The Central Valley Chronicle

November 2025

CENTRAL VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

INSTILLING PRIDE, INSPIRING OTHERS

MS. VLACH'S

COUGAR CONNECTION

FIRST QUARTER SUCCESS

The first quarter ended on a high note for Central Valley students and staff, as evidenced by their accomplishments in the classroom and on the field of competition. Each day, students and teachers continue to set the standard of excellence for themselves and others through hard work, commitment, and pride in representing Central Valley.

At our first-quarter assembly, we celebrated growth and academic excellence by recognizing Honor Roll recipients and our MAP- PAW award winners. These students demonstrated outstanding academic progress, either increasing their MAP scores by ten or more points or scoring above the 90th percentile in their tested areas. We also celebrated our Students of the Month, four individuals, two from high school and two from junior high, who were nominated by their teachers as positive representatives of our school community. Over 30 students were nominated in October alone, highlighting the many examples of leadership and effort seen across our student body.

As we move into the second quarter, our focus as a staff remains on intentional engagement and consistency in classroom routines. Through our ongoing collaboration among teachers and professional development, teachers are aligning instructional practices and engagement strategies to ensure that all students are active participants in their learning. Whether through structured opportunities to respond, clear objectives, or interactive classroom routines, the goal is the same: to create classrooms where every student is seen, heard, and challenged to grow.

Finally, a continued thank you to our staff, parents, and community members for your unwavering support as our students continue to excel in academics, the arts, and athletics. As we enter postseason play and prepare for the next stretch of the school year, we acknowledge not just the achievements but the intentional effort and teamwork that make Central Valley a place where excellence is expected—and achieved.

Central Valley Elementary

November Newsletter

From the Principal's Desk: Mr. Nick Carlson



Cougar Community Recognition

August/September Star Student Winners (COURAGE)



August/September Staff Recognition





Thank YOU!

As we head into November, this is always a busy and exciting time of year at Central Valley Elementary! Between classroom activities, family events, and the start of the holiday season, there's a lot happening both at school and at home. We encourage you to stay connected. Always check your child's backpack for classroom newsletters and school announcements so you don't miss out on upcoming events and opportunities to get involved.

November also gives us a moment to pause and reflect on all that we're thankful for. We are incredibly grateful for our CVE families, community members, and the continued support you show our students and staff. Whether it's volunteering, attending events, or simply offering kind words of encouragement, your partnership truly makes a difference in creating a strong and caring school community.

Thank you for helping us make Central Valley Elementary such a special place for our students to learn, grow, and thrive!

Star Student Winners: Milka Benitez, Paige Malmstrom, Annie Kriewald, Kobi Spiegel, Britton Allen, Quintin Williams, Liam Morrow, Jade Steenson, Avelynn Jimenez, Oliver Retzlaff, Berkany Dugan.

Staff Recognition:

Mary Wood, Heather Haynes

Central Valley Elementary

November Newsletter

CVE Core Values: Respectful, Kind, Responsible, Positive, Honest, Hard Working



Upcoming Events

November 5th
1:30 Dismissal

November 11th
Veterans Day Program 2:00

November 12th
No School. CV One-Act

November 14th
Cougar Community Recognition 3:00

November 21st
Thanksgiving Meal. CVE Families

November 26th
1:30 Dismissal - Thanksgiving Break

November 27th/28th
No School. Thanksgiving Break

Golden Spoon Winner: Mrs. Leth's 4th Grade Class





Central Valley Elementary

November Newsletter

CVE Core Values: Respectful, Kind, Responsible, Positive, Honest, Hard Working

1st Semester Cougar Point Goal:

100,000 Points

Current Total: 49,500

Grandparents' Day









Central Valley Elementary

November Newsletter

CVE Core Values: Respectful, Kind, Responsible, Positive, Honest, Hard Working



WAY TO GO, STAR STUDENTS!





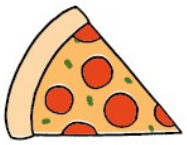




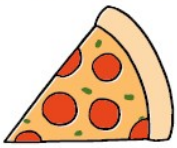


August/September Pizza with the Principal





Sponsored by the Central Valley PTO!





Central Valley FCCLA Attends District 9 Leadership Conference

On Wednesday, October 15th, the Central Valley FCCLA attended the District 9 Leadership Conference, joining 225 members from eight chapters across the district. During the event, we celebrated the success of our district hygiene drive—collecting 1,000 items to support our communities!

A special congratulations goes to Ethan Lobner, who was installed as the District 9 Vice President of STAR Events. Members also participated in engaging sessions focused on SPOT opportunities, FCCLA knowledge, competitive events, and applying FCCLA principles in daily life.

