

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

September 2017

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *Big Dog and Little Dog Going for a Walk* (Dav Pilkey)

A pair of dog friends loves to take walks—especially if it involves splashing and rolling in mud! Your youngster will laugh as he tags along on this messy journey. (Bilingual version also available, with each page in both English and Spanish.)



■ *A Rock Is Lively*

(Dianna Hutts Aston)

They come in all shapes and sizes, melt if they get hot enough, and sometimes arrive from outer space. What are they? Rocks!



Using poetic language, this nonfiction picture book introduces your child to colorful varieties.

■ *May I Have a Word?* (Caron Levis)

Once upon a refrigerator, the alphabet magnets set out to tell a story. But when C and K begin fighting about who stole whose sound and who is hogging all the good words, it looks like there will be no “happily ever after.” F is for *funny* in this tale about the importance of teamwork.

■ *Clothesline Clues to Jobs People Do*

(Kathryn Heling and Deborah Hembrook)

Your child can use clothes on a clothesline and rhyming clues to match people with their careers, then turn each page to see a worker in action. This simple story brings all the characters together for a party at the end.



Reading at school, reading at home

“How do I help my child learn to read?” That’s a common question for many parents. Ask your youngster about the kinds of reading she does in school, and use what you discover to support her at home. Try these ideas.



In a group

Let your child play “reading group” with her stuffed animals or dolls. Suggest that she give each “student” a book and “teach” reading strategies she’s working on like breaking big words into smaller chunks or using pictures to figure out hard words.

With you

When your youngster brings home books from school, set aside time to snuggle up and listen to her read. You’ll get an idea of the reading level that’s right for her and see what topics she enjoys and is learning about. *Note:* If she has

an at-home reading log, have her fill it out, and sign it if required.

On my own

Your child likely has time in school each day to read all by herself. Her teacher may call it “DEAR” (“Drop everything and read”) or SSR (“Self-selected reading”). Try holding a daily “DEAR” time at home for at least 20 minutes. Each person picks any reading material (book, magazine, newspaper) and reads anywhere—on a couch, on the porch, or stretched out on the floor.♥

A writing nook

A cozy space can inspire your youngster to enjoy writing regularly. Consider these suggestions:

- Help your child find a quiet spot. He might use a chair tucked in a corner of the living room or a lap desk on his bed.
- Let your youngster pick out cool writing supplies at a dollar store like colored pencils, fancy paper, or gel pens. Then, he could arrange them in a box or basket to keep in his nook.
- Look for everyday ways to encourage writing. You might say, “Grandpa’s birthday is next week. Why don’t you make him a card?” Or invite your child to add a few items to your grocery list. Suggest that he write stories, poems, and plays, too!♥



Create a comic strip

With lots of pictures and just a few words, comic strips are easy and fun for beginning writers to make. Here's how.

Change a favorite. Suggest that your youngster write new words for a comic strip he likes. Help him cut one from the newspaper and glue it on a sheet of paper. Cover the words with masking tape. He can add his own words in the bubbles or on the paper around the strip. What will each character say or think in his version?



Start from scratch. Have your child divide a piece of paper into frames. Then, he could invent a character or use one from real life—maybe his comic will be about the funny adventures of his cat. Encourage him to draw a picture in each frame and add speech bubbles to tell the story. To help him along,

ask questions like “What happens first?” and “How does Elvis the Cat’s adventure end?” *Idea:* He might like to create a series of comic strips about his character.♥

Fun with Words

Words all around

Even before youngsters learn to read, they get excited when they recognize words on road signs, stores, and food packages. Encourage your child to collect words to make a book she can read all by herself. She'll begin to connect the letters she sees with the sounds they make.

Find words

Give your youngster a notebook. When she spots a word she knows, she could write it or cut it out and glue it on a page. For instance, she might clip “Eggs” from an empty carton or the name of a favorite restaurant from a take-out bag.



Read your book

After your child has filled a few pages, let her read her book to you. She'll build confidence in her reading ability because she'll know every word!♥



Q&A Tell me a story

Q My daughter often asks me to tell her stories at bedtime, but it's not always easy to make them up on the spot. Any suggestions?

A Hearing stories develops your daughter's listening and language skills. You may find it easier to tell stories you're familiar with.

Children love stories about people they know—especially themselves and other family members. Flip through photos at bedtime, and have your youngster pick one that she likes. Her newborn picture could lead to a tale about the day she was born. Or a childhood snapshot of you may inspire a story about the games you played or what you learned at school when you were her age.

Another idea is to retell fairy tales or other children's stories that you know. If you're feeling creative, try changing the story as you go. For example, turn *The Three Little Pigs* into *The Three Little Bananas*.♥



Parent to Parent

“I love you” notes

My son Danny has always loved it when I tuck an “I love you”

play after school?” The notes made Danny feel special and gave him extra reading practice.

note into his backpack. When he was learning to read, I asked his teacher for a list of words he was working on. Then, I used those words in the notes.

Sometimes I'd write simple messages like “You are number one!” Other times, I wrote a question, such as “What game should we

Now secret notes are a tradition at our house. Danny's little sister Jamie is starting to read this year, and he writes notes to put in her backpack. And when I opened my suitcase on a business trip recently, I had a big smile when I discovered a note from Danny to me!♥



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote their children's reading, writing, and language skills.

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