

MEMORANDUM

March 13, 2015

TO: Board Members

FROM: Terry B. Grier, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: **TITLE I, PART A PRIVATE NONPROFIT SCHOOLS 2013–2014**

CONTACT: Carla Stevens, 713-556-6700

This is a summary of Catapult Learning's evaluation of the private nonprofit schools receiving Title I funding. During the 2013–2014 school year, the Houston Independent School District (HISD) supported services from Catapult Learning at 29 non-public schools, within HISD's boundaries. Services were provided in the areas of reading/language arts and/or mathematics at these schools. Nonprofit private schools are eligible for Title I funding (U.S. Department of Education (2006) *Ensuring Equitable Services to Private School Children*); this money is funneled through HISD's Department of External Funding. Given that the private schools served use different academic testing measures compared to public schools, HISD may use "other assessment measures that more accurately reflect the progress of the private school participating students toward meeting the standards that the LEA, in consultation with private school officials, has determined is appropriate". (U.S. Department of Education, (2003). *Title I Services to Eligible Private School Students-Non Regulatory Guidance*)

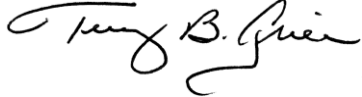
Attached is the evaluation completed by Catapult Learning for the 2013–2014 school year. Catapult Learning's services included AchieveReading and AchieveMath, where students received individualized instruction in small groups. Services were implemented two to four days per week, and each session lasted 45 minutes to an hour. Initial services for the 2013–2014 school year began in August and concluded at the end of June. Teacher conferences, site visits, and communication with parents occurred throughout the year. All students took a pre-test in the fall and a post-test in the spring, which were given through Odyssey, an online learning system. Achievement and growth were also measured using the "standardized" test.

Some of the highlights are as follows:

- Of 565 total students in grades PreK-12, 389 students received reading services and 462 students received math services for a total of 821 services (see page 1).
- Overall in reading, students scored an average of 40.2 points on the Odyssey pre-test and an average of 51.7 points on the Odyssey post-test, resulting in an increase of 11.6 points. In math, students showed an increase of 10.9 points from an average score of on the pre-test of 46.4 to an average score of 57.4 on the post-test (see Appendix A).
- According to the pre- and post-tests taken through Odyssey, 80 percent of the students made gains in reading and 79 percent made gains in math. Assumption Catholic School had the lowest percentage of students who made gains in reading (63 percent), while Schlenker and St. Francis of Assisi had the lowest percent of students who made gains in math (50 percent). Eight schools showed gains for all of their students served in reading, and seven schools did the same in math (see Appendix A).

- On Odyssey, grade 12 had the lowest percentage of students who made gains in reading (43 percent) and PreK and Grade 1 had the lowest percentage of students who made gains in math (67 percent) (see Appendix A).
- On average, reading scores increased by 2 Normal Curve Equivalents (NCEs), and math scores increased by 1.6 NCEs, between the pre-test and post-test as measured by the “standardized” test (see pages 7–8).
- Overall on the “standardized” test, 65 percent of students made gains in reading and in math. In comparing schools that tested at least five students on the “standardized” test, St. Francis of Assisi had the lowest percentage of students who made gains in reading (33 percent), and Incarnate Word Academy had the lowest percentage of students who made gains in math (44 percent) (see Appendix A).
- On the “standardized” test, grade 11 had the lowest percentage of students who made gains in reading (40 percent) and grade 8 had the lowest percentage of students who made gains in math (50 percent). Also, only 52 percent of students in grade 12 made gains in math on the IOWA (see Appendix A).
- On a 10-point scale where 10 indicates that a principal would be extremely likely to recommend Catapult Learning services, an average rating of 7.8 was calculated from the 17 principals who completed satisfaction surveys (see page 9).

Should you have any further questions, please contact my office or Carla Stevens in the Research and Accountability Department at (713) 556-6700.


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cc: Superintendent's Direct Reports
 Chief School Officers
 Pamela Evans



**Houston Independent School District
Program Summary
2013-2014**



Catapult Learning

Thank you for choosing Catapult Learning as your provider for educational support services! We have been pleased to provide you with quality education services during the 2013-2014 school year and look forward to continuing services with you in the years to come.

At Catapult Learning, we pride ourselves on the **power of partnership**. This is why we are devoted to our **Customer First Pledge**

- **All** needs are successfully addressed in consultation and follow up
- **Each** teaching session, training, or service is excellent
- **Every** issue is quickly addressed to confirmed satisfaction

We encourage you to contact your school partnerships representative with comments or concerns:

Annette Charles (214) 206-9520



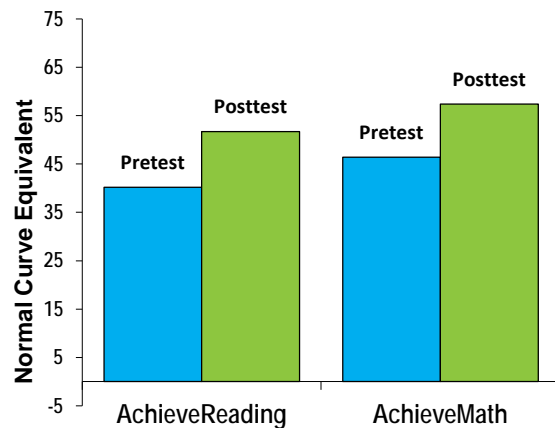
Program Success

During the 2013-2014 school year, Catapult Learning provided services to twenty-nine schools in the Houston Independent School District, including:

389 services in Reading
462 services in Math

Test Scores

A comparison of pretest and posttest scores revealed positive gains with students' average scores increasing by 12 points in reading and increasing by 11 points in math.



Satisfaction

Principals (n=17) reported likelihood of recommending Catapult Learning services as 7.8 on a 10 point scale.

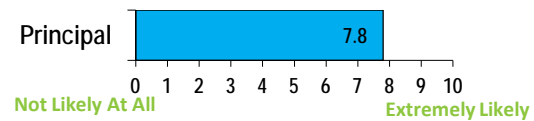




Table of Contents

Instruction: Overview of Services	1
Student Demographics.....	2
Instruction Services: Program Timeline	4
Description of Services.....	5
Achievement Results.....	6
Results.....	6
Reading	6
Math.....	7
Instruction: Parent Involvement.....	8
Principal Satisfaction Survey Results	9

Appendix A: Achievement Test Results

Appendix B: Survey Results

Appendix C: Parental Involvement Materials



Instruction: Overview of Services

Catapult Learning provided 851 instructional services to 565 students during the 2013-2014 school year.

School	Reading	Math	Total Instructional Services Provided
Assumption Catholic School	30	26	56
Beth Yeshurun	31	32	63
Byrd's Foster Group Home	4	5	9
Chinquapin Preparatory Academy	10	8	18
Cristo Rey Jesuit Academy	0	16	16
Harris School	1	1	2
Holy Ghost	8	11	19
Incarnate Word Academy	12	9	21
John Paul II Catholic School	4	9	13
Memorial Lutheran	5	4	9
Our Lady of Guadalupe	23	26	49
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic School	22	20	42
Our Redeemer Lutheran	2	4	6
Queen of Peace Catholic School	22	30	52
Resurrection	25	30	55
Sephardic Gan-Torat Emet	12	9	21
Shlenker	16	8	24
St. Augustine	11	9	20
St. Christopher Catholic School	29	32	61
St. Francis de Sales	16	25	41
St. Francis of Assisi	6	8	14
St. Mary of the Purification Montessori School	3	6	9
St. Peter the Apostle Catholic School	18	22	40
St. Pius X High School	35	39	74
St. Rose of Lima Catholic School	17	22	39
St. Theresa Catholic School	3	12	15
St. Thomas More	9	24	33
Torah Day	15	14	29
Torah Girls Academy	--	1	1
Program Total	389	462	851



Grade Level	Reading	Math	Total Instructional Services Provided
PreK	3	3	6
Kindergarten	12	6	18
1 st	23	24	47
2 nd	50	53	103
3 rd	44	43	87
4 th	54	63	117
5 th	42	59	101
6 th	39	47	86
7 th	40	51	91
8 th	29	40	69
9 th	20	9	29
10 th	15	22	37
11 th	11	16	27
12 th	7	26	33
Program Total	389	462	851

Student Demographics





Grade & Gender

The table below summarizes the gender and grades of students participating in the Catapult Learning program in the Houston Independent School District.