After three learning sessions and lunch, attendees enjoyed a tour of O'Neill's B's Sweet Treats, a local micro bakery connected to a hair salon. A big thank-you to O'Neill High School for hosting this inspiring and fun event!



Front row l-r: Laretta Davis, Kerry Luscomb, Ethan Lobner, Paige Berst, Autumn Luby

Middle row l-r: Josey Marshall, Nakylen Boydstun, Leila Anderson, Lexi Rodriguez, Advisor Mrs. Kathleen Kennedy

Back row l-r: Karter Brown, Hadlee Sherman, Rayna Pokorny, Tesla Landers, Kinley Gates-Boydstun, Leah Welch

Central Valley Attends Livestock Judging

On October 8th, our FFA Chapter attended Livestock Judging in Ord. Livestock Judging is the process of evaluating, selecting, and ranking livestock based on a set of ideal characteristics for the specific class of animal.

In the Junior High Division, we had 5 participants. Wyatt Hansen placed 26th, receiving a purple ribbon; Peyton O'Connor placed 45th, receiving a blue ribbon, Shyann Borwege placed 59th, and Jentry Dugan placed 76th, both receiving a red ribbon. Bryson Winter placed 119th. Overall, the Junior High team placed 12th.

In the Junior Division, Addy Ryan placed 6th and Dalton Dugan placed 21st, both receiving a purple ribbon. Payton Kniss placed 66th and received a red ribbon, MaKenzie Borwege placed 73rd, and Raynea Pokorny placed 82nd, both receiving a white ribbon. Stetson McManaman placed 103rd, Claire O'Connor placed 171st, and Sara Burns placed 174th. The Junior Team placed 7th overall, receiving a red ribbon.

We also had 4 participants compete in Poultry Judging. Katelyn Usasz placed 13th, receiving a red ribbon; Aubrey Winter placed 16th, receiving a white ribbon; Zoey Jensen placed 19th, and Trasa Klein placed 32nd. As a team, they placed 5th overall.











Front row l-r: Claire O'Connor, Mattie Schumacher, Tinette DeRiso

Back row l-r: Mr. Todd Beck, Shawn Koperski, Nevaeh Klemptner



Career Academy works on improving employment skills

This year, one of the opportunities the Career Academy at Central Valley has embarked on is improving job skills. The opportunity to do that has presented itself by being able to take students to the Greeley Country Market every Wednesday to help unload the weekly truck that brings products to be sold.

Central Valley wants to thank Kirby Jensen (store manager) and the rest of the crew for giving them this opportunity. Besides unloading the truck, the students stock the shelves, front the merchandise, take instruction, and learn to work together with the team to complete the process of stocking the shelves of a grocery store. Some of the students have other jobs, so this just gives them more skills. For others, this is the first chance to have work experience and it creates skills that they can take with them to be successful in a job.

It has been a great experience for the staff and students at Central Valley, and we are looking at finding more work experiences for our students from the Career Academy and special needs programs.

Early Development Network

Babies Can't Wait

The Early Development Network provides early intervention services for families with children birth to age three with developmental delays and/or health care needs. Our program connects families with needed services and provides ongoing support. EDN has caring and professional Services Coordinators to serve families with an individualized and strengths based focus. These services are free to families and we welcome anyone who may have questions or concerns.

If you are concerned about a child's development or know someone who is please call EDN (308)237-2280 at ESU 10 for services in Region 10 or 1(888)806-6287 for referrals throughout

Nebraska. If you are unsure which EDN office serves your area please call (308) 237-2280 and we are happy to assist you in finding your best contact person.

To learn more about our program please visit esu10.org and choose the EDN tab in English or Spanish or visit edn.ne.gov.

Scholastic Bowl

you've got questions, we've got answers.

Mrs. Sarah Hansen, Coach

7th and 8th graders competed at Spalding Academy on October 15th. The quiz bowl team made it all the way to the quarterfinals in competition.



Back row l-r: Reed Gotschall, Mavdan Soto, Jaxton Stevens, Zethan Wolf, Turner Freeman, Breckyn Straka.

Front row l-r: Graysen Wuertz, Daniel Wuertz, Cayda Landers, Wyatt Hansen.

Library News

Mrs. Angela Boyce, Librarian

Students at the elementary school have been reading to work toward their Accelerated Reading goal. Students in preschool through sixth grade visit the library every week.

The Book Fair has been a successful event for our school. Grandparents' Day has been a fun way to spread the love of reading. It is wonderful to have books going home with our children.

Thank you to everyone who visited the Book Fair! This year's fair ended up being one of our most successful book fairs!



