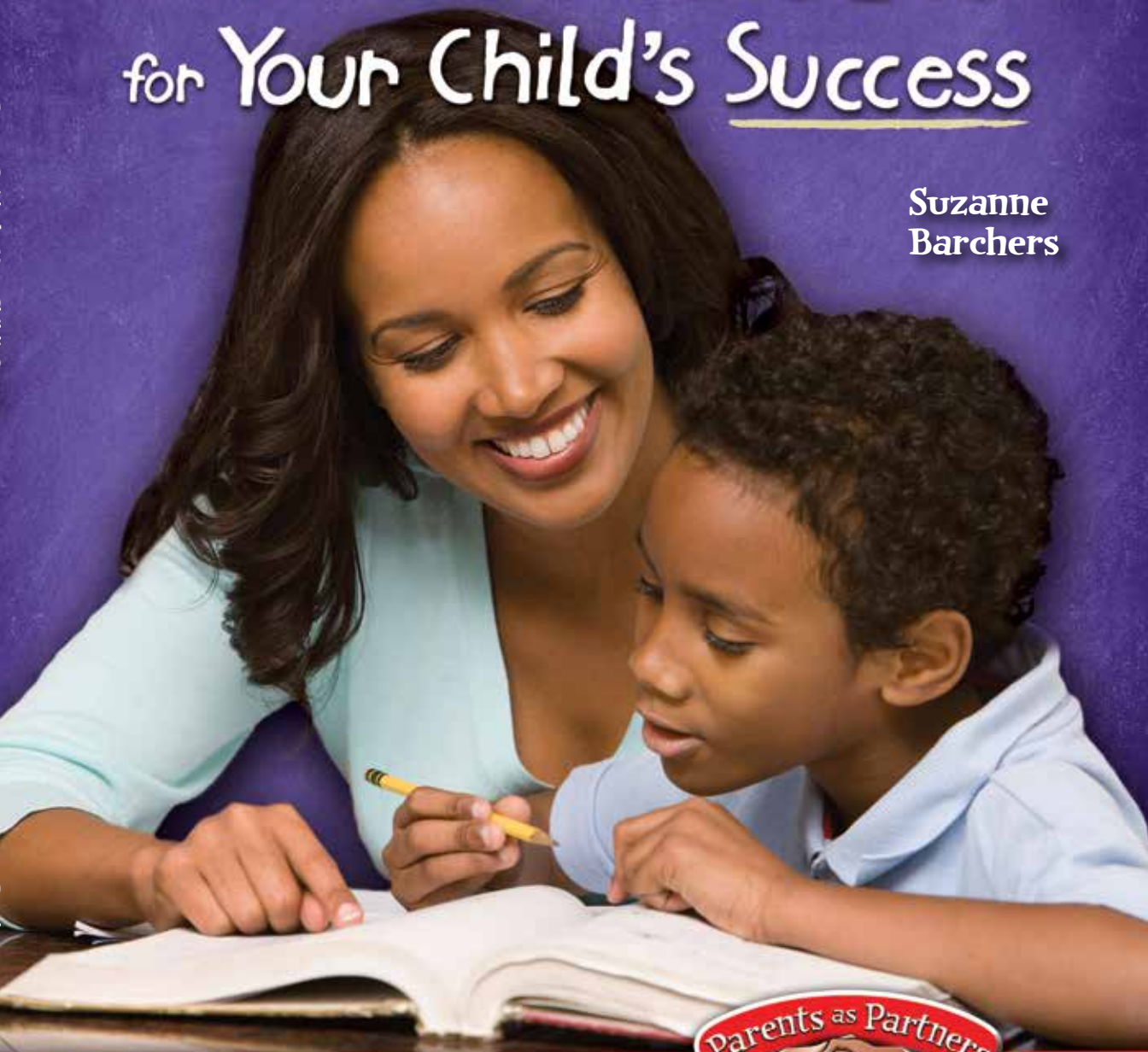


Second Grade Parent Guide

for Your Child's Success

Suzanne
Barchers



Parents as Partners



Teacher Created Materials

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Dear Family,



This is an exciting year for your second grader! Your child is well on the way to becoming a reader. He or she has probably mastered many basic math skills. Second graders are ready to explore science and social studies beyond what they have learned about in earlier grades.

Your second grader has had experiences with other children, including dealing with others on the playground and in the lunchroom. Those experiences make the adjustment to second grade easier. Now, you can expect your child to be a bit more independent. He or she may be building friendships that last a lifetime. Also, you have no doubt learned during the previous year how important it is to build a partnership with the teacher. Know that you can go to your child's teacher for support and to ask questions.

This parent guide will give you more parent-tested ideas for helping your child learn. From tips for organizing school materials to strategies for including learning opportunities in your busy day, you'll find some ideas that are just right for you.



One last thought...

Keep in mind that your second grader still needs your involvement in much of his or her learning. You are still the most important teacher in your child's life. But don't forget to have fun along the way!

