

Encourage Higher Order Thinking Skills

As students prepare for high school, one of the most important skills parents and teachers can instill in them is critical thinking. Certainly, high school teachers do not expect students to remember every detail from every class in elementary and middle school, but they do expect students to be able to **think** – to logically make connections and analyze information. Therefore, critical thinking is an important skill that middle school teachers encourage in each subject. Summer is a great time to work on these critical thinking skills. Open ended questions are key! Below are some great questions to get one thinking:

When reading a book:

- “What do you think might happen next?”
- “Does this remind you of anything from your life?”
- “Can you tell me about what you read today?”
- “Why did he/she act that way?”

When making an important decision:

- “How would you rank _____?”
- “How will what I am about to say or do affect me or those around me?”
- “How do you imagine _____ would look?”
- “What do you think a solution might be?”
- “Why did you decide to choose _____ over _____?”

“Whether you think you can, or you think you can't--you're right.”
— Henry Ford

Be a Growth Mindset Learner

The brain, like a muscle, must be worked to become stronger. To be a growth mindset learner, one must understand that intelligence is not a fixed trait. It can be grown through effort and hard work, through understanding your learning style, and through embracing spiritual, academic, and athletic challenges. This summer don't fall into the trap of “I'm on vacation; I don't have to think.” Don't label yourself as “smart” or “dumb” in any area! Don't rely on Google to do the work for you. Don't blame failure on lack of ability. Use failure to increase your knowledge. Challenge yourself. Ask relevant questions. Think about thinking. Growth mindset learners become strong leaders. Seek to grow!

An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.
Proverbs 18:15 (ESV)

When visiting an unfamiliar place:

- “How is _____ similar to/different from _____?”
- “Can you explain/show me that in another way?”
- “How would you describe this place to someone who has never been here?”



Building Your Schema

The June newsletter brought you information on using IXL as a way to keep one's academic skills sharp throughout the summer. Hopefully, the website has been a tool incorporated into student's screen time. Other websites which will help prepare students for their upcoming year are the following:

<https://www.softschool.com>

<https://www.vocabtest.com/>

<https://www.sadlierconnect.com/vw>

(6th grade - level A, 7th - level B, 8th -level C)

Continue building your knowledge base!

THINK ABOUT IT:



What number comes next in the following sequence?

2 4 8 10 20 ____