2025 ONE-ACT PERFORMANCE & COMPETITION DATES/TIMES

Mon, Nov 3rd - Ord Festival: perform 11:15am

Mon, Nov 10th - CCCV Fest at Central City HS: perform 2 pm

Wed, Nov 12th - Central Valley One-Act Festival: perform 8am @ Scotia

Mon, Nov 17th - Elm Creek Festival: perform 12:45pm

Tues, Nov 18th - Public Performance 7:30pm @ CV Aud

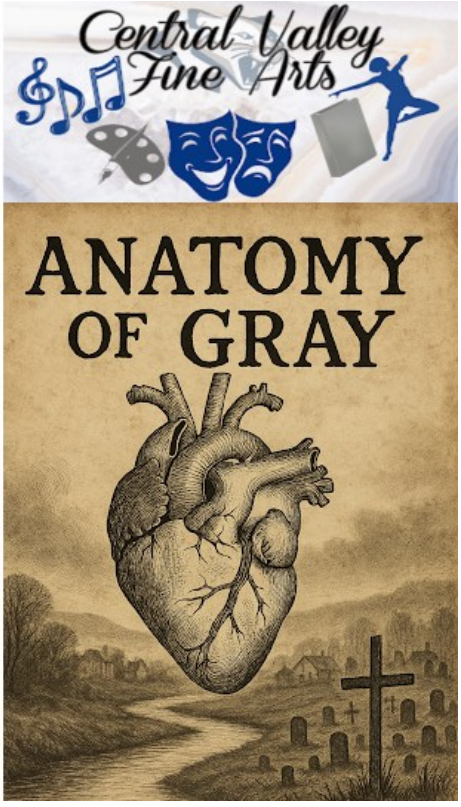
Wed, Nov 19th - Cougar One-Act Workshop: perform 8am @ CV Aud

Tues, Nov 25th - Conference at Central City: perform 3pm

Wed, Nov 26th - HS Performance at 1pm @ CV Auditorium

Wed , Dec 3rd - Districts at Leigh perform 11:15am

Wed , Dec 10th - State One-Act in Norfolk




Central Valley
One-Act Festival
Wed. November 12th
Scotia Gym
Central Valley (D1) 8:00 AM
Ord (C1) 9:00 AM
Sargent (D2) 10:00 AM
Twin River (C2) 11:00 AM
Osceola (C2) 12:00 PM
Hampton (D2) 1:00 PM
Sandhills (D2) 2:00 PM
McCool Junction (D1) 3:00 PM
Centura (A) 4:00 PM
AWARDS 5:00 PM
Concession on site - Admission taken


11/10/2025
HORNS AND CLAWS ONE-ACT FESTIVAL
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
Central City, NE
PLAY LINE UP
8:00 am Central City
9:00 am Palmer
10:00 am Riverside
11:00 am Broken Bow
12:00 pm Ord
1:00 pm Cross County
2:00 pm Central Valley
3:00 pm Elkhorn North
4:30 pm Awards

CENTRAL VALLEY ONE-ACT

Anatomy of Gray

by Jim Leonard Jr.

Cast

June - Laretta Davis
Rebecca - Emalee Leth
Tiny - Aubrey Winter
Maggie - Tesla Landers
Hazel - Trasa Klein
Belva - Bentleigh Dugan
Phineas - Ethan Lobner
Crutch - Thayer Davis
Galen P Gray - William Pokorny
Prudence Belleweather - Paige Berst
Rufus Prindle - Raynea Pokorny
Lorelai Gibbons - Lexi Gonzalez

Crew

Student Director - Brooklyn Perrott
Stage Manager - Kerry Luscomb
Stage Manager - Alandra Luby
Lights - Karter Thompson
Hair and makeup - Nevaeh Vanosdall
Assistant Director - Katie Davis
Director - Rachel Fox
Taylor McIntyre
Payton Kniss
Addy Ryan
Wyatt Rosander
Ty Klein
Caden Straka
Jon Bernt
Talan Wood







"Trailer of Terror" a Spooktacular Success for Central Valley Fine Arts!

The Central Valley Fine Arts department is celebrating another frighteningly fun success after this year's Trailer of Terror fundraiser! The creative haunted attraction from Atkinson, drew an incredible crowd and helped raise funds to support future fine arts events and performances.

Visitors lined up to take the chilling walk through the haunted trailer, filled with eerie effects, haunting characters, and plenty of jump scares—all brought to life by the Winer family of Atkinson. Their hard work and imagination turned the night into a Halloween highlight for the entire community.

