

Show your elementary schooler how to be a scientific thinker

You don't have to be a rocket scientist to teach your child about science. Just do some simple things like these:

- Encourage your child to be a collector and to organize objects, such as seeds, rocks, shells and bottle caps.
- Encourage investigation. Give your child a magnifying glass. Ask him, "What things do you see?" "What's similar and what's different?"
- Talk about the science that happens in your home. For instance, which cereals get soggy? Why do foods in the refrigerator get moldy? Why do some plants need more water than others?
- Include your child—as an observer or, better yet, a helper—when you make household repairs or work on the family car.
- Show an interest in science together. Observe the stars. Weigh snow. Mix paints.
- Nurture curiosity. Ask your child questions like, "Why do you think ... ?" "What might happen if ... ?" and "How can we find out ... ?"
- Go to the library. Check out a few books on different science topics.
- Give your child something to take apart—a ball point pen, a flower, a candle, an old toy. Encourage him to figure out how it works.
- Talk about the weather. Have your child record the temperature each day for a month. Or use the temperature listed in your local newspaper. Note whether the day was sunny, cloudy or rainy. Which was the hottest day? How many rainy days were there?

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