



SPRING

NEWSLETTER

2015

CO-OP PARENTS TALK KID'S BOOKS, SCREEN TIME, & BIG-KID INDEPENDENCE

BY BENJAMIN WHEELER



ADULT: ADRIAN
CHILD: DAMIEN (KATYDID)

PC: What are your childrens' favorite books?

A: Damien likes any book about animals. His favorite book for like the last 3 years has been one called *Unusual Creatures*. It's got angler fish! It has all the geeky information about them. It's written by this great guy named Michael Hearst who is a musician in Park Slope, and he pairs it with a CD. He uses unusual instruments with amazing musicians, and they do a performance once a month.

Then we have a book that we call "the museum book." It's a prehistoric evolutionary book. I wish I knew the name of it! You can see all the different periods, and what becomes what, and follow the path. So that one gets a lot of action too.

He loves cooking books, kids' recipe books. He likes all the Harry Potter Books, I read them to him, and he's starting to read so he reads them a little bit with me. Another favorite is the series *"The Toys Go Out."*

PC: I don't know that...

A: It's really good! It's for new readers. When the family isn't around, the toys have adventures. They have interpersonal conflicts!

Oh, I almost forgot *Geronimo Stilton*, an early readers series.

PC: So, screen time...how are you dealing with that question?

A: We try and avoid it. We use it strategically. We have a tenant who lives below us, and the pitter-patter of two boys is really intense. So sometimes we use it to keep them a little bit more mellow.

But Damien, my oldest son, doesn't do very well with screen time. He has a hard time when we try to turn it off. So we try and not do screen time unless we absolutely have to, like the very early morning. Once in a while we try a movie that we think is going to be really fun for the family, but that usually ends up being a mediocre experience. The kids lose interest, and all of a sudden they are naked and attacking each other and it's past their bedtime!

PC: We just showed our daughters *Annie*. That was a big hit.

A: We saw that on Broadway with Damien! He didn't quite understand that they were acting. Like, who are the people up there? And what's an orphan?

PC: They really liked *Mary Poppins*, too. Musicals are fun!

A: *The Sound of Music!*

PC: We want to take our older daughter to *Matilda* on Broadway.

A: Oh yeah, Roald Dahl! We just read *The BFG*. And we started to read the *Henry Sugar* stories, but those are really sophisticated! I'm saying "Wait a minute... I'm losing you, buddy!"

PARENT CORNER CONT'D



ADULT: JEN CHILDREN: ZORA (PLAYGROUP) AND DAWN (3RD GRADE AT PS 11)

PC: What are your childrens' favorite books?

J: Dawn reads a lot of different books from school. They have fiction and non-fiction books that they're required to read. She likes, you know, princess types of books, and Barbie. But her favorite books are the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series, because they're very interactive, so she can go through and answer questions and write in them.

PC: Do they lay on the homework at that age? I'm scared of that...

J: Between 1st and 2nd grades, they start their required reading. As she has gotten into 3rd grade she has more school-related reading.

PC: What about Zora?

J: She likes *Curious George*. And she likes *Kiss Good Night*, a book about a mama bear and a little bear. The mama bear realizes that she forgot to kiss her little bear goodnight.

PC: Let's talk screen time. How are you handling that? Especially with your 8-year-old, do you have rules about when she can and can't watch stuff?

J: When my 8-year-old hears my phone ring, she runs to it as if it's her own. When she hears the text messages coming in, she'll run to it and say "Oh, it's so-and-so!" At first I was restrictive, you know some people are TV freaks — that's just not me. But I try to limit TV more to the weekends or holidays. As far as the internet, she likes the American Girl website, which has games and stories.

PC: Are those the expensive dolls? The old-fashioned ones?

J: Yes. It's fun for her! She sees it online and then we go to the store in Manhattan and she can pick it out.

PC: Have you thought at what age you will allow your older daughter to walk home or take the subway by herself?

J: That's a good question. I have a friend that has a 2nd grader and a 6th grader. I was asking her how she did the pick up time after school, because they all get off at the same time. So her 11 year-old takes the train by himself. I think that my daughter has a little ways to go before that, but it's definitely something that you have to think about because she'll be in that position in a few years. Because I drive a lot, she isn't exposed to the train every day, so it's something that we would have to ease into.