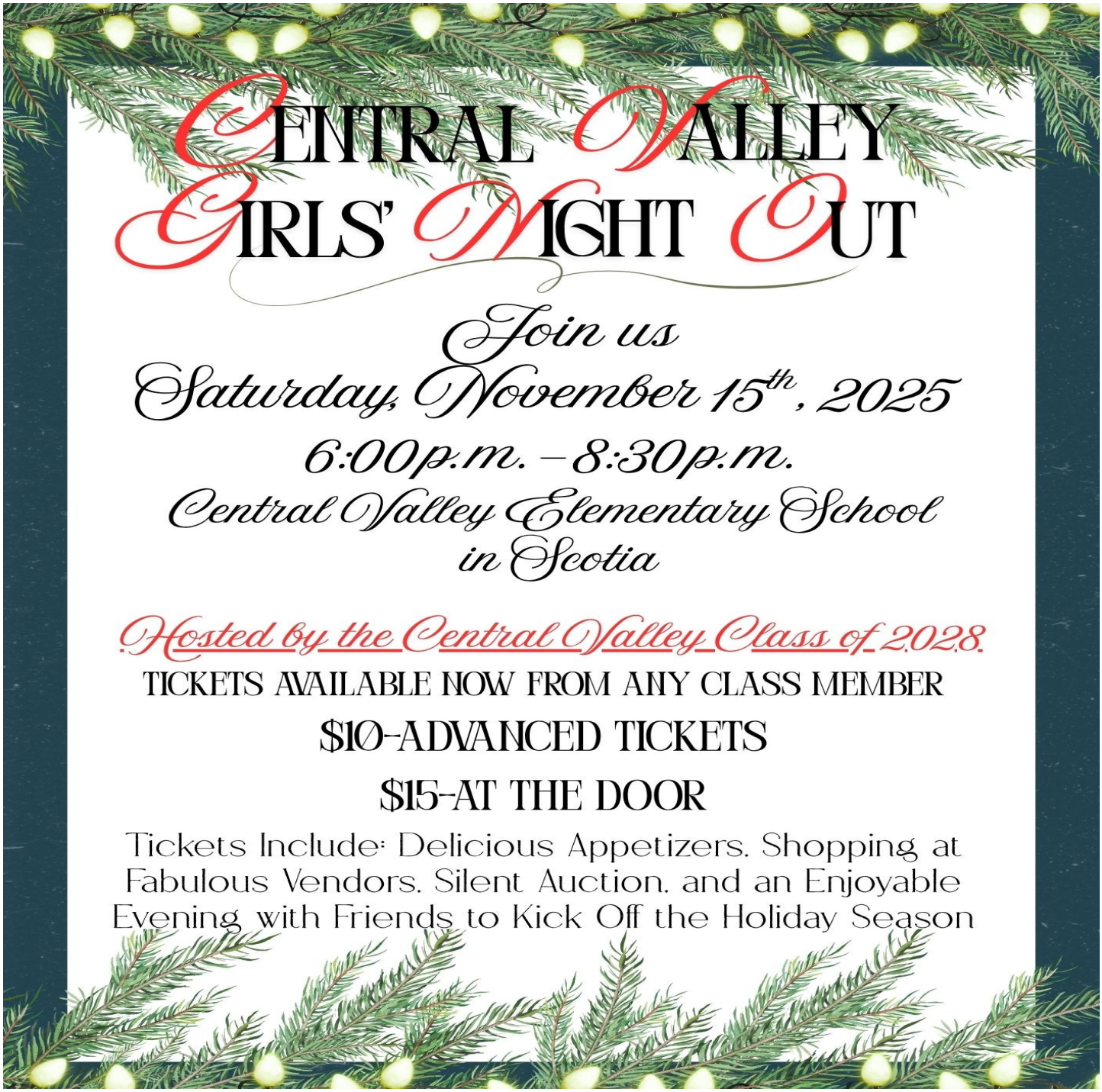
A special thank-you goes out to everyone who attended, supported, and screamed their way through the Trailer of Terror! Your participation and enthusiasm make these events possible.

Central Valley Fine Arts also extends heartfelt appreciation to the North Loup Recreation Committee for allowing the Trailer of Terror to be part of their Barbecue Cook-Off event. The collaboration brought even more excitement to the evening, combining great food, community spirit, and spooky fun into one unforgettable night.

Thank you to everyone who helped make the Trailer of Terror a huge success, we look forward to next year!







This year marks the 16th annual Girls' Night Out — a cherished tradition that brings together our communities, local vendors, parents, and supporters for an evening of fun, fellowship, and fundraising. We are incredibly grateful for everyone who has contributed over the years to make this event such a success.

Thanks to the generosity of our guests and sponsors, Girls' Night Out has already helped send two classes to Washington, D.C., with a third on the way and a fourth soon to follow. The impact of your support continues to reach far beyond this event, giving our students the opportunity to experience our nation's capital in an unforgettable way.

Attendees can look forward to a lively silent auction, as well as drawings for Nebraska Husker volleyball and football tickets — and you do not need to be present to win!

