my name mean?

What were some other options for my name before I was born?

What are some special/unique names in our family?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about the names in your family. What were some things that you learned that you did not know before? What are details about your name?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

25. Hobbies

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be learning about hobbies that your family members enjoy. In "*Talented Teenagers: The Roots of Success & Failure*," the author noted that "talented" teenagers spent three more hours a week on arts and hobbies than did "average" teens. Much of this was family time. The talented teen was more than twice as likely to spend time with his parents than was the average teen. Regardless of the age of your children, begin sharing hobbies now. Take time this week to let family members share some hobbies and then have everyone participate.

Example hobbies: playing a musical instrument, painting, photography, collecting baseball cards, etc.

Questions to Ask:

What are some of your favorite hobbies now?

What were some of your favorite hobbies when you were my age?

How did you get interested in _____?

Why do you like your hobby?

Why do you think it is important for people to have hobbies?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about hobbies you discussed and did this week. What did you learn about the importance of having a hobby? What were some of the things you talked about and did this week?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

26. Do Something for Someone

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be focusing on serving others. When one family serves others, it can be a tremendous example to other families, fostering a sense of community responsibility and perhaps even mobilizing others to contribute their time and skills toward improving the community. Doing something for someone can draw family members closer together, forging new bonds through shared experiences that are outside the normal daily routines. Discuss as family how you can do something for someone and then DO IT.

You can volunteer at a homeless shelter, food bank, or soup kitchen. You can also rake the leaves from an elderly neighbor's lawn or perhaps just make a meal for a family in need. The something isn't as important as the fact that your family is putting others before yourselves.

Questions to Ask:

What are some ways we can help others?

Has anyone ever gone out of their way to do something for you/us? Who? What?

Why do you think it is important for people to help others?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about what it means to do something for someone. What did your family decide to do? How did it make you feel to serve others?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

27. Conduct a Scientific Experiment

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be conducting a scientific experiment. This week you get a two for one with your Family Work, because you get to spend quality time bonding and learning something scientific at the same time. Science helps answer all those tough questions kids like to ask. The benefits of learning about science as a family are enormous. Skills such as perseverance, problem-solving, and research are all a part of the scientific process. You can go to www.sciencebuddies.org, or any other site you like, to get some ideas for your family science experiment. You can build a soap powered model boat or make your own rock candy...it doesn't matter just as long as you have fun with your family.

Other web addresses to look at for science experiment ideas:

www.sciencebob.com

www.sciencekids.co.nz/experiments.html

www.scienceprojectsideas.co.uk/

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about the results of your science experiment and what you enjoyed about Family Work this week.

Bring in your actual experiment if you can or add some pictures to your writing this week.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

28. Thoughts and Opinions

Interaction Type: Discussion

For Family Work this week, you will be discussing a variety of topics. This week is really about taking time to just talk and share your thoughts and opinions about different topics.

Questions to Ask:

What does freedom mean to you?

What personality traits did you get from each of your parents? (ie patient like dad, friendly like mom, etc.)

We use lots of words every day that aren't in the dictionary. What's your favorite made up or slang word?

How would you describe yourself to someone who has never met you?

How do you define fairness?

What is the hardest thing about being # years old?

What is the best thing about being # years old?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about any of the responses you received from the questions above. You can pick any number of the questions to write about, but you do not have to write about all of them.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).





FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

29. Iron Chef Family Edition

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be participating in a cooking challenge. Iron Chef is a popular television show that pits competitors to cook against each other using a certain ingredient. You'll be forming two teams to "compete" against each other in the kitchen. Now, onto the game! Divide your family into two teams of cooks: girls vs. boys, older vs. younger, mixed/balanced skill level, or another division that you can all agree on.

One family member selects two or three ingredients, and someone else devises a menu around them. Sample ingredients: pasta, a vegetable and an herb.

Or, for a more challenging version: Choose a single ingredient and devise a menu that uses this ingredient in 3 recipes (as an appetizer, main dish, salad, dessert, etc.).

Once the teams are done, everyone gets to try at least one bite of each dish. Have fun discussing how the dishes were invented, What name you might give your dish, and opinions of the flavors and final product. Everyone wins!

Try to play more than once this week and try different ingredients.