Grade	# of Female Students	# of Male Students	Total # of Students	% Female Students	% Male Students
PreK	4	8	12	33%	67%
K	16	16	32	50%	50%
1	36	37	73	49%	51%
2	31	26	57	54%	46%
3	36	37	73	49%	51%
4	38	25	63	60%	40%
5	32	23	55	58%	42%
6	31	30	61	51%	49%
7	32	17	49	65%	35%
8	14	9	23	61%	39%
9	16	8	24	67%	33%
10	9	8	17	53%	47%
11	13	13	26	50%	50%
12	4	8	12	33%	67%
TOTAL	308	257	565	55%	45%



Instructional services were provided and supported by:

-  LaSonya Dunham, *Instructional Supervisor*
-  Annette Charles, *Regional Director*
-  Kathy Roberts, *Regional Education Quality Manager*
-  Christine Lamadrid, *Territorial Vice President*

Funding for services was provided by:

-  Title I



Instruction Services: Program Timeline

Events:		Date(s) of Occurrence:
START UP	Catapult Learning Opening Staff Meeting/ Pre-service Training	August 26, 2013
	Continuing Staff Training	January 23, 2014
	Catapult Learning Parent Orientation Meeting	November 20, 2013
EDUCATION QUALITY	Formal Principal Meetings	Throughout year
INSTRUCTION	Services Begin for Students	September 2013
	Staff Development Meetings	June 2-3, 2014
	Progress Reports distributed to parents	October, December, March, June
	Parent Conferences	Throughout program
	Parent Involvement Workshops	November 20, 2013 December 18, 2013 January 30, 2014 February 4, 2014 February 5, 2014 February 25, 2014 February 26, 2014 April 5, 2014 April 23, 2014 May 15, 2014 June 17, 2014
	Posttests Administered	End of program
	Services End for Students	May-June 2014





Description of Services

Instruction Services: AchieveReading & AchieveMath



Reading and Math services were provided to twenty-nine schools in the Houston Independent School District. These services were provided according to the following instructional designs:

AchieveReading PlusTech

-  Incorporates on-line learning into Small Group and Individualized programs.
-  Allows for twice the number of children in the Catapult Learning classroom without sacrificing the teacher's ability to individualize instruction.

AchieveReading PlusTech enables children to receive computer-based, individualized reading instruction that reinforces taught concepts. While students work in a small group with the teacher, additional students are seated at computers as they work through online lessons.

AchieveMath PlusTech

-  Incorporates on-line learning into Small Group and Individualized programs.
-  Allows for twice the number of children in the Catapult classroom without sacrificing instructional fidelity.

AchieveMath PlusTech enables children to receive computer-based, individualized math instruction that reinforces taught concepts. While students work in a small group with the teacher, additional students are seated at computers as they work through online lessons.

Catapult Learning provided:

- 389 services in Reading
- 462 services in Math

Services were provided 2-4 days a week based on the needs of the students, teacher itineraries, the request of the building principals and district approval. The length of each session was approximately 30-60 minutes.



Achievement Results

Catapult Learning measures student performance by comparing pretest and posttest scores on standardized achievement tests for enrolled students meeting the following criteria: 1) enrolled in the program for 20 or more sessions and 2) matched pretest and posttest scores:

Test used	Cycle of testing	Grades tested	Number of students tested	
			Reading	Math
Odyssey	Fall—Spring	K—12	360	441

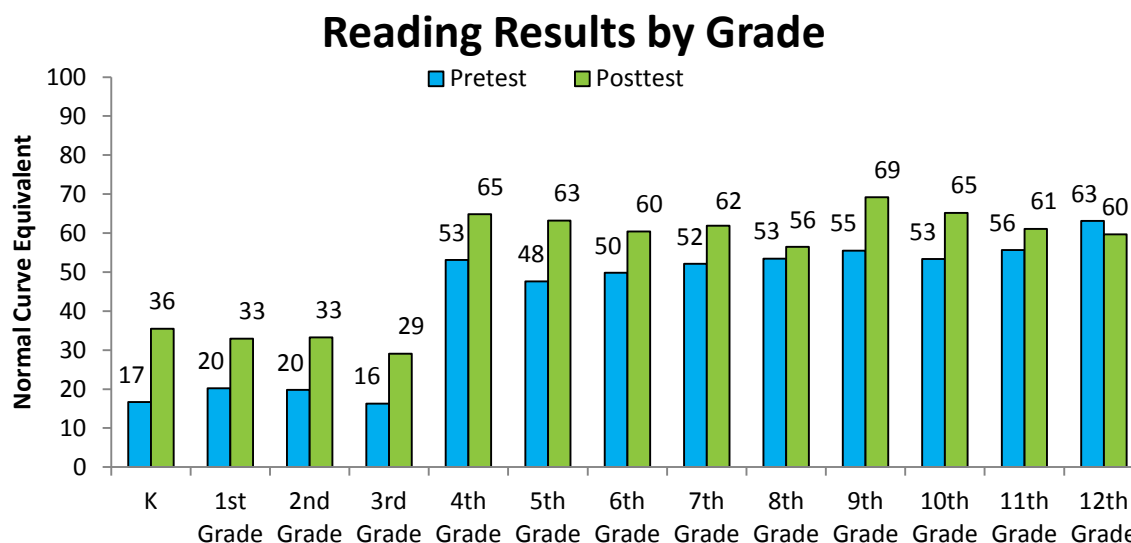
Procedure

Individual test scores were converted into Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) scores to determine an average score for the program. The average NCE pretest and posttest scores were then converted to their corresponding NPR to show where students enrolled in the Catapult Learning program stood on average within a large sample of students. To best demonstrate program effectiveness, pretest and posttest scores are reported according to fall normative scores.

Results

Reading

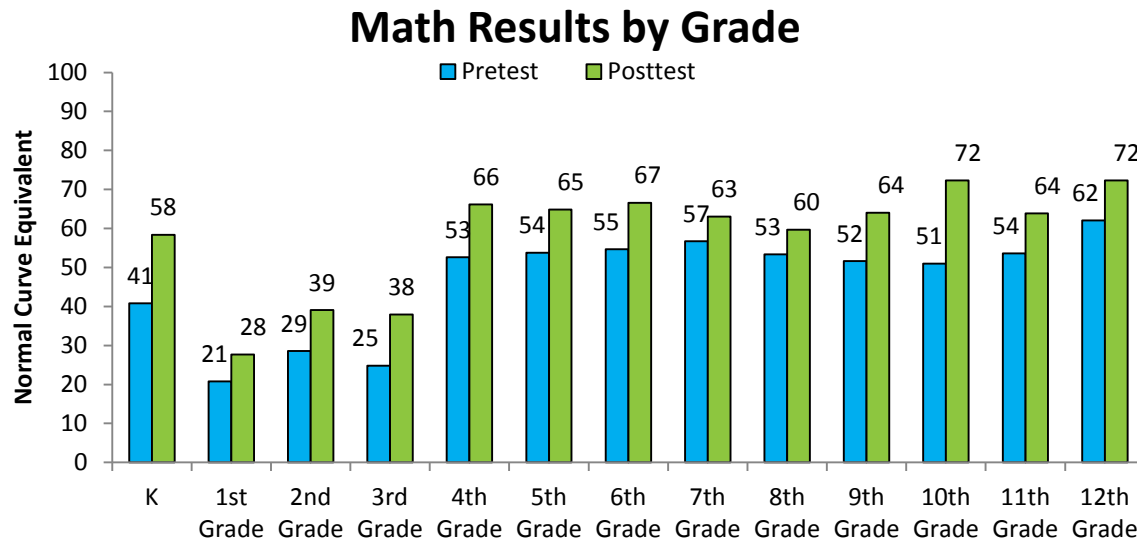
In reading (n=360), students moved from scoring an average of 40 points on the pretest to 52 points on the posttest. The difference between the average pre- and post-test scores in reading was 11.6 NCE points. A t-test of statistical significance indicated that the difference was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).





Math



In math (n=441), students moved from scoring an average of 46 points on the pretest to 57 points on the posttest. The difference between the average pre- and post-test scores in math was 10.9 NCE points. A t-test of statistical significance indicated that the difference was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).





Instruction: Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is a critical element in ensuring children's academic success. Efforts were made to involve parents as much as possible in their children's participation in the Catapult Learning program.

-  Title I Parent meetings were held throughout the fall semester to allow parents an opportunity to receive information on the Title I program. Parent meetings on various topics to improve student learning were held throughout the year at schools and libraries within HISD boundaries.
 - Parents met Catapult Learning staff, viewed the classroom, and received information about the Catapult Learning program.
-  Progress reports were sent to parents 4 times throughout the program, in October, December, March, and June.

Parent Involvement Workshops

The following parent involvement workshops were provided as part of the Catapult Learning program:

Parent Involvement Workshop Title
Promoting Literacy at Home
Supporting Math Skills at Home
Survival Tips for Student Success
At Home Strategies for Student Success
Test Taking Strategies



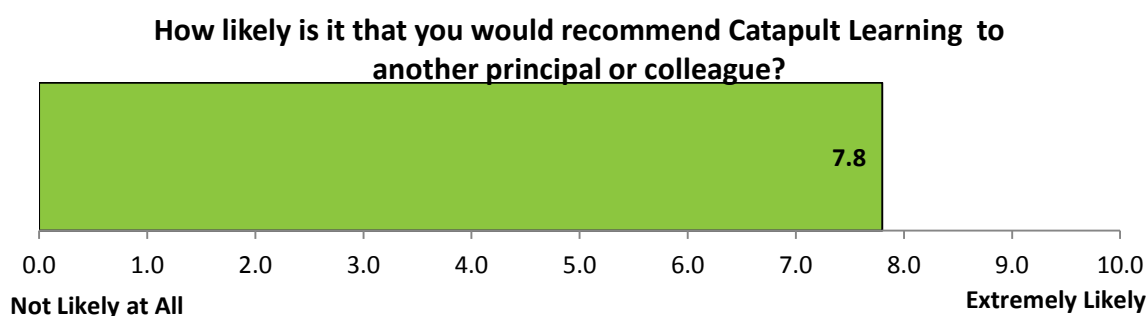
Principal Satisfaction Survey Results

Satisfaction survey results were gathered at the end of service delivery as a means to gain valuable feedback as well as evaluate program success. Item-level survey results can be found in Appendix B.

