



CEDARVILLE CONNECTION

November 4, 2015

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Our mission at Cedarville Elementary School is:
To build a solid academic foundation and develop fundamental skills that will lead our students into a lifetime of success.

From the Desk of the Principal...

In the September 9th issue of the *Cedarville Connection* I gave families information on different ways to demonstrate understanding. We call it Depth of Knowledge, or DOK. DOK is a way to think about content complexity, not content difficulty. In the information, I explained that complexity is different from difficulty. They are different mental operations. If you are not familiar with a word, terminology, or information, it might be difficult to understand what is being read (think back to taking biology in school), but it is not complex. The following are explanations and examples for you as parents.

Difficulty refers to the *amount of effort needed* to answer a question, solve a problem, or complete a task. These questions, problems, and tasks are thought of as easy or hard. It is possible for a learning activity to become increasingly difficult without becoming more complex. For example, you being directed to “Name the states of the Union” is at the *Recall* level of complexity because it involves simple recall (memory) for most adults. Similarly, the task “Name the states of the Union and their capitals” is also at the *Recall* level, but it is more difficult than the prior question because it involves more effort to remember additional information. “Name the states and their capitals in order of their admission to the Union” is still at the *Recall* level, but it is considerably more difficult than the first two. It requires gathering more information and then sequencing it in chronological order.

Complexity is the *thought process* that the brain uses to deal with information. It relates to the kind of thinking, action, knowledge needed to answer a question, solve a problem, or complete a task. Complex questions, problems, and tasks often challenge and engage individuals to demonstrate thinking at higher levels. For example, the question, “What is the capital of Rhode Island?” is at the *Recall* level, while the question “Tell me in your own words what impact a state capital has on the prosperity of that state” is at the *Strategic Thinking* level. The second question is more *complex* than difficult because it challenges and engages you to think critically – or *evaluate* – the impact.

DIFFICULTY ≠ COMPLEXITY

DIFFICULTY

How much effort is needed to answer a question, address a problem, or accomplish a task?

How many people can answer a question, address a problem, or accomplish a task correctly or successfully?

Easy or Hard

COMPLEXITY

What kind of thinking, action, or knowledge must be demonstrated and communicated to answer a question, address a problem, or accomplish a task?

How many different ways can a question be answered, a problem be addressed, or a task be accomplished?

Simple or Complex

Now, all of this is fine and grand when my examples are geared toward adults that have had many more educational opportunities than 5-8 year old children. So, what can you do to make more complex DOK a habit with your child?

Let's start off easy and not even relate anything to a book. Start with electronic media (TV, movies, lyrics to songs, etc.) or real life experiences such as vacations or sports. Spend the time to watch, listen, or reflect with your child. **Then, take the DOK Poster attachment that accompanies this newsletter and ask some questions or use the verbs.** You may have to put them in your own words, but don't lose the complexity in the translation process.

Honestly, I am a believer that there are different ways to learn and grow in our learning. The purpose of making an exercise like this a daily or even weekly habit will become apparent after a while. Give it some time and transition into reading.

Do we want students to work *hard* in their learning? Of course we do. Answering difficult questions, addressing difficult problems, and accomplishing difficult tasks correctly and successfully are not only intellectually beneficial but also personally rewarding. Such experiences strengthen students' character by building their confidence in their abilities and developing a positive attitude about work. However, we also want our students to *think deeply* as well as *work hard*.

Memorable Moments In School...

With Ms. Harris:

When I was student teaching in 2nd grade, I had a very difficult and defiant student. I was in a pickle of what to do. After having his name come out of my mouth more than a million times it seemed, I took him to the hallway. After getting to his level and asking the infamous question "What is going on?" he looked me right in the eye and said "I have never had a teacher care about me like you do, so I always want to get your attention and to hear you say my name." Needless to say, I knew right then that I had chosen the right profession.

Fall Parties...

Our fall parties always seem to have nearly as many adults as students participating in the fun. We give a very big thank you to all that coordinated and volunteered this year.



Honoring our Veterans...



Many people confuse Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Both holidays were established to recognize and honor the men and women who have worn the uniform of the United States Armed Forces. But Memorial Day, which is observed on the last Monday in May, was originally set aside as a day for remembering and honoring military personnel who died in the service of their country, particularly those who died in battle or as a result of wounds sustained in battle.

While those who died are also remembered on Veterans Day, which is observed on November 11, Veterans Day is intended to thank and honor all those who served honorably in the military - in wartime or peacetime. In fact, Veterans Day is largely intended to thank living Veterans for their service, to acknowledge that their contributions to our national security are appreciated, and to underscore the fact that all those who served - not only those who died - have sacrificed and done their duty.

