

Tahoma School District

# Parent Student SLP Guide Strategies to Support Learning

## Student Learning Plan (SLP)

### Student Learning Plans

- Required for students who did not meet standard in reading, writing, or math
- Updated annually
- Actions the school intends to take to improve the student's skills
- Strategies to help parents improve their child's skills
- Suggested practices for students

School districts are required to develop student learning plans for any student who has not met standard in reading, writing, or mathematics as measured on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). The purpose of the plan is to "help assure continued progress in academic achievement as a foundation for high school graduation and to assure that students are on track for high school graduation." If your child failed to meet standard on one or more of the content area tests on the WASL last spring a student learning plan is being developed.

Your child's specific WASL scores were sent home in September in a WASL score report and will also be shown on the student learning plan.

To support your child's progress toward achieving state standards, there are interventions the school is either providing and/or recommending listed on the student learning plan. Parent and student actions are also included to support learning for your child.

Parent support is a critical component in helping each child experience high levels of learning.



**Working together to support high levels of learning for every child.**

The information in this guide is intended to provide a variety of specific ideas and information for parents to use to assist their child.



## Good Study Habits

### Inside:

Talk with Kids	2
Homework Hints	3
Learning Math	5
Reading Skills	6
Help with Writing	7

It is critical to establish good study habits early.

- Decide what to study and how long you may need.
- Do the most difficult tasks near the beginning of your study time. If a task seems overwhelming you may want to start off with an easy part that seems most interesting to you.
- Have a place to study. Think about good lighting, the temperature, and having all your materials easily available.

- Study for 30 minutes, and then take a little break to stretch. Having an energy snack may help.
- Allow longer study times for organizing relationships and concepts, outlining, and writing papers. Use shorter study times for practicing math fluency facts, spelling words or memorizing information.
- If you get tired or bored, switch to something else. Stop studying when you are no longer being productive.

- Study with a friend. Quiz each other, compare notes and predict test questions.
- Practice explaining concepts you are studying to someone else.



# Talking with Kids About Their Day

*Looking for more than one-word answers from your kids about their school day? Here are seven ways to find out what they're really up to.*

From the American School Counselor Association



The scene

You: "How was your day?"

Your child: "Good."

You: "What'd you do?"

Your child: "Nothing."

---

***"This is what I did today that was a little bit hard, but I did it anyway. ..."***

---



Support your child in arriving to school on time each day ready to learn (e.g., rested, fed, prepared with school supplies).

## Ask specific questions

Asking questions that only require a one-word answer will often times produce just that. You can encourage your child to give something more by asking "situation-specific" questions, such as:

- "What did you do in Health & Fitness today?"
- "Who did you sit by at lunch?"
- "Tell me the best part of the story the teacher read today."
- "What did you do during Go Time today?"

## Start a "names I know" list

Have your child start a list at the beginning of the school year called "Names I Know" or "My Classes." Keep it on the refrigerator. Ask specific questions about the kids on the list.

## Give your child time to unwind

Think about your own after-work needs. Just like you, kids need time to decompress after a long day at school. Try not to jump right in with questions about school the moment your kids are dismissed. Give your child time to get home, unwind, and sit with a snack. You might even

want to wait until dinner; that just might be the amount of transition time they need.

## Hone your kids' conversation skills

If you're not getting the answer you're looking for from your kids, it could be that their conversation skills need a little work. Helping kids practice the art of conversation will serve them well in making and keeping friends. Show them that a good conversation begins with eye contact, appropriate body language, and a warm greeting.

## Share some of your day

By sharing how your day went, you're modeling for your kids the kind of information that you'd like to hear from them: "This is what I did today that I felt really good about. ..." "This is what I did today that was a little bit hard, but I did it anyway. ..." These statements naturally lead to questions that you can ask your kids: "What was one thing that you did today that was hard (or fun) for you?"