Forming Routines

Mornings can be pretty hectic. Getting everyone fed and ready for school can be a challenge. Last-minute parent signatures and finishing up homework can make mornings even more hectic! If you haven't already set up a routine, the beginning of a new school year is the perfect time to make some changes.

.....

Try these ideas to prevent frantic mornings.

In- and Out-Boxes

Create in-boxes and out-boxes. When your child comes home, all papers go into the in-box, such as homework, notes that must be signed, and school announcements.



Review Time

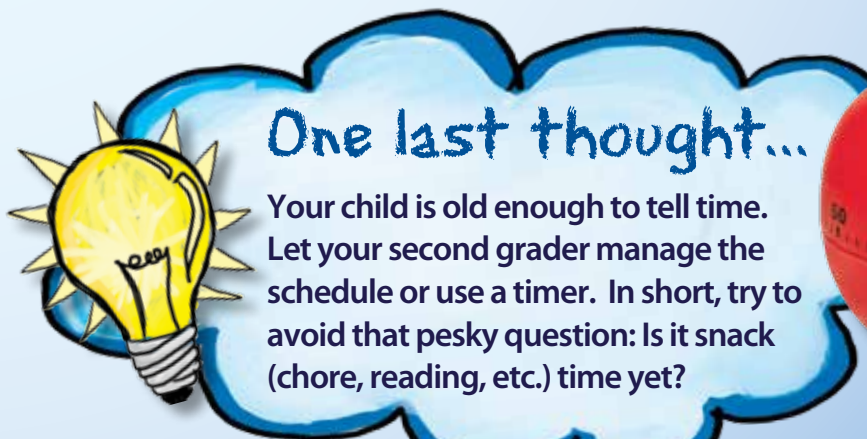
Have a set time, such as after dinner, for reviewing all school papers. Once you are done, homework or notes for school can go into the out-box.

Pack It Up

Collect the papers from the out-box and have your child put them into his or her backpack before bedtime. Everything will be ready for the morning rush.

Create a Schedule

With your child's help, create a schedule. List all of your child's activities, such as homework time, playtime, chores, and bedtime. Post this schedule.



One last thought...

Your child is old enough to tell time. Let your second grader manage the schedule or use a timer. In short, try to avoid that pesky question: Is it snack (chore, reading, etc.) time yet?



Homework

Time

Many schools follow the guide of approximately 10 minutes of homework per grade. Your second grader may be expected to do 20 minutes of homework each night. Even if your child doesn't regularly get homework, it's time to establish routines.

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These tips will help your second grader form good work habits.

Create a Workspace

Gather supplies such as loose-leaf notebook paper, pencils, drawing paper, crayons or markers, a ruler, scissors, and a children's dictionary.

Be Supportive

Monitor progress, and give help if it's needed. Try your best to keep homework time quiet!

Try Flash Cards

Make or purchase flash cards to practice addition and subtraction facts. Try practicing sight words, too.



Use a Timer

Use a timer or stopwatch to see how quickly your child can get through the flash cards. Then trade places.



One last thought...

If your child doesn't have homework, have him or her spend time each day reading and writing. Grandparents would love getting a letter every week or so!

Dear Grandma,
I had fun at
your house. I
liked the tire
swing.

Love,
Amy

Family

Conversations

If you are a working parent, you may long for a quiet evening with minimal conversation. However, dinnertime provides the perfect opportunity to come together and hear about everyone's day. Conversations with your second grader are also important for vocabulary development.

.....

What special activities did you do today?

We got to check out library books.



These questions can help start a good conversation with your family.

What was the best part of your day?

Did you have any problems today?
How did you solve your problem?

Did you check out any good books from the library?



One last thought...

If you have a large family, be sure everyone gets a chance to talk about his or her day. Encourage thoughtful listening and respect.