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

DAN COSTELLO, CO-OP MUSIC TEACHER

THE MAN BEHIND THE MUSIC.

BY MEGAN HARDING

YOU'VE SEEN HIM ON STAGE AT THE HOLIDAY SING. YOU'VE SPOTTED HIM IN THE CLASSROOMS AND CORRIDORS (BOTH PRE- AND POST-BEARD!). AND YOU'VE DEFINITELY HEARD HIS SONGS. BUT DO YOU REALLY KNOW HIM? IT'S TIME TO MEET THE CO-OP'S VERY OWN MUSIC MAN, DAN COSTELLO.

Where did your love of music come from?

I grew up with a lot of music. My mother loves to sing, and my father has quite the record collection! I've always been a singer and remember jamming along to my Fisher Price record player in our basement. Kids stuff like the soundtrack to "Hans Christian Andersen" and some Sesame Street vinyl. My parents were very into folk music from around the world, and '60s stuff like Bob Dylan. I remember hearing Pete Seeger very early on. It was the mid-'80s. There was also a significant amount of Michael Jackson and Bruce Springsteen going on at my house.

And how old were you when you learned to play guitar? Was it love-at-first-sight?

I learned a little bit when I was seven or eight — my dad had a Yamaha acoustic that sat around mostly unused. My older brother started playing it. I remember learning how to play a G chord from a book called Play Guitar with Happy Traum. I didn't really start playing seriously until I was in college. But actually, my love-at-first-sight moment happened with a little Casio keyboard I got for my ninth birthday. I would play it for hours at a time. A few years later my brother got

a full size keyboard and I pretty much claimed it as my own. I'm a much better piano player than guitar player!

What would you say is your secret ingredient for teaching a music class at the Co-op?

The children have great ideas, and it's very important to me that we honor their imaginations. Our classes are a real combination of sing-along and identifying the musical possibilities of our immediate surroundings, as well as identifying how music is made all over the world. It's quite important to teach a cross-over curriculum — music relating to the classroom studies — as it boosts retention in both areas. I always keep in mind that we play music, so playing, having fun and writing silly songs are all part of it.

There's a brand-new Co-op School song. Tell us a little bit about the genesis of it — how involved were you?

Super involved! Ryan (the Sharks teacher) came to me with a goal: "I want to write a school song that incorporates our school's core values." We sat at the piano one morning before school, with the list and description of the school's Core Values. We wrote the words and music together in about an hour.

The Holiday Sing was a big hit, as well as the Spring Sing. Tell us about these events.

The children get very excited to share their songs. The vibe I like to create is that we are sharing songs, not performing them. Nothing makes a greater musical impact on our children than singing together. It's one of the simplest and most powerful ways to celebrate our community. I hope everyone who attends knows that they will be called to action and are prepared to sing with us!



What's the question you get most from students?

"How did you learn to play the guitar like that?"

What was the most surprising moment you've had teaching at Co-op?

I am constantly surprised by our children — the songs they bring to share in class, and the amount they remember from week to week. Sometimes a child who hasn't been singing very much lately will walk in one day, say, "I have a new song," and sing it for the whole class. It's a big moment for them, and for the whole group. And it can be shocking and quite entertaining — like the 3 year-old who came in singing about being chased by gummy bears. It was epic!

What is your favorite song?

"This Land Is Your Land" by Woody Guthrie.

And lastly... Your favorite thing about teaching music at Co-op?

I love the community of this school. It's a unique and inspiring place. The students pick up on that collective energy, and it creates a strong sense of ownership and authority for their learning. They certainly bring that energy to our music class! Oh, and I love the music room!