We look forward to hosting our communities once again for a night that celebrates connection, local business, and shared purpose. Thank you for being part of this incredible tradition and for continuing to make Girls' Night Out such a special event year after year.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Helping Children Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School November 2025

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10

Find out how your child is doing at a parent-teacher conference



A parent-teacher conference offers you something different from many other school activities for families: one-on-one time with the teacher. It is dedicated time to focus on your individual child's strengths and needs, and to discuss plans and expectations for the year ahead.

For the best results from your conference:

- **Chat with your child in advance.** Ask how school is going. Is there is anything your child would like you to ask or tell the teacher?
- **Write down a list of things to tell the teacher.** You are the expert on your child and your family. Sharing information will make it easier for the teacher to meet your child's needs.
- **Make a note of questions to ask,** such as: *Is my child meeting expectations for reading and math skills? Does my child participate in class? Does my child interact with others appropriately and have friends?*
- **Arrive on time.** Teachers usually schedule conferences back to back.
- **Discuss next steps.** Ask the teacher how you can reinforce what your child is learning. Agree on a plan to address any issues.
- **Tell your child** about your meeting. Share praise, and explain plans you and the teacher agreed on.

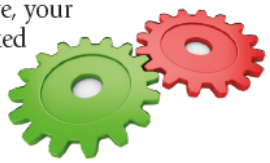
Independent play is worth the time

Research shows that playing independently can help children learn to solve problems and overcome fears—and ease stress at the same time. To help your child benefit from independent play:

- **Make time for it.** Balance structured activities in your child's day with unstructured play time.
- **Give your child** a variety of things to play with, such as cardboard boxes, blocks, art supplies and props for pretend play. Choose toys your child can use creatively, in many different ways. Items from nature like acorns and shells are also inspiring choices.
- **Support your child** in taking positive "risks," such as climbing a low playground rock wall, or balancing while walking on a fallen log. These experiences can boost confidence and willingness to try.
- **Let your child** decide what to play with and how.

Source: "'All work, no independent play' cause of children's declining mental health," Florida Atlantic University.

Offer cooperation practice



In school and in life, your child will be expected to cooperate with others. To reinforce this skill at home, establish rules for sharing and taking turns fairly, such as "If one child chooses the game, the other gets the first turn." Have family members take turns making decisions for the whole family sometimes, such as what movie to watch or what vegetable to eat for dinner.

Support reading progress

Students read to learn. To be successful, they must continually develop and maintain their reading skills as they go through school. To encourage reading skill-building:

- **Make real-life connections.** Have your child read about historical events that happened near your home.
- **Help your child start a book club** with friends. They can meet up for book-related discussions and activities.
- **Read more advanced books aloud.** Listening lets your child enjoy more challenging stories and words.

Foster grateful feelings

Research links gratitude with increased motivation, engagement and achievement in school. To foster this feeling, take time often as a family to make and share lists of what you're thankful for. Be sure to mention school and any progress your child is making. Then, encourage your child to say "Thanks" to the people who are making school a positive experience.



Source: R.B. King and J.A.B. Datu, "Grateful students are motivated, engaged, and successful in school: Cross-sectional, longitudinal, and experimental evidence," *Journal of School Psychology,* Elsevier.

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ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Helping Children Learn®
Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School November 2025

Q&A What can I do to boost my child's memory power?

Q: My child studies before tests, but often forgets the material by test time. How can I help my child remember things better?



A: Being able to recall and use information is an important part of learning. Here are a few strategies that can make it easier. Help your child practice using:

- **Personal connections.** Brainstorm together about ways to relate the material to your child's life. An important date in history might also be a relative's birthday, for example.
- **Grouping.** Divide long lists of facts into smaller groups that share a common characteristic. Instead of trying to remember all 50 states, your child can group them by region and focus on one region at a time.
- **Mnemonic devices,** such as *acronyms* or silly sentences. Your child can make a name, word or sentence out of the first letter of each word in a list of terms. The acronym ROY G. BIV is a classic way to recall the colors of the rainbow (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet). "My Very Elegant Mother Just Served Us Noodles" is often used for the planets in order of their distance from the sun (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune).
- **Mental images.** Your child can draw or imagine a picture of the material, then visualize the picture during the test to remember the information.

Parent Quiz Are you showing how to tackle projects?

Long-term assignments let students explore topics in greater depth. They also usually involve multiple parts. Are you helping your child learn to manage these big projects? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

___**1. Do you encourage** your child to get started as soon as the assignment is received?

___**2. Do you ask** questions to help your child narrow down a broad topic to something specific and manageable?

___**3. Do you help** your child break the project down into small steps and schedule time to do each on a calendar?

___**4. Do you have** your child list all the supplies that will be needed, so you can avoid last-minute shopping trips?

___**5. Do you help** your child locate credible books and online sources?

How well are you doing?