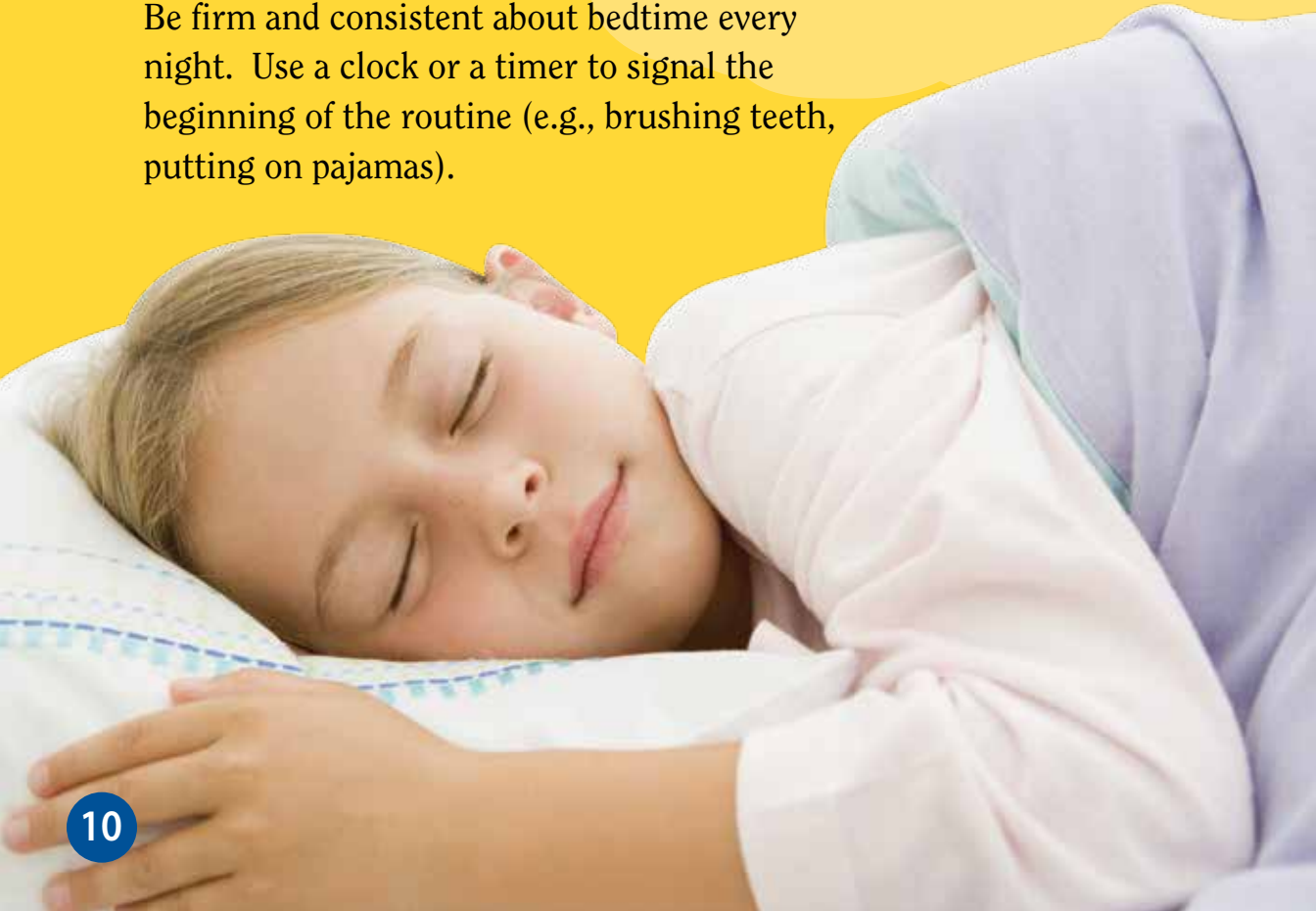
Sleep

Smarts

Second graders need plenty of sleep. Your child will still wake up early, which means that he or she needs an early bedtime. Of course, your child wants to stay up late, but you need to stay in charge and stick to a routine that fosters sleep.

These tips will help your second grader get enough sleep.

Be firm and consistent about bedtime every night. Use a clock or a timer to signal the beginning of the routine (e.g., brushing teeth, putting on pajamas).



Turn off the TV

Turn off the television at least 30 minutes before starting the bedtime routine.

Read Aloud

Read aloud a chapter from a longer book, building continuity into the routine.

The chart below shows how much sleep children need.

Age	Sleep Needed
1–3 years	12–14 hours
3–5 years	11–13 hours
5–12 years	10–11 hours



One last thought...