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

CARLA RODEA, SPANISH TEACHER

TEACHING KIDS A 2ND LANGUAGE

(AND THE BEST MEXICAN RESTAURANTS IN BROOKLYN)

BY LAUREN KESNER O'BRIEN

CARLA RODEA GREW UP VISITING ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES IN MEXICO WITH HER FAMILY BEFORE ENTERING THE CONSERVATORY IN MEXICO CITY AND EVENTUALLY FOLLOWING HER CHILDHOOD DREAM BY MOVING TO NEW YORK. HAVING TAUGHT SPANISH IN MANY SETTINGS, CARLA SAYS SHE'S NEVER SEEN AS INDEPENDENT-MINDED KIDS AS SHE DOES AT THE CO-OP SCHOOL.

This is your first year at the Co-op School. How's it going?

I love the school. I love the fact that these kids are so empowered. They have strong voices and to me that's just fantastic because that's the way it should be.

What do you enjoy most about teaching Spanish?

I love sharing my culture. I love when I start to hear my students understanding and using the language.

Do you have any advice for parents who want their children to learn a second language?

When parents get involved, the kids fly with the language! It's so fulfilling, and it's amazing.

"Get involved" in what way?

I encourage the kids to teach their parents what they learn in class. It doesn't have to be boring. Just five or ten minutes of practicing colors can be a great path to learning a language.

You're a polyglot. Is it true you speak Italian, French, Spanish and English?

When I was in the conservatory in Mexico, I focused on voice. I'm a singer, and part of the study was to learn other languages.

Can you characterize each of those languages with a word or a sentence? For example, I speak some Russian and would say that it's gritty, passionate and beautiful.

I visited France from an early age, so French was always about excitement and had a beautiful feeling of wonder. I wanted to know more and understand it better. Italian is friendly. Italian is fun. It comes with so much expression, with so much hand gesture and drama. Growing up in Mexico and being so close to the US, English is just second nature. Mexico is so informed by what happens here. The movies and the culture of consumerism comes with English. Languages are the entry points to understanding other cultures.

And what about Spanish?

Being Mexican, you know you speak Spanish because the Spanish came and conquered. We

take it for granted as Mexicans, but there are also all of these other fantastic languages. Nahuatl was the language spoken in central Mexico prior to the Spanish people coming. It's still spoken today and it's a beautiful language.

You seem so connected to Mexico. What brought you to New York?

The first time I came here was in 1982. I was young and my father, who is a musician, brought us. I always wanted to come back. In 2004, I finally came back for a vacation and I never left! I stayed 6 months, which is what my visa allowed, and then I applied to City College. When I got in I decided, okay, I'm moving to New York.

What was the hardest part of moving here?

At first it was this amazing adventure, and then I went through the process of being an immigrant, which is very difficult. I started idealizing Mexico but I would go back and feel like, I don't belong here. I went through a few years of feeling displaced. I still go through that, but now I feel in my heart that New York is home.

What's your favorite restaurant in Brooklyn?

There's a fantastic Mexican place called Fonda. It's in Park Slope on 7th Ave. The chef is amazing, he's from Mexico and brings the ingredients from Mexico. It's very authentic and it's great. And, there's also Chavellas. I like the lunch specials.

If you had friends over for dinner this weekend, what would you make?

Mmm... I think I would make a delicious salad with fruits, something fresh, mango or strawberry, a little hint of chili, maybe a tiny bit of honey and lemon drops. I love to cook! Maybe some carne asada. Maybe some steak marinated with a little bit of soy sauce and onions, and I'd make fajitas with those.





ROTEM LINIAL, WOOD SHOP

CREATIVE, WORLDLY & ARTISTIC. A NEW APPROACH TO WOODSHOP

BY AMY GUGGENHEIM

ON THE MOVE. THAT'S THE IMPRESSION ONE GETS FROM THE CO-OP SCHOOL'S WOOD SHOP TEACHER ROTEM LINIAL - IN THE BEST SENSE OF THE PHRASE. THOUGH MOST OF HER TIME IS SPENT IN THE BASEMENT WORKSHOP OF THE BREVOORT CAMPUS INSPIRING THE MINI WOODEN CREATIONS OF CO-OP SCHOOL KIDS.

Rotem brings to her job the sense of imagination, expertise and adventure that her background as an artist living between two countries has given her. More than just the birdhouses, poem trees, and wooden animals that the children create with her, she teaches them the important skills of communication, concentration, planning, and cooperation. This winter, Rotem also taught an enrichment class

called "Cinemagic" that let the children explore all aspects of filmmaking firsthand.

