Practice for 7th and 8th grade AVID students: Week of April 13-17th

Vocabulary Cards

- Using one of the reading passages from either District Packet (given out on Tuesdays and Thursdays at FC from 10-12) or an article of your choice or one provided. **Pick 4-8 vocabulary words that are unknown to you.**
- Using paper or index cards, you will be making vocabulary flash cards.
  - **Front side of card:** Write the vocabulary word (spelling correctly). Underneath the word, write a SYNONYM of word (word that has similar meaning).
  - **Backside of card:** Using multiple colors, diagram/draw image of word/demonstrate the meaning of word using images.

Turn in work by taking picture of it and sending image to me through email. Or videoing yourself reviewing/practicing flash cards and send me video. hhalvor@tacoma.k12.wa.us
Algebra II doesn’t add up when you figure how little it means to most students

SOURCE: The Washington Post
By Jay Mathews
Published December 15, 2019

I got an A in algebra II, I think. That was long ago. I do know that I have long since forgotten whatever I learned in that course and have never used it since.

That has become a national problem. Algebra II is required for graduation in 20 states and the District of Columbia. Yet many experts want to discard it in favor of something more fashionable. These days, they say, students need to understand big data, a course often called statistics.

Algebra II is frequently combined with trigonometry in the third year of high school math. It covers linear equations, functions, exponential and logarithmic expressions, and other things. It became a regular part of American education after high school math was overhauled in the wake of the Soviet Union’s launch of Sputnik in 1957.

It no longer gets much respect. The Freakonomics Radio podcast, in a special episode hosted by University of Chicago economist Steve Levitt, surveyed listeners about math subjects they used in their daily lives. Algebra II wasn’t part of that poll, but 70 percent of respondents said they never used its close cousin trigonometry.

That includes me. I use math in my work but only the long division I learned in fourth grade. It helps me prepare my annual list of schools with high rates of college-level test preparation. A calculator I got free in the mail from SPCA International does the actual arithmetic for me.

So why, many people ask, do we need algebra II, or any of those upper-level high school math courses? “It’s embarrassing,” Levitt said on his podcast, “that we teach a math curriculum that nobody, pretty much, is using.”

In a new report, math education experts Phil Daro and Harold Asturias conclude that the traditional math sequence of which algebra II is a part is more trouble than it’s
worth. Its peculiar difficulties frustrate too many students interested in math and science “while simultaneously erecting irrelevant math hurdles for students with other interests,” they said in their paper “Branching Out: Designing High School Math Pathways for Equity” on the Just Equations website.

They suggest different pathways after algebra I and geometry that would align with different student goals. This would include “an initial course suitable for 11th grade, in lieu of the traditional Algebra II.” They suggest 11th- and 12th-grade math combinations that would include data science and quantitative reasoning.

That meshes with changes in the workplace. Daphne Martschenko, a research analyst at the University of Chicago, told Levitt: “It’s overwhelmingly convincing that people believe data-related skills are important to get by in work today.”

Robert Q. Berry III, a professor of mathematics education at the University of Virginia, is president of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, headquartered in Reston, Virginia. He told me Levitt’s concerns are warranted. He said his organization wants “significant rethinking of what we are teaching in high school to transform learning from focusing on mindless manipulations in mathematics toward developing conceptual understanding.”

That means more than just dumping algebra II. Berry wants to build what he calls “positive mathematics identity and agency.” He described that as students “seeing themselves as doers of mathematics and engaging in the behaviors of doers of mathematics.”

That will be a difficult assignment, at least in high school. Many teens don’t even see themselves as doers of homework. Berry understands that overturning the current math sequence will require cooperation from universities, local school boards, state school boards and others. “The challenges are systemic,” he said. To me, that means I will not live long enough to see it happen.

But there are ways to ease algebra II out of high schools. Gregg Robertson, longtime principal of Washington-Liberty High School in Arlington, Virginia, noted that his math department has courses in probability and statistics, both regular and Advanced Placement, as well as a dual-enrollment quantitative reasoning course through Northern Virginia Community College.
School by school and state by state, that is one way to nudge algebra II toward the trash bin. Requiring that students take four math courses — but not saying which ones — can give a boost to the data and statistics courses being advocated by people like Levitt. Robertson said even calculus, despite its lofty reputation, is also unnecessary for most of his students’ future success.

I passed calculus, too, but don’t ask me to justify its worth. Even before I completed it in 1963, I knew I would never use it again.