## Get the facts straight

From time to time you'll hear information that may

concern or even alarm you about your child's day at school. Don't ponder the details -- ask the teacher! It could be that you and your child's teacher are using different terminology, and your child is confused by your questions. On the other hand, if your child complains about being teased or picked on, repeats a complaint with regularity, or complains of frequent trips to the nurse, there may be a real problem. Calling the teacher or school counselor is the best way to find out what's going on, and get your child the support she needs.

## Keep on asking

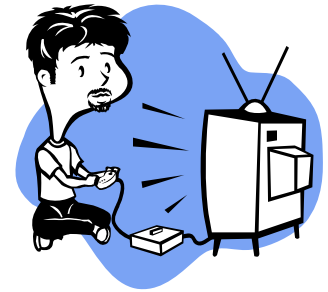
Keep asking. Your child needs you to be a part of their daily lives at school although sometimes it doesn't seem like it. When there is a disconnect between school and home, this is when children begin to feel that "no one understands me anywhere!" Stay connected!!!

## Homework—Ready, Set, GO!

- **Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do homework.** Avoid having your child do homework with the television on or in places with other distractions, such as people coming and going.
- **Make sure the materials your child needs, such as paper, pencils and a dictionary, are available.** Ask your child if special materials will be needed for some projects and get them in advance.
- **Help your child with time management.** Establish a set time each day for doing homework. Don't let your child leave homework until just before bedtime. Think about using a weekend morning or afternoon for working on big projects, especially if the project involves getting together with classmates.
- **Be positive about homework.** Tell your child how important school is. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.
- **When your child does homework, you do homework.** Show your child that the skills they are learning are related to things you do as an adult. If your child is reading, you read too. If your child is doing math, balance your checkbook.
- **When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers.** Giving answers means your child will not learn the material. Too much help teaches your child that when the going gets

rough, someone will do the work for him or her.

- **When the teacher asks that you play a role in homework, do it.** Cooperate with the teacher. It shows your child that the school and home are a team. Follow the directions given by the teacher.
- **If homework is meant to be done by your child alone, stay away.** Too much parent involvement can prevent homework from having some positive effects. Homework is a great way for kids to develop independent, lifelong learning skills.
- **Stay informed.** Talk with your child's teacher. Make sure you know the purpose of homework and what your child's class rules are.
- **Help your child figure out what is hard homework and what is easy homework.** Have your child do the hard work first. This will mean they will be most alert when facing the biggest challenges. Easy material will seem to go fast when fatigue begins to set in.
- **Watch your child for signs of failure and frustration.** Let your child take a short break if they are having trouble keeping their mind on an assignment.
- **Reward progress in homework.** If your child has been successful in homework completion and is working hard, celebrate that success with a special event (e.g., pizza, a walk, a trip to the park) to reinforce the positive effort.

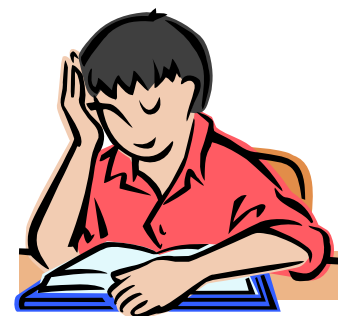


**Many parents find that linking home privileges with school success is a helpful strategy.**

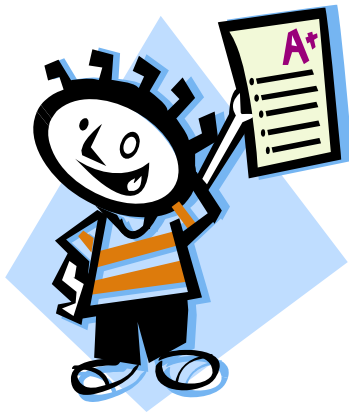
---

*When parents are involved in education, children do better in school, and schools get better.*

---



**Help ensure there are no distractions during homework time.**



## Talk About Assignments

Talking and asking questions can help your child to think through an assignment and break it down into small, manageable parts. Here are some questions to ask.

