

IQ SKILL 1

WISC: Information

Verbal Information & Alertness Draft August 20, 2010 by

Brent R. Evans © Copyright 2010



Description

Verbal information and alertness refers to your ability to recognize, understand, and recall verbal information. This is the foundation of your thinking ability. An added advantage is that the more you know, the easier it is to learn and understand still more. It is tested by answering questions such as: *Who was the third president of the United States?*

Personal and Family Activities

***1. Make it a Challenge for Each Family Member to Increase His or Her Verbal Information & Alertness During the Next Four Weeks**

Place the *Verbal Information & Alertness Power Poster* on your *Learning/Teaching Wall* as a reminder. Schedule one or more activities for your regular *Family Time* each week to increase each person's fund of information.

***2. Weekly Co-Planning Meetings**

Use your *weekly co-planning time* with each member of the family to discuss what he or she has learned during the last week. Share some of the things you have learned. Explore his or her hobbies and interests. Decide together on ways to pursue those interests further, and schedule them on the calendar.

***3. Post a Map of the World**

Place a large map of the world on a bulletin board. A good location would be within sight of where you regularly have breakfast or dinner. Include a supply of colored pins, yarn, and 3 x 5 cards. Each day, select a news article or two, discuss them, cut them out, and then place them to the side of the map. Connect the articles to the geographical locations they refer to with colored yarn. Make it a habit, and watch each person's fund of information grow. Vocabulary words and their definitions related to the news articles could also be written on cards and kept next to the articles. Also use the map when discussing your child's history assignments. Another idea is to keep a bookmark in the W volume of your encyclopedia where a map of the world is located. You can get a variety of free printable maps at http://english.freemap.jp/world_paint/world_paint.html. Another great map web site is the *Houghton Mifflin Education Place* at <http://www.eduplace.com/ss/maps/>.

4. Put up a History Timeline

Draw a history time line at the top of a bulletin board. As your child is studying history at school place historical events as they come up. For a variety of timelines covering different periods in world history, go to *Timelines of History* at: <http://timelines.ws/>. For American history timelines, go to *American History Timeline 1780 – 2005* at: <http://www.animatedatlas.com/timeline.html>. For a great site on World history that also contains detailed timelines, go to: http://www.hyperhistory.com/online_n2/History_n2/a.html.

***5. Learn and Discuss Interesting Topics**

You might want to include learning about a new and interesting topic each week during your regular *Family Activity Time*. As a family, go through your set of encyclopedias or search online for topics you want to learn more about. You could pair up family members and make assignments to research a topic and teach it to the rest of the family, including preparing visual aids and charts.

6. Enjoy Dinner Table Discussions

Make it a habit to discuss topics of interest at the dinner table. Each person could have the responsibility to bring up one topic.

7. Encourage Questions and Write Them Down as They Come Up

Questions show a need and readiness to learn, and are valuable opportunities. Make it a habit to look up questions and items of interest in your set of encyclopedias or by your favorite research methods. Model doing it yourself, and encourage your children to do the same. Did you see a movie about an historical person, like George Washington? Find out more about him. Just finished seeing the weather report? Find out how they predict weather. A news article refers to Finland? Find out where Finland is and what it's like to live there. Many opportunities will come up as you are reading a book, having a discussion, or trying to accomplish some project. Use your encyclopedias or do online research often. Use your *Learning Success Idea Journal* to write questions that come up so they won't be forgotten. Questions are too valuable to risk forgetting

them. At the end of each week, quiz yourself to see if you can remember the answers to your most important questions.

8. Establish the Look-It-Up Habit

It is vital to develop the habit of looking up information as questions or needs arise. Consider questions as gold to be cashed in as you explore their answers. Imagine how your fund of usable information will grow year after year if you and your family members develop this key habit.

9. Set up a Question and Answer Bulletin Board

Set up a small bulletin board for questions or things that anyone in the family wonders about. When the answer or information is found, put it on the board and talk about it. Praise each person who puts a question or answer there.

10. Schedule Question and Answer Nights

Set time aside one night a month to gather as a family to ask questions and discuss answers. Any questions are encouraged as long as the person is interested enough to ask them. Use your encyclopedia, appropriate books, or web searches as a resource. You might even call someone on the phone to help answer a question. It is a good way to learn how to get information and answers to questions. Later, trips to the library could help answer questions in more detail or depth.

11. Explore Question and Answer Books Together

There are several excellent books available containing interesting questions and answers. You might go to *Amazon.com* and type in *questions and answers*. You will find a great selection from which to choose. My favorite is *1000 Questions and Answers* by the Editors of Kingfisher. Purchase one, and make it a routine during this next year to read one question and answer each day. Do it at a regular time that members of the family will start to count on and expect, such as right after eating dinner.

12. Read and Discuss a Cultural Literacy Book

Read and discuss as a family one or more of the *cultural literacy* books now available. Such books cover the most important facts a well-informed person should know about our past and present. Check your library or bookstore. The one that started it all was *Cultural Literacy* by E.D. Hirsch, Jr. Go to *Amazon.com* and type in *cultural literacy*. You will find dozens of books are available. Make a list of the facts you want your family to memorize, or put them on cards for use in games.

13. Review What You Have Learned to Secure It in Long Term Memory

Tricks and strategies vastly increase your memory power. One of the most powerful strategies is *spaced repetition* or *periodic review*. Combine this type of review with your regular *fifteen-minute Planning and Thinking Time* as you plan each day. Write things you want to put into your long-term memory into your *Learning Success Idea Journal*, such as important dates, phone numbers, or key information.

14. Five-Minute Daily Drills

Select areas you wish strengthened, such as math, vocabulary words, historical facts, how to use a particular computer program, bones in the body, etc. As you identify specific items you want to learn, write them on 3 x 5 cards with question or picture on one side and the answer on the other.