**Author Information:**

Jay Mathews is an education columnist for *The Washington Post*, his employer for nearly 50 years. He created the annual Challenge Index rankings of high schools and has written nine books.
DeAndre Arnold, an 18-year-old high school senior in Mont Belvieu, Texas, was given a lousy set of options: Cut the locs he's been growing since seventh grade in keeping with his dad's Trinidadian tradition, or be suspended and barred from graduation ceremonies.

I can think of a handful of reasons a school would need to interrupt a child's senior year of learning, forever mar his high school experience and ban him from the capstone celebration of all he has worked toward and achieved for the past four years. Long hair isn't one of them.

His mom, Sandy Arnold, told local news outlets she cornrows her son's hair and helps him tie it up and away from his ears, eyes and collar so it doesn't violate the student handbook, which reads: "Male students' hair will not extend, at any time, below the eyebrows, or below the ear lobes when let down."

Shortly before winter break, the school issued the ultimatum, citing the handbook. Sandy Arnold told Houston TV station KPRC late last week that she withdrew her son from the school.

DeAndre Hopkins, a wide receiver for the Houston Texans, tweeted his support last week: "Never cut your locks Deandre Arnold."

A change.org petition urges the school to reconsider its policy: "We, the people, near and far are demanding that the school system reassess your decision and change an antiquated and offensive policy that should no longer be applicable to Deandre Arnold or any student hereafter or going forward."

The NAACP released a statement: "The suspension placed on Texas high school student Deandre Arnold due to his dreadlocks
is extremely troubling. There is a stigma often associated with the natural hair of black and brown people that needs to change. Banning ethnic hairstyles is rooted in racial insensitivity and upholds the notion of white supremacy.”

School officials say it’s simply a matter of respecting the student handbook.

“Every school district in the nation has a dress code,” district superintendent Greg Poole told a local news station. “I don’t think you can go to school in your underwear.”

But are those dress codes written and invoked in the service of learning? Are they fairly and equally enforced? Were they written with input from a culturally diverse set of gatekeepers? Were they written with an eye toward a culturally diverse student body?

Going to school in your underwear would violate social norms, fail to protect your body from natural elements, put you at risk for an indecent exposure arrest and introduce the meeting of body parts and desk parts that really ought not meet. I can see how those things would disrupt learning.

Long hair does nothing of the sort. That analogy is a red herring. But schools fall back on that sort of “don’t blame me; rules are rules” shrug time and time again when they’re punishing kids for their hairstyles and wardrobes.

Here’s an idea.

One of the things I discovered while reading the national coverage of DeAndre Arnold’s story is that California just signed a law banning discrimination against natural hair in workplaces and schools. Gov. Gavin Newsom signed the legislation, called the CROWN Act, in July and it took effect Jan. 1. (CROWN stands for Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair.)

“In a society in which hair has historically been one of many determining factors of a person’s race, and whether they were a second class citizen, hair today remains a proxy for race,” the legislation reads. “Therefore, hair discrimination targeting hairstyles associated with race is racial discrimination.”

It states the following:

“The history of our nation is riddled with laws and societal norms that equated ‘blackness,’ and the associated physical traits, for example, dark skin, kinky and curly hair to a badge of inferiority, sometimes subject to separate and unequal treatment.
“This idea also permeated societal understanding of professionalism. Professionalism was, and still is, closely linked to European features and mannerisms, which entails that those who do not naturally fall into Eurocentric norms must alter their appearances, sometimes drastically and permanently, in order to be deemed professional.

“Despite the great strides American society and laws have made to reverse the racist ideology that Black traits are inferior, hair remains a rampant source of racial discrimination with serious economic and health consequences, especially for Black individuals.”

It amends the state’s educational code to protect certain hairstyles from discrimination, including braids, locs and twists.

New York and New Jersey adopted similar legislation shortly after California, according to thecrownact.com, a website dedicated to raising awareness and education about the legislation.

Illinois is, according to the site, one of 20 additional states considering adopting CROWN Acts.

Do this, Illinois. Protect your residents from having their lives and learning and earning potential and dignity disrupted by arcane, small-minded mandates. Make your schools and workplaces safer, more inclusive spaces. With apologies to Gandhi: Be the change you wish to see in dress code policy.

It’s time.

———

©2020 Chicago Tribune
Visit the Chicago Tribune at www.chicagotribune.com
Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.
Kids are learning curse words earlier than they used to

By Travis Wright
Special To The Washington Post.

How do young children learn to swear – and why do they seem to do it at the most inappropriate moments?

Recently, a group of parents have become convinced that the Minion toys in McDonald’s Happy Meals are saying, “What the f_!” To protest, they have taken to the airwaves to warn others about the potentially corrupting influence of the mealtime treat.