You are an artist.

What is your background?

I grew up in West Jerusalem. Over the years I've moved from Israel to the US and back again to study, make and teach art. I studied at The Jerusalem Cinematheque, consuming everything from avant-garde film from Soviet Russia to Hollywood blockbusters. In Jerusalem I also attended The School of Visual Theater. Then I moved to the US and was at San Francisco Art Institute's experimental New Genres Department. From there I transferred to Columbia University and graduated with a dual degree in Art History and Visual Art. I also have an MFA from Hunter College.

What do you love most about teaching at the Co-op School?

I love the emphasis on making and exploring, that the school sees creating as such an important tool for learning. We learn so much through the process of making—close observation, facility with materials, analytic

and creative thinking—every time we make something we are setting up a series of experiments that teach us about the world and ourselves.

Who inspires you?

The great education art-lab Black Mountain College, John Cage, Robert Rauschenberg, Cy Twombly, Merce Cunningham, and many others.

What kind of work do you create?

I make film, video and sculptures that explore cinema, vision and narrative.

Your after school enrichment class, "Cinemagic," was wildly popular with parents and kids alike. What was your goal?

I hope to show that the world is what we make of it, that by building, making, imagining and taking apart, the world becomes our own—with all the freedom (and responsibility) this entails.



CORE VALUES AT THE CO-OP SCHOOL

The Brevoort Campus's New Core Values Hit Home with Students

By Jen Skoda

"THE OTHER DAY THERE WAS A PIECE OF PAPER ON THE GROUND WHEN WE WERE LINING UP FOR RECESS," SAYS SHARKS TEACHER RYAN THORNTON. "ONE OF THE SHARKS PICKED IT UP AND STARTED WALKING TO THE TRASH CAN. AND HALFWAY THERE HE STOPPED AND SAID, 'OH WAIT. THIS IS TAKING CARE OF EVERY SPACE! THIS IS COMMUNITY ACTION!' HE FLEXED HIS MUSCLES AND FLASHED THE COMMUNITY ACTION SIGNAL. IT ALL KIND OF CAME TOGETHER AT THAT MOMENT FOR ME. I SMILED AND THOUGHT, THEY ARE REALLY GETTING THIS!"

The "this" that Ryan is referring to is the Co-op School's five Core Values: Compassion, Uniqueness, Innovation, Community Action, and Joy. These five words reflect both the values of the Co-op community and represent the school's educational philosophy. The Core Values were introduced to the elementary school students this year.

Centipedes teacher Emily Silver and Sharks teacher Ryan Thorton spearheaded a project to incorporate these values into the school curriculum in ways that would resonate with students. Each value was given a color and a hand gesture to help the students better understand and internalize the concept.

"As we introduced each value and saw the excitement and enthusiasm the kids had for them, we felt a great sense of empowerment that these visions and ideas we had for them were realities," explains Meredith Gray, the

Co-op School director. "We have created a place for compassionate, unique, innovative, community-minded and joyful learners to grow, learn and contribute."

At each of the monthly town hall meetings — where students share academic achievements with their larger community — one Core Value was highlighted, and the students participated in an activity that helped bring it to life. Here, a look at the five Core Values.

COMPASSION

"The core values represent how we want our students to be as learners and community members," explains Meredith. "Showing compassion is integral to how we learn as individuals and as a group. There are endless triumphs and tragedies in life and without having compassion for others — how they are feeling, how they are learning, what they are processing — we can't fully be involved as community members." On the day where the town hall meeting was focused on Compassion, students shared examples of the moments they displayed compassionate behavior.

UNIQUENESS

"While we are all part of the same community, school, or city, we are all unique in the way we learn, think, react, and process information," says Meredith. "We feel it's important to learn to appreciate our different views and strategies. There is no one right way to draw. Or read. Or explore. Or learn."

INNOVATION

When "Innovation" was introduced to the students, each class was given the same materials and the challenge to create something with them. Five ping pong balls, two paper towel rolls, a see-through colored plastic container, one egg carton, rope, tape and glue mixed with the students' imaginations became a beautiful

example of where creativity and hard work can take you: a mouse trap, a marble race, an abstract sculpture, and a farm.

