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Teacher Created Materials

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Dear Family,

Welcome to seventh grade! Your young teen has completed approximately one half of his or her K–12 school years. You are a seasoned adult with many years of experience being a parent, a caregiver, a teacher, a coach, and a friend. That said, if you haven't begun to notice big changes in your teen (or soon-to-be teen), stay alert. They are on the way!

Have you ever watched a group of middle schoolers walk down the sidewalk? A 12-year-old girl can be a foot taller than a 13-year-old boy. Your middle schooler may be experiencing intense growth, thanks to growth hormones—or may be wondering when it will be his or her time. Meanwhile, the brain is hard at work, essentially rewiring itself. There is a lot going on in that brain as it works toward adulthood—and your youngster may reflect this almost chaotic work by acting disorganized, being emotional or secretive, or taking unexpected risks.

Believe it or not, that's all okay! There is plenty to look forward to this year. Your seventh grader is better equipped to adjust to going to different classes each period, multitasking, solving problems, and participating in sports or after-school activities that just might be of interest to you as well.

Take time to learn how your teen's teachers communicate so that you know what is going on in school. Newsletters and postings on a website can help you keep ahead of the game.



One last thought...


Take some time to think about when you were in seventh grade. Those memories should help you keep your perspective (and sense of humor) this year.



Top 10

Things Your Seventh Grader Needs to Know



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1. **Citing evidence from the text** to support analysis and inferences from stories
 2. **Elements of a story or drama** and how they interact
 3. **Meanings of words and phrases** used in stories, especially figurative and implied meanings
 4. **Reading and comprehending stories, dramas, and poems** relevant to grade level
 5. **Operations with fractions** to add, subtract, multiply, and divide rational numbers
 6. **Numerical and algebraic expressions and equations** to solve real-life math problems
 7. **Angle measure, area, surface area, and volume** to solve real-life math problems
 8. **Volume of cylinders, cones, and spheres** to solve real-life math problems
 9. **Cell biology, genetics, Earth sciences, and living systems**
 10. **World history and geography** from medieval and early modern times

Science

Step by Step

By grade seven, your youngster will be delving deeper into topics such as biology, Earth sciences, plant systems, human systems (circulatory, muscular), and genetics. Experiments and investigations continue to be important, with particular attention paid to research and documenting the process and results.

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Consider fostering an interest in science with some of these resources.

Museums

Check out your local museum to see if they offer science programs after school or during the summer.



Colleges

If you live near a college campus, check into after-school, weekend, or summer courses.

Science Tools

Invest in basic tools of inquiry that fit your teen's interests, such as a magnifying glass, a microscope, a telescope, star maps, books about inventions, chemistry kits, remote control projects, and educational apps (check out TED and Star Walk) or computer games that use science or scientific inquiry.

Science Websites

- Check out www.sciencebuddies.org for more than 1,000 science project ideas.
- Find “green” projects on the Internet, such as doing a household-energy or water-usage assessment.
- Find national contests to motivate your young scientist or inventor. Just do an Internet search on “*national science contests*” and get started!



One last thought...

There is a tremendous amount of vocabulary acquisition expected in a science class. Help this process by playing word games such as Hangman or word scrambles with vocabulary words.

