

## HOW CAN WE HELP CHILDREN SUCCEED BY BUILDING ON THEIR STRENGTHS?

Every child learns differently, and every child communicates their ideas differently. Our goal is to make sure we use their strengths to help them succeed. We know everyone has tremendous potential. We want students to reach that potential and improve their confidence, their performance on assessments, and their understanding of material. Teachers can do this in the classroom by grouping students by their strengths, by providing different options on assessments, etc. It is much harder for you to do as a parent. How can you do this at home when your child comes to you with concerns about a class? The following is a list of strategies you can use when your child appears to lack understanding and does not know how to proceed. They are divided into five sections, each one representing a different strength.

### **Diagramming:**

- In mathematics and science, students can create a schematic diagram, which is like a flow chart, indicating the process of solving a problem which includes all the steps leading to a solution.
- In mathematics and science, students can create a pictorial diagram in which they represent a situation with a picture. For example they can create something that would represent the way in which a function works.
- In other subjects, students can represent plot or themes using schematic diagrams.

### **Modeling:**

- Ask a student for a real world example of a concept. For example, doing laundry is a composition of functions (the output of one function becomes the input of another) because what you take out of the washing machine is what goes into the dryer.
- They can use real world situations to model relationships between ideas. For example, biting into an apple can help them determine the relationship between surface area and volume.

### **Writing:**

- Ask students to write down in a paragraph what they would do to solve a problem.
- Have students write down questions that are very specific. This will focus them and help them effectively use the resources available.
- All students should annotate their notes (describe how they move from one step the next). They should fill them in at night for anything they remember happening in class but is not in their notes.
- Have students create index cards with major events or ideas in a text, and then have them put these index cards in chronological order
- Students can put what they think they would say to a partner in class on index cards and then arrange the cards by theme (similar ideas).
- Students can keep a journal in which they write down everything they learned that day.

### **Speaking:**

- Have students explain their process to you or another family member.
- Have students discuss questions they have. They should be able to answer the Why and the How questions. It can help them if they explain out loud. They will discover both what they do and do not know. If you understand what they are talking about, then they understand.
- Students can act out a portion of the story.
- Students can discuss the text they are reading with you or another family member.

### **Symbolizing:**

- Have students write down all formulas they will have to use. They should be able to indicate what each symbol means and its purpose in the formula.
- Have students summarize a story using symbols. These symbols can represent many different things. It can help them clarify a story.

These are just some methods you can use.