



"CORE"tastic Kids Newsletter

Handwriting Ideas:

Handwriting Q & A:

Q. Why do you teach capital letters first? Won't children struggle with their lowercase letters later on?

A. Teaching capital letters is much easier. They are all the same size, all start at the top, and share the same placement positions on paper (starting above mid-line and going down to the bottom line). They are also formed with on 4 strokes (big line, little line, big curve, little curve). Children who learn capitals first are better prepared for lowercase writing.

Handwriting Activities:

Cutting:

- * Have child cut coupons
- * Cut scraps for fun collage project
- * Cut various media: straws, cardstock, aluminum foil, old greeting cards, play dough, magazine pictures

Visual Motor:

- * "follow the leader" drawing: take turns being the leader
- * Mazes (start with easy, wide paths and increase difficulty with progress)

Vertical Surface:

- * Lite Brite
- * Magnadoodle propped vertically
- * Pegboards, lacing boards propped vertically

Other Ideas:

- * Sidewalk chalk
- * Squirt guns/water bottles
- * Use a swim "noodle" as a "pencil" and draw in the

Math Bingo:

Make your own bingo cards with numbers instead of letters. Cut out small squares of paper, write down equations whose answers will appear on the bingo cards. Put the equations into a plastic sandwich bag, shake it up and call out the equations. Give the student (s) time to figure



Where performance meets potential.

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Exercise of the month:

The Egg

This great antigravity core activator will strengthen the abdominal muscles for a stronger core! Be sure to breath and count!



- © April 7th -Horizons on the Hill magnet program - parent information meeting night at 6:00 pm at Thomas Sumter Academy
- © 4/10-4/17/09- Spring Break!! Have Fun!!!!
- © 5/16/09-Providence Heart and Sole 5 Miler

Math Tip:

Learning how to solve problems in mathematics is knowing what to look for. Math problems often require established procedures. The key to solving problems is knowing what the procedures are and when to apply them. To identify procedures, the student has to be familiar with the problem situation and be able to collect the necessary information, identify a strategy or strategies, and use it appropriately.

When deciding on methods or procedures to use to solve problems, the first thing your child should do is look for clues (which is one of the most important skills in solving problems in mathematics). If your child begins to solve problems by looking for clue words, they will find that these "words" often indicate the operation.

Clue Words for Addition—sum, total, in all, perimeter

Clue Words for Subtraction—difference, how much more, exceed

Clue Words for Multiplication—product, total, area, times

Clue Words for Division—share, distribute, quotient, average

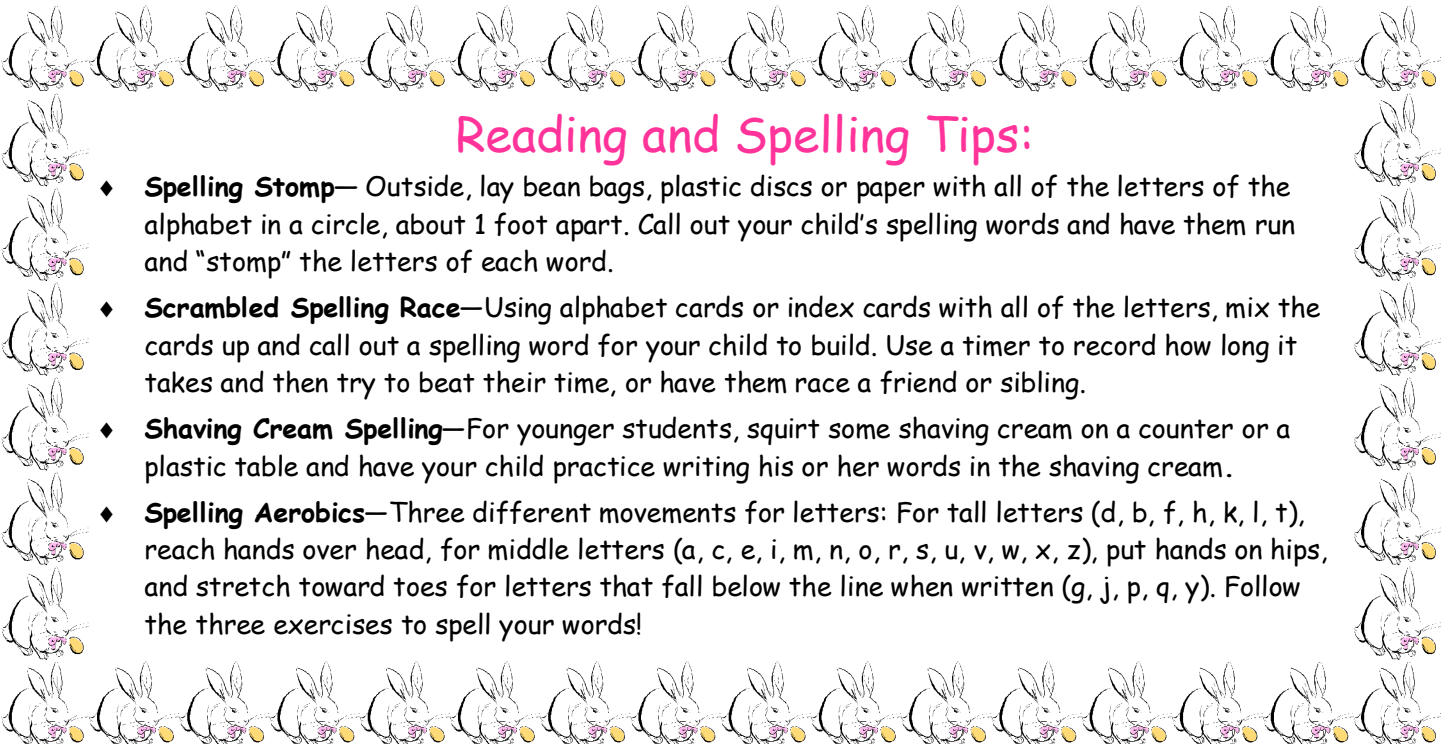
Body Works – From the Inside Out

Children who eat a diet rich in fruits and vegetables perform better academically than their peers. As part of the Children's Lifestyle and School Performance Study, researchers in Canada looked at 4,589 fifth-grade students to examine the link between diet quality and academic performance. Food frequency questionnaires were compared with the results of a standardized test given to all fifth-grade students in Canada. The results showed that children who ate more fruits and vegetables and less fat—indicating a high quality diet—also experienced increases in academic performance.

