

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

May 2016

Keystone Oaks School District

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ **12 Ways to Get to 11** (Eve Merriam)
Three turtles + 2 frogs + 1 lily pad + 5 dragonflies = 11! Combine 6 peanut shells and 5 pieces of popcorn, and get the same total. Your youngster will practice counting and adding with the fun objects in this book as she learns there's more than one way to add up to 11.

■ **Kitty Cat, Kitty Cat, Are You Waking Up?** (Bill Martin Jr. and Michael Sampson)

With its cute refrain, this book is just right for parents and early readers to enjoy together. It's time to get out of bed, but Kitty Cat is standing on her head, practicing her purr, and finding other ways to delay getting off to school.

■ **And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street** (Dr. Seuss)

A little boy named Marco has a big imagination. While walking to school, he looks for interesting things to describe to his dad. And when he finds nothing, he prepares a tall tale in his head. From a gold and blue chariot to the confetti that rains from an airplane, Marco's tale may grow too big to tell! (Also available in Spanish.)

■ **Jamaica's Find** (Juanita Havill)

Who left a red hat and a well-loved stuffed dog at the playground? Jamaica puts the hat into the lost and found—but takes the dog home with her. Then, she learns an important lesson about honesty and discovers how good it feels to make another child happy.



Backyard summer games

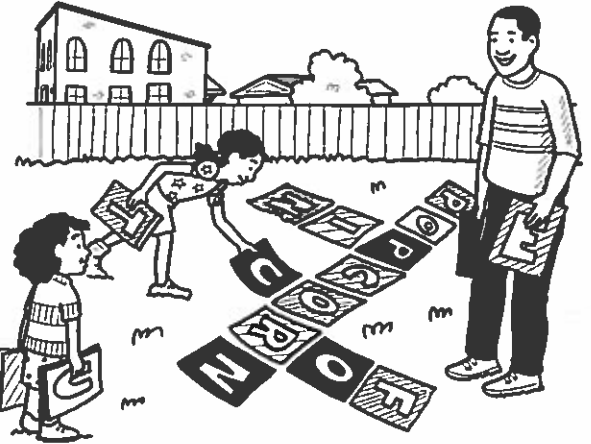
What comes to mind when your youngster thinks of summer? Whether it's the beach, baseball, or the Fourth of July, these active games will keep her reading skills sizzling on hot days.

Seashell relay

Let your child cut out 20 paper seashells and label them with beach-related words (*sand, waves, surfing*). Fill two pails with sand. Bury 10 shells in each, and place them at one end of the yard. Divide into two teams at the other end, and give each team a shovel. Players race to dig up a shell, shout out the word, and run back with the shell to pass the shovel to the next teammate. The first team to read all 10 words wins.

Baseball toss

Secretly think of a baseball-related sentence. ("The crowd roared after the home run.") Write each word on a separate sheet of paper, and crumple them into balls. Then, throw them to your youngster. Once she has every word, she unfolds the balls and unscrambles the sentence.



Next, have her make up a sentence and toss to you. *Variation:* Write one sentence of a paragraph on each ball, and players arrange them in order.

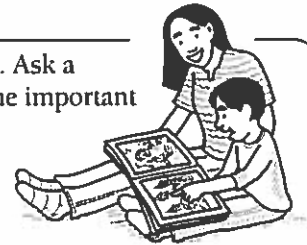
Red-white-blue crossword

Together, create big letter tiles by printing each letter of the alphabet on a separate sheet of red, white, or blue construction paper. Make extra vowels (a, e, i, o, u) and common letters like l, n, r, s, and t. Deal all tiles evenly to players. Then, play a cooperative game: Take turns laying down letters into words until you've arranged all the tiles into a giant crossword on the lawn.♥

Reading—without words

Wordless books tell stories entirely through pictures. Ask a librarian to help you find some, and show your child the important role that pictures play in a story with these ideas:

- No two readers will "read" a wordless book the same way. Let your youngster slowly turn the book's pages while family members tell the story in their heads. Then, take turns holding the book and "reading" your story aloud. It will be interesting to see what the stories have in common—and how they're different!
- Your child may notice something new every time he rereads a wordless book. Help him record himself reading one—he could ring a bell when he turns a page. Have him listen to his recording and follow along in the book. What details would he add or change?♥



Building blocks of fluency

Fluent reading is more than just reading that is smooth and full of expression. A fluent reader recognizes words automatically and understands what he's reading. Help your child become a fluent reader with these tips.

