

Unlucky Arithmetic

Thirteen Ways to Raise a Nonreader

BY DEAN SCHNEIDER AND ROBIN SMITH

- 1** Never read where your children can see you.
- 2** Put a TV or computer in every room. Don't neglect the bedrooms and kitchen.
- 3** Correct your child every time she mispronounces a word.
- 4** Schedule activities every day after school so your child will never be bored.
- 5** Once your child can read independently, throw out the picture books. They're for babies.
- 6** Don't play board games together. Too dull.
- 7** Give little rewards for reading. Stickers and plastic toys are nice. Money is even better.
- 8** Don't expect your children to enjoy reading. Kids' books are for teaching vocabulary, proper study habits, and good morals.
- 9** Buy only 40-watt bulbs for your lamps.
- 10** Under no circumstances read your child the same book over and over. She heard it once, she should remember it.
- 11** Never allow your child to listen to books on tape, that's cheating.
- 12** Make sure your kids only read books that are "challenging." Easy books are a complete waste of time. That goes double for comic books and *Mad* magazine.
- 13** Absolutely, positively no reading in bed.

Unlucky Arithmetic:

Thirteen Ways to Raise a Non-Writer

BY REBECCA LEIGH

1 Tell Children that writers write at desks, not under them and most certainly not on the carpet.

2 Correct all misspellings, including letters spelled backwards. Howe kaan wee reed mistakes?

3 Squash the talk. Writing is for learning vocabulary and sentence structure. Talk is time away from thinking about their writing.

4 Absolutely, positively no writing-in-the-style-of another author. Children have to find their own voice.

5 Don't encourage drawing in writer's notebooks. They're for writing, obviously. If you allow drawings though, ignore the scribbles. There's no story there. Promise

6 Once kids learn how to spell, throw out the markers and crayons. Only use pencil. That way, mistakes can be erased.

7 There is a time for reading and a time for writing. By no means mix the two. It can get confusing.

8 Limit writing on the computer. Serious writing only happens on the page.

9 Under no circumstances talk about the relationship between art and language in picture books. It's right there; they can figure it out, surely.

10 Lined paper is for writing, unlined paper is for drawing. Get it right. If you don't who will?

11 Children are writers-in-waiting; you already know how to write so you don't need to keep a writer's notebook, they do.

12 Make sure children revise and edit on days set aside for revision and editing. There is a writerly plan-stick to it.

13 Avoid showing children your own writing (If you do it); they're more interested in published writing...not yours. Come on...