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about cooking with your family – Iron Chef Family Edition style. What were some of the secret ingredients? What were some of the meals that your family created? How different was the dinner experience this week?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

30. Self Portraits

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be creating artistic representations of yourselves. One of the most enriching ways to bond with your family is to create art together! You've got a hard drive full of family photos, but drawing self-portraits captures the present in a more revealing way. Vincent Van Gogh said, "They say—and I am willing to believe it—that it is difficult to know yourself—but it isn't easy to paint yourself either."

Have family members draw a self-portrait of themselves. When the self-portraits are finished, discuss what you enjoy about each piece of art.

Bring finished pieces of art to share with the class at the end of the week.

Questions to Ask:

What was your favorite part about creating a self-portrait?

If you could make any changes to your self-portrait, what would they be?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about your self-portrait Family Work. Was it more challenging than you thought it would be? Did any of your family members surprise you with their self-portraits?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

31. Have a Dance Party

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be dancing as a family. Playful movement is one of the keys to a healthy family home. It doesn't matter what you choose to do, as long as your arms and legs are moving. Take some time this week to explore different types of dances and music. You can even turn it into a game if you like.

Adults can introduce their old school dances to the children and the children can introduce their modern day dances to the adults. It's old school vs. new school!

Questions to Ask:

Do you still dance a lot now?

Did you dance a lot when you were a kid?

What is your favorite type of dance?

What are some of your favorite memories/stories of dancing?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about dancing with your family this week. How did they answer some of the questions you asked? What was your favorite type of dance that you performed?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

32. Family Traditions...Make a New One!

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be focusing on traditions for your family. Family traditions are a great way to create a ritual that is uniquely yours and has an incredible power to tie the family together. Traditions strengthen your family's bonds, enrich the life you share together, contribute to your children's wellbeing, and create lasting memories. While it is tempting to go crazy with starting lots of traditions, go for quality over quantity.

Here are a few suggestions:

Best and worst part of the day conversation everyday.

Read bedtime stories as a family every night, regardless of age.

Schedule special weekend breakfast meals each week.

Daddy dates with kids, where dad takes the kids out, while mom gets some well-deserved alone time.

Bury a family time capsule.

Questions to Ask:

Why do you think it is important to have family traditions?

What are some special traditions passed down from your family?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about family traditions. What are some family traditions that your family already had in place? What are some new family traditions your family started this week?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

33. Where Do I Hope to be in 1 year...10 years...20 Years

Interaction Type: Discussion

For Family Work this week, you will be discussing your hopes for the future, but more specifically, time increments of 1 year, 10 years, and 20 years. Pose the question and give each family member some time to think before they respond. Spend one night each week discussing only one time period. Really explain your reasoning for your answers.

Where do I hope to be in _____ can be answered in many different ways. What do you think your life will look like in the future, not just the exact location of your home address?

Questions to Ask:

Where do you hope to be in 1 year from now?

Where do you hope to be in 10 years from now?

Where do you hope to be in 20 years from now?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about each one of the three questions and how your family answered. You don't have to write three paragraphs (you can if you want), but give details about what you think your life will look like in the three time periods discussed.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

34. Make Something Out of Nothing

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be honoring Earth Day and creating something new out of something old. Earth Day is our annual reminder to slow down and appreciate the bounty of the earth. The goal is to encourage families to create objects from natural and recycled materials.

The rules are simple: use items that you already have around your home and repurpose them into something new. Your options are limitless, so have fun!

Questions to Ask:

Why do we celebrate Earth Day?

What do you think we could do as a family to create less trash/waste?

What are some other ways we can celebrate Earth Day throughout the year?

Where is your favorite place to spend time outside?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about your experiences with making something out of nothing. Write about what materials you used and what you created.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

35. Fears

Interaction Type: Discussion

For Family Work this week, you will be discussing fears. You will be able to discuss fears from the perspective of a child and fears from a parent's point of view. By discussing your fears and anxieties, families can become a stronger support group for each other. Therefore, by discussing our concerns with loved ones, it not only helps us but also helps them to understand why we feel as we do and puts them in a better position to help us.

Questions to Ask:

What fears did you have when you were a kid?

What fears do you have now that I don't know about?

What are your greatest fears concerning me as I get older?

Tell me about a time when you were afraid of something, but the results turned out to be positive?

What do you think of the following quote, "When you look back are you going to say I'm glad I did or I wish I had?"