### Do you understand what you're supposed to do?

After your child has read the instructions, ask her/him to tell you in their own words what the assignment is about. Some teachers have web sites that you can access by computer for assignments in case your child misplaced a paper or was absent on the day it was given. If your child doesn't understand the instructions, read them with her/him and talk about the

assignment. Does it have words that (s)he doesn't know? How can (s)he find out what the words mean? If neither of you understands an assignment, call one of their classmates or get in touch with the teacher.

### Do you need help in understanding how to do this assignment?

See if your child needs to learn more, for example, about subtracting fractions before (s)he can do their assignment. Or find out if the teacher needs to explain to her/him again when to use different kinds of punctuation marks. If you understand the subject yourself, you may

want to work through some examples with her/him. However, always let her/him do the assignment themselves.

### Do you have everything you need to do the assignment?

Sometimes your student needs special supplies, such as colored pencils, metric rulers, calculators, maps or reference books. Check with the teacher or school guidance counselor for possible sources of assistance if you can't provide the needed supplies. Check with your local library or school library for books and other information resources.

---

*Students are more likely to complete homework successfully when parents monitor their assignments.*

---



Just sitting with your student while they do their homework can be encouraging. Consider reading or doing some paperwork to model good habits.

## Why is it important for my student to learn math?

Math skills are important to a student's success – both at school and in everyday life. Understanding math also builds confidence and opens the door to a range of career options.

In our everyday lives, understanding math enables us to:

- manage time and money, and handle everyday situations that involve numbers (for example, calculate how

much time we need to get to work, how much food we need in order to feed our families, and how much money that food will cost);

- understand patterns in the world around us and make predictions based on patterns (for example, predict traffic patterns to decide on the best time to travel);
- solve problems and make sound decisions; explain how we solved a

problem and why we made a particular decision;

- use technology (for example, calculators and computers) to help solve problems.

### *Children learn math best through activities that encourage them to:*

- explore
- think about what they are exploring
- solve problems using information they have gathered themselves;
- explain how they reached their solutions.

## Tips To Help My Student With Math

### Be positive about math!

#### Let your child know that *everyone* can learn math.

- Let your child know that **you** think math is important and fun.
- Point out the ways in which different family members use math in their jobs.
- Be positive about your own math abilities. Try to avoid saying "I was never good at math" or "I never liked math".
- Encourage your child to be persistent if a problem seems difficult.
- Praise your child when (s)he makes an effort, and share in the excitement when (s)he solves a problem or understands something for the first time.

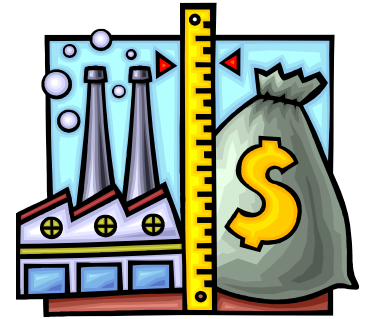
#### Make math part of your student's day.

- Point out to your child the many ways in which math is used in everyday activities.
- Encourage your child to tell or show you how (s)he uses math in everyday life.
- Include your child in everyday activities that involve math – making purchases, measuring ingredients, counting out plates and utensils for dinner.
- Play games and do puzzles with your child that involve math. They may focus on direction or time, logic and reasoning, sorting, or estimating.
- Do math problems with your child for fun.
- In addition to math tools, such as a ruler and a calculator, use handy household objects, such

as a measuring cup and containers of various shapes and sizes, when doing math with your child.

#### Encourage your child to give explanations.

- When your child is trying to solve a problem, ask what (s)he is thinking. If your child seems puzzled, ask her/him to tell you what doesn't make sense. (Talking about their ideas and how they reach solutions helps children learn to reason mathematically.)
- Suggest that your child act out a problem to solve it. Have your child show how (s)he reached a conclusion by drawing pictures and moving objects as well as by using words.
- Treat errors as opportunities to help your child learn something new.