Keep the cards together as a deck and add to it as you determine other things you want to memorize. As you do your drill, the following powerful learning and memory principles will be activated:

- Spaced repetition.
- Mix information reviewed to overcome retroactive interference. This refers to the tendency to forget what you have just learned when you attempt to learn something new.
- Concentrated intensity.
- Experience and see progress.
- Continue until *overlearning* is achieved that is needed for mastery and a strong foundation to build upon.

15. Pursue Hobbies, Talents, & Interests

Research has consistently shown that super-achievers come from families in which their interests and talents are recognized early and supported. Each member of your family should explore new hobbies, talents, and interests, as well as further develop the ones he or she already has.

16. Schedule Quality TV Programs

Schedule the watching of quality television programs as you would other appointments. There are several important reasons to do this. First, there are now many quality television programs from which to choose on almost any subject. You will want to include ones of special interest. Second, it is important to limit television viewing so it doesn't interfere with other important personal and family activities. When you schedule television viewing as you do other tasks and activities, you will more likely put your television viewing in balance. Consult your television guides. Some channels now have their own monthly guides that describe upcoming programs. Of particular interest is *PBS for Kids*: <http://pbskids.org/> This excellent site gives you great information on most public broadcasting shows for children, games and activities, how parents can support learning at home, and free pre-k thru 12th grade resources to support learning at home and at school. You may want to record some programs so they can be seen at more convenient times. Extend your learning experience by looking up things you want to know more about in your encyclopedia or researching them online.

17. Read and Discuss Quotations and Their Authors

Some websites offer one or more quotations a day you could read and discuss as a family. For example, the *Quotations Page*: <http://www.quotationspage.com/qotd.html>. This website also provides other ways to access quotations. By author, go to: <http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes>. As you read and contemplate quotations, you might look up the author and speculate what happened in that person's life that led to saying or writing those words. Take time to discuss how the quotation might have applied in the author's life, and how the quotation could apply in your own. If you get interested in a particular subject, such as *friendship* or *excellence*, go to: <http://www.quotationspage.com/subjects/>.

Education World offers 180 great quotations considered particularly valuable for school-age children to read and discuss at: http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/TM/WS_back_to_school_quotes.shtml

In reading and discussing quotations and proverbs, it is important to realize that young children will probably not be able to abstract the meaning on their own. For example, an adult may have no difficulty understanding the following:

Everyone must row with the oars he has. (English proverb)

A book is like a garden carried in a pocket. (Chinese proverb)

You can't unscramble eggs. (John Pierpont Morgan)

Young children think in concrete terms and may not understand how a concrete example can illustrate an abstract principle. They get stuck with the oars or the garden or the eggs. Formal thinking ability and being able to think abstractly usually starts developing around the age of 12 to 14. This is easy to test. Simply give your child a proverb and see if he or she can give you the meaning.

Other quotation sites you might want to explore are:

Brainy Quote: <http://www.brainyquote.com/>

Cool Quotes: <http://www.coolquotes.com/>

Quote World: <http://www.quoteworld.org/>

Wisdom of the Ages: http://www.quotations.com/w_filter.htm

Quote Land: <http://quoteland.com/>

18. Recognize This Day in History

At the beginning of each month, take time to consider historical events that occurred during that month. For example, you could start the year with recognizing that Paul Revere and Betsy Ross were both born on January 1. Also occurring on January 1 was the issuance of the *Emancipation Proclamation* by Abraham Lincoln in 1863. Write the important events on your Monthly Calendar or in your *Learning Success Idea Journal*. As each day arrives, take a moment or two to reflect on the meaning of those events. At breakfast or dinner, read and/or discuss that day's important historical event. Go to the *Fact Monster Today in History* web site:

<http://www.factmonster.com/dayinhistory>. Another great site is the *History.com This Day in History* web site: <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history.do> Here you can actually watch a one-minute video about today's date in history. You can also play a *Think about History* game either as a single player or in competition with others. The game includes video clips of historic events and then challenges you with a question. Fun for the whole family! Another great website is *Today in History* at: <http://timelines.ws/today.html>. Here you will find all the days of the year listed. Click on that day and discover numerous historical events that occurred on that day.

19. Establish Every-Year Plans and Holidays

Holidays are great opportunities to learn more about your heritage while also creating special family experiences. For example, decide how you can celebrate the 4th of July, our declaration of independence from England, in a way that could really focus on its importance. What could make it a memorable family experience that everyone in your family will look forward to each year? Most monthly calendars include holidays. You could also research holidays on the web. Go to the *Fact Monster Holidays in America* for a listing and description:

<http://www.factmonster.com/spot/holidays.html>

20. Set Up a Holiday Bulletin Board

There are holidays throughout the year. Each of them involves events important in our heritage. A nice way to celebrate them is to establish a *Holiday Bulletin Board*. As each holiday comes up, have the family create an appropriate bulletin board of pictures, drawings, stories, and comments that would help bring to everyone's attention the purpose of the holiday. In between established holidays, you could still decide on historical events that occurred during the month and give them recognition by creating appropriate bulletin boards.

21. Choose a Hero of the Month

Select a hero of the month. It is important the family chooses and feels ownership in the selection. You could make your selection after browsing through an encyclopedia. You might go to the *My Hero* web site at <http://myhero.com/myhero/go/theteachersroom/calendar.asp>. Here you will find a great selection of candidates for each day and month of the year. Read together an article on the selected person. For example, you might choose Johann Gutenberg (1398-1468) who was the inventor of movable type in printing. This made printing books economical and therefore available to all. What effect did this have? Find or have your family draw several appropriate pictures and place them on your *Learning/Teaching Wall*. Gather information for a week or two. Go to the library and see what books and materials you can find. Do some online research. Think of creative ways to celebrate this person's contributions. You might make table decorations out of books or book covers. Each member could check a book out of the library. Have an evening sharing your books with each other and enjoying delicious snacks and foods. Look up *PRINTING* in an encyclopedia. Go to some *how to* web sites. One good one is *KinderArt.Com*. The following web address takes you to that web site on a page that shows you how to do *Linoleum Block Prints*. <http://www.kinderart.com/printmaking/lino.shtml> Try it as a family. Write a family newsletter and send it as an email to extended family members and friends. Discuss how the technology available today makes printing and distributing information so much easier.

