

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

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Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ *Mary Had a Little Glam*

(Tammi Sauer)

A famous nursery rhyme gets a makeover in this story. Mary can't help offering fashion advice to her classmates (who include familiar characters) at Mother Goose Elementary School. Soon she has added a bit of glamour to everyone, including the class pet.



■ *Rabbit & Robot: The Sleepover*

Rabbit has planned every detail of his sleepover with Robot, right down to which veggies they'll have on their pizza. But when things don't go smoothly (Robot prefers hardware on his pizza), the friends must rely on Robot's stellar logical thinking skills. The first book in the Rabbit & Robot series.

■ *The Story of Snow: The Science of Winter's Wonder*

Does your child know that a snowflake is a crystal? In this nonfiction book, she'll discover how a snowflake forms and then changes as it passes down through the clouds. Plus, she'll find instructions for catching snowflakes to observe.



■ *More Spaghetti, I Say!*

(Rita Golden Gelman)

Minnie will eat spaghetti with just about anything—ice cream, marshmallows, and even pickles. Her friend Freddy tries to distract her from her pasta obsession so she'll play with him, but he makes a big mess in the process. (Also available in Spanish.)



Support for beginning writers

Your little author probably has plenty to say, but she may need help getting started or putting all of her ideas on paper. Lend a hand with these strategies.

Create a word bank

Before your youngster writes a story, help her list words she might use. If she's writing about the winter carnival at school, the list may contain *hot chocolate*, *photo booth*, and *gingerbread*. She can refer to her list as she writes so she remembers everything she wants to mention.

Hold a writing "conference"

Offer to read a story your child is working on, and point out places where you want to know more. You could ask, "What did the little girl feed her horses for breakfast?" or "What color are the horses?" Encourage her to add the answers, then read it again. She'll see that details make a story more interesting.



Read a picture book

A favorite book can provide a "blueprint" for your youngster's story. Suggest that she use a character, the setting, or the format for inspiration. For example, reading *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* (Laura Numeroff) could lead her to write "If I Give My Dog a Tennis Ball." Maybe the tennis ball will make her dog want to play with a baseball, then a soccer ball, and then a basketball!♥

Keep the conversation rolling

Build your child's speaking and listening skills with the roll of a die! Pick a topic (perhaps the day he was born), then take turns rolling a die and following these directions.

Roll a 1: Add a statement. ("We couldn't wait to meet you.")

Roll a 2: Ask any family member a question. ("How big was I?")

Roll a 3: Add a statement *and* a question. ("Wow, I was tiny. Who came to visit?")

Roll a 4: Share your opinion. ("You were adorable.")

Roll a 5: Move on to a related subject. ("Mom, what were you like as a baby?")

Roll a 6: Wild card—do any of the above.

Idea: Carry a die with you in the car for fun on-the-go conversations.♥



“I predict that...”

“What do you think will happen next?” Asking your child to predict the path a story might take can boost his comprehension. When you read aloud, try these ideas.

Picture mysteries. Cover up the words every few pages, and have your youngster predict what’s going to happen based on the illustrations. Encourage him to point out clues. Maybe a picture of ducks waddling toward a family picnic makes him think the ducks will try to eat the food. Now read on so he can see if his prediction is right.



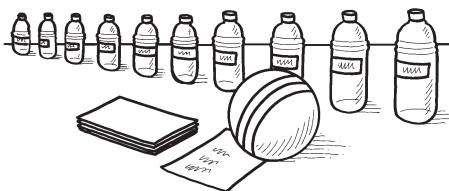
Secret predictions. Keep paper and pencil handy for each of you while you read. At any time, either of you can say, “I have a prediction!” Then, stop reading, and secretly write or draw what you believe will happen next. As the story continues, place a check mark next to each prediction that comes true. At the end of the story, explain why you made each prediction, and tell which ones were correct.♥

Fun with Words

Bowling for sight words

This version of bowling lets your youngster practice reading *sight words*—common words that early readers learn to recognize at first glance.

Materials: sight word list (from the teacher or sightwords.com/sight-words/dolch/), marker, 10 index cards, masking tape, 10 half-filled water bottles, ball



Help your child write one word on each index card and the same words on separate strips of tape. She should stack the cards facedown and label each bottle with a piece of tape.

Next, line up the bottles in a row (with a few inches between each one), and have players stand 6 feet away. Take turns drawing a card, reading the word, and rolling the ball toward the matching bottle. If you knock it down, keep the card and remove the bottle. Now it’s the next player’s turn. Collect the most cards to win.♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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Parent to Parent

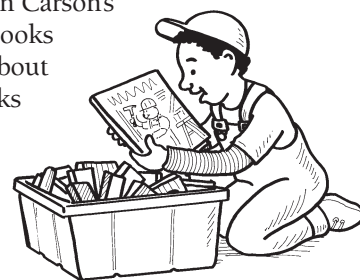
Surprise, there’s a book!

During a recent visit to my son Carson’s classroom, I noticed baskets of books everywhere. There were books about money and shapes in the math center, alphabet books beside a basket of magnetic letters, and biographies of artists near an easel.

When we got home, I looked around and thought, “Where can we add books?” It turns out there were lots of places! Carson wanted to put library books about construction into his block bin.

When I found a book about fossils at a flea market, I added it to his box of dinosaurs. And Carson decided that his toy kitchen was the perfect place for a kids’ cookbook.

Now I regularly leave “surprise” books for my son to find—and sometimes he does the same for me. I’ve noticed him building a construction site with blocks and matching toy dinosaurs with the photos in the fossil book. I love that he’s making connections as he plays.♥



Lists are practical—and fun

A list is a great example of real-life writing. Show your child how useful writing is with these suggestions:

- Let your youngster help you make a grocery list. She can refer to the advertising circular to spell what you need (*milk, rice*).
- Before you travel, have her list items to pack. For a winter break trip to her grandparents’ house, she might write *toothbrush* and *teddy bear*.
- Suggest that your child make a to-do

list for her day: “Go to school. Feed the dog. Read a book.”

- Work together to create a guest list for a holiday meal or a list of gifts she could make for relatives.
- Weave list writing into playtime. Have your youngster design a sign listing the flavors in her pretend ice cream shop or the services offered at her imaginary pet-sitting business.

Idea: Encourage your child to illustrate her lists.♥