JOY

"What brings joy to your class?" This was the question each class was asked to really consider before coming together to share with their community. Answers ranged from simple ones: "Singing!" "Laughing!" "Playing!" to the more detailed: "When my teacher tells a joke," "When I learn from my friends," and "When I get a math problem right." Additional answers included hugs, lunch, and "seeing my friends in the morning."

COMMUNITY ACTION

For the "Community Action" activity, the students were given trees to plant and collectively care for. "One of my favorite aspects of the Core Values initiative is that moment when a student realizes that what they are doing actually ties back to a Core Value," says Ryan. Just take the Shark student's triumphant realization while throwing away trash as proof that it's already working.

Emily and Ryan also worked with music teacher Dan Costello to develop a Coop School song to highlight the Core Values. This song is enthusiastically sung by the elementary school at their town hall meetings and choreography was added for the Core Value Culmination Ceremony.

"The core values have become the real heart of the Co-op school. These values aren't just something that live on our website. They have become so visible on our students' faces, through their actions and how they have learned to negotiate with each other. We hope these values are understandings that grow with our students throughout their Co-op experience," Emily said.

CONT'D NEXT PAGE

THE CO-OP SCHOOL SONG

COOP,
the Co-op School's the place for me
working together as a team,
the Co-op School's the place for me

who, who, who, who,
who, who, who, who

We love and care that's
COMPASSION, COMPASSION

Being the person that I am
UNIQUENESS, UNIQUENESS

Try new ideas
INNOVATION, INNOVATION

Taking care of every space
COMMUNITY ACTION

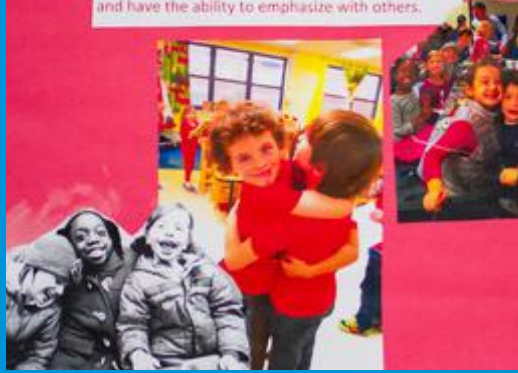
Play, learn, make friends
JOY, JOY, JOY

COOP,
the Co-op School's the place for me
working together as a team,
the Co-op School's the place for me

that's the end, your choice!

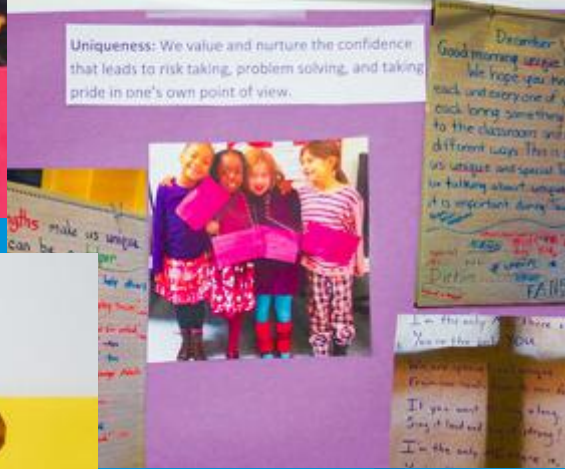
Compassion

Compassion: We value and nurture the strength of character it takes to work together as a team, to be an individual, to respect differences of opinions, and have the ability to empathize with others.



Uniqueness

Uniqueness: We value and nurture the confidence that leads to risk taking, problem solving, and taking pride in one's own point of view.



Innovation

As innovative Co-op members, we value and nurture curiosity, imagination, creativity, experimentation, and perseverance when faced with challenges.



Community Action

As Active Community Co-op members, we value and nurture an overall awareness, respect and care for our surroundings, community and environment.



Joy

Joy: We value and nurture the simple joys of playing, learning, and friendship making.