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about your discussions about fears. What were some things that you discovered? Explain with detail about your experiences with fears and how to overcome them.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

36. Walks and Talks

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be going on daily walks and talks. Studies have shown that children mimic their parents' behavior, so if parents aren't active, then in effect they may be teaching their children to be less active as well. Although it is true that kids probably do get more exercise than parents, consider these questions: How much time do your children spend watching television, playing video games, or staring at the computer screen rather than riding their bikes or playing tag?

Walking and talking is a double dose of goodness, because families can spend time together talking about their days and get some exercise as well. Not every family member will have the same skills in skiing, tennis, golf, or basketball, but even the smallest of youngsters can handle a walk around the neighborhood or to the park.

Try to get out of the house every night this week and take a family walk.

Questions to Ask:

What was the best part of your day?

What was the worst part of your day?

What are your plans for tomorrow?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about your walks and talks. What was it like to get out of the house each night? What were some of your favorite parts of the walks and talks?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

37. Minus Twenty Things

Interaction Type: Discussion

For Family Work this week, you will be discussing how the world would be a better place minus twenty things. The reality is that our modern world has some amazing technological advances, but that doesn't mean we are better for it. Even though we're living in a period of growth and innovation, there are still some things in existence that should have been wiped out years ago for the good, and the sanity of all of the world's peoples.

Your task is to discuss and then create a list of twenty things that would make the world a better place. The twenty things will be up to you as a family to decide...there are no other rules.

Questions to Ask:

What are twenty things the world would be better off without? Why?

How should we rank these twenty things?

Writing Assignment:

Your writing for this week is to turn in the list of twenty things that the world would be better off without. Once you have created your first list, go back and rewrite the list in order of things that you would get rid of first...basically ranking your list from the things you would most like to get rid of first to the end.



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

38. Hopes and Dreams

Interaction Type: Discussion

For Family Work this week, you will be sharing your hopes and dreams, especially for your child. Life is tremendously busy and sometimes we don't really sit down and think about our hopes and dreams for our kids. Of course, we want the obvious things for them – health, happiness, success, etc, but this week it is time to truly reflect and discuss those hopes and dreams. As you discuss this week, listen to your child's response before you answer...you may be surprised by their hopes and dreams for themselves.

Questions to Ask:

What do you hope for me to be when I am your age?

What is the proudest moment of your life? Why?

If you woke up tomorrow and could do one thing that you can't do right now, what would it be?

In the year 2030, what do you hope we will have discovered that will change the world for the better?

Which dreams in your life have you lived out?

Which dreams do you still hope to accomplish?

What is one thing you would like to learn in the next year?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about your discussions dealing with hopes and dreams. What are some hopes and dreams your family has for you? What are some hopes and dreams you have for yourself?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).





FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

39. Make a Scrapbook Page

Interaction Type: Discussion and Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be making a scrapbook page for your family. Every family has loads of pictures, but the key is to make sure that instead of letting those photos stay trapped in your memory card or the hard drive forever, you free them into the “real” world in the form of scrapbook. Create your scrapbook page, or pages, together. You can focus on a single event, person, month, or year, but be sure your page(s) captures the memories behind the photographs.

Ferris Bueller said it best when he stated, "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in awhile, you could miss it." Take some time this week out of your busy life to tell a story through your family scrapbook page.

Questions to Ask:

Do you have a lot of photographs of your family when you were a child? Can I see some?

Do you have a baby book or scrapbook? Can I see them?

Why do you think so many people love to look at old photographs?

Do you prefer real photographs or images on your phone? Why?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about your making a scrapbook page. Was it easier or more difficult than you originally thought? What is story does your scrapbook page tell?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

40. Friends Then and Now

Interaction Type: Discussion

For Family Work this week, you will be discussing the importance of friendship. The philosopher Aristotle said, "In poverty and other misfortunes of life, true friends are a sure refuge. They keep the young out of mischief; they comfort and aid the old in their weakness, and they incite those in the prime of life to noble deeds." Friendships are vital for wellbeing, but they take time to develop and can't be artificially created.

Discuss friends from the past and friends now.

Questions to Ask:

What is your definition of a true friend?

Why do think it is important to have good friends?

Is there such a thing as bad friends? Why or why not?

Who are some of your best friends when you were younger?

What are some of your friendships that have lasted the longest? Why?