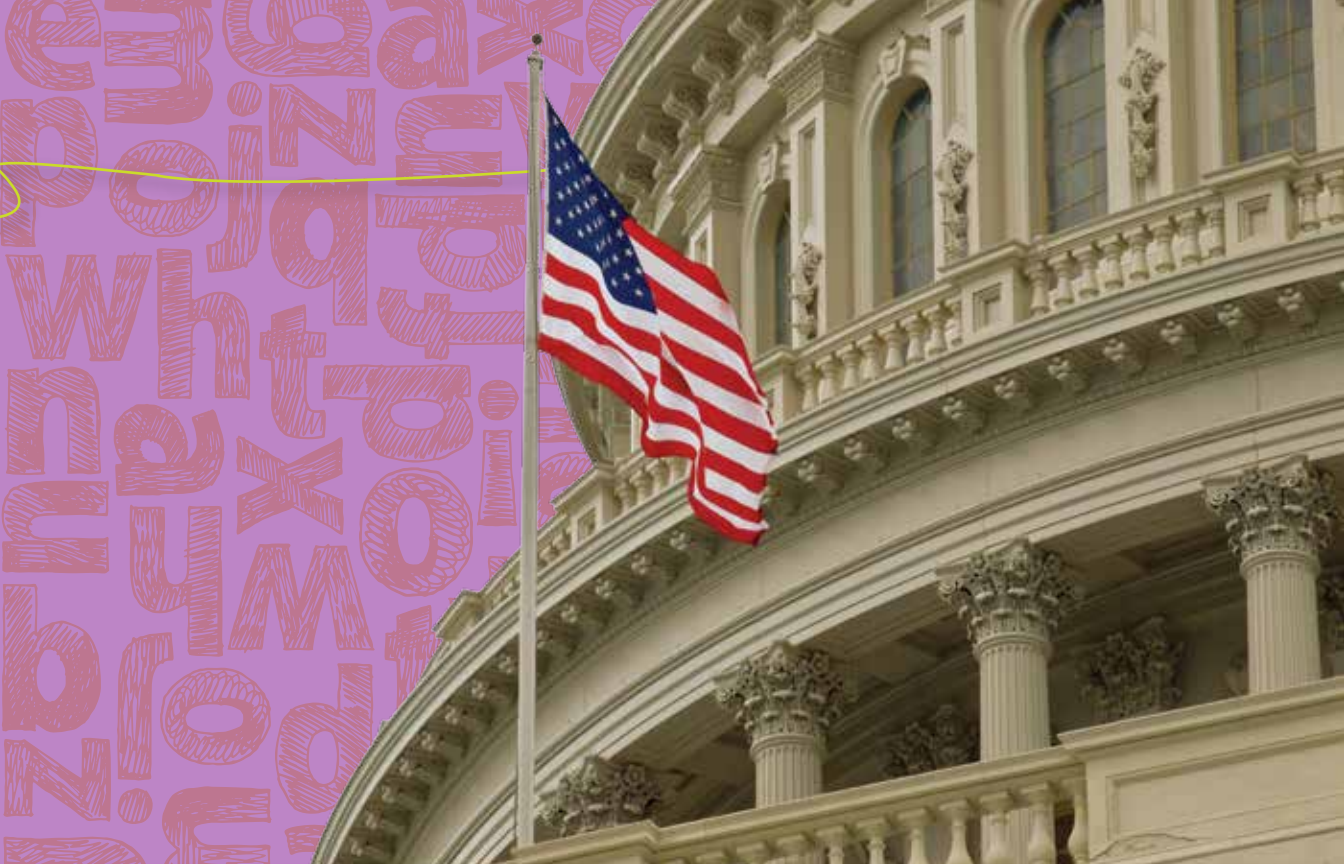
Get ready for the next day (clothes, books, etc.) as part of your nighttime routine. This will make for a smoother morning routine.

Top 10

Things Your Second Grader Needs to Know

1. **Word strategies** for reading words (e.g., short and long vowels, common vowel teams—*ea*, *ee*, and *ie*)
2. **Literature** from around the world (e.g., folktales, fairy tales, classic myths)
3. **Writing** from a variety of genres (e.g., letters, journal entries, book reports)





4. **Addition and subtraction** within 20
5. **Place value**
6. **Time and money**
7. **Life cycles** of plants and animals
8. Materials in **solid, liquid, and gas forms**
9. **Time lines and ancestors**, as well as important heroes
10. Different **types of governments in the country**

Reading **Is Everywhere!**

Your child is building reading vocabulary every day. Your time is stretched, but there are still many opportunities when you are running errands or standing in lines that can be used to reinforce reading skills. Just look around!

.....



These games will help improve your child's reading.

Play I'm Thinking Of...

Challenge each other with clues such as "I'm thinking of a fruit that starts out as green and turns yellow."

Play Categories

Have your child find words on signs or packages that fit into a category. The category can be fruits. Challenge your child to find words like *banana*, *apple*, and *kiwi* throughout the store.

Play Find the Food

Spell out foods to challenge each other. For example, "Find the food spelled *b-a-g-e-l*."

Play Name That Verb or Adverb

Say a word and have your child tell you if it is a verb or adverb.



One last thought...

Kids Learn! Sight Words 1-300 is a great app for sight word practice and fun! It's available for some devices.

Reading Time

This is the year to begin reading longer books to your child. Your child will benefit from hearing you or an older sibling read aloud longer passages with expression. You may have to sneak reading into your day, but it will be worth it!

.....



These activities will help improve your child's reading.

Read Alouds

Have your child read a book aloud to a relative via video chat, over the phone, or as a podcast.

Multitasking

Have your child read aloud to you while you are doing chores or cooking.

On the Go

Keep a library of books in the car, or get audio books from the library.

Compare and Contrast

Compare a book to a video or television version. For example, *The Cat in the Hat* by Dr. Seuss. How are they alike? Different?



One last thought...

Read aloud together, even if English isn't your first language. You'll both benefit!