22. Teach to Learn

Have each family member participate in teaching others some of the concepts and areas of information he or she is learning. Is your child learning about the bones in the human body? Have him or her teach the family about it. This could be a regular part of your *Family Activity Time*. You could go over what the child will teach the family by reviewing what is being learned at school or home, and together selecting one or two subjects. Help your child prepare the lesson along with any visuals that may be desirable. The very expectation that you are expected to teach what you learn has substantial benefits and increases learning power.

23. Occasionally Watch the News Together

An easy, automatic way to increase general knowledge is to watch a favorite news program or a selected public broadcasting system program as a family. Share opinions and discuss what is happening in the world. Encourage questions. Locate your set of encyclopedias near the television set so family members can look up more information when needed.

24. Read and Share the Newspaper

The newspaper is a fantastic tool for building fund of information. It covers almost every area, is written to appeal to a wide span of interests and ages, and comes right to your home with fresh information each day. Take time to go through the newspaper together and discuss articles of interest. As questions come up, use your encyclopedia or favorite research methods to search for

more information. Make it a habit to read at least one article aloud. Have part of your regular family conversation be, *what's in the news today?* A great web resource is *Time for Kids*: <http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/teachers> Short, interesting articles that appeal to children are included on a weekly basis. Teaching resources including worksheets, mini-lessons, and graphic organizers are available for K-1, 2-3, and 4-6 grade levels. Take time to explore the wealth of possibilities for interesting family activities and discussions.

25. Follow Interesting News Stories

Take turns having the responsibility to follow a news story as it develops each day and report to the family on it during dinner. If there are no new developments in the story, then a new story is taken to follow and report.

26. Read Something Interesting to Your Family Each Day

Make it a habit to read something of interest you find in a newspaper, magazine, or book aloud to family members. There are many fascinating things to know in life. Share that excitement with your family. Encourage your children to notice and bring reading selections of their own to the family's attention.

27. Talk about What You Read

Make it a tradition in your family for each person to share what he or she is reading and the thoughts that are generated. It may even stimulate other members of the family to read the same book or article.

28. Read with a Pencil

Thomas Carlyle once wrote, *The true university of these days is a collection of books!* Get the most out of your reading by jotting down good ideas when they come up, or information you want to remember. Share what you learn with other family members.

29. Choose a Subject of the Month

As a family, select a subject of the month. Read articles in an encyclopedia about the subject or use your favorite research methods. Visit the library and check out books and recordings. For example, you may decide to learn about different musical instruments or types of music. It is important that the subject you select is one the family as a whole supports.

30. Establish an Experience Table

Give your child opportunities to see, feel, hear, and do new things. Learning is easier when we are able to relate what is new to things already known or experienced. One simple idea is to create an *experience table or shelf*. Frequently place items there for family members to examine, such as gadgets, interesting tools, plants, pictures, recordings, rocks, variety of materials, seeds, etc. There is no end to the possibilities. When you notice something interesting, bring it home and place in on your *experience table*. You might place a sign to *PLEASE TOUCH*.

31. Appreciate Exact Words

Get in the habit of using specific and exact words for things and actions, and check fairly often what your child thinks particular words mean. Use your dictionary, encyclopedias, and other

reference books often. It is difficult to hold onto or use information without the right words to refer to that information.

32. Determine a Positive Reading/Learning/TV Ratio

There is a direct relationship between reduced television watching and high grades and achievement. Establish a positive reading/watching television ratio in your home. Quality programs scheduled beforehand at the beginning of the week may be watched for free, but beyond scheduled and agreed upon programs, each family member is expected to spend more time reading, writing, or doing computer work than watching unscheduled television. You will see significant growth within the first week. Imagine the effect if you continued to do this during the coming months and years.

33. Read School Textbooks Together

If you wish to strengthen your child's general knowledge, take a few minutes a day and read together out of his or her school textbooks. Take time to talk about the meaning of words, check understanding of basic concepts, and encourage your child to ask questions. Don't feel you have to cover a lot of pages, and don't rush through the pages you do read. Take a few notes that you can review together later. Spend only as much time as you can set aside on a regular basis. Much of the payoff will be from setting the regular expectation that there will be time set aside each day for this activity. Your child will begin to ask more questions and become more involved in directing his or her own learning efforts.

34. Set Basic Facts Challenges

Each week post a list of basic facts members of the family are challenged to memorize by the end of the week. Young children might learn the days of the week, months of the year, their telephone number and address, etc. Older members might memorize the continents, oceans, presidents of the United States in order, the different musical instruments and how they sound (e.g. *Peter and the Wolf*), basic wood working tools, breeds of dogs, and types of trees. The possibilities are endless. Refer to your encyclopedia for ideas.

35. Visit the Library Regularly

Schedule a family visit to the library at least once a month. Spend an hour there. Encourage each member of the family to explore personal interests and check out one or more books. Everyone should also spend some time in the periodical section and see if there are any interesting articles to read in the current issues of their favorite magazines. When you get back home, have some dessert, and share what each person learned.

36. Train Effective Use of Library & Reference Sources

Have everyone in your family become thoroughly trained in how to use books, encyclopedias, libraries, and computer on-line searches. It will pay off through the years many thousands of times more than the time it takes to do the initial training. Here is an example on using books:

- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- Glossary

- Copyright
- List of Charts, Illustrations, or Maps
- Index
- Introduction, Forward, or Preface

Your local librarian would be happy to provide your family with an introduction to the library.

37. Yellow Pages Field Trips

Browse through the yellow pages of your phone book and then decide on one or more places listed to visit with your child. For example, you might visit an automobile showroom, a lumberyard, a printing shop, a golf shop, or a dairy. You might want to take along a digital camera or camcorder and record some pictures to talk about later.

38. Show and Tell

Schedule one evening a month to do what schools have found to be one of the most popular activities in the early grades, that of *show and tell*. Each member of the family is to bring one item to show the rest of the family and discuss. Preschoolers can share their newest toys or games; adults could share their hobbies, what is going on at work, or involvement with volunteer activities.

