

Science At Home.

As a parent(1), I think a lot about my children's education(2). Is it good or bad? Is it varied, hands-on(3), relevant? The only way to really(4) find out, is to look at their text books, go to their schools, and talk to their teachers. And then, we have to remember that each person is unique; each has different preferences, ways of learning, and abilities. Some people are comfortable with academics, and others are not(5). Some students are good at taking exams, and others prefer to demonstrate their knowledge in other ways. Recently, my son Robert has been at home with a bad cough. He has been bugging me to buy him an electrical circuit. So, we shopped around until we found the perfect 'kit'(6). It has batteries, a light, a motor that spins, sound devices, and connecting wires. There is also a booklet(7) that gives instructions and warnings, pictures, and general advice. So Robert has spent hours connecting, fiddling(8), and creating, and every minute that goes by he learns something. Play and imagination are great teachers. And learning doesn't necessarily happen on paper, or on a computer screen. When I asked Robert what was so good about his kit, he said, "It's the energy hook-ups(9), and seeing what you can do with them."

1. 'As a parent' this kind of phrase is used with different nouns/titles.
 - a. As a teacher, I try to understand how my students learn best.
 - b. As a policeman, he tries to be observant.
2. 'I think a lot about my children's education'. This is a good format for other sentences.
 - a. We think a lot about our father's health.
 - b. They think a lot about their safety because they live in Hurricane Valley.
 - c. He thinks a lot about buying land in the future.
3. 'Hands-on' refers to activities that involve touch and manipulation.
 - a. The new children's museum in Spokane is hands-on; the kids can really touch, feel, and play with the displays.
 - b. Babies and toddlers learn most of their lessons in a hands-on way.
4. 'The only way to really +verb..., is to ...' another great format for a sentence.
 - a. The only way to really make money, is to work hard for a long time.
 - b. The only way to really make a point, is to speak intelligently.
 - c. The only way to really understand a culture, is to live in that country.
5. 'Some people are comfortable with academics, and others are not.' In this sentence, the adjective doesnot have to be repeated at the end.
 - a. Some people love chocolate, and others don't.
 - b. Some laws are fair, and others aren't.
 - c. Some people work eight hours a day, and others don't.
6. A 'kit' is usually a set of objects that all fit together or work together for a common purpose. Like Robert's kit, all the parts in the box can be used to build different electrical circuits.
 - a. I bought a kit to build a bird house for the garden. It had wood, nails, glue, and paint.
 - b. My husband always has a tire repair kit with him when he goes biking.
7. A 'booklet' is a small, soft book, similar to a pamphlet but bigger. We usually receive booklets with

new appliances for instruction.

- a. The booklet that came with my new vacuum cleaner is not clear.
 - b. You need to read the instructions that came in the booklet so you know how to put the drawers together.
8. 'Fiddling' comes from the verb 'to fiddle' which means 'to manipulate with your hands', 'to mess about', and 'to experiment physically with something'. Kids are good 'fiddlers'.
- a. Someone has been fiddling with my alarm clock, and now it doesn't work.
 - b. I wish you wouldn't fiddle with my make-up; it's all untidy now.
9. A 'hook-up' is often used generally for a connection of some kind, especially electrical or metallic.
- a. Where is the hook-up to the power supply?
 - b. We need the correct hook-up to connect the boat to the truck.

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