

# QUESTIONS A PARENT CAN ASK TO HELP THEIR CHILD WITH SCHOOL WORK

<http://connectedmath.msu.edu/families/homework-support/>

One goal in helping children learn is to assist them in figuring out as much as they can for themselves. Ask questions that guide, without telling what to do. Good questions and good listening will help children make sense of mathematics, build self-confidence, and encourage mathematical thinking and communication. A good question can help students clarify a problem and support different ways of thinking about it. You do not need to know how to do the problem to support your child's learning.

Here are some questions you might try; notice that none of them can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." By using these questions, and by referring to the notebook that students create and use in class, you will be building on in-class experiences and contributing to your child's success.

## GETTING STARTED ON THE PROBLEM

- What do you know?
- What do you need to find out?
- How could you begin?
- Are there words you do not understand?
- Have you solved similar problems that would help? Let's look at your notebook.

## WHILE WORKING

- How can you organize the information?
- Can you make a drawing (model) to explain your thinking?
- Are there other possibilities?
- What would happen if...?
- Can you describe an approach (strategy) you can use to solve this?
- What do you need to do next?
- Do you see any patterns or relationships that will help solve this?
- How does this relate to...?
- Can you make a prediction?
- What did you...?
- How were you thinking about the problem when you did this...?
- What assumptions are you making?

## REFLECTING ABOUT THE SOLUTION

- Has the question been answered?
- How do you know your solution (conclusion) is reasonable?
- How did you arrive at your answer?
- How can you convince me your answer makes sense?
- What did you try that did not work?
- Can the explanation be made clearer?

## RESPONDING (HELPING YOUR CHILDREN CLARIFY AND EXTEND THEIR THINKING)

- Help me understand this part...
- Can you explain it in a different way?
- Is there another possibility or strategy that would work?
- How does the math in this problem relate to the mathematics in this unit? In previous units?
- Is there anything you want to add to your notebook?
- Are there any questions you want to ask your teacher?