STORY NIGHT

TRUE
STORIES
TOLD
LIVE

BY STEPHANIE VANAMEE

THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2015 - THE CO-OP SCHOOL'S 6TH ANNUAL STORY NIGHT

On Thursday, June 11, 2015, the Co-op School's sixth annual Story Night will take place. Modeled after the popular MOTH series, this is one of the year's most powerful events, so don't miss it! Come hear parents, alums, teachers and grandparents share personal stories that promise to be gripping, hilarious, mind-blowing, and full of emotion.

Here, we learn a little bit about this year's Storytellers.

UFASAHA YARISH

Co-op Affiliation:

My daughter, Hypatia Yarish, is an alum.

Five words that describe you:

Adventurous, social, loving, loyal, playful

The best story you've ever heard:

My mother worked for Northwest Airlines as a cargo engineer for 20 years, in what might be considered a man's job. She told me and my sister a story about how she earned her male colleagues' respect on the job.

Your story is about:

My first child.

MEL DOCKERY

Co-op Affiliation:

Grandmother of Owen Dockery, 4 years old, Butterfly

Five words that describe you:

Retired, Happy Grandma, Neophyte Storyteller

The best story you've ever heard:

World War II. An air raid. People trapped, flames everywhere. A woman says "we have to get out," a man replies "It's no use. We're trapped for eternity." The woman says "I won't go through this again" and manages to escape and runs away from the flames but then returns immediately to see if she can save anyone else. She finds a policeman outside a boarded up building who says "This house was destroyed in the war. There were no survivors."

Your story is about:

The first born child leaves home for college.

MARK MARTIN

Co-op Affiliation:

My son Thomas is a Centipede.

Five words that describe you:

Beamish. Uffish. Galumphing. Vorpel. Frabjous.

Best story you've ever heard:

A friend made an error of judgement as a gullible young man and spent a summer in prison. As terrifying as the experience was, he made it sound hilarious, and every detail revealed something about both my dear friend and the prison system. The story finished, the whiskey came out: two happy endings.

Your story is about:

My dad and WWII, and it'll make each hair on your head "stand on end like quills upon the fretful porpentine." That's Hamlet. He had dad issues, too.

VIVIANNE GUEVARA

Co-op Affiliation:

My daughter, Xenia, is a Katydid.

Five words that describe you:

Mommy, Daughter, Social Worker, Lover and Fighter

The best story you've heard:

Two people met, fell in love, and joined the circus together.

Your story is about:

Miracles and angels in Ecuador, and the kindest of strangers.

KRISTI NELLOR HAMPOLE

Co-op School Affiliation:

My super sassy lil big girl, Tudor, just turned 5. She was an adorable Cricket last year and is a very proud Bumblebee this year. My son, Kirin is almost 2, never stops moving nor smiling and is an incoming bug in the fall.

Five words that describe you:

Creative, loyal, gregarious, caring, and (mildly) inappropriate

Best story you've ever heard:

It is courageously vulnerable and deeply connects you to humanity. Both hilarious and gut wrenching, it inevitably makes you cackle louder than appropriate and ugly cry in public.

Your story is about:

Here's a little 5-7-5 Haiku that tells you all you need to know about my story...

Blueberries. Crack whores.
Slow the car and cut the lights.
All to save my mom.

THE TAKEAWAY: 10 TIPS FOR LEARNING AT HOME

We know our kids are learning all day at school. But how can we support their learning at home? Parents and teachers offer their ideas. Cut them out and put them on the fridge as reminders!

By Chirag Patel

TIP #1: COUNTING AMOUNT OF FOOD THAT CAN FIT IN A TRAY

Details: Use a multi-compartment tray for meals and have your child (a) guess how many pieces of fruit will fit in the compartment (b) count them as she puts them in.

Purpose Sorting, Counting and Estimation
When Mealtime
Grade Pre-K - K
Source Chirag Patel, Parent

TIP #5: IDENTIFY WORDS AND SHAPES WHEN WALKING DOWN THE STREET

Details: Have your child read words and logos of familiar signs as you walk down the street. If they can't read words, have them pick out letters they know. Also have them identify shapes such as triangle yield signs, square mats in the park, rectangular cinder blocks, etc. You can talk about how words and signs are important because they tell us what to do!