More yes *answers mean you are showing your child how to plan and complete big projects. For each no, try that idea.*

"One may walk over the highest mountain one step at a time."
—John Wanamaker

Share tools for learning

Math and science tools aren't always expensive and complicated. You probably have several at home (or on your phone). Using them with your child provides familiarity which pays off in school. Help your elementary schooler use a:

- **Magnifying glass** to observe items in nature like pine cones and anthills.
- **Tape measure** to find the *circumference* (distance around) of tree trunks.
- **Calculator** to play store or restaurant.
- **Compass** to find out what direction you are walking in.

Source: M.E. Ennes and others, "Children and Parents' Perception of Access to Science Tools at Home and Their Role in Science Self-efficacy," *Research in Science Education*, Springer.

Keep a family journal



Writing regularly helps your child strengthen literacy skills. To instill a writing habit, start a family journal. Each weekend, have your child jot down something special about the week. It doesn't need to be long; a couple of sentences will do. After your child's entry, add one yourself. Soon, you'll have a record of the year's highlights to enjoy reading and remembering together.

Does your child see clearly?

Poor vision can negatively affect your child's school performance. Having your student's eyesight tested yearly is an important way to prevent problems. To protect vision:

- **Limit screen use.** High levels have been linked to nearsightedness in kids.
- **Promote outdoor play.** An extra hour or two a day outside can help some children avoid nearsightedness.

Source: Anglia Ruskin University, "Screen time linked to risk of myopia in young people," *ScienceDaily*; "Outdoor activity and Myopia Progression in Children," *Ophthalmology*.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL

Helping Students Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School November 2025

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10

Improve reading comprehension by helping your child build skills



When reading to learn, students need to identify the major points in a text. They must also draw *inferences* (use evidence in the text to grasp meaning that is not directly stated). Research shows that about one third of eighth graders struggle to do these things.

To help your student strengthen these important reading skills:

- **Encourage your child to scan** the text before beginning to read. What questions do the headings, graphics and words in bold type raise? After completing the reading, can your child answer the questions?
- **Help your child learn new words.** When encountering unfamiliar words in reading material and in life, suggest that your child write them down, along with their meanings.
- **Ask your child to tell you about** the reading. What was the main point of the chapter or passage? What supporting details did the author provide to back it up?
- **Help your child build reading fluency.** Share short articles that will interest your child. Time your student reading them. Challenge your child to read faster and still identify the main points. Being able to read quickly and easily aids understanding.

Source: "NAEP Reading Assessment 2024," National Assessment of Educational Progress; A.G. Boardman, *Effective Instruction for Adolescent Struggling Readers*, Florida Center for Reading Research.

Support success in meaningful ways

Studies show that middle schoolers benefit when their families are engaged in their education. As your student develops independence, you may be less involved in daily schoolwork, and your engagement can evolve.

Here are three activities which can make a real difference to your middle schooler's achievement:

1. **Setting clear expectations.** When students know their families believe they can learn and expect them to stay in school and give it their best effort, they become more motivated.
2. **Extending learning topics.** Look for related science videos to watch together, historic sites to visit, plays to act out as a family, projects to manage together, etc.
3. **Planning for the future.** Help your child think about academic and personal strengths and learn about careers that involve them. Together, research the education needed to prepare for them.

Source: D. Viadero, "Scholars: Parent-School Ties Should Shift in Teen Years," Education Week.

Sharpen online awareness

Many middle schoolers are unable to tell the difference between factual content online and ads. Teach your child to:

- **Recognize code words.** "Sponsored content" is an ad.
- **Read more.** Sometimes a site will summarize or take one sentence from another source out of context. Reading the original source provides clarification.
- **Follow links.** Do they lead back to trustworthy sources or company pitches?

Source: *Evaluating Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning*, Stanford University History Education Group.

Promote weekend learning

Does your child have too much idle time on weekends? Here are a few ideas to keep your student busy and learning:



- **Cook together.** Offer some recipes to choose from and help your child prepare a simple meal.
- **Start a book club.** Let your child pick a book to read together. Discuss it over a tasty treat.
- **Be hometown tourists.** Ask your child to research interesting local places. Visit and let your child be your guide.

Start off on a career path



Families want children to grow up and find satisfying work that suits their interests. To help your child take the first steps:

- **Urge your student** to discover interests through activities such as school clubs and volunteering.
- **Discuss your own job** experiences. Could your middle schooler shadow you or a coworker at work?
- **Explore career-related classes** your child could take in high school.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL
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Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School November 2025

Q&A What can I do to find out about my child's school life?