Principals

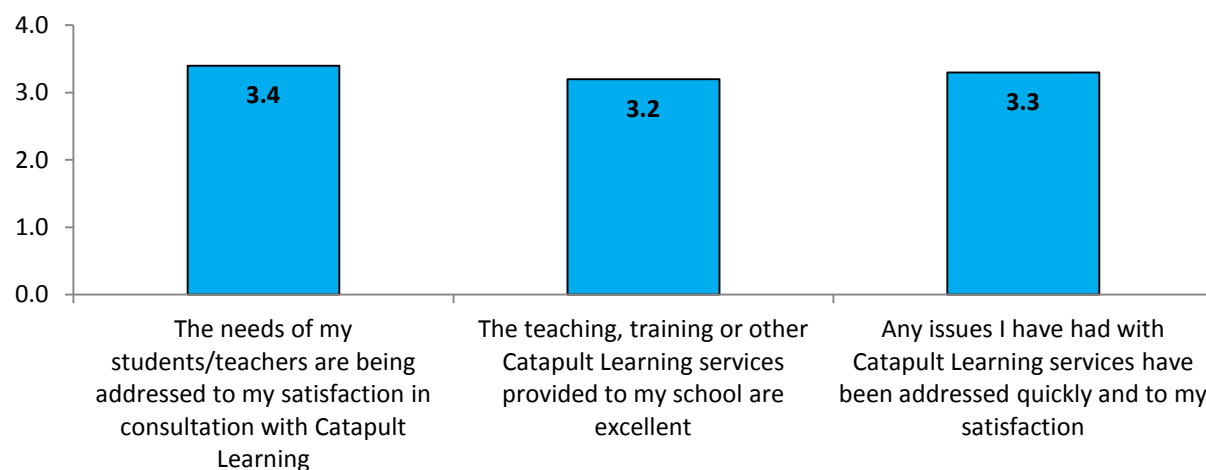
Principals were surveyed at the conclusion of services with Catapult Learning's four-question Customer First survey. Responders were to consider all services provided when completing the survey. Surveys were completed by seventeen principals.

Principals were asked to rate the likelihood of recommending Catapult Learning to another principal or colleague according to a 10 point scale, where 10 represented "extremely likely" and 1 represented "not likely at all." The average rating was 7.8.



Principals also rated their level of agreement with three statements about Catapult Learning regarding meeting student/teacher needs, excellence of services, and responsiveness. These items were based on a 4-point scale, where 4 represented "Strongly Agree" and 1 represented "Strongly Disagree."

Principal Survey Results





Appendix A

Achievement Test Results

Catapult Learning
Houston Independent School District
Program Summary, by School
2013-2014
READING: Odyssey

School	Number of Students	Average NCE Pretest	Average NCE Posttest	Average NCE Difference	% of Students Who Gained
Assumption Catholic School	30	46.4	48.9	2.5	63%
Beth Yeshurun	30	29.9	45.8	15.9	97%
Byrd's Foster Group Home	4	26.0	38.0	12	75%
Chinquapin Preparatory Academy	5	32.8	47.0	14.2	100%
Holy Ghost	8	41.0	51.5	10.5	100%
Incarnate Word Academy	12	59.7	72.2	12.5	75%
John Paul II Catholic School	3	24.7	34.7	10	100%
Memorial Lutheran	4	25.0	30.5	5.5	75%
Our Lady of Guadalupe	22	35.6	48.5	13	86%
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic School	19	37.2	43.4	6.2	79%
Our Redeemer Lutheran	1	30.0	48.0	18	100%
Queen of Peace Catholic School	21	26.9	44.0	17.1	100%
Resurrection	23	40.6	51.9	11.3	87%
Sephardic Gan-Torat Emet	10	19.5	41.1	21.6	100%
Shlenker	16	19.7	32.0	12.3	75%
St. Augustine	11	31.5	52.2	20.7	91%
St. Christopher Catholic School	29	49.0	59.4	10.4	76%
St. Francis de Sales	14	49.3	70.9	21.6	79%
St. Francis of Assisi	5	63.2	54.8	-8.4	20%
St. Mary of the Purification Montessori School	2	51.0	60.0	9	100%
St. Peter the Apostle Catholic School	18	45.4	60.0	14.6	78%
St. Pius X High School	32	58.3	65.3	6.9	69%

St. Rose of Lima Catholic School	16	45.9	61.6	15.8	81%
St. Theresa Catholic School	3	36.7	66.7	30	100%
St. Thomas More	9	36.4	32.4	-4	22%
Torah Day	15	33.7	45.5	11.8	80%
Program Total	362	40.2	51.7	11.6	80%

Catapult Learning
Houston Independent School District
Program Summary, by School
2013-2014
READING: Standardized Reading

School	Number of Students	Average NCE Pretest	Average NCE Posttest	Average NCE Difference	% of Students Who Gained
Assumption Catholic School	30	29.1	32.0	2.9	67%
Beth Yeshurun	31	19.0	22.7	3.7	58%
Byrd's Foster Group Home	4	35.9	38.3	2.4	100%
Chinquapin Preparatory Academy	5	25.4	35.2	9.8	100%
Harris School	1	26.3	28.2	1.9	100%
Holy Ghost	8	33.2	33.0	-0.3	63%
Incarnate Word Academy	12	34.6	35.5	0.9	58%
John Paul II Catholic School	4	36.0	43.0	6.9	100%
Memorial Lutheran	5	30.2	30.8	0.7	60%
Our Lady of Guadalupe	23	36.4	36.3	-0.1	52%
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic School	22	32.8	33.2	0.4	68%
Our Redeemer Lutheran	1	18.9	21.8	2.9	100%
Queen of Peace Catholic School	22	31.7	31.9	0.2	45%
Resurrection	25	27.1	31.1	3.9	68%
Sephardic Gan-Torat Emet	12	28.2	26.9	-1.2	42%
Shlenker	16	15.0	25.0	10	100%
St. Augustine	11	33.1	33.6	0.5	73%

St. Christopher Catholic School	27	36.1	36.0	-0.1	67%
St. Francis de Sales	15	31.3	34.5	3.2	80%
St. Francis of Assisi	6	35.6	35.3	-0.2	33%
St. Mary of the Purification Montessori School	3	38.4	43.2	4.8	100%
St. Peter the Apostle Catholic School	18	29.5	30.0	0.4	61%
St. Pius X High School	34	33.5	34.6	1.1	62%
St. Rose of Lima Catholic School	17	34.0	36.0	1.9	65%
St. Theresa Catholic School	3	36.2	41.6	5.3	67%
St. Thomas More	9	36.1	39.1	3.1	67%
Torah Day	9	34.6	35.8	1.2	78%
Program Total	373	30.5	32.6	2	65%

Catapult Learning
Houston Independent School District
Program Summary, by School
2013-2014
MATH: Odyssey

School	Number of Students	Average NCE Pretest	Average NCE Posttest	Average NCE Difference	% of Students Who Gained
Assumption Catholic School	24	54.3	58.8	4.4	67%
Beth Yeshurun	32	33.7	45.7	12	81%
Byrd's Foster Group Home	4	24.8	44.0	19.2	100%
Chinquapin Preparatory Academy	4	20.5	38.3	17.8	100%
Cristo Rey Jesuit Academy	16	61.3	72.1	10.9	81%
Holy Ghost	10	49.0	71.2	22.2	100%
Incarnate Word Academy	6	67.3	78.7	11.3	100%
John Paul II Catholic School	9	68.2	76.2	8	89%
Memorial Lutheran	4	51.0	61.3	10.2	100%
Our Lady of Guadalupe	25	36.1	55.2	19	88%

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic School	20	56.5	76.5	20	100%
Our Redeemer Lutheran	4	41.5	49.5	8	75%
Queen of Peace Catholic School	30	32.5	44.1	11.5	77%
Resurrection	28	43.7	56.8	13.1	75%
Sephardic Gan-Torat Emet	9	30.8	33.3	2.6	56%
Shlenker	8	34.1	34.6	0.5	50%
St. Augustine	9	48.2	58.0	9.8	89%
St. Christopher Catholic School	32	55.4	62.2	6.7	78%
St. Francis de Sales	25	45.6	55.1	9.5	76%
St. Francis of Assisi	8	63.3	66.3	3	50%
St. Mary of the Purification Montessori School	6	52.5	62.5	10	100%
St. Peter the Apostle Catholic School	22	48.1	56.5	8.4	77%
St. Pius X High School	36	57.5	71.9	14.4	81%
St. Rose of Lima Catholic School	22	56.9	56.4	-0.5	55%
St. Theresa Catholic School	12	52.5	61.0	8.5	67%
St. Thomas More	24	34.1	46.7	12.6	79%
Torah Day	14	27.9	46.9	18.9	86%
Torah Girls Academy	1	22.0	32.0	10	100%
Program Total	444	46.4	57.4	10.9	79%