---

*Understanding math builds confidence and opens the door to a range of career options.*

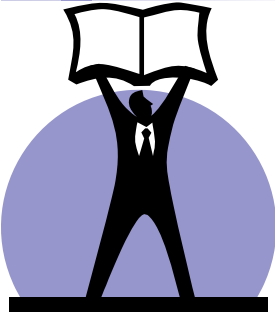
---

## READING HOMEWORK TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Have your child read aloud to you every night.
- Choose a quiet place, free from distractions, for your child to do nightly reading assignments.
- Ask your child to tell you in their own words what happened in a story.
- To check your child's understanding of what (s)he is reading, occasionally pause and ask your child questions about the characters and events in the story.
- Ask your child why (s)he thinks a character acted in a certain way and ask your child to support their answer with information from the story.
- Before getting to the end of a story, ask your child what (s)he thinks will happen next and why.



**Have your student read independently, read to a sibling, or read to you every day**



Let your child see you and other members of the family enjoying reading regularly.

---

*Encourage your child to independently read at least one book at the appropriate reading level outside of school every two weeks.*

---



Make regular library visits a part of your family routine.

## Improving Reading Skills for Students

**A good reader does as many of the following as possible:**

- Seizes the main ideas
- Thinks about what the author is saying
- Is active not passive
- Concentrates on what is being read
- Remembers as much as possible
- Applies what is being read to personal experience

**Think about the subject you are going to read about.**

- What do you know about this subject?
- What do you want to learn about this subject?
- After you read, what have you learned about this subject?

**Skim the section you are going to read.**

- Do you see anything familiar?
- Do you see anything new?
- What is your overall impression?

**Read for comprehension - Make a note of important parts.**

- Use a post-it note or an index card and write down important main ideas and vocabulary. This will help you review what you have read.
- Stop and re-read ideas that you are not sure you understand.

- Think of where else you might find more information about the same topic. "I bet there would be something in my history book about this, too."

**Recall to yourself what you have just read**

- Stop occasionally as you are reading and put into your own words what you have just read.
- At the end of a chapter, recall what the main points were.
- Discuss what you have read with another student or with your teacher. This will help you clarify your thinking.

**Textbooks**

- Read the Title and Author of the text.
- When was it published?
- Read the Table of Contents.
  - How many chapters are there?
  - How many pages are in the whole book?
  - What chapter or chapters look the most interesting?
  - Thumb through the book.
  - Are there pictures, graphs, maps, charts, and illustrations?
  - What impression do you have about the text?
  - After you have done all the above, go back and do it again in a more detailed way.

## Students Committed to Reading

**To gain reading skills necessary for life, students need to:**

- Make progress in reading a personal goal.
- Accept responsibility in conjunction with school

personnel and parents for increasing his/her reading skills.

- Attend classes each day and participate in additional tutoring or summer school as necessary.
- Actively participate and strive to gain personal

expertise in reading when in class.

- Complete reading assignments during class and outside of class.
- Independently read at least one book at the appropriate reading level outside of school every two weeks.

## Should you help your student with writing?

Yes, if you want your child to:

- **Do well in school**
- **Enjoy self-expression**
- **Become more self-reliant**

You know how important writing will be to your child's life. It will be important from first-grade through college and throughout adulthood.

**Writing is: Practical**

Most of us make lists, jot down reminders, and write notes and instructions at least occasionally.

**Job-Related**

Most jobs require writing--preparing memos, letters, briefing papers, sales reports, articles, research reports, proposals, and the like. Most workers do "some" writing on the job.

**Stimulating**

Writing helps to provoke thoughts and to organize them logically and concisely.

**Social**

Most of us write thank-you notes and letters to friends at least now and then.

**Therapeutic**

It can be helpful to express feelings in writing that cannot be expressed so easily by speaking.



*Writing can help students organize and examine their thinking.*

## Help Your Student to Learn to Write Well

Writing well requires:

- **Clear thinking.** Sometimes a child needs to have his/her memory refreshed about a past event in order to write about it.
- **Sufficient time.** Children may have `stories in their heads' but need time to think them through and write them down. School class periods are often not long enough.
- **Reading.** Reading can stimulate a child to write

about his/her own family or school life. If your child reads good books, (s)he will be a better writer.