39. Talk with People and Learn About Their Experiences and Interests

The more we actively engage in conversation, the more we learn from other people. Of course, the type of people we associate with makes a great difference. Give your children opportunities to talk to a variety of people about their interests and occupations. Include your children in adult conversations.

40. Create Interesting Scrapbooks

Make it a family hobby to make interesting scrapbooks, notebooks, or collections, such as: leaves, flowers, trees, animals, stamps, baseball, rocks, weather, cars, and airplanes.

41. Make Special Posters

Have available a large roll of paper, along with marking pens, crayons, and paints. Each month decide on a special topic, such as a Famous Historical Event, Science Information (e.g. Food Chains), Good Health and Nutrition, Physical Exercise and Benefits. Family researches the subject and makes a poster illustrating what they found. Place the poster in the house where everyone can see it, and talk about it frequently.

42. Take Turns Giving Five-Minute Lessons

Give your children teaching opportunities. One of the best ways to really learn something well is to teach it to others. Review one or more volumes of your set of encyclopedias. Write down topics for family members according to interest and readability. Each player selects one of the topics and prepares a five-minute lesson on it.

43. Carry Memory Cards

Write some important general knowledge facts on an index card for each member of the family. Each person should have facts that are appropriate to him or her. Each person carries his or her card around during the week and memorizes the facts written on it. One or more times each day, members of the family quiz each other on their facts. A variation is to give each person a card with appropriate facts on it at the beginning of a trip. Challenge each family member to learn the facts on his or her card by the time the trip is over, or before a certain destination is reached. Memory cards could be kept in a file box for periodic review.

44. Read Stories of Famous People

Make it a family habit to read stories and books about famous people. Books like: *Crowns of Thorns and Glory* by Gerry Van Der Heuvel, which is the story of Mary Todd Lincoln and Varina Howell Davis, who were the two Presidential First Ladies of the Civil War. Reading the book not only gives you an increased awareness of what life was like during the Civil War period, but also generates empathy for the people who become alive as you read. An illustrated encyclopedia is an excellent resource because it often includes pictures and examples. It is relatively easy now to find out about any famous person by doing an online search. Each person's story adds to our awareness of our past, and our potential for the future.

45. Take Learning on Trips

Make it a habit to add learning and experience into each family outing. What will we concentrate on learning during this trip? Who will do what? What preparation and materials do we need? Example: trees. Read about trees. Try to identify some of the trees during your trip to the store. Keep a log of your experiences, and questions that come up.

46. Extended Family Learning Letters

If you are fortunate to have caring relatives and friends who would like to participate positively in your family's development, start an exchange of learning letters. Part of the letters could be the usual social type, but part (maybe on different colored paper) could be related to learning. Your child could write letters indicating his or her recent learning experiences and interests and include one or more questions. The relative could answer back with his or her own recent learning experiences and interests, respond to your child's questions, and then include one or more questions. Grandparents might particularly enjoy this way of being positively involved in their grandchildren's lives and development.

47. Pure Uninterrupted Reading Time

Make it a habit in your family to have a regular time that everyone in the family reads if they are home. It could be right after dinner or some other activity, or it could be a set time, like 9 o'clock every evening. It could be as little as 15 minutes. Avoid distractions as much as possible, such as phone calls or conversation other than sharing what is read. Children too young to read could have books read to them, or they could look through their picture books.

48. Increase Reading Speed by Using the Double Method

Increase the rate of information flow while reading by using and teaching the technique of seeing and reading silently two words (or more) at a time instead of one. With a little practice, it is just as easy and fast to read silently two words, as it is to read one word. You will effectively double your reading speed, and along with it you double your information flow.

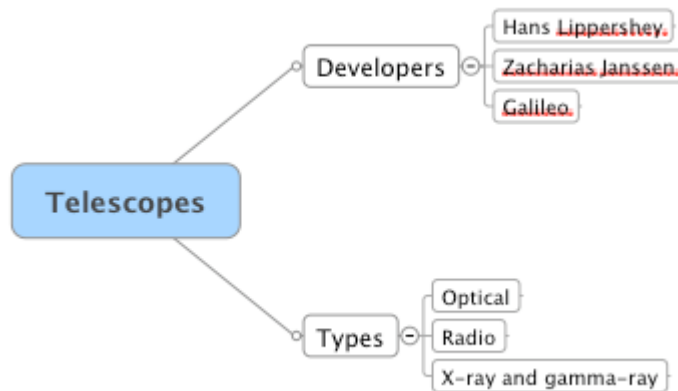
49. Write in the Margins

Use the margins of the books you read to write notes or stimulus words of items you want to remember. It will then be easier to review and put it into your long-term memory. Also of value would be to include any thoughts or questions that come up in your mind that you might want to pursue further.

50. Create Mind Maps of Articles or Book Chapters

Select an article or book chapter a week or month to read together, and then make a mind map of it to place on your *Learning/Teaching Wall*. A mind map (sometimes called visual note-taking) is a simple way to write notes. There are almost no rules. You simply draw a small oval in the middle of a sheet of paper and write the title of the subject. Each main point becomes a line from the oval, and each piece of information related to it becomes an offshoot. It is not necessary to write all the facts, just the ones you want to put into your long-term memory. For examples, go to:

<http://www.mind-mapping.co.uk/mind-maps-examples.htm>.



51. Physical Exercise

Add Mental to

Mental exercise is just as important as physical exercise. During or after each physical exercise session, challenge yourself to recall or memorize specific areas of information.

Verbal Information & Alertness Games to Play

52. INFO-GRAB

Players each write 25 or more famous names of people, characters, animals, events, bits of information, or dates on small slips of paper. The slips of paper are folded and placed in a paper bag. Players are divided into two teams. Teams take turns trying to identify as many of the slips as they can in one minute. A member of the playing team takes one slip at a time from the bag and gives his or her team clues until they guess the right answer. That slip is set aside to tally at the end of the game. At any time, the clue giver can give up on a slip and select another. The same person keeps drawing slips and giving clues until time is called. The teams then reverse roles. While one team is playing, the other team times them and makes sure the rules are followed. Team members take turns being the clue giver. The game ends when all the slips are guessed, time is

called, or each team has had a pre-determined number of turns. Team with the highest number of correctly identified slips wins.

53. TIMED FLASH CARDS

Make or buy flash cards containing the facts you want memorized. Use your child's schoolbooks, an encyclopedia, or one of the dictionaries of cultural literacy now available. You could also prepare cards on the information your child will need for an upcoming test. For each card, write a question on one side, and the answer on the other side. Schedule a regular time each day to go through the flash cards. Each time a player gets a question right, place the card in a separate learned pile. When he or she misses, identify the correct answer, and then place the card back somewhere in the playing deck so it will come up again. Continue until all cards, including cards that were missed previously, are correctly answered. How much time did it take? Write it down. See if the cards can be successfully gone through in a shorter time tomorrow. Do this until the whole deck can be answered correctly without a single miss. Celebrate the accomplishment. Prepare a new deck, but keep the old deck to review occasionally. For best results, have a regular time for this activity, like right after dinner or just before breakfast.

54. FLASH CARD TURNOVER

Each player is given ten flash cards, each with a question on one side and the answer on the back. Cards should be prepared according to the current learning needs of each player. Players may study their cards for a few minutes before the start of the game. Each player places his cards with question side up in a horizontal row in front of him. On a turn, a player rolls two dice and may either add or subtract the two numbers. This indicates the card he may try to answer and turn over. For example, if a 2 and a 3 are rolled, a player could try to answer either the #5 (2+3) or the #1 (3-2) question. If the question is answered correctly, the card is turned over with the answer face up. If incorrect, player reviews answer and then places card back so only the question shows. He may get a chance on that question again on a later roll of the dice. First player to turn over all of his or her cards wins the game.

55. INFORMATION CARD CAPTURE

Prepare a deck of cards with questions on one side and the answer on the other. Shuffle the cards, and deal twenty to each player. One player attacks while the other player defends. The defending player shows his cards (question side showing) one at a time. If the attacking person answers the question correctly, he captures the card and adds it to his pile. The card should be placed at the top of his deck so it will come up first when it is his turn to defend. This creates the repetitions needed for *over-learning* or *mastery*. If the answer is not known, player realizes it will come up again soon, so the answer when revealed lingers in his mind. A player continues capturing cards until he makes a mistake. When this happens, the other player becomes the attacker and gets his chance to capture cards. Cards are captured back and forth until one player winds up with all the cards, or has the most cards when time is called. Differences in ages or ability could be evened up by having the player with the higher ability limited to winning only a certain number of cards on any one turn. Select information from what your child needs to memorize for his or her next social studies or science test, or perhaps what was missed on the last test. What would be interesting or important for members of the family to learn? You could also prepare question cards from an article in your encyclopedia. Add to your cards over the coming weeks and months.

The following is a set to get you started: states and their capitals. Support the game occasionally with reading about the states and their capitals in your encyclopedia. Combine this game with a United States puzzle to do as a family to get a good frame of reference. Talk about places you have visited or would like to visit.

Alabama (Montgomery)
Alaska (Juneau)
Arizona (Phoenix)
Arkansas ((Little Rock)
California (Sacramento)
Colorado (Denver)
Connecticut (Hartford)
Delaware (Dover)
Florida (Tallahassee)
George (Atlanta)
Hawaii (Honolulu)
Idaho (Boise)
Illinois (Springfield)
Indiana (Indianapolis)
Iowa (Des Moines)
Kansas (Topeka)
Kentucky (Frankfort)
Louisiana (Baton Rouge)
Maine (Augusta)
Maryland (Annapolis)
Massachusetts (Boston)
Michigan (Lansing)
Minnesota (Saint Paul)
Mississippi (Jackson)
Missouri (Jefferson City)
Montana (Helena)
Nebraska (Lincoln)
Nevada (Carson City)
New Hampshire (Concord)
New Jersey (Trenton)
New Mexico (Santa Fe)
New York (Albany)
North Carolina (Raleigh)
North Dakota (Bismarck)
Ohio (Columbus)
Oklahoma (Oklahoma
City)
Oregon (Salem)
Pennsylvania (Harrisburg)
Rhode Island (Providence)
South Carolina (Columbia)
South Dakota (Pierre)
Tennessee (Nashville)
Texas (Austin)
Utah (Salt Lake City)
Vermont (Montpelier)
Virginia (Richmond)

Washington (Olympia)
West Virginia (Charleston)
Wisconsin (Madison)
Wyoming (Cheyenne)

56. TIME HIT

Prepare several dozen cards. Write an event like landing of Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock, start of Civil War, Louisiana Purchase on one side of card, the year on the other. Shuffle and place cards event side up. The event on top is read and players say a year they think is right for the event. The card is turned over and player who says the right year first, or whose guess is closest, wins the card. If two or more players come up with the same winning year at the same time, the card is placed to the side. The first of those players to win a new card wins the previously tied one. Player winning the most cards wins the game. Game may also be played with date side up and players naming event. The following are some events and dates to get you started. The usual way of getting events, though, should involve looking them up in an encyclopedia, textbook or on-line, talking about them, and then preparing the cards.

Jamestown Established (1607)
Pilgrims Land at Plymouth (1620)
Dutch Establish New Netherlands (1624)
Puritans Arrive Massachusetts (1628)
Lord Baltimore Founds Maryland (1634)
Roger Williams Founds Rhode Island (1636)
English Capture New Amsterdam (1664)
William Penn Founds Pennsylvania (1681)
French & Indian War Starts (1754)
French & Indian War Ends (1763)
British Enact Sugar Act (1764)
British Enact Stamp Act (1765)
British Enact Townshend Act (1767)
Boston Massacre (1770)
Committees of Correspondence (1772)
Boston Tea Party (1773)
"Intolerable Acts" (1774)
Minutemen fight at Lexington (1775)
Declaration of Independence (1776)
John Paul Jones defeats "Serapis" (1779)
Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown (1781)
Constitution ratified (1788)
George Washington becomes first President (1789)
John Adams becomes second President (1797)
Thomas Jefferson becomes President (1801)
Importation of slaves prohibited (1808)
War of 1812 (1812)

57. SOCIAL STUDIES & SCIENCE ABC'S

Players first write all letters of the alphabet except X and Z down the left hand side of their papers. Leader identifies a social studies or science category, such as famous people in American history, famous events, or geographical locations (cities, rivers, national monuments, etc.), elements in the periodic table. Players have ten minutes to write a name for as many of the letters as possible.

Player with the most complete list wins. The game could be played with teams and/or allowing use of reference books. The example below is for geographical names.

Alabama
Boston
Cuba
Denmark
Erie
France
Germany
Holland
Iceland
Japan
Kansas
Louisiana
Montana
Nevada
Ohio
Pennsylvania
Quebec
Rhode Island
Seattle
Tahoe
Utah
Vermont
Washington
Yugoslavia

58. MEMORY MATCH GAMES

Write a question on one card, and the answer on another card. Prepare 20 or more sets. You could use cards from other games in this section. Shuffle cards, and place face down spread out. Each player in turn is allowed to turn over two cards. If the cards match (question on one card fits the answer on the other), the player takes both cards, and gets another turn. If they don't match, the cards are placed back face down, and next player gets a turn. Player with the most cards when all cards are won wins the game. Other possibilities include matching famous dates with the name of the event, or famous people with their accomplishments.

59. INFORMATION SCAN

This game is for two or more players. You will need to prepare two identical sets of fact cards. Keep in separate decks. Shuffle both decks, and then place the cards from one of the decks answer side up in rows so they may be seen and reached by all players. Leader shuffles the other deck, and then reads one of the questions. Players race to be first to touch the correct answer card. A player may only touch one answer card on a play. If he touches the wrong one, he may not then try to touch the right one. First player to touch the right answer card wins the question card just read. The answer card should be left on the table. If no one touches the correct card, the leader identifies it, and the question card is put back in the question deck to come up later. Leader reads a new question, and the game continues. Player winning the most cards wins.

60. CHAIN REACTION

Choose a category to start the game, such as famous people, events, geographical places, animals. First player writes a name. Next player writes another name, but it has to start with the last letter of the previous name. See how far it can go. Any player not able to come up with a new name on his or her turn is out of the game. The game could also be played with each player or team trying to make as long a string of names as possible, and is allowed to try new attempts within a certain time limit.

Example: category is famous people (last names or first and last names may be used). Washington - Newton - Nebuchadnezzar - Roger Williams - etc. Teams could be given 5 minutes to look through encyclopedias or textbooks before the game starts. Every 5 minutes thereafter, teams could be given 60 seconds to look through books again.

61. BIOGRAPHY RUMMY

Prepare sets of four identifying phrases for each of 13 famous people. The four phrases should be written on nametag stickers, and placed on regular playing cards having the same number or value. For example, the first identifying phrase for Norman Rockwell could be leading American illustrator (Ace of diamonds), born February 3, 1894 (Ace of Hearts), drew pictures of children, elderly people, and dogs in amusing situations (Ace of Spades), and many of his works appeared in the Saturday Evening Post (Ace of Clubs). Do the same for twelve other famous people. Shuffle the cards, and deal seven to each player. Remaining cards are placed face down in the center of the table. This pile becomes the STOCK. The top card from the stock is turned face up and placed beside it. This starts the discard pile. The object of the game is to make books or sequences. BOOKS consist of three or more cards related to each other, such as aces or sevens. Three or more

cards of the same suit in numerical order make a SEQUENCE, such as 3, 4, and 5 of diamonds or 9, 10, and Jack of Spades. Players take turns doing the following:

- Draws a card from the stock or any top cards from the discard pile. He can take as many from the top card down as he wishes, but must not leave any cards in between and must use the last card taken.
- Place any BOOKS or SEQUENCES in his hand on the table if he so desires.
- Ends his turn by placing one card from his hand face up on the discard pile.
- A player goes out when he uses all of the cards in his hand. The player going out receives ten bonus points. All players then count their points for that deal. They do this by counting one point for each of their cards on the table that are in books or sequences, and subtracting from that any cards remaining in their hands. Play then resumes with a new deal. First player to score 100 points wins the game.

62. PRESIDENTIAL LINE-UP

Prepare one card for each president. The card should contain the name of the president and his number position (Washington was 1st, John Adams was 2nd, etc.). The number position is used in the game, but also list the years in office so the players may visualize the time periods better. President Grover Cleveland will require two cards, and two number positions, as he was elected president for two non-successive terms. An excellent idea would be to read together articles on presidents of the United States found in an encyclopedia. If you can find pictures of the presidents, you might paste or tape them on your playing cards. *Fact Monster* has a chart identifying all the presidents at <http://www.factmonster.com/ce6/history/A0840075.html>. *Kid Info* not only lists the presidents but also contains a wealth of other information about each one, including a picture. http://www.kidinfo.com/American_History/Presidents.html

- (1) George Washington (1789-1797)
- (2) John Adams (1797-1801)
- (3) Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809)
- (4) James Madison (1809-1817)
- (5) James Monroe (1817-1825)
- (6) John Quincy Adams (1825-1829)
- (7) Andrew Jackson (1829-1837)
- (8) Martin Van Buren (1837-1841)
- (9) William Henry Harrison (1841)
- (10) John Tyler (1841-1845)
- (11) James K. Polk (1845-1849)
- (12) Zachary Taylor (1849-1850)
- (13) Millard Fillmore (1850-1853)
- (14) Franklin Pierce (1853-1857)
- (15) James Buchanan (1857-1861)
- (16) Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865)
- (17) Andrew Johnson (1865-1869)
- (18) Ulysses S. Grant (1869-1877)
- (19) Rutherford B. Hayes (1877-1881)
- (20) James A. Garfield (1881)
- (21) Chester Alan Arthur (1881-1885)

- (22) Grover Cleveland (1885-1889)
- (23) Benjamin Harrison (1889-1893)
- (24) Grover Cleveland (1893-1897)
- (25) William McKinley (1897-1901)
- (26) Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909)
- (27) William Howard Taft (1909-1913)
- (28) Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921)
- (29) Warren G. Harding (1921-1923)
- (30) Calvin Coolidge (1923-1929)
- (31) Herbert Hoover (1929-1933)
- (32) Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933-1945)
- (33) Harry S. Truman (1945-1953)
- (34) Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-1961)
- (35) John F. Kennedy (1961-1963)
- (36) Lyndon Bains Johnson (1963-1969)
- (37) Richard M. Nixon (1969-1974)
- (38) Gerald R. Ford (1974-1977)
- (39) James Earl Carter, Jr. (1977-1981)
- (40) Ronald Wilson Reagan (1981-1989)
- (41) George Bush (1989-1993)
- (42) William Clinton (1993-2001)
- (43) George W. Bush (2001-2009)

Shuffle the cards and deal seven to each player. Players place their cards face up in a horizontal line in front of them in the same order received. Players may not move their cards around. The object of the game is to be first to have cards in correct sequential order from earliest to latest. A player does this by taking a card on each turn from the top of the undealt deck, and using it to replace any of the cards in his line-up. He discards the card that is replaced. Whenever a player's line-up of presidents is in correct sequence from earliest to latest, he calls out *LINE-UP* and wins the game. The presidents in his line-up need to be in order, but gaps are allowed. For example: Thomas Jefferson - Andrew Jackson - James K. Polk - Abraham Lincoln - Andrew Johnson - Woodrow Wilson - Harry S. Truman would win.

63. PRESIDENTIAL MATCH-UP

Prepare another set of cards containing an historical event for each of the president cards used in PRESIDENTIAL LINE-UP. The historical event cards are shuffled and placed face down in rows; the president cards are also shuffled and placed face down in another set of rows. Player on a turn turns over one historical event card, and one president card. If they match (the event occurred during a president's term), he wins both cards. Player gets another turn. If they don't match, the cards are turned back over to their facedown positions, and the next player gets a turn. Player with the most cards at the end of the game wins. The game could also be played with more than one event card for each president. In that way, players could continually add to their general knowledge by researching new events and including them in future games. When played this way, the president card is always put back on the table after a match so it can be used again.

64. PRESIDENTIAL CLAIMS

Shuffle president cards and put in stack. Shuffle event cards and put in stack. Deal seven president cards to each player. Player holds cards in hand so he can refer to them. On a turn, player turns over the top card from the event stack. If he is able to match that event with a president card in his hand, he takes both cards and puts them in his win stack. If a player, on his turn, cannot match the event card he turns up with one of his president cards, he leaves the card face up, and it is the next player's turn. That player can either use the face-up card already there, or may turn over a new one. If he can't match it, he leaves that card face-up. Game continues until a player is able to go out of the game by using all of his president cards. He gets 10 points for going out. Players then count their winning cards. Each winning card counts as one point. Player with the highest total of points wins the game. Points could be accumulative from game to game. The series could be a certain number of games, or the winner could be first person to reach 100 points. Each president card left in a player's hand could be subtracted from that player's score. Occasionally, research and add new event cards.

65. PICFACTS

You are probably familiar with the game of *Pictionary*, a fun game available commercially. It can provide many hours of valuable interaction with words and phrases. You play *Picfacts* in a similar way, but with facts you write on cards to use in the game. For example, you could prepare cards for historical events such as the American Revolution or the Boston Tea Party. In this case, players draw pictures to help their team guess the correct historical event. For variation, players could act them out in pantomime.

66. BULLETIN BOARD QUESTION CARDS DRAW (?)

Place question cards on your *Learning/Teaching Wall* or bulletin board. Leave them up for a week. Players research answers. At the end of the week, place the cards in a sack, and allow each person to draw one card. If the person can answer the question drawn correctly, he or she wins a prize. All questions and their answers are then discussed. Use your encyclopedia often.

67. AROUND THE WORLD WITH FACTS

Play this game the same way it is done with a basketball, but you will use Information Fact cards you prepare ahead of time. For each card, write a question on one side, and the answer on the other. Examples: Name the months of the year. Who was the third president of the United States? In what direction does the sun set? Shuffle the cards and place them question side up in a stack. Also place coins on the table to represent places around the *key* (a zone on a basketball court near the basket) at which questions will be asked. A player starts at one side next to the basket. If he successfully answers the first question, he moves to the next coin and tries that question. If he misses, he may try the next question, but if it missed, he must go all the way back to the beginning and wait until it is his turn again. This can be avoided by not taking a second chance. Then, when it is his turn again, he begins from the position where he left off. Questions are always at random. The player able to get around the world first wins. Longer games require players to come back around the world before winning.

68. HISTORICAL EVENTS LINE-UP

Play this game like PRESIDENTIAL LINE-UP, only you will use historical event cards. Prepare a set of cards containing the events and years of some important category. For example, you could prepare cards concerning women's rights, fair trials, wars, development of transportation,

inventions. Pursue interests of family members. You might start out by reading an article on INVENTIONS in your encyclopedia. The following link will take you to an About.Com site that contains information about hundreds of famous inventions listed alphabetically.

<http://inventors.about.com/od/astartinventions/a/FamousInvention.htm> The following inventions could be written on cards and used to play the game.

Airplane (1903) by Orville & Wilbur Wright (U.S.A.)
Barometer (1643) by Evangelista Torricelli (Italy)
Electric battery (1800) by A. Volta (Italy)
Bicycle (1840) by K. Macmillan (Scotland)
Cotton Gin (1793) by Eli Whitney (U.S.A.)
Dynamite (1865) by Alfred Noble (Sweden)
Internal-combustion engine (1860) by J. Lenoir (France)
Jet engine (1936) by Frank Whittle (England)
Kite (1000 B.C.) by Unknown person (China)
Lightning rod (1752) by B. Franklin (American Colonies)
Magnetic compass (1200's) by Unknown person (China)
Movie projector (1888) by Thomas Edison (U.S.A.)
Nuclear reactor (1942) by Fermi & others (U.S.A.)
Nylon (1936) by Wallace Carothers (U.S.A.)
Paper (1st century) by Tsai Lun (China)
Phonograph (1877) by Thomas Edison (U.S.A.)
Polaroid camera (1947) by Edwin Land (U.S.A.)
Power loom (1786) by Edmund Cartwright (England)
Printing - movable type (1440) by J. Gutenberg (Germany)
Quick-freezing food (1924) by C. Birdseye (U.S.A.)
Radar (1936) by R.A. Watson-Watt (England)
Radio - wireless (1896) by Guglielmo Marconi (England)
Telegraph (1837) Samuel Morse (U.S.A.)
Safety razor (1895) by King Gillette (U.S.A.)
Reaper (1835) by Cyrus McCormick (U.S.A.)
Safety pin (1849) by Walter Hunt (U.S.A.)
Sewing machine (1845) by Elias Howe (U.S.A.)
Telephone (1876) by Alexander Graham Bell (U.S.A.)
Television (1923) by Vladimir Zworykin (U.S.A.)
Transistor (1948) by Bardeen, Brattain, & Shockley (U.S.A.)
Video recorder (1956) by Charles Ginsberg & others (U.S.A.)
Vulcanization of rubber (1839) by C. Goodyear (U.S.A.)
Washing machine (1851) by J.T. King (U.S.A.)
Water wheel (1st Century B.C.) by Unknown person (Roman Empire)
Windmill (700's) by Unknown person (Persia)
X-ray tube (1895) by Wilhelm Roentgen (Germany)
Xerography - photocopying (1942) by C. Carlson (U.S.A.)
Zipper (1896) by W.L. Judson (U.S.A.)

As you have time during the coming weeks, look up the events in your encyclopedia or online and read them together as a family.

69. FACT-A-DAY STRINGS

Each member of the family is challenged to learn one new fact a day for as many days in a row as possible. A good time for everyone to announce their new fact, and to demonstrate they still remember all previous facts in the current fact-a-day string is during or right after dinner. Celebrate everyone's achievements and encourage each other to keep the string going. As soon as one person is unable to remember a fact previously learned, the string starts again.

70. ADD-A-FACT

Each night at dinnertime, family members take turns adding a fact that the family is to remember. Mom might start it on the first night by presenting the fact that the sun sets in the west. The next night, the family has to answer correctly the question of what direction does the sun set. Dad might add the next fact.

71. WHO OR WHAT EVENT AM I?

Players take turns pretending they are a famous, historical person or event. Pretending player first indicates whether he or she is a person or event. Other players may ask questions that may be answered yes or no. After each unsuccessful answer, the pretending player must identify one letter of the famous person's last name, but it doesn't have to be in order. After all letters of the last name are revealed, then letters of the first name are given. If player is pretending to be an event, then he or she must indicate how many words are in the identifying title of the event, and must indicate in which of the words each letter given is located. If the person or event is not guessed correctly by the time all letters are identified, then the pretending player reveals who or what he was. Players could think up their own historical people and events, or they could be placed on cards and drawn at random.

72. INFORMATION BINGO

Prepare two identical sets of information cards. Each card should have a question written in large print on one side, and the answer on the other side. The two sets of cards, using the same questions and answers should be easily recognized so they can be separated if they get mixed together. This can be done by using different size cards, using a different colored pen, placing a special mark on one deck, or using print on one deck and cursive on the other. Preparing the question and answer cards can be done at a separate time from playing the games. You will need at least 25 cards per person playing. Four players would require 100 cards. Take one set, shuffle the cards, and deal 25 cards to each player. Players place their cards answer side up in 5 rows of 5 cards each. Players may study their cards before the game actually begins, but not once the game has begun. The leader shuffles the other deck of cards, and places them question side up in a single pile. Leader reads the top question card. Players check their cards to see if they have the correct answer card. Only one player will have the right card. In fact, on some plays no one will have the right card if not all of the first deck of cards are used. Player with the right card turns it over so the question side is up. If a player turns over an incorrect card, he or she is not allowed to turn over another one on that play even if the correct card is one of their other unplayed cards. Play continues with new question cards read until a player wins the game by being first to have a row of five cards horizontal, vertical, or diagonal with question sides face up.

73. INFORMATION CHECKERS

Place small, removable stickers on the playing squares of a regular checkerboard. Write a suitable question on each sticker that would be important for the players to learn or know, and involve very brief answers. For example: When did the Civil War begin? What are the three branches of the U.S. government? Place checkers as usual on the board, and play like regular checkers, but players must answer the question on any square before landing on it.

74. SCENES FROM HISTORY

Players draw a picture of an historical event. Other players try to guess what it is. Or, instead of drawing, players could act out a scene such as Paul Revere's ride in pantomime. Don't give any spoken hints.

75. MASTERY PARTY

Each member of the family declares a fund of information challenge. Some examples are: counting to fifty, memorizing the presidents of the United States, foreign language vocabulary.

76. SCRAMBLE

Prepare a deck of cards. On half of the cards write a problem, math fact, word, etc. On the other half of the cards write down the answer or definition. Played solitaire, the player shuffles the cards and sees how fast he can put the pairs together correctly. Two or more players could be given twenty seconds a turn to match as many cards as possible during that time. Player keeps all cards correctly matched. Player with the most cards when all the cards have been matched wins

Tests

Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (Information subtest). Item analysis of the **Stanford Binet Intelligence Test**. *Peabody Individual Achievement Test* (General Knowledge subtest). Item analysis of the *Slosson Intelligence Test*. Analysis of *Woodcock-Johnson Cognitive Test*. Analysis of *Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude* (Various levels and editions).