Your Home Library

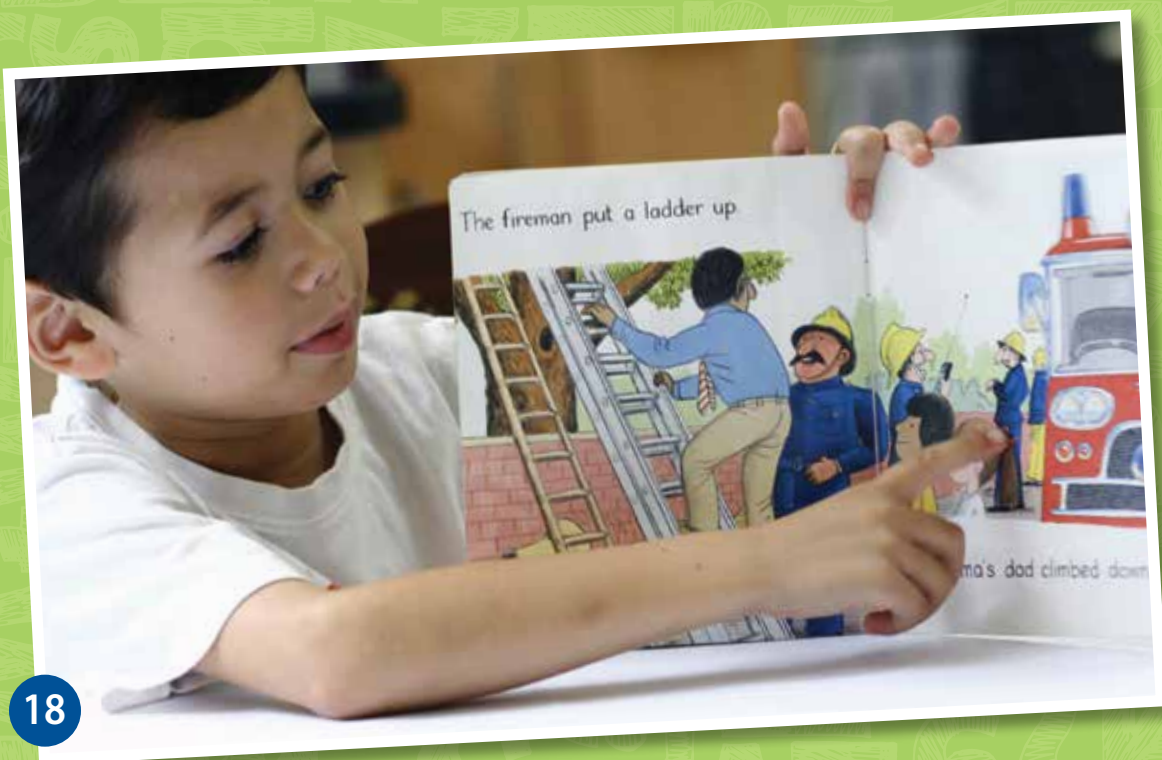
Building a home library can be a great way to help your child find a love for reading. Your librarian can help you with book ideas. Ask for lists of award-winning books and recommended authors of early chapter books. Make building a home library a family project.

.....

*Here are some ideas
for where to find books.*

Thrift Stores • Used Bookstores

Warehouse Sales • Sidewalk Sales



These are some good books your second grader might enjoy!

Magic Tree House Series
by Mary Pope Osborne

Skippyjon Jones by Judy Schachner

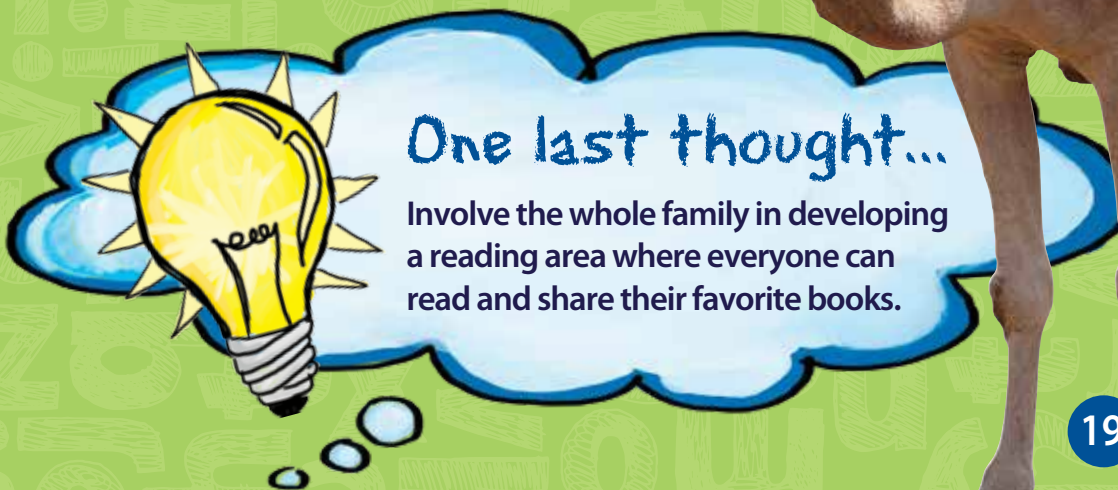
The Fire Cat by Esther Averill

Amos and Boris by William Steig

Junie B. Jones
by Barbara Park

How the Camel Got His Hump
by Rudyard Kipling

Fancy Nancy
by Jane O'Connor



One last thought...