• **A Meaningful Task.**

A child needs meaningful, not artificial writing tasks. You'll find suggestions for such tasks in the section, "Things To Do."

• **Interest.** All the time in the world won't help if there is nothing to write, nothing to say. Some of the reasons for writing include: sending

messages, keeping records, expressing feelings, or relaying information.

• **Practice.**

And more practice.

• **Revising.**

Students need experience in revising their work-- i.e., seeing what they can do to make it clearer, more descriptive, more concise, etc.

---

*Meeting a writing deadline, taking responsibility for the finished product, and feeling ownership are important parts of writing well.*

---

## Pointers for Parents

In helping your child to learn to write well, remember that your goal is to make writing easier and more enjoyable.

**Provide a place**

It's important for a child to have a good place to write--a desk or table with a smooth, flat surface and good lighting.

**Have the materials**

Provide plenty of paper--lined and unlined--and things to write with, including pencils, pens, and crayons.

**Allow time**

Help your child spend time thinking about a writing project or exercise. Good writers do a great deal of thinking. Your child may dawdle, sharpen a

pencil, get papers ready, or look up the spelling of a word. Be patient--your child may be thinking.

**Respond**

Do respond to the ideas your child expresses verbally or in writing. Make it clear that you are interested in the true function of writing which is to convey ideas.



*Respond to the ideas your child expresses verbally or in writing.*

## Writing — Things To Do

### Make it real

Your child needs to do real writing. It's more important for the child to write a letter to a relative than it is to write a one-line note on a greeting card. Encourage your child to write to relatives and friends. Perhaps your child would enjoy corresponding with a pen pal.

### Suggest note-taking

Encourage your child to take notes on trips or outings and to describe what she saw. This could include a description of nature walks, a boat ride, a car trip, or other events that lend themselves to note-taking.

### Brainstorm

Talk with your child as much as possible about his/her impressions and encourage the child to describe people and events to you. If the child's description is especially accurate and

colorful, say so.

### Encourage keeping a journal

This is excellent writing practice as well as a good outlet for venting feelings. Encourage your child to write about things that happen at home and school, about people he likes or dislikes and why, things to remember or things the child wants to do. Especially encourage your child to write about personal feelings--pleasures as well as disappointments. If the child wants to share the journal with you, read the entries and discuss them--especially the child's ideas and perceptions.

### Write together

Have your child help you with letters, even such routine ones as ordering items from an advertisement or writing to a business firm. This helps the child to see firsthand that writing is important to adults and truly useful.

### Use games

There are numerous games and puzzles that help a child to increase vocabulary and make the child more fluent in speaking and writing. Remember, building a vocabulary builds confidence. Try crossword puzzles, word games, anagrams and cryptograms. Flash cards are good, too, and they're easy to make at home.

### Suggest making lists

Most children like to make lists just as they like to count. Encourage this. Making lists is good practice and helps a child to become more organized. Children might make lists of their CD's, DVD's, baseball cards, favorite songs, furniture in a room, etc. They could include items they want. It's also good practice to make lists of things to do, schoolwork, dates for tests, social events, and other reminders.

## More Pointers for Parents *(continued from page 7)*

### Respond *(continued)*

This means focusing on "what" the child has written, not "how" it was written. It's usually wise to ignore minor errors, particularly at the stage when your child is just getting ideas together.

### Don't you write it!

Don't write a paper for your child that will be turned in as

his/her work. Never rewrite a child's work. Meeting a writing deadline, taking responsibility for the finished product, and feeling ownership of it are important parts of writing well.

### Praise

Take a positive approach and say something good about your child's writing. Is it accurate? Descriptive? Thoughtful? Interesting? Does it say something?

**Tahoma School District**  
Teaching and Learning Department  
425-413-3400

### Questions ?

Contact your school principal or the Tahoma Teaching and Learning Department

**Your Child's Progress:** For grade level expectations and specific learning expectations go to <http://www.k12.wa.us/Resources/default.aspx#progress>