

# HOW YOU CAN USE QUESTIONS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

All students benefit from parents or caregivers showing interest, sparking conversations, and supporting their learning. Having regular conversations with your child about what they are learning or doing in school encourages critical thinking and also shows your child that you care.

For example, thoughtfully asking questions might help you to identify specific learning challenges, recognize progress, or make connections about the kinds of learning and activities your child truly enjoys. This guide gives tips on how to ask thoughtful, effective questions.



## Start A Conversation With Your Child About School.



**BEGIN BY ASKING YOUR CHILD ABOUT HOW THEIR DAY WAS.** This not only encourages them to reflect, but enables you to follow-up for more.

- Ask about the specific classes or topics they are studying to learn even more about their day and to let them know that you are interested in the details of their life.



**USE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS.** Open-ended questions help engage your child in a discussion, reflect on their experiences, and encourage them to think critically.

- Avoid “yes/no” questions. An example is: “Do you like your math class?”
- Instead, try an open-ended question like: “What do you like and dislike about your math class?”



**REPHRASE LEADING QUESTIONS.** Leading questions are asked in a way that implies a correct answer and don't lead to deeper engagement.

- For example, “You’ve finished all your homework, right?” is a leading question that may prompt the student to say “yes” even if that’s not the case.
- Instead try: “How much of your homework have you done so far?”

## These Seven Question Words Allow You To Ask A Variety Of Clarifying And Probing Questions:



### **Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? Which?**

Of course, how and when to ask questions may vary based on the child's grade level, age, and level of independence.

## You Can Model And Encourage Thoughtful Questioning.<sup>1</sup>

### **THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF QUESTIONS:**

**Clarifying questions** are questions of fact and don't require much thought to answer.

- For example: "Which book did you read today?"

**Probing questions** require more thought to answer. They encourage students to make deeper connections and develop problem-solving skills.

- For example: "What is something that you have in common with the main character of the book you're reading?"



### **Need a conversation starter?**

Ask this question: "Can you show me something that you learned or did in class today?"

References: <sup>1</sup>Birbili & Karagiorgou, 2009