**Catapult Learning
Houston Independent School District
Program Summary, by School
2013-2014
MATH: Standardized Math**

School	Number of Students	Average NCE Pretest	Average NCE Posttest	Average NCE Difference	% of Students Who Gained
Assumption Catholic School	26	27.9	28.7	0.8	50%
Beth Yeshurun	32	23.9	28.2	4.3	72%
Byrd's Foster Group Home	4	34.0	34.9	0.9	75%
Chinquapin Preparatory Academy	4	25.7	27.5	1.8	50%
Cristo Rey Jesuit Academy	14	62.1	62.3	0.2	50%
Harris School	1	36.5	39.0	2.5	100%
Holy Ghost	11	33.3	33.7	0.5	64%
Incarnate Word Academy	9	34.6	34.0	-0.5	44%
John Paul II Catholic School	9	40.2	36.5	-3.7	56%
Memorial Lutheran	4	36.8	36.2	-0.6	25%
Our Lady of Guadalupe	26	35.4	36.3	1	62%
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic School	19	33.3	33.1	-0.2	53%
Our Redeemer Lutheran	4	33.9	38.9	5	100%
Queen of Peace Catholic School	29	32.3	35.2	2.8	69%
Resurrection	29	30.0	31.3	1.3	62%
Sephardic Gan-Torat Emet	8	31.0	33.3	2.3	63%
Shlenker	8	24.5	26.6	2	63%
St. Augustine	8	30.8	36.6	5.8	88%
St. Christopher Catholic School	22	32.1	33.4	1.3	77%
St. Francis de Sales	25	30.7	35.9	5.2	84%
St. Francis of Assisi	8	33.6	37.0	3.4	88%
St. Mary of the Purification Montessori School	5	34.9	34.1	-0.8	60%
St. Peter the Apostle Catholic	21	28.3	28.1	-0.2	62%

School					
St. Pius X High School	36	32.5	33.8	1.3	58%
St. Rose of Lima Catholic School	22	33.3	34.0	0.8	64%
St. Theresa Catholic School	12	34.5	35.2	0.7	67%
St. Thomas More	24	34.4	34.2	-0.2	63%
Torah Day	10	28.4	36.4	8	80%
Torah Girls Academy	1	50.0	50.5	0.5	100%
Program Total	431	32.5	34.1	1.6	65%

Catapult Learning
Houston Independent School District
Program Summary, by Grade
2013-2014
READING: Odyssey

Grade	Number of Students	Average NCE Pretest	Average NCE Posttest	Average NCE Difference	% of Students Who Gained
PreK	2	12.0	30.0	18	100%
K	12	16.7	35.5	18.8	83%
1st	23	20.2	33.0	12.7	87%
2nd	48	19.8	33.3	13.5	92%
3rd	43	16.3	29.1	12.8	95%
4th	51	53.1	64.9	11.7	78%
5th	40	47.7	63.2	15.6	83%
6th	37	49.8	60.4	10.6	70%
7th	33	52.1	61.9	9.8	76%
8th	25	53.4	56.4	3	56%
9th	15	55.5	69.2	13.7	87%
10th	15	53.3	65.2	11.9	67%
11th	11	55.6	61.1	5.5	73%
12th	7	63.1	59.7	-3.4	43%
Program Total	362	40.2	51.7	11.6	80%

Catapult Learning
Houston Independent School District
Program Summary, by Grade
2013-2014
READING: Standardized Reading

Grade	Number of Students	Average NCE Pretest	Average NCE Posttest	Average NCE Difference	% of Students Who Gained
PreK	3	18.4	25.9	7.6	100%
K	12	21.3	23.1	1.7	67%
1st	23	25.2	25.2	0	57%
2nd	48	25.7	29.7	4.1	73%
3rd	42	29.6	32.0	2.5	67%
4th	49	33.0	33.9	0.9	59%
5th	37	32.5	34.3	1.9	62%
6th	39	34.9	36.4	1.5	67%
7th	40	30.6	33.8	3.2	63%
8th	28	31.5	33.3	1.9	71%
9th	20	34.2	35.5	1.3	75%
10th	15	34.8	36.6	1.8	67%
11th	10	29.6	29.9	0.4	40%
12th	7	35.2	36.4	1.2	71%
Program Total	373	30.5	32.6	2	65%

Catapult Learning
Houston Independent School District
Program Summary, by Grade
2013-2014
MATH: Oddysey

Grade	Number of Students	Average NCE Pretest	Average NCE Posttest	Average NCE Difference	% of Students Who Gained
PreK	3	28.7	42.3	13.7	67%
K	5	40.8	58.4	17.6	100%
1st	24	20.8	27.7	6.9	67%
2nd	53	28.6	39.1	10.5	83%
3rd	43	24.8	37.9	13.1	84%
4th	62	52.6	66.2	13.6	89%
5th	58	53.8	64.9	11.1	72%
6th	46	54.7	66.6	11.9	74%
7th	49	56.7	63.1	6.3	71%
8th	36	53.4	59.7	6.3	69%
9th	5	51.6	64.0	12.4	100%
10th	18	50.9	72.3	21.4	100%
11th	16	53.6	63.9	10.2	69%
12th	26	62.1	72.3	10.2	81%
Program Total	444	46.4	57.4	10.9	79%

**Catapult Learning
Houston Independent School District
Program Summary, by Grade
2013-2014
MATH: Standardized Math**

Grade	Number of Students	Average NCE Pretest	Average NCE Posttest	Average NCE Difference	% of Students Who Gained
PreK	3	15.4	17.9	2.5	67%
K	4	21.0	27.2	6.1	100%
1st	23	30.9	33.6	2.7	61%
2nd	51	29.4	32.0	2.5	73%
3rd	39	29.6	32.5	2.9	72%
4th	59	32.3	35.0	2.7	68%
5th	51	31.5	33.3	1.7	73%
6th	44	32.3	33.8	1.5	66%
7th	50	31.9	33.0	1.1	60%
8th	40	33.5	32.2	-1.3	50%
9th	8	33.5	35.3	1.8	63%
10th	20	35.5	35.3	-0.2	60%
11th	16	37.2	38.9	1.6	56%
12th	23	45.9	46.6	0.7	52%
Program Total	431	32.5	34.1	1.6	65%



Appendix B

Survey Results

Principal Survey

End of Program

2013-2014

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. The needs of my students (or teachers) are being addressed to my satisfaction in consultation with Catapult Learning.	7	41%	9	53%	1	6%	--	--
2. The teaching, training or other Catapult Learning services provided to my school are excellent.	5	29%	11	65%	1	6%	--	--
3. Any issues I have had with Catapult Learning services have been addressed quickly and to my satisfaction.	6	35%	10	59%	1	6%	--	--

How likely is it that you would recommend Catapult Learning to another principal or colleague?

Extremely Likely												Not Likely at All												Avg. Rating
10		9		8		7		6		5		4		3		2		1		0				
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%			
5	29	-	-	7	41	2	12	-	-	2	12	-	-	1	6	--	--	--	--	--	--	7.8		

What is the primary reason for the score you just gave us? Please respond below.

- Catapult started late this year and last year. I would like to see if we could get it started early this coming school year. I believe I would be able to see better results if this happened.
- Consistency, flexibility, and attention to detail
- Cost of services.
- I enjoy this service for our kids
- I would prefer to handle out funds ourselves.
- I'm mostly satisfied, though the limitations of our Title I program and funding method (from HISD) are, well, limiting.
- LaSonya Dunham has been very helpful in tailoring a program that works for our school.
- Peggy Portnoy runs an amazing Catapult program at Shlenker. LaSonya Dunham is very knowledgeable and easy to work with. Our students are making progress.

- Tech issues sometimes, not all tutoring should be tech based. Missing the 1/1 tutoring that would be more specific to the learner.
- The monitoring system in which the tutors are checked on by the company is important and that is why I valued the service.
- The program enhances our school's ability to support students and parents to have success in school. LaSonya Dunham is very helpful and a huge asset to have as the program leader.
- The recommended computer program through Odyssey was full of troublesome glitches which made it hard for tutors to use with confidence. Catapult selected this program but could not always resolve the problems with it.
- The representatives are extremely professional and respond in a timely manner when needed
- The staff were great! The computer software seemed more of a repeat questioning (like testing) tool and less of a true teaching and tutoring tool.
- Unless the school has access to computers and the internet, this service is practically useless.
- We had a lot of turnover in tutors. There was not enough consistency during the 15 weeks.
- We were always able to get the support we needed from Catapult.



Appendix C

Parental Involvement Materials

Catapult Learning FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Achieving Beyond Expectations

October 2013



AUTUMN

is all around!

Celebrate Autumn! Depending on where you live you may notice things happening outside in your neighborhoods in autumn.

Consider taking a family walk. Talk about the flowers, the trees, and decorations that may be displayed. Collect some leaves and try to identify the variety of leaf. Your child can use a sheet of white construction paper or plain white paper to make leaf rubbings using crayons. Place 2 or 3 of the leaves collected under the paper and then rub across the paper with crayons. This work of art would look wonderful on your refrigerator or even framed!

SCHOOL TIME



Yes, your children are back in school! Each year brings new challenges, changes, and successes! Help your children maintain their positive start this year. Invite your children to participate in working with you to accomplish the bullets below:

- Require a regular bedtime each night
- Arrange a homework/study area in your home which is free of distractions
- Review and check completed homework assignments
- Plan for regular, balanced, nutritious meals—especially breakfast and lunch
- Keep lines of communication open with school

TECHNOLOGY AND YOU



Technology surrounds us—phones, computers, tablets! These devices can be used to support reading and math development through the following recommended websites.

www.ed.gov—This is the United States Department of Education website. There are links to information for parents. There is an official blog of the US Dept. of Education called “HOMEROOM” (accessed from this website). Go to the tab marked RESEARCH *then* PUBLICATIONS & REPORTS *then* EDUCATION RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER. Click here and you will see available parent resources.

www.reading.org/informationFor/Parents.aspx
This is a site for the International Reading Association. You can find these brochures at this website:

- Getting Your Child to Read
- Supporting Your Beginning Reader
- Writing Activities for Your Reader
- What Kids Really Want to Read

You will also be able to access a variety of book lists across the grades.

www.nctm.org/resources/families.aspx
This is the website for the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. It will link you to ideas for math!