McDonald’s responded to the criticism by explaining that Minions are just speaking Minionese, “a random combination of languages and nonsense words.” The company says nothing they say can be translated into any known language.

As a child psychologist and early childhood educator, I study how children learn to communicate their feelings – and am well-acquainted with their ability to use new words at the most embarrassing moments.

So, are children today swearing more than they did previously? Well – yes and no.

Children are learning to swear at an earlier age. Timothy Jay, a psychology professor, suggests that the rise in profanity among children is not surprising, given the general rise in the use of swearing among adults since the 1980’s.

“By the time kids go to school now, they’re saying all the words that we try to protect them from on television,” Jay said. “We find that swearing really takes off between [ages] 3 and 4.”

However, children do not appear yet to be using worse swear words than in the past – just common swear words more often, according to the new research.

When young children swear before the age of 2 or 3 years old, they are usually just repeating what they have heard. Because they are learning to use language to communicate, children mimic words to make sounds and to see how those around them will respond. Through these responses, children come to understand what the words mean.

So before taking your young child’s insult to heart, it may be important to realize that she may have no idea what she is actually saying.

When slightly older, children swear for different reasons. If they do not hear a word often, they may be using it because they do not understand that it is offensive.

Perhaps they have heard it pass through the lips of someone they admire. And they say it in an attempt to be similarly cool. Or, they might just like the sound of it.

By the time children are in pre-K and kindergarten, they often begin to realize that curse words are offensive and may quit swearing on their own. But, as I have found in my clinical work, they may still “drop the bomb” when they are scared, feeling frustrated or want to hurt others.

While working as a school counselor, I found that some children like the attention receive when “talking dirty” and may use profanity to show off in front of their peers.

As I have found in my work, when words get an extreme reaction, children are more likely to view that word as important and retain it for future use.

Likewise, given that most people curse when they are frustrated, shocked, thrilled, or otherwise emotionally charged, profanity is usually uttered with a little extra “oomph!”

Children in the midst of developing their own vocabularies are like language vacuum cleaners, sucking up as many words as they can. Emotionally charged expletives stand out like superheroes.

Though they may not know what they mean, curse words are internalized as words with superpowers. And they get used when normal words just won’t fit the bill.

That’s why children often curse at the most embarrassing moments – when visiting the dentist for the first time, in the grocery checkout aisle when told they can’t have a package of gum, on the first day of school or when your boss is invited over for dinner.

In each of these examples, children might be confronting new or different expectations, experiencing fear, frustration or disappointment, or receiving less attention than might be typical.

Likewise, during times when you are distracted, nervous or frustrated, your child’s anxiety may also be heightened. Because they have learned, perhaps from you, that curse words are for moments when we aren’t really sure what else to say, it often seems that they let them fly when we most wish they would not.
To prevent younger children from cursing, prevention is the best strategy.

If children are not exposed to profanity, they will not begin using it. Though television, cartoons and the world at large are full of curse words, children are most likely to hear adult language at home.

It may not help that parents can sometimes be hypocritical when it comes to swearing. Nearly two-thirds of adults surveyed who had rules about their children swearing at home found that they broke their own rules regularly.

This sends a mixed, confusing message about swearing and when it’s appropriate.

For older children, understanding why your child is cursing and what the cursing is meant to communicate is important in determining how best to respond. For example, if the child swears only when frustrated, he may not have another way to express himself.

Suggesting more acceptable language or providing more constructive outlets for his frustration will redirect the behavior. And cursing should diminish.

So, if the “Minions parents” are talking too much about “WTF” in front of their children, they can be sure that their children will likely be using the expression the next time they need to communicate a big emotion.

My advice: if they don’t like what the toys are saying, throw them away and don’t make a big deal out of it!

---

Wright is an assistant professor of Multicultural Education, Teacher Education, and Childhood Studies at the University of Wisconsin.

This article was originally published on The Conversation: http://theconversation.com.

---

WASHINGTON POST-BLOOMBERG--08-07-15
Schools are hurting kids by banning rough play

Bloomberg
By Virginia Postrel

No roughhousing. No superhero games. No turning your fingers -- or your Pop-Tart -- into a make-believe gun. No tag. And certainly no dodgeball.

Stories of zero-tolerance play-policing by schools are a well-established news genre. Most recently, parents in Washington state mounted a successful campaign to force the Mercer Island School District to reverse its ban on playing tag during "unstructured playtime," or what used to be called recess. In his backpedaling press release, district superintendent Gary Plano puzzlingly insisted that "asking students to keep their hands and feet to themselves at all times, including recess" wasn't a ban on tag. Perhaps he envisions tag by telepathy.

