

# Daily Learning Planner

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

Mesa Unified School District #4



THE  
**PARENT**  
INSTITUTE®

December • January • February 2022-2023

## December 2022

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

- 1. Have a Device-Free Day. Do activities with your child such as reading or cooking.
- 2. Offer encouragement when your child faces challenges. Say “You can do it,” or “Go for it!”
- 3. Do everyday tasks with your child, such as washing dishes, to gain more time together.
- 4. Play Alphabet Mix up. Choose a word, then rearrange the letters in alphabetical order. Can your child figure out the word?
- 5. Plan a seasonal family activity together.
- 6. Take turns making statements. Have your child identify each one as either *fact* or *opinion*.
- 7. Use math-related terms in conversation, such as *parallel* and *intersect*.
- 8. Think of synonyms for common words with your child. For example, one synonym for *talk* is *converse*.
- 9. On this day in 1962, the Petrified Forest National Park was established in Arizona. Learn about its fossil marvels with your child.
- 10. Encourage your child to compare prices and return policies before making a purchase.
- 11. Suggest that your child write a portion of your family’s year-end letter to send to family and friends.
- 12. When you watch TV or videos with your child, ask questions: “Did that person make a good decision?” “What would you do?”
- 13. Put your child in charge of taking photos at a family event.
- 14. When arguing with your child, focus more on solutions than blame.
- 15. Give your child a “do-it-yourself” gift. For example, a model kit or a book of recipes for children.
- 16. Let your child pick out an unfamiliar vegetable at the store. Find a recipe that uses it and give it a try!
- 17. Discuss the importance of responsibility with your child. What would happen if everyone were irresponsible?
- 18. Have your child time how long a car trip takes. How many miles did you drive? What was your average speed?
- 19. Check up on academic goals. Is your child making progress?
- 20. Teach your child to ask *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why* and *how* questions when doing research.
- 21. Help your child plan a relaxing end-of-day reading routine.
- 22. Hang a chalkboard in your home. It’s a fun place to practice math problems or leave notes for family members.
- 23. Do a secret good deed with your child.
- 24. Brainstorm with your family about an issue, such as how to assign chores fairly.
- 25. Ask everyone to write down two positive things about each member of the family. Don’t forget to include yourself.
- 26. Post a meaningful quotation you love where your child will see it.
- 27. Talk about people who have shown integrity. How did they show it?
- 28. Teach your child how to prepare a favorite dish. Feeling competent makes a middle schooler feel good.
- 29. Talk with your child about a choice you have made. Then talk about the consequences.
- 30. Suggest that your child write a descriptive story with lots of details.
- 31. Ask if there is a school subject your child would like to improve in.

# January 2023

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

- 1. Have your child make a step-by-step plan to reach a New Year's goal.
- 2. Turn over a self-care responsibility you've previously done for your child. Present it as a positive step.
- 3. If your child wants to talk at an inconvenient moment, schedule a time to talk later—and be sure to follow through.
- 4. Choose a number from 1-12. How many things can your child think of that come in that number?
- 5. Let your child make choices about what to wear (within reasonable limits).
- 6. Is your child shy? Encourage your student to seek out someone who looks ill at ease and start up a friendly conversation.
- 7. Mention how education has helped you in your work and everyday life.
- 8. Suggest a book to your child in which the main character is a positive role model.
- 9. Teach your child: "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail."
- 10. Talk with your child about mistakes. What are some ways people can learn from their mistakes?
- 11. Encourage healthy food choices by having your child compare nutrition labels at the grocery store.
- 12. Ask your child to do research to find the best deal on a big-ticket item your family would like to purchase.
- 13. Take your child to a high school sporting event. Talk about your student's plans for high school.
- 14. Look for a skill you and your child can learn together. It's a fun way to get to know your child on a new level.
- 15. When your child dawdles, set a timer. Say, "Try to finish before it rings."
- 16. Acting out historic events can bring history lessons to life. Get the whole family involved!
- 17. Establish or reestablish a morning routine that works for your family.
- 18. With your child, make a graph of family characteristics or routines, such as favorite desserts or bedtimes.
- 19. Has it been a hard week at school for your child? Go out together for a treat this evening.
- 20. Teach your child to make eye contact with the audience before giving a presentation.
- 21. At bedtime tonight, tell a story about yourself at your child's age.
- 22. Try to be available by phone or in person right after school. It's often when kids are most ready to talk.
- 23. Look for opportunities to compromise with your child.
- 24. Is your child having a problem at school? Suggest brainstorming about ways to solve it—without your help.
- 25. Teach your child to make to-do lists and check off finished tasks.
- 26. Create a word search for your child by hiding words in a grid and surrounding them with random letters.
- 27. Compliment something about your child's appearance today.
- 28. "Because I said so!" is frustrating for middle schoolers to hear. Explain your reasoning.
- 29. Review what your child should do in an emergency, such as a fire.
- 30. Peer pressure can be positive. Encourage your child to participate in group activities like sports and volunteering.
- 31. Help your child consider consequences before making a decision.

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# February 2023

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

- 1. This is African American History Month. Explore the National Museum of African American History and Culture online at [nmaahc.si.edu](http://nmaahc.si.edu).
- 2. Link your child's responsibilities to freedom. As your middle schooler becomes more responsible, you'll grant more freedom.
- 3. Let your child see you reading for pleasure.
- 4. Make sure there will be adult supervision when your child visits a friend's home.
- 5. If your child hears an unfamiliar word, suggest looking it up in the dictionary.
- 6. Ask what your child would do if a friend stole something from a store.
- 7. Encourage your child's interest in school-based extracurricular activities. Participation can help prevent risky behavior.
- 8. The next time you drop your child off at practice or rehearsal, stay a few minutes and watch.
- 9. Tell your child a family story. Try to think of one that teaches a lesson.
- 10. Remember that the key to getting your child's respect is showing your child respect.
- 11. Is your child trying to make friends? Teach conversation starters, such as, "I like your ..."
- 12. Take a walk with your child and use all five senses to observe the world around you.
- 13. Share an interesting fact with your child. For example, the moon takes a little more than 27 days to orbit the Earth.
- 14. Serve your child's favorite breakfast today just to say, "I love you."
- 15. It's Susan B. Anthony's birthday. With your child, learn more about her achievements.
- 16. Notice and talk about the positive qualities of your child's friends.
- 17. Think of a food advertising word, such as *hearty*. See who can find it at the grocery store first.
- 18. Have everyone in the family spend a half hour cleaning up the house. Many hands make light work.
- 19. Help your child organize something, such as a closet or schedule.
- 20. Make it clear that school is your child's job. It's more important than sports, hobbies or screen media.
- 21. Listen with interest when your child describes class content. Ask follow-up questions.
- 22. Challenge your child to match every hour of recreational screen time with a screen-free hour of time outside.
- 23. Think of ways you and your child waste time. Together, find ways to manage time better.
- 24. Spend 20 minutes on DEAR time today (Drop Everything and Read).
- 25. Choose a book that you and your child can both read and discuss.
- 26. Let your child daydream sometimes. It can build imagination and coping skills.
- 27. Ask which assignments from this school year your child thinks will be memorable in five years.
- 28. When your child overreacts, it's important for you not to. Set a time to talk later when you both are in control.

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