Catapult Learning FAMILY NEWSLETTER



YUMMY LUNCHES

How many different combinations can you create for lunches? Choose one item from each column to create each lunch.

A	B	C	D
bread	peanut butter	jelly	mustard
crackers	cheese	tuna salad	butter
bagel	egg salad	lunchmeat	mayonnaise
soft roll	lettuce	tomato	pickles

RECOMMENDED READINGS



The Children's Choices Project is a project supported by the International Reading Association and the Children's Book Council. Each year children are asked to read newly published books and vote for the books they like best. The selected books for this year are published in the *Children's Choices 2013 Reading List*. You can find the complete list on the web or at www.reading.org/informationFor/Parents.aspx.

GRADES K-2

Amelia Bedelia's First Vote

by Herman Parish

Bailey at the Museum

by Harry Bliss

The Fly Flew In

by David Catrow

Otto The Book Bear

by Katie Cleminson

GRADES 3-4

*5,000 Awesome Facts
(About Everything)*

by National Geographic Kids

Dolphins in the Navy

by Meish Goldish

Giants Beware! By Jorge Aguirre

My Pop-Up World Atlas

by Anita Ganeri

GRADES 5-6

Cardboard by Doug Tennapel

Haunted Caves by Natalie Lunis

Liar and Spy by Rebecca Stead

Shadow by Michael Morpurgo

MAKING WORDS



See how quickly you can find 12 words made from the letters in the words, **harvest feast**.

Have someone time you, or find a friend and see who can find the words first.

- | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 5. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 6. _____ | 10. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 7. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 8. _____ | 12. _____ |



NUMBER FACTS

Be a wiz at math! Practice your number facts for addition, subtraction, multiplication and/or division for at least ten minutes every night! Use flash cards that can be purchased in local stores or make your own flash cards with 3 X 5 index cards. Ask your parents to work with you.



Catapult Learning FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Achieving Beyond Expectations

November 2013

PARENT CONFERENCES

Maybe you are getting ready for a formal parent-teacher conference. This is a great opportunity to better understand what your children are doing in school and how you can support their academic progress. At many conferences, teachers will share ideas that you can do at home to keep your child moving in a positive direction. Be sure to share important information about your child's life at home. For example, the arrival of a new baby could mean sleepless nights for the whole family. Have you set up your parent-teacher conference yet?

Top 5 Questions to Ask Your Child's Teacher

1. What is my son/daughter expected to learn this year?
2. What are the types of tests given to find out what he/she has learned?
3. How are my child's test-taking skills?
4. How does my son/daughter participate in class?
5. What can I do at home to support your work in school?

FOCUS ON THANKSGIVING

Some people cite the first American holiday of Thanksgiving in the autumn of 1621. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the *last* Thursday in November as Thanksgiving. In 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed the *fourth* Thursday in November as Thanksgiving. That is the day we celebrate each year. What do you know about the history of Thanksgiving? Where can you go to do more research about this holiday?

GREAT READS WITH A THANKSGIVING THEME

PreK – 2

1,2,3 Thanksgiving by Nikola-Lisa
A Turkey for Thanksgiving by Bunting
Gracias, the Thanksgiving Turkey by Cowley
The Squirrel's Thanksgiving by Kroll

Grades 2-4

Fat Chance Thanksgiving by Lakin
How Many Days to America,
A Thanksgiving Story by Bunting
Molly's Pilgrim by Cohen

AT HOME WITH HOMEWORK

Homework reinforces concepts and skills taught to your child during the school day. It is important to understand both your child's school policy for homework and also the homework expectations of the classroom teacher. Will your child bring home a pre-printed list of assignments or will your child copy the homework from the board? Be sure to check through your child's backpack with your child right there next to you. Ask your child what needs to be completed. Allow your child to complete the assignments on their own but be there to check over the work and, if required, sign the assignment.

THANKSGIVING WORD FIND

Find 16 words in "Thanksgiving." Work with a family member or have a race with a friend.

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

THANKSGIVING RECIPE

Baking and cooking with your child reinforces both reading and math. Cranberry sauce and pumpkin recipes can be fun to make at home.

- 🍷 Read the recipe's directions with your child.
- 🍷 Have your child gather the equipment and ingredients needed
- 🍷 Work with your child step by step to create the food.
- 🍷 **Enjoy!**



TECHNOLOGY AND YOU

Search the web for ideas and activities to do with your children.

MATH

www.fifurethis.org This site offers math challenges for families

www.mathplayground.com where you and your child can play logic games and solve word problems

READING

www.rif.org This is a nonprofit children's literacy organization. At this site your child can read about favorite authors and view interviews about authors such as Jack Prelutsky, Eric Carle, Beverly Cleary and Mem Fox.

READING & MATH:

<http://www2.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html>

At this site you can find books for parents to help your child with reading, math, and homework.

These titles can be downloaded from the website:

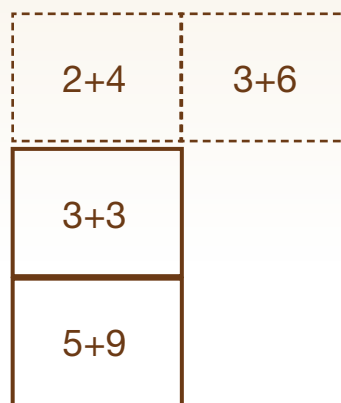
HELPING YOUR CHILD BECOME A READER
HELPING YOUR CHILD SUCCEED IN SCHOOL
HELPING YOUR CHILD LEARN MATH

www.softschools.com A website where you can download free math worksheets, math games, grammar quizzes and phonics worksheets and games

MATH

Dominoes – using a pack of 3X5 index cards you can create a variety of domino games.

- Basic Facts- divide each index card in half and write math facts on each half. Players need to match a fact that will yield the same sum.
- Equivalent Fractions – same format but have your child match equivalent Fractions such as $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{2}{4}$ or $\frac{5}{10}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$
- Multiplication – substitute multiplication facts on the paper dominoes



READING

Set aside 10 to 15 minutes several times a week to read to your child or to have your child read to you. Some titles from The Reading Nook website are:

GRADES 1-3

- *7 X 9 = Trouble* by C. Mills
- *Apples to Oregon* by Hopkinson & Carpenter
- *Arthur's Mystery Envelope* by M. Brown
- *Amelia Bedelia* by P. Parish

Grades 4-6

- *Everything On A Waffle* by Horvath
- *Paddle-to-the-Sea* by Holling
- *Granny Torelli Makes Soup* by Cotler



Catapult Learning FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Achieving Beyond Expectations

December 2013

December 21: Winter is Here!

Our Catapult Learning students live all across the country. Students in Florida wear jackets; students in Rhode Island bundle up in parkas. In Chicago and Milwaukee, skating is a popular pastime, and in New Orleans families may take a walk along the bayou. No matter what you may be doing in December, what do you think happens with animals?

FOCUS ON: Hibernation

When animals sleep through the winter, scientists call it hibernation.



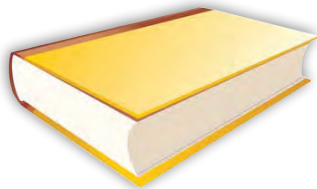
To hibernate, animals eat a lot of food during the fall and summer, increasing their body fat so they won't feel hungry while they

sleep. They also prepare their nests, dens and burrows to be safe from the weather and other dangers.

Warm-blooded animals that hibernate include bats, chipmunks, woodchucks, bears and raccoons. Frogs, toads, snakes, and earthworms are some of the cold-blooded animals that hibernate.

Take a trip to your school or neighborhood library to learn more about hibernation.

Great Reads With A Winter Theme

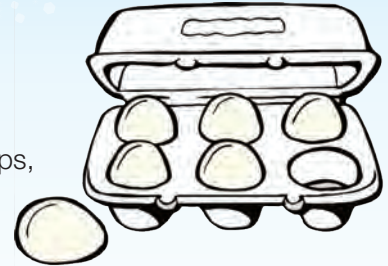


When Winter Comes by Nancy VanLaan
It's Winter, Celebrate the Season by Linda Glaser
Hello, Snow by Hope Vestergaard
The Story of Snow: The Science of Winter's Wonder by Mark Cassino
Animals in Winter by Henrietta Bancroft
Downhill Fun: A Counting Book about Winter by Michael Dahl

Enjoy Homemade Games!

Egg Carton Memory

Egg cartons are useful long after the last egg has been scrambled. Fill each cup with small items such as paper clips, shells, buttons and coins.



Version 1 - Player takes a look at carton for 30 seconds and writes what he/she saw inside. For the second look, decrease the time to 15 seconds. Continue until all the objects have been "remembered."

Version 2 - Player takes a look at carton for 30 seconds. Remove one item carton without showing what the item is. Player looks again and needs to say what has been removed.

Version 3 - Form teams of two to test memory skills. Each team collects items to fill the egg carton and the team that wins the best of three rounds is the winner.

Clean-up Scavenger Hunt (Parent Designed)

1) Select an item to be the "treasure." This can be a cardboard circle wrapped in foil to look like a coin, or a small special treat. Hide the treasure.
2) Give your child a treasure map. The map is a list of items you want to see cleaned up: an orange sweater (left on the sofa), a toy truck (pushed under the bed) a backpack (left on the hall floor). As these items are collected, players are looking for the treasure. The treasure cannot be claimed until all the items on the treasure map (the list) are collected.