Imagine what your brain is capable of with a healthy diet and regular exercise. With springtime upon us, there is no better time to start a family exercise routine and to begin looking closely at what we eat. Walking after dinner, riding bikes, or even playing some games such as tag and capture the flag will not only promote and develop fitness, it will also give families more quality time together. Get started today!!



“Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body, it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity.”
JFK



Reading and Spelling Tips:

- ◆ **Spelling Stomp**— Outside, lay bean bags, plastic discs or paper with all of the letters of the alphabet in a circle, about 1 foot apart. Call out your child's spelling words and have them run and "stomp" the letters of each word.
- ◆ **Scrambled Spelling Race**—Using alphabet cards or index cards with all of the letters, mix the cards up and call out a spelling word for your child to build. Use a timer to record how long it takes and then try to beat their time, or have them race a friend or sibling.
- ◆ **Shaving Cream Spelling**—For younger students, squirt some shaving cream on a counter or a plastic table and have your child practice writing his or her words in the shaving cream.
- ◆ **Spelling Aerobics**—Three different movements for letters: For tall letters (d, b, f, h, k, l, t), reach hands over head, for middle letters (a, c, e, i, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x, z), put hands on hips, and stretch toward toes for letters that fall below the line when written (g, j, p, q, y). Follow the three exercises to spell your words!

The Magic Learning Formula

Studies Show Kids Learn Better When Having Fun!

We've all met teachers who are quite serious about their work. In fact, some believe that kids at school are not there to have fun. They believe they are there to do the "work" of learning. Anything, (e.g. an activity or energizer) that even hinted of the "F" word (fun) is immediately dismissed as a waste of time.

They (and you) might be curious about what the research says about our brain, enjoyment and learning. First of all, let's be clear about it: there are many types of learning (14 in all) and many of them often happen non-consciously (imitation learning is an example). Second, there is no magical absorption, "sinking in", or "download" of content. Those are metaphors. Learning is ultimately an electrochemical event in the brain. Everything learned consumes resources, like neurotransmitters, proteins, glucose and calcium. One of the neurotransmitters highly involved in learning is dopamine. You may know it as the one implicated in drug abuse. But dopamine serves multiple roles. It is implicated in the *anticipation* of pleasure as well as pleasure itself. When we are in a better mood, with just the right amount of dopamine, we actually make better decisions. Too much dopamine and we make poor decisions. In the right dosages, it facilitates working memory and neural plasticity (the remodeling of synapses). You'd want to keep your student's affect level WELL ABOVE feeling bad and WELL BELOW euphoria. How do you do that?

As you might suspect, good feelings in the classroom will enhance dopamine production. What is it that teachers can do that is behavioral; that actually bumps up the production of this special neurotransmitter? First, repetitive gross motor activities will do it, (e.g. marching, power walking, etc.). Get the movement going in the classroom! Second, succeeding at a challenging task will raise the dopamine levels. Third, camaraderie and team spirit can help do it. Finally, just the anticipation of pleasure can do it. Hook them in with a genuine promise of something good coming up soon! Why do all of this? Enhanced dopamine levels support better working memory, enhance memory formation, and better decision-making. But here's the really amazing thing: The reverse actually works, too! Better decisions made bumps up dopamine! New skills learned bumps up dopamine. Is this awesome or not? Let's cut to the chase: everything done in the classroom is likely to have SOME effect on the brain. Brain-based education says, "Be purposeful about it." Now, go have some fun!

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McNab F, Varrone A, Farde L, Jucaite A, Bystritsky P, Forssberg H, Klingberg T. (2009) Changes in cortical dopamine D1 receptor binding associated with cognitive training. *Science.* Feb 6; 323(5915):800-2.

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The Core Institute is a performance development center that seeks to maximize physical and intellectual skills. Our goal is for each student's performance to meet his or her potential - what ever level that may be! If you believe your child could be a better athlete on the playing field or a more successful student in the classroom, then call us today. Be a part of the Core Families who are seeking excellence!

Call us at:
 (803) 469-CORE (2673)



March for Meals 5K Riverbanks Zoo Run

Core Institute participated in the March for Meals 5K Run to support the program that provides meals for senior citizens. Core took home the "Long Neck Award" which was given to the team that came the furthest distance to run. There were also two students of Core that took home awards; Robin Majority took home the "Turtle Award", and Zane Mooneyhan took home the 3rd place award for his age group. We are very proud of all who participated in this worthy cause. We encourage everyone to get involved and stay fit!!!!

St. Patrick's Day 5K

The rain could not dampen the spirits of the Core group as they participated in the St. Patrick's day "Get to the Green". Collin Charles won 1st place in the 11-14 year old division.

Providence Heart & Sole Women's 5 Miler—May 16, 2009

We would like to invite all mothers, daughters, sisters or friends to come out and join us to raise awareness of heart disease—the number one killer of women. Please call Tammi Soles at 803-469-2673 for more information.

