

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

September 2010

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Book Picks

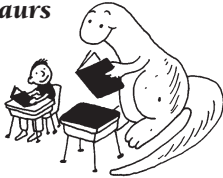
Read-aloud favorites



■ How Do Dinosaurs Go to School?

It might be fun for your youngster to have dinosaurs as

classmates—if they're as gentle and kind as the ones in this story. One dinosaur cleans his desk, and another helps a child build a giant block tower. A nice back-to-school read-aloud by Jane Yolen.



■ Under the Lemon Moon

Rosalinda's beautiful lemon tree is wilting. And a stranger is picking her lemons and selling them at the market! As the little girl tries to heal her tree, she learns a lesson about sharing and generosity. A magical tale by Edith Hope Fine. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ Night Shift

Your child may be surprised to know that many people work at night while he sleeps.

In Jessie Hartland's book, workers paint bridges, sweep streets, and bake doughnuts all night long. Descriptions of these jobs and more can help your youngster understand the world of work.

■ Pickles to Pittsburgh

In Judi Barrett's sequel to her popular *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*, Kate has an interesting dream. She visits Chewandswallow, where food falls from the sky and is shipped to people who need it. Find out what's waiting for Kate when she wakes up.



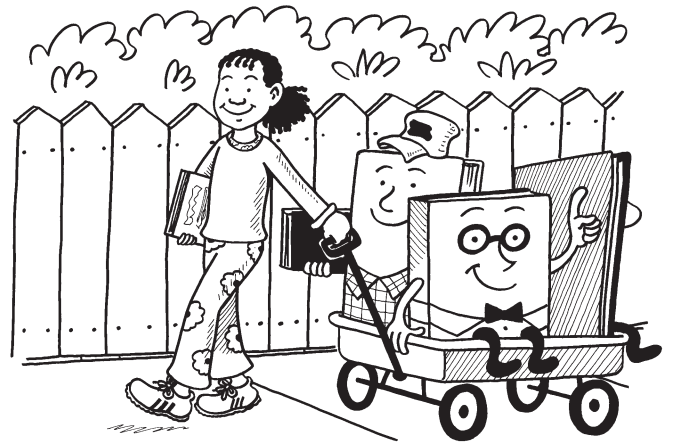
Reading for real

Learn to read, or read to learn? With nonfiction books, your child can do both. Here are ways she can become a strong reader while she discovers more about the world.

Find familiar topics. A book is more likely to interest your youngster if she recognizes the topic and some words and pictures. For example,

read a book about an everyday subject (*Bread, Bread, Bread* by Ann Morris). Then, help her relate to the book by talking about the kinds of bread your family eats. Ask her to name several types in the photographs (pita, roll) and find words she knows.

Seek variety. Show your child that nonfiction comes in many forms. In addition to biographies, fact books, and how-to books, she might like poetry such as *A World of Wonders* by J. Patrick Lewis or an alphabet book like *Lights on Broadway*



by Harriet Ziefert. Check out a different kind of nonfiction each time you visit the library.

Follow up. When a book captures your youngster's attention, encourage her to learn more about its topic. She'll build research skills by looking up *hockey* or *horses* in an encyclopedia or typing the subject into a library database to get a list of book titles. If possible, take a related field trip. For instance, visit a farm after reading *My First Horse and Pony Book* by Judith Draper. ♥

Family time

Make reading and writing part of your family's activities, and you'll give your youngster's skills a boost this school year. Try these suggestions:

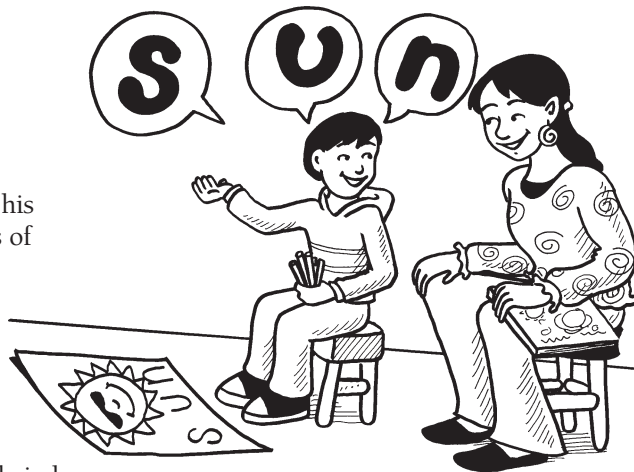
- Hold a comedy night. Take turns reading jokes aloud from a book. Your child will practice reading with expression.
- Cook meals together, and help your youngster read recipes aloud to you. Soon, he'll recognize words like *bake*, *cup*, and *mix*.
- Work together to plan a party or other family gathering. Have your child make the guest list—he can practice ABC order by writing the names alphabetically.

Tip: Set aside time every evening to read books, magazines, and newspapers as a family. ♥



Ready to write

Kyle adds letter-like squiggles to his drawings. Olivia makes long strings of letters under her pictures. And Tommy is starting to sound out words as he writes. All of these children are writing! Use these ideas to support your youngster at every stage:



1. When your child draws lines and circles and pretends they are letters, he is getting ready to write. Ask, “Can you read that to me?” Then, set an example by reading

his own. Encourage him to label items in his drawings (sun, tree). Help him sound out the word and write each letter he hears: “S-u-n ... sun!” ♥

your own writing when you write or type in front of him.

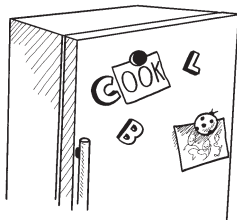
2. Once your youngster learns to write letters, give him a notebook and pencil. Suggest that he copy words he sees all around him. For example, he might write down words from a calendar, a piece of mail, or a road or store sign.

3. If your child has learned some of the sounds that letters make, he’s ready to write some words on

Fun with Words Magnetic spelling

Children love playing with magnetic letters. You can make the most of your youngster’s play with these activities that will help her learn to spell words:

- Use magnetic letters to put a common word ending (-ook) on the refrigerator.



Take turns adding a letter in front of the ending to make a word (c to make cook, l to make look). The last person to think of a new word chooses the next ending.

- Ask your youngster to spell a word with the magnetic letters and leave them somewhere for you to find. She might place the letters on your desk or on a table by your bed. When you find the word, have her read it to you.

- Put magnetic letters that spell a word in a brown paper bag. Have your child empty the bag and see if she can arrange the letters to spell the word. Then, let her choose letters to make a word for you to spell. ♥



Parent to Parent

A favorite author

When I was little, Arnold Lobel was my favorite author. I wanted my daughter Marissa to find a writer she liked, too, because I thought it would help her enjoy reading more.

I decided to introduce her to a new author each week. At the library, I asked her to choose a book so that I could help her find several more by the same person. When Marissa picked *Just Me and My Mom* by Mercer Mayer, I suggested that she also check out *Just Me and My Dad* and *Just Go to Bed*.

Each time we read a book, I pointed out the author’s name on the front. We also looked at the back cover for the writer’s photo and biography. It didn’t take long before my daughter started saying, “I know her,” and began asking to read other stories by the same writer. Marissa’s still deciding on her favorite author, but she’s considering several. ♥



Q&A “Tell me a story!”

Q My son often asks me to make up stories, but I’m not sure how. What should I do?

A There are many different ways to approach storytelling. One idea is to ask your son to help you—he’s sure to be full of ideas.

Explain that stories can be real or imaginary. For example, he would probably love to hear stories about your childhood or about the day

he was born. Or the two of you can make up your own version of a familiar story or a fairy tale. You might put a twist on “Hansel and Gretel,” where they find a house made of pizza ingredients instead of candy.

Your son will probably like your stories no matter what they’re about or how you tell them. And hearing stories will help him build vocabulary and listening skills. ♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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