



Questions to Ask Your Elementary School Age Child About School That Encourage More Than One Word Responses

Has this ever happened to you? You ask your child, “How was school today?”, and your child responds, “Okay.” You ask your child, “What did you learn in school today?”, and the response is, “Nothing.” Both questions are answered with one word and then the conversation is over. You want to know more about your child’s day in school, yet with the single word responses given by your child, you know no more about the school day’s events than you did before you posed the questions. Given the short responses offered by your child, how can you possibly gauge what your child is experiencing throughout the school day? Maybe a change is needed in the questions you pose.

Here is a list of questions you can ask instead of the typical questions, “How was school today?”, or “What did you learn in school today?” A simple rephrasing of these two questions can create a conversation with your child that requires more than one word responses.

1. What happened at school today that made you happy?
2. What happened at school today that made you laugh?
3. What was the best part of school today? What made it the best?
4. What would you change about school today if you could? Why do you want this change and how can you make it happen?
5. Tell me about lunch. Who did you sit with? What did you talk about? What did you like about lunch today? If you could change something about lunch, what would it be?
6. What was easy for you to do in school today? What made it easy for you?
7. What was difficult for you to do today? How can you make this easier? Is there a strategy you can use? Who can you ask for help?
8. What activities did you choose during recess or independent time? Were you happy with your choice?
9. Could you find everything that you needed for your classes today? Did you use any strategies to help you find these things? OR Where did you have difficulty finding things? How can you fix this situation?
10. Did anyone do something special for you today? Did you do anything special for someone today? What could you have done special for someone?

Content provided by Strosnider & Sharpe, authors of the EF Guidebook, Corwin, 2019. Visit our website: www.instituteonexecutivefunctioning.com, on Facebook: Institute on Executive Functioning, on Instagram: efhelpers, or on Twitter: @efhelpers

