

**T**he following are suggestions for you to use during school open houses. Activities provide ways to show parents what their children are learning and how parents can take an active role in their children's education.



## Open House

### Suggestions for Preparing for Open House

- ◆ Throughout the school year, take pictures of your students while they are working in groups, particularly as they explore new concepts. When the photographs are developed, encourage the groups to provide captions summarizing the activities in the photos.
- ◆ Have groups keep a scrapbook or group journal that briefly describes their activities and what they discovered or learned.
- ◆ Make the photographs, scrapbooks, or group journals available to parents to look through.
- ◆ Place math manipulatives and tools (with directions) in work areas near the photographs. Encourage parents to try some of the activities recorded in their children's journals or displayed in the photographs.

### Math Refreshments

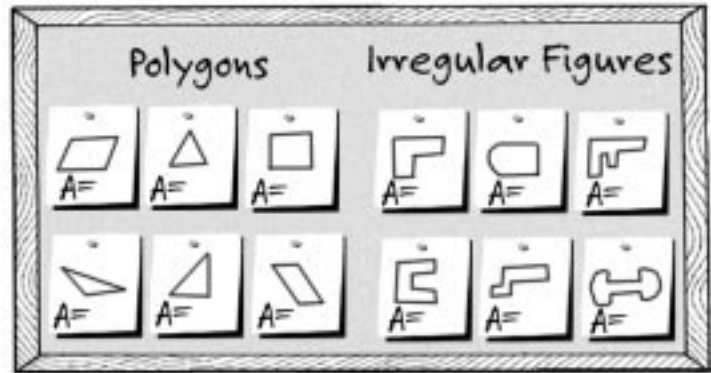
- ◆ Have students bring in some of their favorite recipes for quick breads, granola bars, or other similar snacks. Have them refrain from high fat or high sugar recipes.
- ◆ Students should select several of the recipes and decide how much of each recipe is needed to make enough snacks for the Open House.
- ◆ Whichever recipes your students decide to make, a poster should be made explaining how math was used.
- ◆ If materials are unavailable at your school, have groups of students volunteer to make some of the recipes at home and bring them to school the day of the Open House.

### Computer Use in the Classroom

Ask volunteers to demonstrate computer programs, such as *Cabri Geometry* and *ClarisWorks*. You may want to have students demonstrate how to use spreadsheets for evaluating algebraic expressions or how to use a graphing program for creating a variety of different graphs. As an alternative to, or in conjunction with a demonstration, have printouts from various computer activities available for parents. You may also want to mount some of the graphs on posterboard as a visual summary of how the class uses the computer to create graphs.

## Bulletin Board Suggestions

Create a bulletin board that demonstrates student knowledge of area. Have students draw polygons and irregular figures for which they can find the areas. Then have them record the area beneath each figure. Mount the figures on a bulletin board, separating polygons and irregular figures. If desired, you can group similar polygons. You may also want to have students show the formula they used to calculate each area.



## Teacher-Directed Activities

- ◆ Provide parents with rulers and formulas for the areas of polygons and circles. Have a copy of each student's polygon and irregular figure available. Then have the parents find the area of their child's figures. They can check their results with the bulletin board.
- ◆ Have each parent make an irregular figure that shows their child's initials on graph paper. Then have them find the total area of the initials and bring their paper home for their child to check.
- ◆ Suggest that parents write a simple note to their child that might include a description of their favorite activity or manipulative. The note could be written on a piece of paper from a removable self-stick notepad.
- ◆ Ask parents to tell their child about what they did and what they learned about sixth-grade mathematics at the Open House.

## Information to Distribute to Parents

See the following articles in *Home and Community Connections* which are available to give to parents at an Open House:

- ◆ Time Management Tips
- ◆ Over the Break
- ◆ Helping with Homework
- ◆ Preparing for Tests
- ◆ Summer Math
- ◆ Using Technology at Home