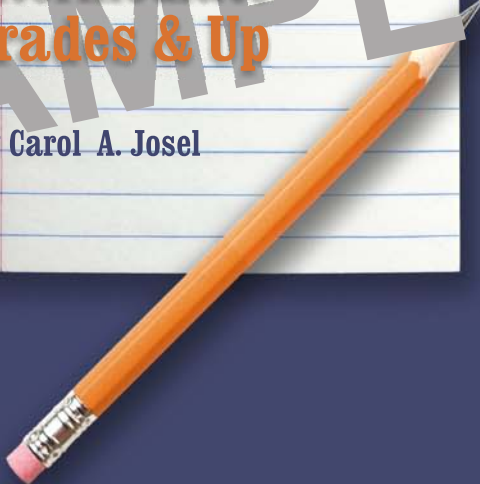


149

**Parenting
School-Wise
Tips**

**Intermediate
Grades & Up**

by Carol A. Josel



Dear Parents,

You want your child's homework done with no hassles, followed by good grades dancing across every report card. How does that happen? It begins with this booklet and its 149 student-tested tips, gleaned during my 28 years as a teacher and learning specialist. Each suggestion constitutes simple, good advice to share with your child. You can address the tips either individually or by topic. This booklet includes pointers on:

- Motivation
- Goal-Setting
- Organization
- Reading
- Writing
- Revising and Editing
- Spelling
- Homework
- Memory Techniques
- Note-Taking
- Studying
- Test Prep
- Test-Taking

For more detailed information on how to help your child meet academic success, visit our website, sign up for our free monthly newsletter, and put *Other-Wise and School-Wise: A Parent Guidebook* into action for you. Other offerings include *Getting School-Wise: A Student Guidebook* and *ESL Activities for Every Month of the School Year*. For more information about quantity purchases of this booklet, as well as speaking and consulting services, contact:

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Motivation Tips

- 1 Remember that motivation is as important as ability. Keep the focus on motivation. Without hard work, talent is of little service.
- 2 Model good effort and value learning to develop your child's work ethic. Behavior is imitated. Teach by example.
- 3 Create opportunities for success that build on your child's strengths and interests. Accomplishment in one area builds confidence in others.
- 4 Maintain realistically high expectations for your child. Setting the bar out of reach invites frustration. Setting it too low diminishes the accomplishment.
- 5 Help your child resist peer pressure keeping them from excelling. Popularity and learning need to be separated from each other.
- 6 Require scheduled homework/study sessions in a quiet environment. This confirms your household's commitment to education.
- 7 Kick-start homework sessions as needed and then step back. Taking over suggests to your child that the work can't be done without you, thus lowering self-esteem.
- 8 Believe in and share your child's capacity for success. Occasional cheerleading can be helpful.
- 9 Focus on successes and help your child find opportunity in failure. Some of the best learning comes from mistakes and shortcomings.
- 10 Applaud time and effort on a task. Success depends on it. After all, if it's worth doing, it's worth doing right.
- 11 Praise only true accomplishment. Hanging every unremarkable picture on the refrigerator lowers self-esteem.

12 Engage your child in accomplishing goals independently. This is how self-reliance is achieved.

13 Encourage new experiences, such as music or painting, to broaden horizons. Straying from comfort zones enables the discovery of new interests and goals.

14 Share news accounts, biographies, and autobiographies of hard working individuals who have struggled and triumphed. Much can be learned in the company of strong role models.



Goal-Setting

15 Determine first what your child wants to accomplish. Success depends on having a specific goal in mind.

16 Make sure goals are attainable and moderately challenging. Satisfaction derives from attempting a difficult task, working hard, and finally either accomplishing it or knowing you gave it your best shot.

17 Set the right tone by giving goals a positive spin, such as "I'll use my time well," instead of "I won't waste time." Negatives can be self-defeating.

18 Promise a reward, like a new book, to fuel the motivation required of goals. Such incentives promote sustained effort. They are like trophies.

19 Station sticky-note reminders on bathroom mirrors, doors, and other easy-to-see places. Goals require a due date. Well-placed reminders help the process.

20 Share goals. Approval can be a powerful motivator.

21 Facilitate accomplishment with positive self-talk. When we think we can, much like that Little Engine, we'll likely prove ourselves right.

22 Encourage your child to replace "I can't; it's too hard," with, "I'll do my best." That, in itself, is a worthy goal.

23 Monitor success consistently along the way. Look for an alternate route when things aren't working out as planned.

24 Check on progress periodically. Keeping track of the starting point helps show how much has already been accomplished.



On Organization

25 Purchase such supplies as pens, pencils, pencil case, paper, and binders with your child before school bells start ringing. This gets the ball rolling after a long summer break.

26 Include an assignment book, preferably a teacher's lesson plan book. These planners provide plenty of space for recording homework in every subject.

27 Buy a 2-pocket homework folder. Assignments collected in the left pocket throughout the day are transferred to the right one upon completion. This keeps things well organized and always handy.

28 Load up on notebook dividers. You'll need to purchase one divider for each minor subject and four for each major subject, thus providing for their accompanying notes, tests/quizzes, and returned homework. Now there's a place for everything.

29 Help sort and correctly file papers on a weekly, if not daily, basis. This eliminates messy notebooks and misplaced work.

30 Purchase a specially designed hole puncher that fits on a binder's three rings. Teachers don't always have time to punch holes. This ensures that papers can be properly filed right away.