

*Engaging Your Student's Thinking*  
*A How-To Reference Page for Parents*

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#### Reminders

- **Remind** students to grapple with new ideas; this creates a more critical thinker.
- **See** mistakes as opportunities to learn, not as failures.
- **Encourage** problem-solving by offering options rather than solutions.
- **Inspire** them to read, especially non-fiction texts.
- **Stay** positive! Keep your expectations high! EVERY KID CAN DO IT!

#### Discussions and Questions

- Keep it "Open-Ended".
- Ask them questions, instead of providing answers.
- Guide them to question their own thinking.
- Have them teach you something they learned that day.

#### *Sample Questions:*

1. Can you give me an example?
2. How can we find out if that is true?
3. Can you be more specific?
4. Does this all make sense together?
5. What is the most important idea?
6. What did you learn today that was challenging? What was exciting?
7. Why?

#### Technology Activities

- Help your student acquire technology skills.
- Locate online articles-current events- and read them together.
- Encourage them to find and learn about future plans, like college and career options.

#### Teacher Communication

When you talk to the teacher, don't worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. Ask the teacher questions such as:

- Is this piece of work satisfactory? How could it be better? Is my child on track?
- How can I help my child improve or excel in this area?
- If my child needs extra support or wants to learn more about a subject, what resources are there to help his or her learning outside the classroom?
- How can they become better skilled at gathering information and citing material accurately?
- How does my child defend interpretations of reading he/she has researched?