

## Grade 5 October Part 3

### Guidelines for successful parent-teacher conferences

I once went into a parent-teacher conference with a multitude of questions in my head. During the conference, I could only remember three of them—probably the least important. As I left, I resolved that the next time I would do it right. I would take the time to write down all the questions, so I could go home knowing more about my child's educational progress in school.

Parent-teacher conferences often begin with a discussion of the child's academic achievement. Make sure that you ask questions about each of the academic areas. If your child has taken a standardized achievement test, ask the teacher to explain to you about the way the test scores are reported. Find out if the teacher thinks that the test scores accurately reflect your child's performance in the classroom. Some children can answer questions correctly in the more informal atmosphere of the classroom, but they fail the same questions on a test.

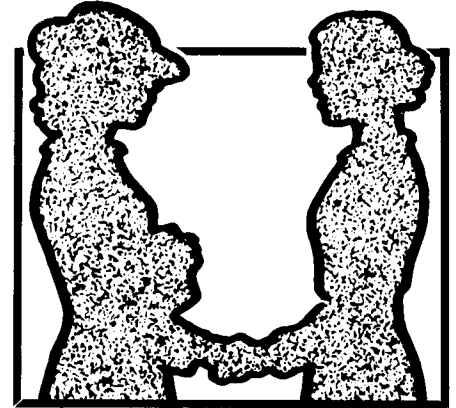
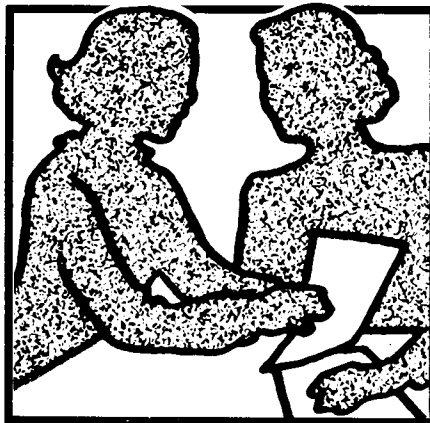
Ask the teacher if there are things you can do at home to help your child's learning in school. Teachers can have very creative ideas about how to help your child learn at home—but often they don't volunteer those ideas unless the parent asks them.

### Children have different learning styles

After you have looked at academic achievement, find out about your child's learning style. Some children are "visual learners." They learn best when they can see what they are learning.

Some children are "auditory learners." These children learn best when they can hear what they are learning.

Ask about where your child sits in the classroom. Highly distractible children usually learn best when they are seated in the front of the class, which is also best for children with visual or hearing impairments.



A parent also needs to find out about how their child behaves in school—in the classroom, cafeteria, playground. It is not unusual for children to behave quite differently at school and at home. It is as though the child were living in two different worlds. And just as it is helpful for the parent to learn about school behavior, it is equally helpful for the teacher to learn about behavior at home.

Ask the teacher about your child's social skills. How does she get along with other children at school? Does the teacher see your child as a leader or a follower? When a parent asks these questions, the teacher will feel more free to discuss information that might not otherwise be mentioned.

A well-planned parent-teacher conference can be helpful to both parent and teacher—and it will benefit the child, too.

*"What a teacher is, is more important than what he teaches."  
—Karl Menninger—*