

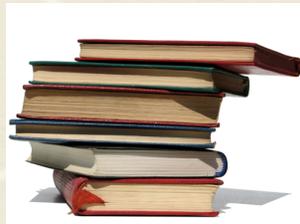
# HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD SUCCEED?

1. Get involved in your child's school life. Ask your child about their day, about schoolwork that is brought home, about their friends and teacher.
2. Become familiar with the curriculum for your child's grade. You can find it on the Ministry of Education website at [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca)
3. Communicate with your child's teacher. If you have any questions talk to the teacher about learning strategies that are being used to cover the combined grades curriculum.
4. Stay connected with the school. Attend parent information meetings and other school events. Volunteer at the school if you have time. Attend school council meetings.
5. Make learning fun. Learning is not limited to the classroom. Simple activities at home can help to build your child's skills and confidence. Read together, talk about prices at the grocery store, read labels on cereal boxes.



# How Can A Teacher Teach More Than One Grade at a Time?

- \* Introduce a common topic then give each grade a different task or problem.
- \* Break students into groups to study different problems and report back to the class. These groups can be flexible, including students with varied interests and skills.
- \* Bring students together for activities like health, physical education, and the arts.



The Ministry of Education has many tools to help both teachers and parents.

Visit [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca) and discover how you can help your child succeed in school.

Information for this pamphlet taken from the LNS Research Monograph #9 and the Ministry of Education publication: An Introduction to Combined Grades

# COMBINED GRADES

AN INTRODUCTION



 Sudbury Catholic  
Schools



## ***What Is A Combined Classroom?***

Combined classes group children from two or more consecutive grades in one classroom. Schools combine classes for a variety of reasons. This includes organizing classes to meet student learning needs and combining grades to balance class size.

All classrooms include students with a range of skills and abilities. Combined grade classes are not new—they have always been a part of the school experience.

## ***How Are Students Chosen For Combined Classes ?***

A variety of factors are considered when grouping children into classes including:

- \*Learning style
- \*Academic needs
- \*And many other factors

# THE RESEARCH SAYS...

Students in combined grade classrooms achieve as well academically as those in single grade classrooms.

Whole-class strategies such as explicit instruction, co-operative learning and subject integration support improved learning in combined grades classrooms.

Students appear to benefit from the spirit of co-operation and mutual help that exists in these settings.

## ***Effective Strategies for Combined Grades***

1. ***Explicit Instruction*** builds skills that are key to learning through practice and follow-up. Explicit teaching is an investment in basic skill development through teacher demonstration, monitoring and independent practice.
2. ***Co-operative learning*** helps to build the classroom as a learning community where students share responsibility for one another's development. Students are motivated and become models for one another through demonstration of the learning strategies they use.
3. ***Subject integration*** enables teachers to tailor the length of learning activities to the different grade and performance levels within the classroom. Subject integration requires knowledge of expectations and targeted content.



## ***How Will A Combined Class Affect My Child?***

Several studies have found that students in combined classes do just as well as students in single-grade classes. In fact, some students actually do better in language and reading.

Canadian studies also show that children in combined classes have more opportunities for emotional and social growth. The rich social environment helps students:

- \* Learn how to work on their own as part of a team.
- \* Build leadership abilities as they work together and help each other.
- \* Develop decision-making skills, and become more self-motivated and responsible.