Q: We're a few months into the school year, and I feel out of touch as far as assignments and test schedules go. How can I stay up-to-date without seeming nosy? Should I just leave these things up to my child?



A: You're not being nosy—you're being engaged! Staying aware of what is going on at school is important. To get the information you need:

- **Ask your child** for regular updates on each class. If your student doesn't want to talk about them every day, set aside 15 minutes for a weekly chat. Knowing you are going to ask may motivate your child to keep track. And if a problem is brewing, your child has a built-in time to tell you about it.
- **Read school communications** for families. In addition to letters home, check the website, family portal, social media, emails, etc. If you need help accessing them, ask the office staff.
- **Ask your middle schooler's teachers** if there is a class website or other method for learning about activities in their class.
- **Attend school events and workshops** when you can. You can connect with school staff and other families, and find out more about what is going on at school.

Parent Quiz Are you teaching social media safety?

Social media platforms like YouTube, Tik Tok, Snapchat and Instagram are popular with many middle schoolers—and that comes with risk. Are you reinforcing safe rules for social media use? Answer *yes* or *no* below:

___**1. Do you check** your child's privacy settings regularly and discuss the dangers of sharing specific personal data?

___**2. Do you talk** about why your child should not post or share inappropriate photos or hurtful comments?

___**3. Do you explain** that people online may not be who they say they are, and it is not OK to meet them without you?

___**4. Do you insist** that your child alert you to hurtful or scary posts by others?

___**5. Do you say** that you will monitor your child's online activity from time to time?

How well are you doing?

More yes *answers mean you are helping your child learn to use social media responsibly. For each* no, *try that idea.*

"While we try to teach our children all about life, our children teach us what life's all about."
—Angela Schwindt

Enrich everyday activities with a little math practice

Building your child's comfort with math is as easy as working it into activities you already do together. To work on:



- **Measurement,** have your child calculate the area of a room, double a recipe, measure books for a new shelf, etc.
- **Arithmetic,** give your child a grocery receipt. Ask, "How much did we spend today on vegetables?"
- **Statistics,** have your child read graphs in news articles and interpret them.

Foster a healthy body image

Many adolescents don't like what they see in the mirror—and that can have a negative impact on their school performance. To help your child have a positive body image:

- **Discuss the changes** puberty brings.
- **Focus on fitness,** not weight.
- **Don't criticize people's bodies** or appearance—or your own.
- **Suggest unfollowing** social media that makes your child feel unattractive.

Source: S. Gregg, "Positive Body Image: Why It Matters, How to Help Students," UA News Center, University of Alabama.

Offer support that counts

Feeling supported at home helps students do their best in school. In a survey, middle schoolers said they'd like their families to:

- **Show interest** in their schoolwork.
- **Listen to them** when they talk.
- **Offer guidance** without lecturing about mistakes.
- **Notice when they do** things right.

Source: A. Jackson and others, *Making the Most of Middle School: A Field Guide for Parents and Others,* Teachers College Press.

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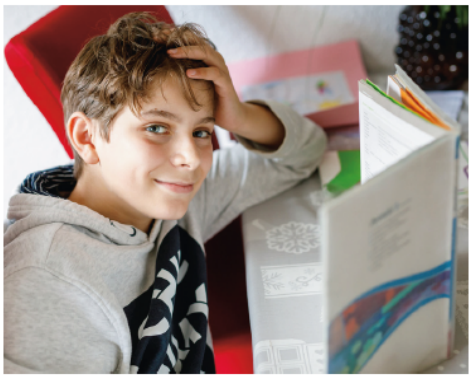
HIGH SCHOOL

Helping Students Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School November 2025

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10

Share strategies with your teen for reading different subjects



Reading is assigned work in most high school classes. But the approach your teen takes to reading material for each subject shouldn't always be the same. Different strategies can help your student get more out of texts in different subjects.

When the topic is:

- **Math,** encourage your teen to read explanations and sample problems twice before tackling problems. A first quick read will provide an overview. Next, your teen should read more slowly, take notes, and work through the sample problems step by step. Now your student is ready to solve the problems.
- **History,** suggest that your teen start by reading any included questions or summaries to get an idea of the key points. Then, have your teen check the headings and words in boldface type, and pay special attention to any graphics, which often contain essential information. Only then should your teen start at the beginning and read through to the end.
- **Science,** encourage starting with the vocabulary. Your teen can scan the text for unfamiliar words, write them down and learn their meanings. Do any of the words contain parts that appear in other science terms? Knowing that *biology* is the study of living things can help your teen figure out that *bioelectric* means electrical activity in living things.

Help your teen develop self-respect

When students have self-respect, they understand the importance of doing their best. They know they are worthy of being treated fairly and kindly—and that it would be out of character for them to treat others differently.