December Word Find

How many words can you make from the phrase: **season of winter**? Work with a family member or have a race with a friend. You can have your parent time you as you search for words. Can you find at least 12 words?

How long did it take you? _____ minutes

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Study Skills # 1: Make Your Own Mnemonic

A mnemonic can help you remember important information—especially for tests in school.

- 1) It can be a phrase or sentence with a catchy rhyming pattern.

"I before E except after C; or when sound A as in neighbor and weigh."

"Red sky at night, sailor's delight; red sky at morning, sailor, takes warning."

- 2) It can be a phrase or sentence with the first letter in each word standing for part of a list.

Remember the planet's distance from the sun: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto
My very easy method: just set up nine planets.
Or to remember the rainbow order of colors:

Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet

Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain.

OR

Roy G. Biv

- 3) Mnemonics can be a single word.

The Great Lakes of the United States are: Michigan, Huron, Erie, Superior, Ontario. Take the first letter of each name, (M,H,E,S,O) scramble them to make the word: HOMES

What mnemonic will you create for the next school test?

No-Bake Dipped Pretzels

When cooking we learn to follow directions, measure ingredients and finish a delicious project.

Ingredients:

- Package of Pretzel rods
- Creamy peanut butter
- Favorite candy or cookie chopped into pieces

1. Count the number of pretzel rods needed. (3-5 per person)
2. Measure 1 teaspoon of peanut butter. Holding the pretzel at one end, swirl the opposite end in the peanut butter covering the half the pretzel.
3. Take candy (lifesavers, m&ms, wafer cookies work well) and **smoosh** them into the peanut butter. Be sure to cover all of the peanut butter with the candy.
4. Arrange the pretzel rods on a plate. If you can, take a quick picture before you enjoy this treat.
5. Remember to wash the spoon, put unused ingredients away and clean up the counters!



Catapult Learning FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Improving Student Performance for 38 Years

January 2014

THE CALENDAR

30 days hath September

April, June and November

All the rest have thirty-one

Except for February which has twenty-eight

Except in a leap year when it has twenty-nine.



Did you learn a version of this poem in school?
As we start a new year, think about the months that
are in a year. Write the names of the months on the
lines below:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 10. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 12. _____ |

Great Start for School Days!

For a great start of the school day,
plan a few steps the night before.
Keep school calendars handy.

- 1) The night before each school day, consider:
Is today gym day? → Pack up your sneakers.
Library day? → Find the books that need
to be returned.
Planning on a field trip? → Get the permission
slip signed.
- 2) Plan what clothes to wear to school the night
before. If school clothes are ready, there are fewer
decisions to be made in the morning. It also gives
time to find a favorite pair of socks!
- 3) Establish a regular bed time and stick to it!
Without enough sleep, it's hard to concentrate
on *starting* the day, and stay focused on school work.
- 4) Help your child learn to wake themselves up.
Show your child how to set an alarm so the morning
routine is not rushed.
- 5) Eat breakfast together! Everyone knows that a
simple, healthy breakfast is a great step to a great
day...for parents and children alike. The ten minutes
spent together gets everyone ready for a great day!

FOCUS ON: January

- January has the coldest temperatures in the
Northern Hemisphere.
- In the Southern Hemisphere, January has
weather like July in the Northern Hemisphere.
- January is known as the “wolf month”
because in northern climates, hungry wolves
would come into their towns searching
for food.
- January has had different names
throughout history:
Roman: Januarius
Saxon: Giuli
Germanic: Schnee-mond (snow month)

What new name would you give this first month
of the year?

Winter Themed Books

Winter

by Nuria Roca
(pre K-2)

The Story of Snow:

The Science of Winter's Wonder

by Mark Cassino (pre K-2)

Animals in Winter

by Henrietta Bancroft &
Helen Davie (K-3)

Lemonade in Winter

by Emily Jenkins (K-3)

The Mitten

by Jan Brett (K-4)

Owl Moon

by June Yolen (3-7 years)

Brian's Winter

by Gary Paulsen (4-8 years)

The Boys of Winter: The Untold Story of a Coach, A Dream & the 1980 US Olympic Hockey Team

by Wayne Coffey (5-8 years)





Make Your Own Marching Band

Recycle packaging to make your own musical instruments. Crayons, sequins and glitter can make the instruments look as beautiful as they sound.

DRUM Take an empty oatmeal box (and cover). Use a pen to poke a hole in the center of the cover and at the center of the bottom of the box. Thread a long piece of yarn through these holes. Put the lid back on the oatmeal box. The yarn should be long enough to hang the box around your neck. You will then be ready to tap a beat with unsharpened pencils as your drumsticks.

HORN Take an empty paper towel roll. Cover one end with waxed paper, and secure in place with a rubber band. Carefully punch a row of holes along one side of the roll using the tip of a pen. Cover the holes with your fingers as you sing into the uncovered end of the roll.

SHAKERS Take empty plastic egg containers and fill them with dry rice. Make music by shaking the eggs.

One, two, three...you are marching forward!



Be a Comparison Shopper!

You can practice reading, math and help with the family grocery shopping at the same time. Go shopping with your parents and challenge yourself to look closely at price information to decide which items to buy.

For example:

Chicken noodle soup is on the list. Should you buy 3 cans for \$4.00 or 2 cans for \$1.50 each? Which is the better buy?

Potato chips are buy-one-get-one-free. Why is this a smart purchase?

Family Game Night

Many families enjoy time together by playing games on "Family Game Night." Some suggested games that can be found at your local stores (Target, K-Mart, Walmart) are:

SCRABBLE and SCRABBLE JR
BOGGLE
STORY CUBES by Rory
CANDYLAND
RUMMY-O
MONOPOLY



Answer to Be a Comparison Shopper:
Buy 3 cans for \$4.00 and you will save fifty cents.

January Word Find

How many words can you make from **Winter Wonderland**? Work with a family member or have a race with a friend. Some clues are: something you use in fishing; something you use in a boat; part of a car; the opposite of lose. Find at least 12 words?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

STUDY SKILLS # 2: Planning Homework Time

What creates a positive, stress-free experience for your family?

HOW? What information about homework do you have to plan homework time? Does the teacher send home a weekly assignment sheet? Perhaps information is posted on-line? Are there long-term assignments that need to be worked on a little at a time? Add the due date to your family calendar. Remember to add a little time in for reviewing previous work. Be sure that your homework is signed if required. When finished with the assignment(s), be sure to put them in your backpack so that it will be ready when you get to school.

WHEN? Sometimes it's great to have a snack and play outside to be energized for homework. Sometimes it's great to get started right after coming home from school. Sometimes it makes more sense to save homework for after dinner. Whatever the choice, be consistent throughout the week to develop good time management skills.

WHERE? Have a designated place to do homework. The kitchen table can work quite nicely and means an adult is available for extra help with tough challenges (like regrouping with triple digits). A desk in a quiet place can be perfect for children needing minimal distractions.

With a routine homework plan, getting the tasks done can be stress-free for everyone!

Catapult Learning FAMILY NEWSLETTER

February 2014



10 Ways to Create a Family of Learners

1. Fill your home with words! Magazines, newspapers, even placemats with words on them surround everyone with language.
2. Have a Reading Hour when every family member reads his own book. Take some time to talk about what everyone is reading.
3. In a family with a few children (or visitors) have each child take turns reading to one another.
4. Support everyone's interests. For example, if someone loves to play basketball, challenge him to find five facts about their favorite team by using an internet source, library book or newspaper.
5. Enthusiastically share when you are learning new information. Talk about how you will plant the vegetable garden, learn a new dance or change a tire.
6. Encourage everyone to express their opinions and make choices. It can be about simple topics such as whether to have green beans or broccoli with dinner or whether to wear the red or the blue hat.
7. Don't focus on grades or test scores. Allow your children to talk about what they are learning in school.
8. Have your children teach you what they have learned. (A sneaky way to get in some study time!)
9. Provide materials for creative expression. Have children tell stories about worlds they create... either by drawing on paper or building with blocks.
10. Celebrate with words! Give compliments for accomplishments... both the academic and non-academic ones.



FOCUS ON: American Presidents

February 17th is Presidents' Day when we remember two of our greatest Presidents: George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. In Mt. Rushmore, South Dakota, both men's faces have been carved into a mountain.

George Washington

- He was our first President and known as the Father of Our Country.
- His picture is on our dollar bill and his birthday was February 22.
- He grew up in Virginia, worked as a surveyor and farmer and led the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.

Abraham Lincoln

- He was the 16th President and his nickname was Honest Abe.
- His picture is on the five dollar bill and the dime and his birthday was February 12.
- He was a great leader during the Civil War and kept the country together while freeing the slaves.

Books About Two Presidents

- *George Washington's Teeth* by Deborah Chandra & Madeleine Comora (5-8 year olds)
- *Abe Lincoln's Hat* by Martha Brenner & Donald Cook (5-8 year olds)
- *Who Was George Washington?* by Roberta Edwards (8-11 year olds)
- *Who Was Abraham Lincoln?* by Janet Pascal (8-11 year olds)
- *George Washington An American Life* by Laurie Caulkoven (10 and up)
- *Abraham Lincoln from Pioneer to President* by Ellen Blue Phillips (10 and up)

Who are the other two presidents carved on Mt. Rushmore? Where can you find this information? What are two important reasons why these presidents are remembered?

Catapult Learning FAMILY NEWSLETTER

STUDY SKILLS # 3: How to Take a Test

You've come to school, completed all of your assignments. You and your friends have worked to review and practice what you've been taught. Today is the day of the test! This is the time when you get to show what you know! Make it a stress-free experience by following these simple guidelines.