Purpose Words and Shapes
When Walking outside
Grade Pre-K - K
Source Joanna, Beetles Teacher

TIP #2: SET THE TIMER WHEN COOKING AND RELATE IT TO AN ANALOG CLOCK

Details: Set a digital timer for 5 minutes, and have an analog watch or clock nearby. Talk about what 5 minutes represents and explain how to read it on the analog clock. Watch the second hand and minute hand move, and ask questions like, which hand moves faster? It is useful for kids to relate the digital countdown to real-world timing and the hands on the clock. Optional: Offer a treat to reward patience after the timer is up.

Purpose Telling Time
When Mealtime
Grade Pre-K - 1st
Source Bobby Lapointe, Parent

TIP #3: READ STORIES AND BOOKS THAT RELATE TO SCHOOL TOPICS

Details: Whenever your child's class starts a new topic on something (eg. the 5 senses), scan your book collection at home to see if you have anything that relates and pull those out for bedtime reading (or to bring into the classroom to share). The daily email from your Co-op teacher can be a great source for ideas. Also check The Co-op's library, the public library, or storybook apps such <http://farfaria.com> for further reading on each topic.

Purpose Reading
When Bedtime
Grade All
Source Ingrid Peck, Parent

TIP #4: NAME EMOTIONS AND MAKE FACES TO MATCH

Details: Take turns naming emotions and scenarios and have the other person make a face to match. For example: "How do you feel when you have to go home after a good time at the playground?" *Make sad face.* Ask about examples of how your child or a classmate felt that emotion.

Purpose Empathy
When Around the house
Grade Pre-K - 2nd
Source Ben Wheeler, Parent



TIP #6: CREATE CHARTS FOR CHORES TO MAKE THEM FUN

Details: Create a job helper chart by putting words and corresponding pictures of daily chores on a dry/erase board, chalkboard, or poster. This will help give kids a sense of ownership and independence. By the end of the week when they complete all the chores on the chart, you can give them a special treat, like watching a favorite movie or extra play time at the park. After a few weeks, they will be able to create their own chart!

Purpose Responsibility
When Around the house
Grade All
Source Colleen, bumblebees teacher

TIP #8: SPROUT FOODS IN YOUR KITCHEN

Details: Sprout the beans, peas, lentils, wheat berries, flax, or quinoa that you have in your pantry. Place food in jar, add 2 inches of water, and cover the jar with mesh or cheesecloth and a rubber band. Keep overnight and rinse daily if needed. Observe as they grow and explain how they grow.

Purpose Gardening
When Mealtime
Grade All
Source Sophie, Gardening Teacher

TIP #9: HELP YOUR KIDS MEDITATE /CALM DOWN WITH A BELL

Details: Get a bell or triangle. Close your eyes, and then strike it. While the bell is ringing, keep your eyes closed. Ask your child to think about what's on their mind while their eyes are closed. Open your eyes when you can no longer hear it. Then, let another person ring the bell.

Purpose Meditation
When Bedtime
Grade All
Source Jonathan Kaplan, Parent Emeritus

TIP #7: SPELL WORDS WITH REAL WORLD CONTEXT

Details: Give your child opportunities to write words that are grounded in real-world context. Instead of spelling unfamiliar words, encourage your child to use the letter sounds, blends, digraphs and vowel patterns they know to write all the sounds they hear with "best guess" spelling. Examples are grocery lists, letters to friends/family, and signs.

Purpose Spelling
When Around the house
Grade 1st and up
Source Kevin, Centipedes Teacher



TIP #10: ASK KIDS TO READ TO YOU

Details: Mix it up sometimes and ask your kids if they want to read to YOU! It doesn't matter if they are not reading words yet. It can be a story they know really well where they "read" the pictures, or they can make up a story from what they see in the pictures. They can pick out words they know. And if you share a book that is rhythmic, repetitive, or rhyming, leave pauses so your child can fill in the words!

Purpose Reading
When Bedtime
Grade All
Source Carmelle Arad, Dragonfly Teacher