February 2019

Monte Vista High School
Mr. Scott Wiedeman, Principal

High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success

Short Clips

Learning together

When your teen seems especially into a subject he's studying in school, explore it as a family. You can watch a movie on the Industrial Revolution or survey family members about inherited traits like blue eyes or dimples. If your child enjoyed a novel in English class, read and then discuss it together.

DID YOU KNOW? Teenagers are less likely to wear seat belts than people in any other age group. Explain to your child that buckling up *every time* she's in a car cuts her risk of injury or death in a crash by 50 percent. Set a rule that when she drives, she cannot start the car until everyone is fastened in. And make a point of doing the same when you're the driver.

What's new in the dictionary?

Language is constantly evolving, which is why dictionaries add new words and definitions every year. Ask your high schooler to search the internet for "2019 dictionary updates," then look for the words in daily life. He might see *glamping* (glamorous camping) in an outdoor magazine or *schnoodle* (a schnauzer-poodle mix) on a dog-lovers' forum.

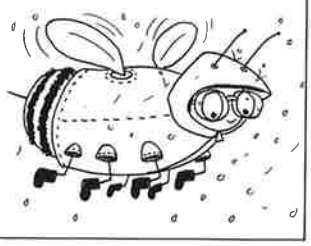
Worth quoting

"Those who wish to sing always find a song." *Swedish proverb*

Just for fun

Q: Can bees fly in the rain?

A: Not without their yellow jackets!



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Kindness is cool

Your teenager is going through a lot of changes, so it's normal for her to sometimes focus on herself instead of others. Show her how kindness can be cool and uplifting with these activities.

Spread kind words

Suggest that your teen text or private-message kind, thoughtful comments to peers. She might compliment a student council member for delivering a powerful speech. Or she could offer encouraging words to a basketball player after a tough loss. Then the next time she sees the classmate, she can follow up face-to-face.

Do kind acts

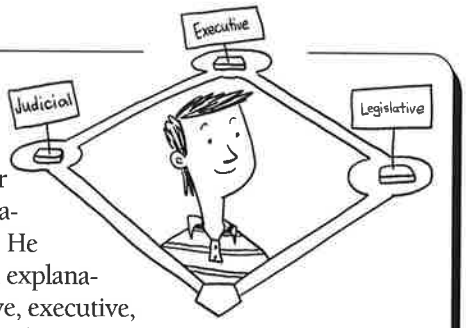
Little things can really brighten someone else's day. At home, she could do a chore for a sibling who is studying for a big test or go to the store for a dinner ingredient you forgot. In school, have her look for ways to show kindness toward staff. Perhaps she'll thank a cafeteria worker, hold the door for a custodian, or reshelve books she's not using to avoid making extra work for the librarian.

Be kind anonymously

Encourage your high schooler to be kind "just because"—and not in search of praise. She might write compliments ("You rock!") and slip them under family members' bedroom doors. Or if she has a part-time job, she could leave a basket of muffins in the employee break room with a note that says "Take one."

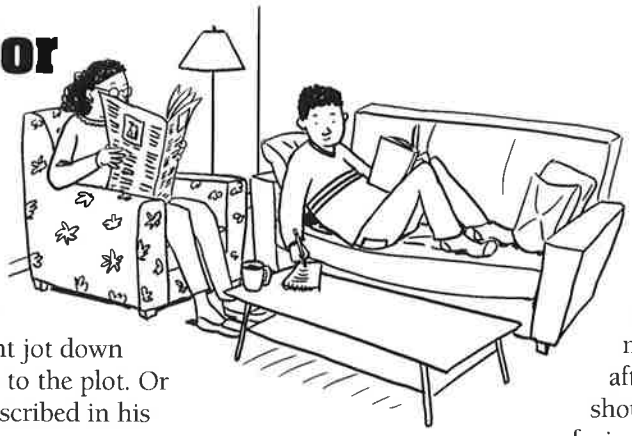
Now I remember!

Learning and remembering information for tests will be easier with strategies like these:



- Have your high schooler think of a familiar place, maybe a baseball field, and picture locations within it (first, second, and third base). He can mentally assign facts to each, perhaps an explanation of each branch of government (legislative, executive, judicial). During a test, he'll "run the bases" in his mind to jog his memory.
- Suggest that your child invent acronyms to remember facts or processes. A well-known one is FOIL (First, Outer, Inner, Last). It can help him simplify *binomials*, or algebraic expressions like $(2x + 3)(x + 1)$. With a little creativity, he'll think of his own acronyms.

Reading skills for every subject



Being a strong reader will help your high schooler do well not only in English class, but also in math, science, and social studies. Share these ideas.

Be an active reader. Suggest that your teen read with a pen in his hand. He might jot down a passage from a novel that he sees as key to the plot. Or he could sketch a diagram of a process described in his biology textbook. When he reads an explanation of a math formula, he can make up sample problems.

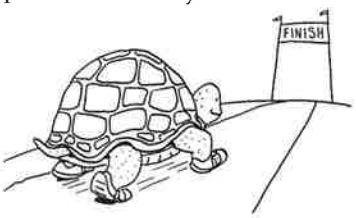
Clear up confusion. If your high schooler doesn't understand part of what he's reading, he could skip it and keep going. The meaning may become clearer after he reads more. Then, he should go back and read the confusing portion, trying to connect it with the part that made sense.

Use visuals. Remind your teenager to pay attention to graphics like diagrams and charts. They support the text and provide valuable information to help him learn visually. For example, a time line in his history book may give him an overview of a civilization's rise and fall.

Promote perseverance

Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper editor who said he lacked imagination. And Dr. Seuss's first book was rejected 27 times.

What did Disney and Dr. Seuss have in common? They persevered—and achieved great success. Try these ideas to build perseverance in your teen.



1. If she's struggling with something like understanding chemical formulas, remind her of a time when she struggled, persevered, and succeeded. Looking back can motivate her to move forward.

2. Encourage her to break out of her comfort zone by leading a skit in her improv group or trying stand-up paddleboarding. New experiences give her the chance to overcome fears and setbacks.

3. Help your teen respond positively to and learn from her failures. Say her story isn't accepted by the school literary magazine. Rather than giving up, she can ask the advisor for feedback. That will help her improve—and motivate her to try again.

Parent to Parent: Parent-teen bonds

When my son Daryl was younger, I gave him hugs and kisses every day. But now that he's in high school, he shies away from this kind of affection.

I talked with a neighbor who has adult children. She said teenagers don't tire of hearing a parent say "I love you"—even if they don't say it back. The catch? Say it when their friends aren't around, because it might embarrass them. She believes that staying close and loving during the teen years contributed to helping her kids stay out of trouble and mature into well-adjusted adults.

Now I don't hesitate to tell my son that I love him. Also, I've discovered that Daryl is okay with pats on the back and high-fives. Asking about music he likes and attending his wrestling meets are other ways I show love.

Love looks different during the teen years. But Daryl still knows how much he means to me.

Q&A: Breaking up is hard

Q *My daughter is going through a tough time after breaking up with her boyfriend. How can I help her?*

A While you can't make everything "all right" (as much as you'd like to!), you can give your daughter support. Start by letting her know you're available anytime she feels like talking. She might not open up right away, but she'll know you're there for her.

Then, you could lightly suggest ways to help her move on. For instance, she should resist the urge to call or text her ex-boyfriend—or to check his social media accounts.

Also, encourage your daughter to get involved in other activities to take her mind off him. For instance, she might join a cycling or poetry club. She'll spend time with friends and have something new to fill her days.

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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