

Daily Learning Planner

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

Gadsden City Schools



THE
PARENT
INSTITUTE®

December • January • February 2024-2025

December 2024

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

- 1. Will your family celebrate a holiday this month? Ask your child to take the responsibility for one or two traditions.
- 2. When reviewing a graded test, talk about what your child got right first. Help your student think about what worked to learn that material.
- 3. Ask your child to take photos during family events. This can build interest in participating.
- 4. Eliminate distractions and try not to interrupt when your child is doing schoolwork.
- 5. Make plans to take your child to an event at the high school. Discuss your student's own goals for high school.
- 6. Together, think of synonyms for words. A synonym for *talk* is *converse*.
- 7. Faced with a thorny situation? Try talking with other families at school. Teachers can also be helpful sources of advice.
- 8. Bake cookies with your child. If you're doubling a recipe, have your middle schooler do the math.
- 9. Make popcorn and watch a movie with your child. Talk about the film.
- 10. Talk with your child about a choice you have made. Then, talk about the consequences.
- 11. Encourage your child to compare prices and return policies at different stores before buying something.
- 12. Make a special toast to your child at breakfast or dinner.
- 13. Knock before you enter your child's bedroom. Respecting middle schoolers' privacy boosts their self-respect and independence.
- 14. Show your child you are always trying to learn and improve.
- 15. School attendance matters. Set a bedtime that lets your child wake on time. Don't allow absences or late arrivals because your child is tired.
- 16. Limit drinks with caffeine at night. They can deprive your child of needed sleep.
- 17. Have each family member do two nice things for others today. Later, have everyone share what they did.
- 18. If your child uses social media, scroll through the feed together. Discuss content that sends messages about unrealistic or unhealthy body types.
- 19. Use math-related terms in conversation, such as *parallel* and *intersect*.
- 20. Choose a word and rearrange the letters in alphabetical order. Can your child figure out the word?
- 21. Make a positive comment about one of your child's friends today.
- 22. Ask which your child likes more, being alone, or being with other people?
- 23. Listen to your child's favorite radio station in the car. Exchange opinions about what you hear.
- 24. Read a favorite children's book aloud as a family.
- 25. Give the gift of your time to your child.
- 26. Share stories about your family's history with your child.
- 27. With your child, think of as many city nicknames as you can: The Big Easy (New Orleans), Motor City (Detroit).
- 28. Practice the art of compromise. Negotiate with your child about something you can be flexible about.
- 29. Brainstorm together about ways to make your family's diet healthier.
- 30. 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.
- 31. Together, make a collage of photos taken of your child this year.

January 2025

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- 1. Help your child set goals for 2025. Set some for yourself, too. Discuss steps you'll each take to reach them.
- 2. Ask your child to plan and schedule a fun family night this month.
- 3. Have your child take a five-minute break after every 30 minutes of homework or studying.
- 4. Make a list of the best times your family had during the last year. Schedule time on the calendar to do some of those activities again.
- 5. Suggest that your child write a letter to a teacher or coach who has been a positive influence.
- 6. Ask your child to brainstorm dinner ideas for the week.
- 7. Invent something with your child.
- 8. Offer praise when your child has studied hard. This encourages your middle schooler to keep it up.
- 9. Help your child rehearse ways to say *no* to things that are against the rules or just feel wrong.
- 10. Post an inspiring quotation where your child will see it.
- 11. Talk with your child about how rights come with responsibilities.
- 12. Visit the library and check out two copies of the same book for you and your child to read and discuss.
- 13. Encourage your child to participate in a volunteer activity.
- 14. Suggest that your child review class notes each evening and draw a picture or diagram to illustrate main ideas.
- 15. Encourage your child to break large tasks into small parts. This makes projects less overwhelming and easier to finish.
- 16. Make up trivia questions about your family. Quiz one another at the dinner table.
- 17. Has it been a challenging week at school for your child? Go out together for a treat.
- 18. Review your family's schedules. Do they reflect your priorities?
- 19. Ask about what your child likes most about this year's classes.
- 20. If your family is making a big purchase, have your child help you research options and make the best choice.
- 21. Make a household rule as a family. Write it down, along with the consequence for breaking it.
- 22. Share strategies with your child about how to remember facts for a test, such as setting them to music or linking them to familiar ideas.
- 23. Call out words from the dictionary during mealtime. Take turns guessing how to spell and define them.
- 24. Avoid using problems with schoolwork as an excuse to criticize or argue with your child about other issues.
- 25. Check on your child's grades. Do they meet your student's expectations and yours?
- 26. Try a new recipe with your child. Cooking is a tasty way for middle schoolers to practice following directions.
- 27. When your child faces challenges, say, "Go for it!" or, "You can do it!"
- 28. Acknowledge your child's feelings, but avoid saying "I know how you feel." Middle schoolers believe their feelings are unique.
- 29. Brainstorm about something with your child. For example, how could your family save money on groceries?
- 30. Have your child do some road math. How long did a car trip take? How many miles were driven? What was your average speed?
- 31. Suggest a few fun, screen-free activities that your child can do alone.

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February 2025

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

- 1. Tell your child about a time when considering your values helped you make a decision.
- 2. Allow your child time to daydream. It builds imagination and problem-solving skills.
- 3. Make opportunities for your child to write. Have your middle schooler make a grocery list or take notes at a family meeting, for example.
- 4. Resist the urge to argue with an angry middle schooler. Instead, say "You sound upset. When you calm down, we can talk about it."
- 5. Cut out small paper hearts. Each day, write a reason you love your child on one. Tape them together to make a chain.
- 6. Ask your child to add two four-digit numbers. Can your middle schooler figure the answer on paper before you can with a calculator?
- 7. Have your child keep a study log. Your student can record time spent each day studying each subject. When grades come out, compare.
- 8. Listen to a piece of music that has no lyrics. Have your child write words to the tune.
- 9. Help your child think of tough situations that might come up with friends. How would your student handle them?
- 10. Ask to see your child's homework. Have your child explain one of the concepts involved.
- 11. Encourage healthy eating. Allow your child to choose a fruit or vegetable at the grocery store.
- 12. Is your child having a problem at school? Discuss things your middle schooler could do to solve it without your help.
- 13. Tonight, leave a valentine where your child will find it in the morning.
- 14. Have each family member prepare one part of a meal, then enjoy it together.
- 15. Is your child's room messy? Challenge your middle schooler to a 15-minute pickup blitz before doing something relaxing.
- 16. Spend 20 minutes on DEAR time today (Drop Everything and Read).
- 17. Talk to your child about a local issue that you feel strongly about.
- 18. Stay positive when helping with schoolwork, even if your child gets discouraged. Show confidence in your child's ability to learn.
- 19. Praise something about your child's behavior today.
- 20. Let your child quiz you about a homework topic. Thinking up questions helps students learn.
- 21. Play a game with your child that uses math skills, such as Monopoly, Yahtzee or Go Fish (for pairs of cards that add up to 10).
- 22. Teach your child to ask *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why* and *how* when doing research.
- 23. Take a walk with your child and use all five senses to observe the world around you.
- 24. Tell your child that when studying history, acting out past events brings lessons to life.
- 25. Have a conversation with your child about what the world would be like if there were no rules.
- 26. Keep a list of your child's school and extracurricular activities and accomplishments.
- 27. Encourage deeper thinking by asking your child questions like, "Can you give me another example so I can be sure I understand?"
- 28. The next time you purchase something marked "some assembly required," do the job with your middle schooler.

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