Involve the whole family in developing a reading area where everyone can read and share their favorite books.

Spelling and **Writing Time!**

Second graders should be writing every day. Having a good vocabulary pays off throughout life. Luckily, we live in a world full of words! This makes building vocabulary fun and easy.

.....

These ideas will help your second grader have fun with spelling and writing.

Stationery

Have your child make get-well, birthday, congratulations, and sympathy cards for family and friends. Encourage your child to add artistic touches.



Play With Your Food

Combine food and spelling. Have your child make a word with alphabet cereal before eating it. Decorate a cake with words, or make words with uncooked macaroni.

Word Art

Practice spelling words with art supplies such as string, toothpicks, or ribbon—anything that can be reused. Put a collection of items in a plastic bag to keep your child busy at a restaurant.

Spelling Fun

If your child gets a weekly spelling list, have him or her practice each word by writing it with crayons, markers, or ropes of clay, or in a box of sand or cornmeal.



One last thought...

Capitalize on spelling patterns, even for those tough words such as *right* and *light*. If your child makes a logical mistake, such as confusing words like *wear* and *where*, praise the effort. Then, simply point out that sometimes you just have to memorize spellings.

Goldilocks' Rules for Finding a Book

Choosing a book can sometimes be challenging for children. Sometimes children want to read books that aren't always right for them to read by themselves.

.....



Use Goldilocks' Rules to find a book that is just right—not too easy, not too hard!

Too Easy

- 1.** I have read the book many times before.
 - 2.** I understand and can retell the story.
 - 3.** I know and understand almost every word.
-

Too Hard

- 1.** There are five or more words on a page that I can't read.
 - 2.** I don't understand what is happening in the story.
 - 3.** I need help when reading this book.
-

Just Right

- 1.** The book is new to me (still okay to reread a favorite).
- 2.** I can retell and understand what I have read.
- 3.** I can read most of the words on the page, but there are some words I need to work on.
- 4.** I can read the book by myself, but I may need help.

Math

on the Go

Most second graders need to practice skills such as measuring, counting money, and basic geometry. Use idle moments when in the store or running errands to have your child practice these skills.



Here are a few activities to help build math skills while on the go.

Find That Coin

Have your child identify coins needed for a purchase.

“Our can of corn costs 79 cents. What coins would I need to buy this can?”

What Size?

Have your child guess the sizes of things.

“This box is about 8 inches long. How long do you think that other box is?”

What Shape?

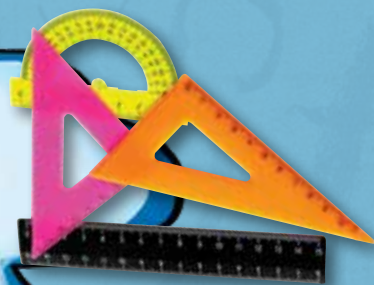
Have your child identify and describe geometric shapes, such as rectangles, squares, circles, and triangles.

“Can you find a sign that is a rectangle? How many sides does it have?”



One last thought...

Take a moment to measure the width of your child's hand. Use this measurement to roughly measure other objects.



Math at Home

Second graders are mastering their addition and subtraction skills. They are making a big leap into mental math. Help you child gain confidence through this transition.

.....

Here are a few activities to help build math skills while at home.

Baking Math Problems

Turn cooking and baking into math problems.

“This recipe calls for 1 teaspoon of vanilla and 1 tablespoon of cinnamon. Which is more?”



Grocery Math

Have your child count and classify things as you unpack groceries.

“How many round things did we buy?”

Table Math

Turn everyday tasks into math problems.

“There are 4 people in our family. We’ll need 4 spoons for soup and 4 spoons for ice cream. How many spoons do we need for each person? In total?”

Liquid Math

Introduce liquid measurements while doing chores.

“How many ounces are in these bottles? How many ounces are in these cans? Which container holds the most? The least?”



One last thought...

Eventually, your second grader will need to memorize multiplication facts. Use this year to build an understanding of multiplication as a shortcut for addition.

Two-Digit

Addition and Subtraction

Second graders are learning how to add and subtract two-digit numbers by regrouping. This will be an important skill they will use for the rest of their lives!

Subtraction

tens	ones		tens	ones		Check: tens	ones
□	□		5	14		1	
6	4	→	6	4	→	4	5
- 1	9		- 1	9		+ 1	9
			4	5		6	4

Addition

tens	ones		tens	ones
□			1	
3	7	→	3	7
+ 2	5		+ 2	5
			6	2



Practice these problems with your child.

Addition

1. $46 + 57$

5. $85 + 37$

2. $31 + 72$

6. $25 + 97$

3. $90 + 99$

7. $54 + 66$

4. $88 + 88$

8. $33 + 75$

Subtraction

1. $97 - 68$

5. $96 - 77$

2. $60 - 58$

6. $80 - 24$

3. $53 - 49$

7. $72 - 15$

4. $31 - 18$

8. $92 - 36$

Science

All Around

During this school year, second graders will more formally explore the world. They will understand how simple machines affect movement. They will study plant and animal life cycles. They will learn about the Earth's resources. Your second grader will realize that science is all around!



