



September 27, 2020

Dear Wolfpack,

Thank you for your dedication to education during remote schooling. Below are some ideas and suggestions to support you as we learn together to bring school into the home in new and exciting ways.

Sincerely,

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Skill-Building Activities: *A Reference List*

★ Build *Math* Skills:

- Cook together
- Complete “shopping missions”
- Create and follow a schedule
- Counting collections
- Math Jeopardy: <https://jeopardylabs.com/>

★ Build *Reading* Skills:

- Read alouds
- Poems
- Word searches/ Letter searches
- Comic strip story sequencing puzzles
- Other Reading activities: <https://mclass.amplify.com/homeconnect/>

★ Build *Organization* Skills:

- Reduce, reuse, reorganize
- “A place for everything...”
- Create and follow a schedule



Skill-Building Activities: *Explained and Expanded*

★ Math

- **Cook together:** Cooking teaches fractions, quantity, measurement, and +, -, x, and /. Many parents have taken to YouTube with their children to help other families perfect the art of cooking with their kids. To get started, check out Jamie Oliver's son's channel "Cooking with Kids" to get some meal ideas or visit him on Twitter: #kitchenbuddies.
- **"Shopping Missions":** Encourage students to participate in handling money and preparing for meals by giving them shopping missions. Give them part of the shopping list and an allowance, and they have to figure out how to get everything on the list.
- **Create and follow a schedule:** Students who help make a schedule practice planning ahead, making a to-do list, estimating how long activities will take, and measuring the passing of time. By following a schedule, students measure the passing of time and practice keeping commitments. They also learn how to adjust to changes in routine/ schedule, an essential soft skill.
- **Counting collections:** Counting anything and everything is great practice for students who are beginning to explore the relationships between numbers. Students can:
 - Find groups of items and count how many.
 - Split collections into different size groups to practice subtraction, and bring different size groups together again for addition.
 - Bring same size groups together for multiplication and addition, split larger groups into smaller, equal size groups for division and subtraction.
- **Math Jeopardy:** [This website](#) has many pre-made math Jeopardy puzzles for students to practice the skills they have been learning in school and compete against friends and family as a fun way to practice.



★ Reading

- **Read alouds:** Read aloud poems and stories that you find online, at the library, or anywhere that sells books. [Storyline Online](#) is a good resource for kids to listen to books read aloud when someone is not available to read to them. One of the most important parts of read-alouds are the discussions that happen because of them. When children have the opportunity to ask questions, tell back what they read, and tell you what they think will happen next, they are building their memory and their ability to communicate with others and think critically about what they just read.
- **Poems:** Especially in the younger grades, read aloud poems and rhyming books like Dr.

Seuss. Students can find rhyming words, and sounds at the beginning or end of words. Making your own poems using ones you read or listened to, and finding things in the house that rhyme with a word in the poem you read together are also great exercises to prepare students for reading and spelling on their own.

- **Word searches/ letter searches:** There are resources online for these simple letter and word recognition activities to train the eye to see letter patterns in English that students need to remember and recognize automatically when reading and writing. Playing games such as Boggle and Scrabble are also great for supporting students as they learn how to spell. You can even play Scrabble with a dictionary to build vocabulary.
- **Comic strip story sequencing puzzles.** Take the comics out of the newspaper, read them together, cut them up, and then put them back together in the original order. This supports students in building their memory and reading skills. It also helps practice narration, because the panels (images that make up a comic) have to be organized and laid out in order from first to last.
- **Other reading activities:** <https://mclass.amplify.com/homeconnect/> This website includes dozens of at-home and on-the-go activities to support reading skills in preschool through second grade.



★ Organization

- **Reduce, reuse, reorganize:** Keep containers of any size you need and give them a new purpose in your home. Cylinders make good pencil/ marker holders. Big pretzel containers are good for blocks and other larger items. Some cereal boxes can be turned into paper and notebook storage with some tape and a pair of scissors. Gift baskets and clean boxes received by buying in bulk can also be repurposed for organization and storage. See Pinterest for some awesome ideas.
- **"A place for everything...":** Create a place to keep school materials organized. Designate a backpack, box, or table/ desk/ shelf space for students to store each item they need throughout the day. Make sure that each item goes back to its designated storage spot after it is used, or at least by the end of the day. See Pinterest for ideas.
- **Create and follow a schedule:** Students learn how to compare different tasks and analyze them to see when and how they would like to complete each task. They learn how to organize activities so that they do not overlap, how to write down and stick to a plan, and how to adapt when plans change. They also practice communicating their plan with others.
 - Start with the school schedule provided by Gillingham, and build around it. There are numerous parents who have started blogs about schooling at home, and many of them provide schedules that you can adapt to fit your needs.