At any rate, Mercer Island isn't the first school district to prohibit tag and it won't be the last. Bans on physical contact and pretend violence are the norm on U.S. school playgrounds.

"The majority of school districts in the U.S. have 'zero-tolerance' policies on 'any form of violence,' " says Jennifer Hart, who teaches early childhood education at the University of the Sunshine Coast in Australia and has published research on "playful aggression" among children. Kids who wrestle, pretend to fight, or play superheroes face punishment, as do teachers who tolerate such old-fashioned antics.

Behind these policies is the superstitious belief that vigorous physical contact and make-believe violence will beget immediate and future real physical harms -- magical thinking that fundamentally misunderstands how children play and learn. Prohibiting rough-and-tumble play doesn't make recess safer or kids less apt to hurt others. To the contrary, the bans deprive children of the very experiences they need to master peaceful social interactions.

Roughhousing is more than good exercise. Psychological research shows that it's essential to childhood development. Rowdy, physical play teaches kids to communicate verbally and nonverbally; to take turns; to negotiate rules; and to understand when they can use their full strength and when they need to hold back. It may sometimes look like fighting but it isn't. Kids smile and laugh, return voluntarily to the game, take turns in dominant roles, and wear distinctive "play faces."

In a chasing game like tag, children "learn how their bodies move, how their playmates will respond when a change to the game is made, how to negotiate these changes to games, what to do when one of the children falls, and how to express their thoughts to the others involved in the game," writes Michelle Tannock in the Journal of Early Childhood Education, summarizing the developmental-psychology literature. When she interviewed kids at two child care centers in British Columbia, Tannock found that they all said rough-and-tumble play was prohibited -- yet they engaged in it anyway.

"To simply forbid it is like telling children, 'We're not going to let you eat today, because the food might be contaminated,' " says Frances Carlson, author of Big Body Play, a guide published by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. "Children can't live without it, so they do it in hiding." Over the past three decades, as the research into its importance has mounted, the NAEYC has gone from hostile to supportive of full-body play. Unfortunately, laws and schools haven't kept up, hurting kids' development.

Contrary to what squeamish authorities seem to think, it's the kids who don't engage in rough-and-tumble play who actually tend to be more violent later on in life. So, says Carlson, forbidding playful physical contact "stokes the fire as opposed to diminishing it."

Some kids are indeed prone to hurt others. "If you've ever watched a group of 4- or 5-year-olds play Duck, Duck, Goose," says Carlson, "there's always one child who, when it's his turn or her turn, will not tag. They'll slap." Socially and developmentally behind their peers, the offending children are those who most need the lessons big-body play can teach. Keeping them from playing tag, says Carlson, "is not the way they learn how to tag more gently. Continuing to tag is the way they learn to tag more gently." Good teachers will coach rather than punish kids who play rough. That may sometimes mean physically standing in for playmates to show a child when a tag is too hard or a wrestling grip too tight.

The law in Carlson's home state of Georgia prohibits such good pedagogy, at least in child care centers. (School districts set their own policies.) It dictates that "staff shall not engage in, or allow children or other adults to engage
Schools are hurting kids by banning rough play

By Virginia Postrel

(continued)

in, activities that could be detrimental to a child’s health or well-being, such as, but not limited to, horse play, rough play, wrestling.” This provision assumes ill effects contradicted by psychological research. And it often puts Carlson in the peculiar position of giving training seminars that start with this warning: “What I’m about to teach you to do today is illegal in the state of Georgia. However, I was asked by the state of Georgia to present this training to you.”

Educating teachers doesn’t do any good, of course, if they can’t use what they learn. The zero-tolerance approach not only hampers children’s education. It treats teachers not as educational professionals but as passive bystanders unable -- or forbidden -- to make judgment calls, even in ridiculous cases.

Take what happened to Drew Johnson, now a high school freshman, when he was a child at Cumberland Elementary School in Fishers, Indiana. One fall recess he bent over and picked some dandelions. For that offense, he served several days of lunchtime detention. When his shocked parents asked the principal what was wrong with such innocuous behavior, she explained that some kids had been throwing rocks at recess. To make things easy on recess monitors, the school had simply banned picking anything up from the ground -- flowers included.

———

Virginia Postrel, a Bloomberg View columnist, writes about commerce and culture, innovation, economics, and public policy.

———

The pandemics ahead
©2016, The Washington Post

This appeared in Friday’s Washington Post.