- The day before the test, get a good night's sleep.
- The morning of the test, have a healthy breakfast.
- When you first get the test, take a few minutes to breathe deeply. Tell yourself "I may not know all the answers, but I will know a lot of them."
- Read and listen carefully to the directions. Ask questions if you need help.
- When you get stuck on a challenging question, move on to the next question. When you complete the questions you know, go back and tackle that difficult question.
- Before you turn in the test, take a few minutes for a final check of your answers.



Everyday Math in February

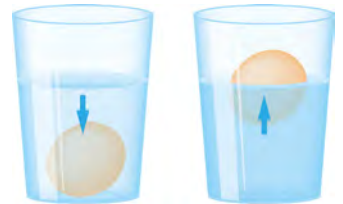
February is a month with a variety of daily temperatures depending on where you live. Track the temperature each day for the month of February.

What is the highest temperature for the day? What is the lowest temperature for the day. Record your numbers on the printed calendar and at the end of the month, create a bar graph of the temperatures. What does your bar graph tell you about the temperatures in February where you live?

Family Science Experiment

Scientists learn information by conducting experiments. Work with your children as they become scientists and conduct this experiment. What do you think happens when an uncooked egg is placed in a glass of water? What happens when you add some salt?

- Pour water into a tall glass until it is about half full.
- Add 6 tablespoons of salt to the glass of water.
- Carefully pour more plain water in the glass until it is nearly full. Don't stir the salt in the glass.
- Place the egg on a spoon and gently lower the egg into the water. What happens?



The explanation: If you were careful when you added the tap water to the salt water and you were careful when you lowered the egg into the water, the egg is able to float in the middle of the glass. Why? Salt water is DENSE and can hold the egg up. If you've ever gone swimming in the ocean, you may have noticed it was easy to float. That was because of the salt in the water!



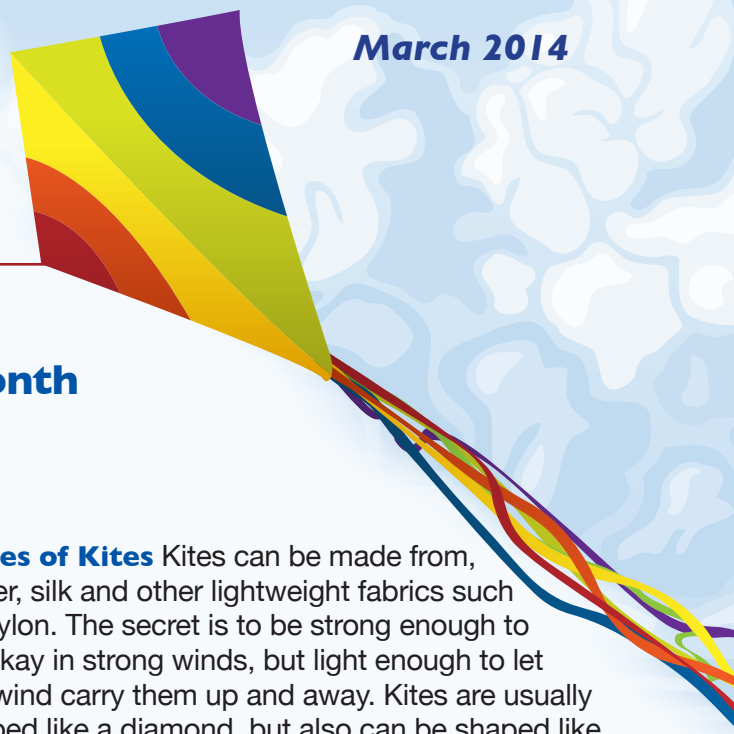
F E B R U A R Y

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

Catapult Learning

FAMILY NEWSLETTER

March 2014



FOCUS ON: March is National Kite Month

People have been flying kites for hundreds of years. One legend tells about a Chinese farmer who tied a string to his hat to keep it from flying away. He had such a great time “playing against the wind” that he added more string to see how far the hat could go... before he put his hat back on his head.

Kite Contests How far can your kite fly? Can you make a kite flip around in mid-air? Who has the most colorful kite? How long can you keep your kite in the air?

Kite Power Kites have been used to move sleds, deliver bait to fisherman far out at sea, and to pass secret messages. How would you use a kite?

Kite Science Benjamin Franklin discovered electricity when flying a kite in Philadelphia in 1752. The Wright brothers observed the way kites fly when planning the design of the first airplane. Before there were satellites, the US Weather service used kites to put their thermometers and barometers into the air. Do you know other science facts about kites?

Types of Kites Kites can be made from, paper, silk and other lightweight fabrics such as nylon. The secret is to be strong enough to be okay in strong winds, but light enough to let the wind carry them up and away. Kites are usually shaped like a diamond, but also can be shaped like an empty can.

Crafty Kites You can buy kites, but it is more fun to make them on your own. These websites have easy to follow directions to make your own kites from materials you probably have around the house.

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/activities/crafts/kite-craft/>

<http://www.instructables.com/id/Easy-Paper-Kite-for-Kids/>

http://www.pbs.org/benfranklin/exp_kite.html

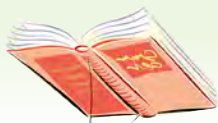
STUDY SKILLS # 4 Planning the Project

This is the time of year students are often given projects to work on at home. Whether it's a science fair experiment, a social studies research paper or a book report, creating a good plan can keep this a stress free, fun and educational activity.

- **Recall**— Is this like other projects you've done before? Maybe you started early, forgot about it, and had to rush to finish? Maybe you didn't find the exact information you needed and spent a lot of time trying to make up for that. No matter what, apply the lessons from your other experiences to this one.
- **Time**— When the assignment is given, read it carefully to understand the expectations and the due dates. Break the project into smaller parts. Estimate how much time each part will take and write in your calendar when you will finish each part. When you finish a part, you can check it off the calendar!

- **Materials**— Will you need special materials such as a tri-fold board for a science project, a folder for your final copy, crayons to decorate the folder? Where can you find the materials? Do you already have these items? Will you need to buy anything?
- **Other Resources**— Will you need to ask for help from an adult other than your family? You may want to schedule an appointment with an expert. Are there classmates you can work with or is this an individual assignment?
- **Research**— Do you need to plan a trip to the library? When will you fit that into your weekly schedule? Will you need internet access? If you are sharing a computer, plan when you will be able to do the research you need.

Projects outside of school allow students to show off all the great skills learned during the regular school day. It's a chance to be creative and learn new information all at once. Have fun!



Catapult Learning FAMILY NEWSLETTER

FLY A KITE INTO A BOOK

Curious George Flies a Kite

by H.A. Rey & Margaret Rey (ages 4-7)

The Kite Festival by Leila Torres (ages 5-8)

Franklin's Kite by Joe Costello and
Joanne Castor (ages 5-8)

The Kite Fighters by Linda Sue Park (ages 9-12)

Windblown by Stephen Messer (ages 9-12)

Making Kites Step by Step by David Michael
(ages 8 and older)

*Easy-to-Make Decorative Kites: Step-by-Step Instructions
for Nine Models from Around the World Paperback*
by Allen Bridgewater (ages 8 and older)

INDOOR GAMES

March can be a month when a rainy day (or another snowstorm!) can keep everyone indoors. Playing a few games is a fun way to wait for better weather. These activities also help with eye-hand coordination and following direction; both skills are important in successful school work.

Paper Toss Target: Crumple a piece of paper and take turns tossing it into a basket. Make the game harder by moving further away from the basket. You can also see how many tosses each player can make without missing the basket. Keep score by awarding a raisin for each successful toss. Another reward could be pennies from the penny jar.

Challenge Course: First one through wins! Your course will need a starting place and a finishing place. One person will need to be the judge and score keeper. For larger groups, it might be best to time how long it takes to get through the course so turns are taken one at a time. Your course could include these challenges.

1. *Bounce-it*—Push furniture against the wall.
Each player hops on one foot 20 times.
Make a mistake? Don't worry, just start again.
2. *Freeze-it*—Stand on one foot for 30 seconds.
3. *Island Dash*—run around the island or an area of the kitchen before completing the next task.
4. *Jump the Snake*—A rope, laid on the floor, is slithered by a judge. Without touching the rope, jump 4 times over it.
5. Get to the finish line for your final score.

BE A TIME TELLER

Draw a line between the digital times to the times written in words.

5:15	four fifty
1:30	eight forty-five
2:00	twelve ten
8:45	six o'clock
4:50	one thirty
12:10	seven forty-five
6:00	five fifteen
7:45	two o'clock

Can you show the time on a clock face?
Remember that the small hand shows the minute; the larger hand shows the hour.
Draw the clock hands on the clocks to show the listed time. Ask an adult in your family to check your clocks.

5:15



12:30



5:45



12:00





Catapult Learning

FAMILY NEWSLETTER

April 2014



April is National Poetry Month

In 1996, April was named National Poetry Month—a time to celebrate, explore and enjoy all types of poetry. Find out what poetry events are being held in your local libraries and community centers and participate in them. This is a great time to share the poems you know and to learn some new ones.

- Copy one of your favorite poems and pass it along to your friend.
- Memorize a poem and recite for your family.
- Make up a song that goes with the words of your favorite poem.
- Explore the website www.poets.org
- Visit www.creativebrainsonline.com for magnetic poetry kits.

