



CEDAR RIVER ACADEMY

Contents

Citizenship.....	1
Encouraging Mathematical Maturity.....	2
Skill Development.....	2

CITIZENSHIP

Good citizenship is a positive caring behavior that teaches children compassion and concern for our society. It is something that requires constant nurturing to become a habit in children. By exhibiting responsible behavior we teach children about the behavior that is expected of them on a daily basis. Citizenship crosses all cultural and economic boundaries, can take many forms, and is easily taught to children in many ways requiring little time or effort on the part of parents and educators. As adults, we are the main role models for children due to the fact that they see us on a frequent basis. They are constantly watching our behavior and often imitate it in a variety of settings.

As children reach the middle childhood grades they, too, can become role models for their younger siblings. They are able to:

- **Be good neighbors by extending friendship to those who live or are in class around them** - (Many of CRA students extend friendliness every day. These actions are noted on the “Thinker Bear” poster.)
- **Volunteer to help in their community at the food or clothing bank or at the community center** – (Our Pre-K class at CRA was instrumental in collecting and counting donated food. They actually helped deliver it to the food bank!)
- **Assist in taking care of the environment by recycling or participating in clean-up activities in their community** – (At CRA our middle-childhood students study environmental conservation and protection. We all recycle paper.)
- **Demonstrate rule-obeying behavior by following school rules and modeling this behavior to younger students** – (Our middle-childhood students model correct behavior and encourage the younger students to follow CRA's school rules.)
- **Participate in class, school, or local government by voting or discussing current election events.** (Our middle-childhood students voted in their class during the recent presidential election.)

Through these actions and services we are encouraging children to contribute to the common good of our society and to grow personally as well.

ENCOURAGING MATHEMATICAL MATURITY

In the upper elementary grades, mathematics becomes more collaborative involving discussions of ideas and strategies between children in the classroom. They begin sharing information with each other in an effort to solve problems and make sound decisions. Children rely on the mathematics they learned through experience in the lower grades to help them process solutions to problems in a more abstract manner. Their knowledge of concepts and computation become invaluable to them for processing information quickly and efficiently. Communication skills are rapidly built as solutions to problems are clearly stated in written and verbal form. As their knowledge base for math increases so does their confidence.

At home there are a few ways parents can help their child in mathematics. First, parents can make math part of their child's day. They could talk to their child about the ways math is used in everyday activities, involve their child in everyday activities that involve math (such as measuring ingredients, counting out plates and utensils for dinner, or buying items at the local grocery store), play games that involve a math focus (telling time, sorting, estimating, logic and reasoning), and do math problems with your child for fun involving math tools such as handy household objects, rulers, or measuring cups and containers of various sizes. Secondly, parents can be very positive about math at home by letting their child know that everyone can learn math, pointing out ways math is used in their jobs, encouraging their child to keep working on a problem until they find a solution, even if it is difficult, and praising their child when he/she makes an effort and solves a problem or understands something for the first time. Finally parents can help their child by encouraging them to give explanations. Even when they're trying to solve a problem, parents can ask what he/she is thinking, suggest that they act out the problem, and treat errors as opportunities to help learn something new.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

During the Middle Childhood years, (ages 6 to 12 years), children build upon skills they gained in early childhood. Their abilities stretch from concrete thoughts to more abstract ideas. The children have the ability to follow complex directions with little repetition and become more independent, shifting the responsibility from their teacher to themselves. As this transition occurs, these children begin to refine their ability to pay attention, concentrate, and self-direct themselves.

Middle childhood children are able to elaborate on the events that happened during the day in an articulate manner and carry on adult conversations. Since they usually enjoy reading for pleasure with ease, you will probably be given a detailed account of the latest book they have read. Because of their reading abilities and independent nature, children this age explore more topics in depth and learn to establish an informed point of view. Their writing exhibits more complex vocabulary and sophisticated sentences when writing simple compositions in which their ideas are clearly expressed. Though they may still require concrete hands-on activities, they have a more solid understanding of time and numbers and are able to collaboratively work with peers on problem-solving games and activities while developing their social skills. Their ability to classify becomes more refined and they begin learning to form hypotheses in order to find out more about the world around them, gaining an enthusiasm for learning where achievement can become the motivating factor. They begin working toward competence boosting their self-esteem, learning to plan ahead, and to evaluate what they do. When you begin to notice these levels of development in your child, you can be assured that they are definitely learning and growing.