

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

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Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *This Book Just Ate My Dog!*

(Richard Byrne)

When Bella takes her dog for a walk across the pages of this book, he “disappears” into the crease. Everyone who comes to help find him disappears, too—including Bella. It's up to the reader to rescue them all in this fun picture book.



■ *Inspector Flytrap in the da Vinci Cold!*

(Tom Angleberger)

Meet a Venus flytrap who solves mysteries. He travels by skateboard and

has a clue-eating goat sidekick. In this first book in the Inspector Flytrap series, the clever plant cracks a case about smelly cookies, follows the trail of a missing rose, and more.



■ *Living Things and Nonliving Things: A Compare and Contrast Book*

(Kevin Kurtz)
The bright photos in this book encourage readers to compare things they see every day and ask questions. Do all living things move? Do all non-living things stay still? The answers may surprise your youngster!

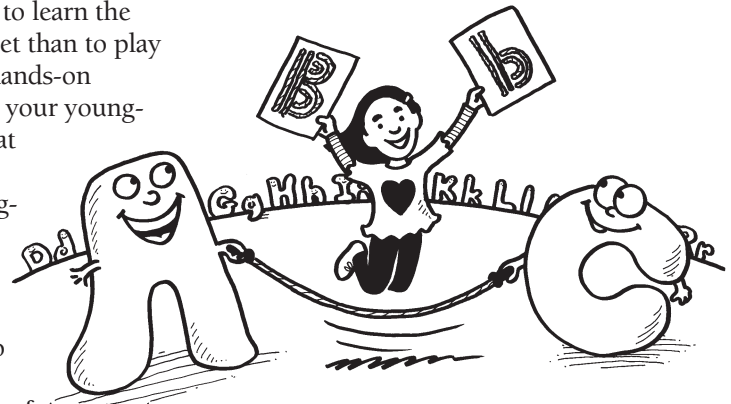
■ *United States Capitol*

(Julie Murray)
Take a glimpse inside the U.S. Capitol in this nonfiction book. Readers learn who works in the Capitol, what jobs they do, and why the building plays an important role in the American government. Part of the U.S. Landmarks series. (Also available in Spanish.)



A-B-C...play with me

What better way to learn the letters of the alphabet than to play with them? These hands-on activities encourage your youngster to look closely at each letter's unique features so she recognizes the letters when she reads.



Crafty letters

Ask your child to pick any letter, and write a large version of it on paper for her to trace over with glue. She can cover it with craft supplies (glitter, yarn, toothpicks). Talk about each letter's lines, curves, or loops. (“What will you use for the slanted lines of the A?” or “Good idea to use yarn for the curve of the P.”)

Secret-letter bag

Can your youngster identify a letter by touch? This activity helps her notice small differences between letters. Secretly choose two magnetic letters with similar features, and put them in a brown paper

bag. Examples: E and F, M and N, or O and Q. Have her reach in without looking, feel both letters, and name them.

Letter match

Use a set of uppercase letter tiles from a game, or let your child make her own “tiles” by printing each capital letter on a separate scrap of paper. Place the letters in a bowl. Now help your youngster write all the lowercase letters randomly on a sheet of paper. Take turns drawing a tile from the bowl and placing it over the matching letter on the paper (A on a, B on b).♥

“What did you read in school today?”

Reading is a big part of your youngster's day at school. Show interest by asking about books he listened to or read. Here's how.

1. Have your child tell you the title of a book his teacher read aloud or that he read by himself.

2. Ask him what he learned from the book or what it was about. Maybe the teacher read a nonfiction book on pumpkins—can he describe how pumpkins grow? Or perhaps he chose a graphic novel about dragons during silent reading time.

3. Suggest that he draw a picture of his favorite part of a story. Let him describe the action in the book, using his drawing as a guide.♥



Make the most of library visits

Regular trips to the library make reading a habit that will benefit your child throughout his school years—and his life. Try these tips for putting library visits into your family routine.

Before you go. “Advertise” the library as a source of information. You might say, “I know you love construction vehicles. We should check out a book about them.” Show him how you use the library, too.



Example: “I need some slow-cooker recipes. I bet we’ll find a cookbook that’ll help.”

While you’re there. Take time to explore together and become familiar with the layout. The more at home your youngster feels, the more he’ll enjoy the library. He can share his discoveries with you, too. He may be excited to find a shelf of sports books or more titles in a favorite series.

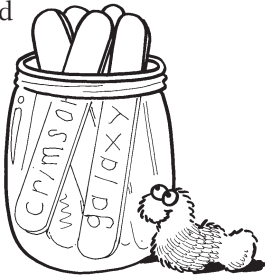
Back at home. Suggest that your child showcase the books he checked out by creating displays like those he saw at the library. For instance, he could put plastic farm animals on a table with books about farms. He might even hold story hour for your family—just like at the library.♥

Fun with Words

Be a word collector

Galaxy, crimson, caterpillar... your youngster can grow her vocabulary by collecting words that look or sound interesting to her.

When your child finds a word she likes, help her write it on a craft stick and add it to a jar. *Tip:* If she doesn’t know a word’s meaning, look it up in a dictionary together.



Now encourage your youngster to play with her collection so the words become familiar. For instance, she might sort them into categories (colors, animals) or by number of syllables. Or take turns pulling out a random word and giving each other clues to guess it. For *crimson*, you could say, “My word is a color. It’s a shade of red.”

Note: It’s okay if your child chooses words she can’t read. Youngsters can say and understand big words like *triceratops* or *nectarine* long before they’re able to read them!♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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Autumn writing

Fall is full of fun reasons to write. Encourage your youngster to write words or sentences with these seasonal activities.

Fall shapes

Together, draw and cut out leaves, apples, and other fall shapes from construction paper. On each one, help your child write the object’s name (“leaf”) or something he does with it (“I like to jump in leaves”). Then, let him use the shapes to decorate his bedroom.



Five senses

Your youngster can use his senses to enjoy autumn activities. Suggest that he make a five-senses chart with columns labeled “I saw,” “I heard,” “I smelled,” “I tasted,” and “I touched.” He can write words or draw pictures to go with the labels (an orange leaf beneath “I saw,” an apple pie under “I tasted”).♥

Q&A Support for speech therapy

Q My daughter receives speech therapy at school. We do exercises at home that the speech therapist recommends, but are there other ways we can help her make progress?

A Reading with your child is a fun way to practice speech at home. Take turns reading aloud from a book. When it’s her turn, she can point out words that contain sounds she’s working on and say them out loud.



Help her find words with the target sound at the beginning, middle, and end so she practices saying it in all parts of words. For instance, if she’s focusing on *ch*, she might find *chair*, *ketchup*, and *beach*. While she reads, ask her to show you how the therapist teaches her to form the sounds with her lips and tongue.

Finally, be sure to read with your daughter just for fun, too. Not every reading experience needs to turn into speech practice—it’s important for her to read simply for the joy of reading.♥