These activities will help your child to think scientifically and critically.

Find It!

When out and about with your child, look for examples of Earth's resources being used to make other things. For example, plants provide the food we eat, trees provide building materials for our homes, and oil from deep inside Earth makes gas for cars.

Build It!

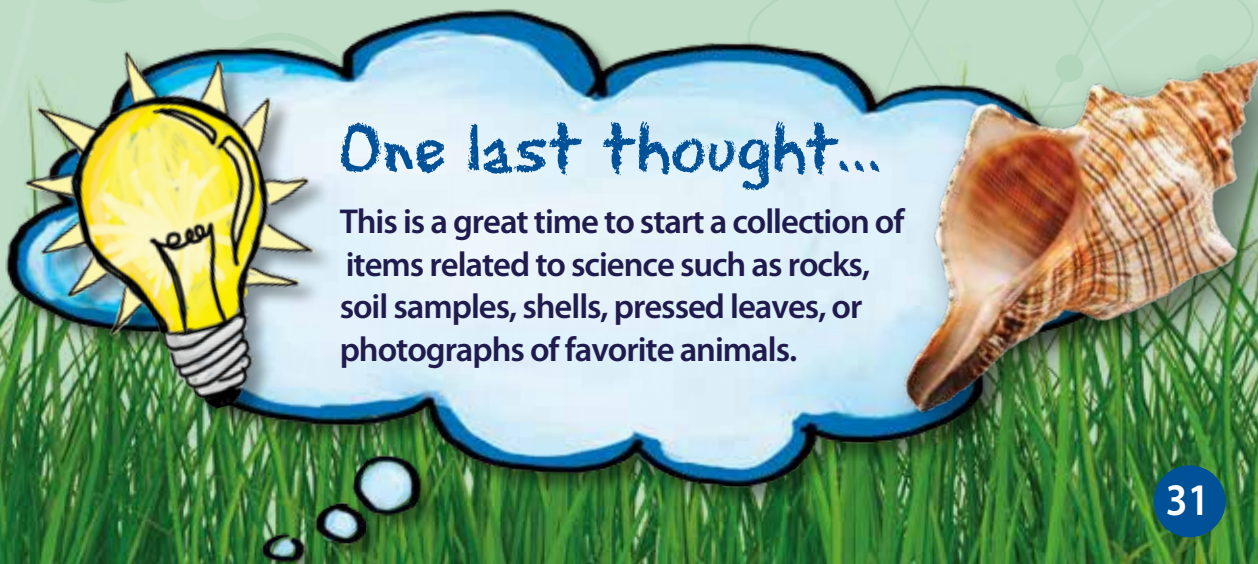
Teeter totters, ramps, wheels and axles (on cars), and pulleys (on bikes) are all simple machines. Talk about simple machines with your child. Then, build one together out of blocks. It can be as simple as a toy car sliding down a ramp.

Plant It!

Plant something simple with your child and watch it grow. Sugar snap peas are easy to plant and they taste great! Discuss why the plant needs water and sun.

Research It!

Go on a nature walk with your second grader and spot as many animals as you can. Then, have your child pick his or her favorite animal from the walk. Go to the library and research the animal's life cycle together.



One last thought...

This is a great time to start a collection of items related to science such as rocks, soil samples, shells, pressed leaves, or photographs of favorite animals.

Social Studies

Skills

Your second grader is ready to develop a sense of history, especially as it relates to your family. Second graders are also developing an interest in people from history who have affected their lives.

.....

Here are some activities to help your child develop a historical understanding.

Historical Holidays

Discuss the significance of national holidays, such as Independence Day. What is the history behind these holidays, and why do we still celebrate them today?



Famous Figures

Investigate historical figures or events related to your town or city. When traveling to other locations, plan to learn about important historical figures who lived there.

Maps

Use maps to explore places where you have lived or where relatives now live. Have your second grader draw a simple map of your home or community.

Voting

Your second grader is beginning to understand the power of the democratic process. Set up a family meeting to handle issues, with each person getting a vote. Compare it to the U.S. government, with the president (and parents!) retaining veto power.



One last thought...

If your family represents more than one culture, capitalize on the riches brought by such diversity. Celebrate differences in traditions, dress, and foods.



After-School

Fun

Your second grader may be ready for more organized group activities. Finding a balance in your schedules is a challenge, but organized groups can be a great way to extend your child's learning opportunities.



Here are some ideas to help your child be more socially active.