Who are your best friends now? Why?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about the importance of true friends. What were some responses from your family to the questions you asked? Do you see friends you have today lasting a lifetime?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

41. Paper Airplane Contest

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be having a paper airplane contest. In this day and age of technology and gadgets, a simple paper airplane can still win your child's heart.

Take one day to just explore aerodynamics and different types of paper airplanes. Take another day or two to explore different materials and designs that will help your airplane travel the furthest distance or stay in the air the longest. Finally, test your designs in a contest pitting family members against each other. Have two separate contests: one for distance and a second for time in air.

Questions to Ask:

When and how did you learn how to make paper airplanes?

How can a paper airplane help us learn about science and aerodynamics?

Do you prefer speed paper airplanes or ones that glide? Why?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about making and flying your paper airplanes this week? What were the results from the contests? Which type of paper airplane did you like the best? What was the overall experience like?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

42. Inspiration

Interaction Type: Discussion

For Family Work this week, you will be discussing things that bring you inspiration. Inspiration can be viewed as a way to transcend our limitations and accomplish things we never thought were possible. Some people say that inspiration gives our lives meaning. When our tasks seem impossible in front of us, inspiration gives us what we need to overcome.

Discuss what inspiration means to your family and give examples of things that inspire each of you.

Questions to Ask:

What does it mean to be inspired?

Talk about a time you were inspired to try something new. What was it? What happened?

What is the proudest moment of your life so far?

Think about a time when you have changed something in your life for the better. What was it and how did you do it?

Finish this sentence: "Someday, I'm going to be the first person to..."

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about inspiration. What does it mean to be inspired? Give examples of inspirational things in your family and what you can learn from them.

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

43. Play Outside

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be playing outside as a family. Unplug and disconnect from technology this week and go outside and play some games. What you play doesn't matter...just play some games.

Here are few ideas:

Capture The Flag, Red Rover, Jump-Rope, Hopscotch, Soccer, Red Light, Green Light, Simon Says, Freeze Tag, and Potato Sack Race.

Questions to Ask:

What are your favorite games to play outside?

What games/activities/sports do you wish you were better at doing?

What was your favorite thing to do outside when you were my age?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about playing outside with your family. Give some examples of the games you played outside. What did you enjoy the best about Family Work this week?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

44. Thankful

Interaction Type: Discussion

For Family Work this week, you will be focusing on things that you are thankful for. A quick look at news headlines can make you wonder if there are really things to be thankful for. For many families, life can have some very sobering moments that make it hard to be thankful for the many gifts we have each day. Our simplest abilities of breathing, walking, talking, hearing, and seeing are all gifts that are easy to forget.

Take some time week as a family, wherever you are and whatever you're doing, discuss and come up with a thankful list. If it doesn't come naturally, don't let that stop you from still giving thanks. There is still much to be thankful for, if we only have eyes to see.

Questions to Ask:

Who are some people you appreciate? Why?

What experiences have you had that you are thankful for?

What are some things you take for granted, that you are thankful for?

What is different today than it was a year ago that you're grateful for?

What have others in your life done that you are thankful for?

What abilities do you have that you are grateful for?

Writing Assignment:

Along with your Thankful List, write a paragraph about things that you are thankful for. How did family members answer the questions above? How did you answer questions above?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).



FAMILY WORK

Homework that puts FAMILIES first!

45. Make a Mat – Design a Dinner Placemat

Interaction Type: Activity

For Family Work this week, you will be designing dinner placemats for you to use for meals. Many restaurants provide placemats and crayons so that children can amuse themselves while they wait for the food to arrive. Designing similar placemats for your own home isn't difficult.

Your child should have a large piece of paper (from their teacher). Here are few simple suggestions to follow while creating your placemats:

- Write a menu of dinner ideas your family frequently eats.
- Design simple games for the back of the place mat. For instance, you might create a crossword puzzle with the names of different foods.
- Make a word search with interesting facts about your child such as his favorite color, animal and food.
- Leave a space for creative doodling.
- Create a space for Best Part of the Day and Worst Part of the Day to discuss.

Questions to Ask:

Why do you think restaurants have dinner menus just for kids?

Where was your favorite place to eat as a kid? Why?

What are some other things we can add to our placemats?

Writing Assignment:

Write a paragraph about designing and creating your placemats. What are the best parts of your placemat? What are some things you would change to make it better?

Paragraph must include: introductory and concluding sentences, supporting details with explanations, be well organized in which it flows easily, and have correct writing conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage).