



Ten Things Your Child Should Know: 5th Grade (Volume 5)

Danita Smith

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Have you ever wondered if your child was developing important skills in school?

I have had several experiences that have inspired me to write this book series. For me, my first and foremost inspiration was my own desire to educate my son. I believe strongly that raising my son is one of the most important things I will do in my life.

In addition, several other experiences have driven home for me the need to address the lapses in our children's education in this book.

On one specific occasion, I was helping a teenager find a part-time job so that she could earn extra money during the summer and not have to ask her parents for funds. We went around to several stores—shoe stores, record stores, and fast food restaurants. When we finally found a place she liked, we sat down to fill out the application. There was a part of the application that required her to write some information about herself. I realized as we began writing that this young lady had trouble putting her words into sentences—even just two sentences. I helped her think about what she wanted to say and the kinds of things an employer might want to know about her, but it was obvious that she hadn't developed the skills to even begin to approach this task with confidence. She was going into her senior year in high school.

What was surprising about this entire situation was what happened when she went back to school for her senior year. She told me that she was participating in a work study program, which would last for a half-day of school on most days. The work study program was at a local dry cleaners and she said she was told this would help her gain real skills that she could use upon graduation. I thought, "She had trouble writing two sentences on a sheet of paper, but she's taking dry cleaning to prepare her for life after graduation?"

For some of our children who do graduate, questions are being raised about how much they truly know about the subjects they were taught and how well they are actually prepared to go on to college.

I wasn't surprised by some of these reports because, as I have said, I have seen it with my own eyes. I think it's time we do something about it as parents, regardless of whether or not local or state governments come to the rescue.

What if you could ask yourself a series of questions that would help you assess whether your child is learning key skills in reading, writing, and math as he or she progresses through school?

What if you had a list of activities that you could do with your child at home that would help reinforce the skills he or she will learn in class?

This book may be able to help.

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