Museums

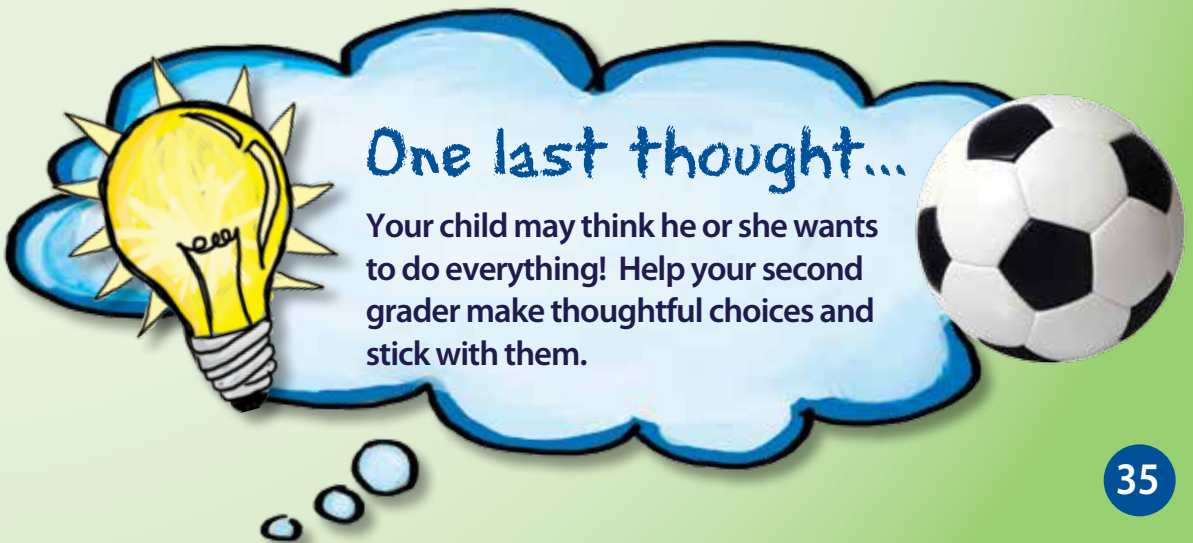
Check out local museums for organized programs. This is a great way to deepen your child's interest in an area of science or art. If your museum doesn't have regular programs, ask another parent and child to attend a museum trip with your family.

Be Active

Be sure your child acquires some basic physical fitness skills, such as swimming, that will serve throughout adulthood. Then, branch into team sports, such as soccer.

Pastimes From the Past

Don't forget the joy of having time to play traditional games, such as Capture the Flag, Flashlight Tag, and kickball.



Learning

On the Road

If you are like most families, you spend a lot of time on the road. Travel games aren't just for long trips. Games played on the go can be fun and educational.

.....

Put the fun in the functional part of your day with these learning games.

Alphabet Hunt

Find items that start with letters of the alphabet, and name them in alphabetical order. The player identifies the object, such as apples, and identifies the letter, such as A. Then, the play moves to finding an object that starts with B. This variation of identifying letters requires your child to think about the spelling.



Number Hunt

Have one person choose the number of items to count, such as 10 cows. The first person to reach that number gets to choose the next group of items to count.

State Hunt

Find a blank map of the United States on the Internet. Each time your child finds an out-of-state license plate, have him or her label the corresponding state on the map. Keep a complete U.S. map handy for reference.



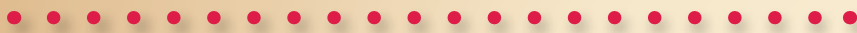
One last thought...

Try variations on memory games, such as I Packed My Suitcase. (Player 1: I packed my suitcase with an apple. Player 2: I packed my suitcase with an apple and a banjo.) It keeps kids thinking.

Family

Fun Nights

While learning is important, it is also important to have fun together as a family. Try to create a new family tradition by engaging in one of the activities below every week.



Try these activities to bring fun and laughter to your family.

Movie Night

Lights, camera, action! Take turns picking a movie to watch as a family once a week. Dim the lights, pop the popcorn, and get into your coziest pajamas. Then, snuggle up and enjoy the movie.



Game Night

Did you have a favorite board game as a child? There are hundreds of board games for families to play today. Be sure the game is age-appropriate and fun! Have your child help you choose the game. If you can't find a game you like, create your own!



Flashlight Tag

This version of Hide and Seek is played in the dark. (Make sure it's safe.) The "Seeker" starts at a base, such as a porch, and counts to 10 while players hide. Then the Seeker searches for other players, tagging them with a flashlight. The last tagged person becomes the Seeker.



One last thought...

Be flexible with the rules, depending on the ages of the kids. And encourage your kids to make up their own games.



Dear Parent,

Thank you for taking the time to read this collection of activities and strategies for integrating learning into everyday living. Guiding your child through second grade can be great fun with huge rewards. The year will fly by, and soon you'll be thinking about what to do with a third grader! Meanwhile, we hope that these suggestions will help you make the most of your busy days.

Remember, your main goal is to keep your child busy learning, not just busy, and to have some fun along the way!

*Thank
you!*





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“Thank you for helping us
create a world in which
children love to learn!”