Thanks to all who have given of themselves in service to our country!

Your child's health...

Research shows that parents are often their children's most important role models in all aspects of their lives. Children who see parents enjoying healthy foods and being physically active are more likely to do the same.

Help kids stay active.

- Put an hour of physical activity into your child's day.
- Limit TV and other screen time to less than two hours per day.

Encourage healthy eating habits.

- Shop, cook, and plan for healthy meals.

- Make sure your child eats a healthy breakfast daily.
- Sit at the table and eat together as a family.
- Know how much food to serve your child.

Promote healthy choices.

- Make sure your child gets enough sleep each night.
- Help your child understand why you are making these changes.

Spirit Wear On Sale...

Spirit wear will be on sale Friday, November 6th, during the lunch time in the cafeteria. We know that many people have asked about when they could purchase spirit wear now that the seasons are changing. PTO representatives will be around throughout the lunch times. Now is a perfect point in the year to check out all of the new supply. **See the order form that accompanies this newsletter.**

Following up with Conferences...

Thanks to each of you who took time from your busy schedule to talk with your child's teacher during Parent – Teacher Conferences! As we move ahead, our staff will continue to make every effort to make sure that every child benefits from the interactions between parents and teachers.

It can be very helpful, too, for parents to talk about conferences (and other topics) with their children. It is most effective if we, as parents, approach these topics in as positive a manner as possible. Although you may already be familiar with them, it never hurts to review these tips for communicating with your child:

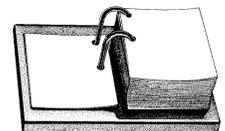
- **Listen to what you are saying.** Listen to your words, the tone of your voice, and think about the look on your face.
- **When possible, explain why certain behavior or action is desired.** This not only provides your child with a guideline for the moment, but also gives him/her the tools to evaluate situations for future behavior.
- **Do not use terms that belittle, humiliate, or embarrass your child.** Negative words have a negative impact. A child may, after being told enough times, begin to *believe* he/she is a “dummy” or “stupid”.
- **Get to the point.** Long lectures can confuse your child and cover far more issues than the one at hand.
- **Be perfectly clear.** Use words that your child understands, and make sure your child knows what behavior was desirable or undesirable.
- **Don't compare.** Make allowances for differences in talents, capabilities, and personalities.
- **Set an example.**

- **Be honest with your child.** Share your feelings. A child can understand worry, fear, and concern.
- **Admit your own mistakes.** Your child will appreciate knowing you're not perfect.
- **Make sure rules and expectations are understood.** Sometimes criticism comes from misunderstanding of rules, expected behaviors, and the consequences of misconduct.
- **Let your child have a part in making decisions about things affecting him/her.** By helping decide rules and consequences, children better understand the things that affect them.
- **Be a good listener.** Let your child know you care about his/her feelings and are willing to work problems out together.
- **MOST IMPORTANTLY:** Try to put everything in a positive perspective so that criticism is CONSTRUCTIVE and not destructive.

Please feel free to contact with your child's teacher whenever you have questions or concerns. As we all continue to work together, we build the best possible learning environment for our students.

Mark Your Calendar...

Nov. 9-13: *National Young Readers' Week*



Nov. 9-13: Hearing Screening

Week for new students

Nov. 11: **Veterans Day**

Nov. 11: Fall Intramurals end

Nov. 11: Collaboration Day – 3:10 dismissal

Nov. 12: Principal for a Day Program – Mr. Nelson Peters, County Commissioner

Nov. 12: Real Men Read Round 2 for grades 2 & 3

Nov. 12: PTO meeting @ LEEL 9:30

Nov. 15 - 21: National Bullying Awareness Week



Nov. 16: Anti-bullying assembly p.m. in the gym with rapper Six8

Nov. 17: eLearning practice day with parents

Nov. 18: Midterms go home to those not receiving weekly progress reports through Parent Access

Nov. 18: Collaboration Day – 3:10 dismissal

Nov. 23: Canned Food Drive begins and runs through Dec. 17th. Items go through Grabill Food Bank to needy families.

Nov. 25: Popcorn/Pretzel Wednesday and Spirit Day

Nov. 25: Third grade visit from the Zoomobile in the pit area 10:45 until the end of the day

Nov. 25: Collaboration Day – 3:10 dismissal

Nov. 26 – 27: **Thanksgiving Break – NO SCHOOL**