Poet Match Draw a line connecting the poets with the states they lived in. What famous poets are from your state?

New Jersey	Emily Dickinson
Missouri	Carl Sandburg
Massachusetts	Maya Angelou
Illinois	Walt Whitman

ANSWERS: New Jersey, Emily Dickinson; Missouri, Carl Sandburg; Massachusetts, Maya Angelou; Illinois, Walt Whitman.

FOCUS ON: Everyone Writes Poetry

Poems tell stories. Poems create pictures. Poems can be short; poems can be very long. Some poems rhyme and some do not. Some poems are made into songs; others are read from books. Some poems use punctuation; some poems do not use capital letters.

The one certain thing about poetry is that people have always loved it!

Acrostic poems are created by writing the word vertically, then starting each line with that letter:

Always coming just in time with
Pretty flowers blooming purple, pink and
Red.
It's easy to forget winter's chill when
Listening to the birds saying hello again.

Haiku is another type of poetry. First created by ancient Japanese poets, haikus are about nature. These poems use exactly 17 syllables. The first line has 5 syllables. The second line has 7. The third line has 5 syllables. Here is an example written by a poet named Basho.

*Spring morning marvel
lovely nameless little hill
on a sea of mist*

What kind of poem will you write? Create your own poem and share it with your classroom teacher and your Catapult Learning teacher.

State Abbreviation Match

Draw a line connecting the state with its abbreviation. How can you check to see if your answers are correct?

State Abbreviations

IL	FL
NJ	PA
MO	WI
CA	KY
TX	

What is the abbreviation for your state? _____



Catapult Learning FAMILY NEWSLETTER

STUDY SKILLS #5 Create Creativity

Creative thinking helps to identify problems and create solutions. Good students become even better students with increased creativity. There are several ways to practice creativity with your children.

Play “20 Questions”

Choose a person to begin the game. This person thinks of an object that can be classified as an animal, vegetable or mineral. The other players try to guess what the object is by asking questions. Some samples might be:

Is it an animal? Is it a vegetable? Is it a mineral?

Is it bigger than a car?

Is it something we eat?

All questions may only be answered by yes or no. Players guess what the object is whenever they think they know. If a player is correct, it is his/her turn to think of an object and the other players guess. If a player guesses incorrectly, then more questions may be asked.

BUT...only 20 questions can be asked in all for each object.

Creating good questions and listening to all the information increases the likelihood of winning the game and helps practice creative thinking.



Here are two web resources to develop creative thinking skills:

- Invent new animals using the website **www.switcheroozoo.com**
Where might these inventions live?
Do they have names?
What kinds of food do they eat?
- Create your own doodle! You can use markers and crayons to create colorful, detailed doodles. Talk about your doodles – are they animals, vegetables or minerals? Check **Amazon.com** for **Doodle Maker**, an Android app.



MATH TIME

PRACTICE: It is important to keep practicing your math skills each day. Use flash cards to drill your basic addition, subtraction, multiplication and division facts. Five minutes each night works wonders!

THINKING: Try to write word problems involving these operations or ask an adult or older brother or sister to make up word problems for you. Think about how to solve the problem and then work it out. Have your work checked.

EXPLORE: Check your local library for the book *The Grapes of Math* by Greg Tang. This book is great for children who are just developing problem solving skills presented in mind-stretching math riddles. The focus is the operation of addition.



POETRY BOOKS

Find these poetry books in your school or neighborhood library.

All the Small Poems and Fourteen More
by Valerie Worth (ages 4-8)

Something Big Has Been Here by Jack Prelutsky (ages 5-12)

Falling Up by Shel Silverstein (ages 6-9)

Poems to Learn by Heart by Caroline Kennedy (ages 5 and up)

Once I Laughed My Socks Off—Poems for Kids
by Steve Attewell (ages 5 and up)

The Dream Keeper by Langston Hughes (ages 8 and up)

Poetry for Young People: Edward Lear
by Edward Mendelson (ages 8 and up)

You Come Too Favorite Poems for Readers of All Ages
by Robert Frost (ages 10-14)



Catapult Learning

FAMILY NEWSLETTER

May/June 2014

PICK A PRIZE WINNER

Everyone knows that a good book can be fun to read, and a great book can open up the world. With so many books at school, in the stores, on-line, and your local library, how can you choose the right one for you?

Look for the prize winners! Since 1922, the Association for Library Service to Children has given **The Newbery Medal** to the author of the most distinguished children's book of the year. You can find the complete list of all the books at www.ala.org, but here are few favorites from past prize winners:

1934: *Invincible Louisa* by Cornelia Meigs

1950: *The Door in the Wall* by Marguerite de Angeli (Doubleday)

1968: *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* by E.L. Konigsburg

1975: *M. C. Higgins, the Great* by Virginia Hamilton

1995: *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech

2000: *Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis

2010: *When You Reach Me* by Rebecca Stead

8 TIPS FOR INTERNET SAFETY

On the Internet we can research information, communicate with friends, and play interactive games with people around the world. Parents can support safe navigation online by using these 8 tips:

- **Be sure** that the features and content on a website are acceptable for your children. If you cannot explore sites before they visit them, explore the sites together to decide if they are acceptable.
- **Establish** bookmarks for sites you've agreed are appropriate. Agree that the sites will be found by clicking on the bookmark rather than random searching.
- **Decide** together how much time children will be online and what they will do when they are logged on.
- **Know** what's happening when your child is on the computer by keeping the computer in a family space. Have an adult in the room when children are on-line.

STUDY SKILLS #6 Test Taking Tips

As you get ready to take year-end tests, be wise and use these test taking strategies.

Multiple Choice

Use the 50/50 strategy. With 4 choices, eliminate 2, then choose between the two remaining possibilities for your final answer.

True/False

If any part of the statement is FALSE, the answer is always FALSE.

If any part of the statement is TRUE, the answer could be TRUE or FALSE.

Think carefully about whether the statement is true all of the time. If not, the answer is false.

Short Answer

Read the question carefully.

What are you being asked to do?

Compare? Describe? List? Explain?

Re-read your answer to be certain you've completely answered the question.



- **Contact** your Internet service provider to learn about filtering programs that will limit exposure to inappropriate material.
- **In cyberspace**, people are not always who they say they are. Children should know not to give information of any kind to people they don't know.
- **Help guide** your children on how to report unacceptable cyber behavior. The first person they tell should be you.
- **Be nice.** The Internet can be viewed as a kind of playground. Just as mean or unkind words are not allowed on the playground, they should not be allowed on the Internet.

Establishing Internet safety guidelines can be a positive conversation with your children that gives them another way to navigate the world. Have fun!





Catapult Learning FAMILY NEWSLETTER

STAYING SHARP IN THE SUMMER

- As you read new books, add words to your Catapult word ring. Using your word ring, arrange your words in ABC order, separate your words by the number of syllables or vowel sounds. Can you find words with the same blend or digraph? What other words would have the same sounds?
- Plan for a "Family Game Night" each week. Look around your house for games to play. Some ideas could include *Chutes and Ladders*, *Candy Land*, *Monopoly*, "24", and many card games.
- Math Facts Flash!—ask an adult to help you practice your math facts every other day for at least 15 minutes each time. This practice could include addition, subtraction, multiplication and division facts. Use a calendar and record the days when you practiced.

MORE THAN BOOKS

This summer, check out the activities at your local library.

From New York City to New Orleans; from Ohio to Texas, many public libraries are participating in the summer reading program FIZZ, BOOM, READ. Focused on science topics such as space exploration, weather phenomena, and nature studies, this is a summer reading program to remember.

Activities could include:

- Contests for the number of books you read
- Science experiments
- Author talks
- Story hours
- Craft projects
- Art exhibits



What is happening at your local library in 2014?

Check out the *Barnes & Noble* Summer Reading Program for a chance to choose a free book after you have read 8 books and recorded information about the books on a special sheet. Use the website at www.bn.com/summerreading. Ask your teacher about this program or ask your parents to check out the BN website.

Check out www.scholastic.com for many parent and child reading and general activity ideas to support summer growth.

FOCUS ON: Fun in Summer

You will smile, giggle, and chuckle sharing these riddles!

Q: Why didn't the quarter roll down the hill with the nickel? *Because it had more cents*



Q: Why was the math book sad?

Because it had too many problems.

Q: What kind of meals do math teachers eat?

Square meals!

Q: Why didn't the two 4's want any dinner?

Because they already 8!

Q: What is a math teacher's favorite sum?

Summer!

Q: What do you get when you divide the circumference of a pumpkin by its diameter?

Pumpkin Pi!

Q: Knock, knock—Who's There?—

lettuce—lettuce who? *Lettuce in and you'll find out!*












Q: Knock, knock—Who's There?—Tank—Tank Who?

You're welcome!

Shape Scavenger Hunt

Take a walk through your neighborhood and see what you find that matches these shapes. If the weather is not good outside, have the hunt in your home!

	: square	I found: _____
	: rectangle	I found: _____
	: triangle	I found: _____
	: hexagon	I found: _____
	: octagon	I found: _____
	: quadrilateral	I found: _____
	: rhombus	I found: _____
	: circle	I found: _____
	: pentagon	I found: _____

Summer Activity Scramble

Use the hint on each line.

Which activity is your favorite? _____

nrkbiegi = _____ d _____

mnsiwgm = _____ i _____

knwgil = _ a _____

ngtsia = _ k _____

maleasl = _____ g _____

ANSWERS:
bike riding, swimming, walking, skating, ball games