To foster self-respect:

- **Make it clear** that everyone makes mistakes and hits bumps in the road. These are temporary. After learning from them, your teen can make a fresh start.
- **Discuss your teen's strengths.** Point out that people have different strengths and weaknesses. This awareness can help teens control feelings of envy or inadequacy.
- **Talk about peer pressure.** Explain that if your teen feels like something is wrong, it probably is. Role-play ways to avoid situations that might lead to trouble.
- **Speak out against** substance abuse. Remind your teen that self-respect includes respect for personal health and safety.

Source: S. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*, Fireside.

Listening instills courage



When your teen has something to say, take time to listen carefully. When you hear a valid point, consider it. You don't have to agree. But by taking the ideas seriously, you help your teen build the confidence needed to speak up and contribute in school.

Encourage further research

Going beyond a basic internet search to find additional resources can help your teen build skills and create a more in-depth paper or presentation. Your student might:

- **Interview experts.** These could be people mentioned in published articles on the topic. Your teen can contact them and ask for an interview.
- **Create a survey** on the topic and include findings in the project.
- **Ask the teacher** to suggest resources to check for different points of view.

Meaning boosts memory

When memorizing, it is more effective to relate information to meaningful things than to simply repeat it over and over. Recommend that your teen:



- **Look for links.** Does *stationary* or *stationery* mean paper? Your teen could think: "*Stationery* uses envelopes."
- **Imagine a picture.** The Spanish word for narrow is *estrecho*. Your teen could imagine the word stretched out vertically until it is very narrow.
- **Form a sentence.** The number of letters in the words "I shouldn't battle again," correspond to the date the U.S. Civil War ended: 1865.

Source: "Long-Term Memories Made with Meaningful Information," ScienceDaily.

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Helping Students Learn® HIGH SCHOOL
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Q&A What can I do to get my teen to care about school?

Q: My freshman seems to have lost interest in school. My teen either doesn't do assignments or doesn't turn them in. If I say something, I hear "I don't care if I pass or not." How can I turn this around before my teen just drops out?



A: Student disengagement has become a significant challenge in schools recently. And you are right to be concerned, because poor ninth grade performance is a recognized drop-out factor.

Every teen is different, so begin by figuring out what lies behind your teen's loss of interest. Is anything different in your teen's life than it was in middle school? Are the classes this year much harder or easier than they were then? Last year's teachers may be able to provide insight. A high school counselor may also be able to direct your teen and your family to helpful resources. Next, involve your teen in problem-solving:

- **Say you are concerned** because you care about your teen. "You may not care how you do in school, but I do."
- **Help your teen decide** on some specific, achievable goals for this year.
- **Focus on positive steps** your teen can take right now. Making up every missed assignment may not be possible, but doing tonight's reading is. Each step your student takes can provide motivation to take another.

Parent Quiz Are you supporting your shy teen?

For shy teens, new situations can be a source of worry. Speaking up in class and connecting with other students is often a challenge. Are you doing what you can to help your shy teen cope? Answer *yes* or *no* below:

___**1. Do you show** your love and appreciation for your teen?

___**2. Do you help** your teen find and participate in activities with students who have similar interests?

___**3. Do you encourage** your teen to try volunteering? Helping others boosts teens' self-confidence.

___**4. Do you role-play** social interactions with your teen and brainstorm things to say?

___**5. Do you discuss** strategies with your teen's teachers if shyness is affecting your student's participation in class?

How well are you doing?

More yes *answers mean you are helping your teen learn to function well despite shyness. For each* no, *try that idea.*

"When a shy person smiles, it's like the sun coming out."
—Anita Diament

Support complex thinking

In high school, students are developing advanced thinking skills that help them consider multiple possibilities, hypothetical situations and abstract concepts. To help strengthen these skills:

- **Ask your teen to offer** opinions on family rules, consequences and decisions.
- **Discuss your teen's views** of the world (avoid judgmental language) and talk about your own.
- **Help your teen discover** ways to contribute in the world and gain deeper understanding of issues of interest.

Review time management

Student workloads often grow and become more challenging in the higher grades. So does the importance of effective time management skills. Remind your teen to:

- **Create a master schedule** of all responsibilities, and block out the time needed to complete them.
- **Prioritize schoolwork** when conflicts with other activities arise.
- **Set up phone reminders** to go off a few days before a big assignment is due.

Include some time for play

Adding an element of play to study time can help your teen manage stress and boost brain function at the same time. Suggest that your teen:



- **Draw a picture** of the setting of a reading assignment or act out a scene.
- **Write a song** about a science concept.
- **Create a logo** and appropriate "fan merchandise" for each side in a history conflict.

Source: K. Douma, "Playing to Learn in Middle and High School," Edutopia.

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