While it has not gained much attention in the United States, Brazil has been struck in recent months with an outbreak of Zika virus that has infected hundreds of thousands of people. Most of the time the symptoms are mild and flu-like, but in some cases health officials say the virus has led to birth defects in babies born to women who were infected in pregnancy. The virus is spread by small insects such as mosquitoes or fleas, and there is no known vaccine to prevent infection.

The Zika story might seem easy to dismiss if one is not living in Brazil. Is this just another unpleasant headline about misery far away?

Not quite. In the aftermath of the mishandled and tardy reaction to the Ebola epidemic in West Africa in which more than 11,000 people died, an independent and authoritative commission was set up in the United States to look ahead and draw lessons from this and other recent waves of infectious disease. The 17-member Commission on a Global Health Risk Framework for the Future issued its final report on Jan. 13, and the panel's conclusions are a wake-up call about the threat of pandemic disease that could originate almost anywhere and spread everywhere. Despite all the advances of science, “the global community has massively underestimated the risks that pandemics present to human life and livelihoods,” the group declared. “There are very few risks facing humankind that threaten loss of life on the scale of pandemics.”

The 1918 influenza pandemic killed anywhere from 50 million to 100 million people; in catastrophic mortality events since 1900, only World War II caused more deaths. Since it first appeared, HIV/AIDS has killed more than 35 million. Although the tolls have been far lower, five outbreaks in the past 15 years have been worrying: severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS; two influenza waves, H5N1 and H1N1; Ebola; and Middle East respiratory syndrome, or MERS.

As the world becomes more globalized with the movement of goods and people, as climate change disrupts the environment, and as pathogens move between humans and animals, cocktails of infectious disease will form, spread and sicken. Already a dozen cases of Zika virus have been reported in the United States, so far only among people who had traveled outside the country. “The threat from infectious diseases is growing,” the panel warns, adding that “the conditions for infectious disease emergence and contagion are more dangerous than ever.” Moreover, “further outbreaks of new, dormant, or even well-known diseases are a certainty.”

The commission insists that pandemic risks must be treated not as distant, unavoidable possibilities but as real national security threats. Just as nations invest in military preparedness, the panel says, so should they confront disease. In fact, this has been long neglected in many places. The panel calls for measures to bolster public health systems in individual countries; creating a rapid-response capability; strengthening the World Health Organization; and funding research and development of new therapies, all for about $4.5 billion a year. That’s the equivalent of three Powerball drawings like the one on the day of the panel’s report.
Dreams are weird. Most of them seem to contain a mixture of familiar faces or places and an absolute mishmash of brain confetti. One minute you’re flying through the halls of your school, and the next you’re riding a roller coaster full of monkeys.

So why do our brains produce these nightly hallucinations, which most often occur when we’re deep in a kind of sleep known as rapid eye movement, or REM? And are dreams good for anything?

“There are a lot of theories,” said Alice Robb, science writer and author of the book “Why We Dream.” “One thing that’s happening with dreams is that we’re working through anxieties. We’re sort of going over and rehearsing things that we’re stressed about.”

Got a big test coming up? A trip to the dentist? Get in a fight with a friend? Don’t be surprised if your dreams start to echo those ideas, but in bizarre, dreamy ways.

The idea is that once “you’ve experienced it, you’re less afraid of the reality, which is almost always less scary than whatever your brain has cooked up in your sleep,” said Robb.

Another theory is that your brain uses dreams to assist with learning and creating memories.

“So your brain is sort of tightening the connections that you’ve made recently. It’s sorting through memories and figuring out what’s going to go into your long-term memory, what’s not important and we’re going to get rid of,” said Robb.

Interestingly, scientists have found that REM sleep increases when we devote a lot of time to studying something really difficult, such as learning a new language.

Robb also said that kids are especially good dreamers.
“Children actually sometimes spend more of the night dreaming and actually often have a more intense relationship with their dreams than adults,” Robb said.

Adults also train themselves to ignore and forget their dreams, said Robb, but you can reverse that trend by simply paying more attention. Try keeping a dream journal, for instance, as one way to be more conscious of all the wacky things that flit through your brain while you’re sleeping. This may also help you key into common themes in your dreams that relate to what’s going on in your own life.

“If you want to understand what those dreams mean to you, you have to pay attention to your own patterns,” said Robb.

Perhaps flying through the school represents your craving for summer break. Maybe the argument with your friend is your brain’s way of preparing you to settle your differences. And the roller coaster ride full of monkeys? Well, that’s for you to figure out.