

# Standardized tests

## Choose to do well

True or false: Standardized tests are tough. The answer depends on how prepared your youngster is. Consider these four steps to help him handle test week.

1. Explain that the tests will show how much he has learned. Encourage him to try his best, but don't put so much emphasis on the tests that he feels stressed.
2. Practice the test format. For example, your child might have to read a paragraph and answer questions. Using one



of his textbooks, have him look at the questions at the end of a section first and then read the passage. That will help him know what to read for and how to find the answers.

3. Limit activities the night before tests. You may want to avoid having guests for dinner, or let him skip his brother's

baseball game if it means being out late. Be sure your youngster gets to bed on time and sets an alarm for the next morning.

4. On test day, give him an energy-boosting breakfast. Try to include both protein (eggs, yogurt, milk) and carbohydrates (fruit, oatmeal, toast).♥

### ACTIVITY CORNER

## Paper bag city

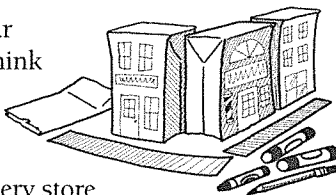
Let your child create her own 3-D community. She'll practice map skills and learn about urban planning as she decides where to put the buildings in her town.

**Materials:** paper lunch bags, crayons or markers, newspapers, black construction paper, scissors, tape

Have your youngster think of buildings to include, such as a

bank, a grocery store, a school, a library, and houses. She can make them by drawing doors, windows, and signs on flat bags. For every bag she decorates, have her stuff a second one with newspaper. Then, she should open each decorated bag and slide it over a stuffed bag so her "buildings" will stand up. For the roads, she can cut black construction paper into strips and tape them together.

Finally, have your child lay out her roads and arrange her buildings alongside them to make her very own town.♥



### Q & A

## Bullying: The bystander's role

**Q:** My child has been coming home from school upset because kids frequently pick on a classmate and never let her play with them. What advice should I give my daughter?

**A:** Tell your youngster that her classmate was being bullied—and that she may be able to help stop it!

There are several things she can do. If she feels safe, she could say something like, "That's not nice," and then ask the classmate to walk away with her. Or she might invite the child who is being bullied to join her in a game or school project.

Also, remind your youngster to report bullying to a teacher or other adult when she sees it. Let her know this is not tattling, but a way to help someone who is being hurt. You can explain: "Asking an adult to help a child who is being bullied is like asking the nurse to help a child with a scraped knee."♥



### PARENT TO PARENT

## Thinking games

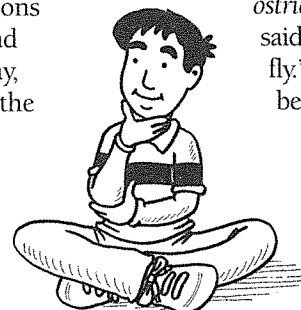
Between school, errands, and activities, my family spends lots of time on the go. I decided to use some of it for "thinking games."

I taught my kids a game my parents used to play with me, called "Would You Rather?" I offer two options and ask which they prefer and why. For example, I might say, "Would you rather live near the beach or the mountains?"

My son came up with a game he named "Three Favorites." Someone picks a category (outfits, movies), and we all tell our top three

choices. My daughter thought of "What Doesn't Belong?" We take turns naming items and asking the others to explain which is the odd one out and why. The kids especially like this game because there can be more than one "right" answer. For example, when I named *owl*, *ostrich*, and *eagle*, my daughter said, "Ostrich, because it can't fly." My son's answer was, "Owl, because it hunts at night."

Now they want to play all the time. I'm glad because we're having fun—and they've gotten better at thinking through their ideas.♥



### OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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