1. Learn a lot of words. The more words your youngster recognizes effortlessly, the more fluent his reading will be. That's because tripping over unfamiliar words interrupts his



flow and distracts him from comprehending a book. Introduce new words regularly by reading aloud to him—especially books that are a little too hard for him to read on his own. Also, help him practice any lists of sight words (common words like *went* or *said*) that his teacher sends home.

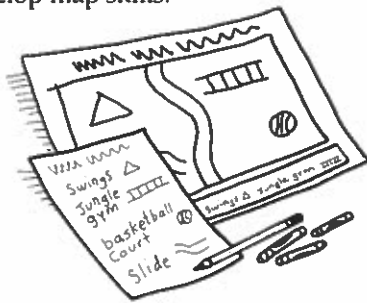
2. Be prepared to read.

Before your child starts a book, “preview” it so he knows what to expect. You could read the title, look at the cover, and talk about the topic. For example, if the cover shows a chameleon and the title is *Reptiles*, he'll be ready to read about cold-blooded animals like chameleons and snakes. ♥

Fun with Words

Make a map

Maps are full of symbols. Making one is a great way for your child to practice connecting words and symbols—and develop map skills.



First, let her choose something to map, perhaps your neighborhood playground. Help her list what to include, such as *swings*, *slide*, *jungle gym*, and *basketball court*. Beside each, she should draw a symbol that will represent it on her map (a triangle for swings, a horizontal ladder for the jungle gym).

Now she can draw her map. She could title it (“Elm Street Playground”) and place the symbols where they go. Ask her to draw a key at the bottom—a box with each symbol and what it represents. Finally, have her use her map to give you a “tour.” ♥

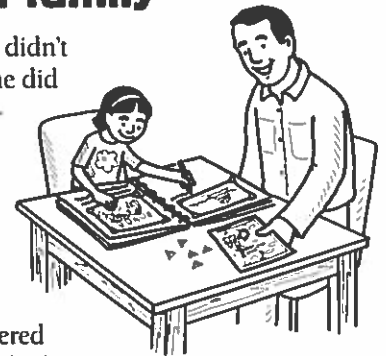
Parent to Parent

Writing about our family

My daughter Brianna said she didn't like writing, but I noticed that she did like talking to people and asking questions. So I suggested that she help me add captions to our family photo album by interviewing her grandparents.

Together, we brainstormed questions: “What did you like best about school?” “Where did you get married?” “How many years did you play on the basketball team?”

The next time her grandparents visited, they answered the questions while Brianna took notes. Then, we worked on our captions. At first, Brianna dictated them to me. But after a few, she wanted to write them herself. My daughter loved doing the interviews and hearing the stories—and she enjoyed working on the photo album. Now she wants to make another one. ♥

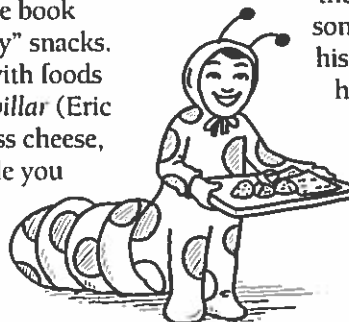


Celebrate books

Add a dash of fun to summer reading with these activities that your whole family will enjoy.

● **Throw a party.** Dress up like book characters, and serve “literary” snacks. For instance, set out a tray with foods from *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Eric Carle) like strawberries, Swiss cheese, and pickles. Read aloud while you enjoy the snacks. You could also make and play a party game, such as “Pin the Caterpillar on the Leaf.”

● **Be secret book pals.** Put family members' names on slips of paper in a hat, and take turns pulling one out. Go to the library, where each person secretly chooses a book his pal would enjoy. At home, he wraps the book and adds the person's name. Get together to unwrap your books. Guess who picked yours, and then read the books together! ♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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INTERMEDIATE EDITION

Working Together for Learning Success

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Keystone Oaks School District



Book Picks

■ *Milo Speck, Accidental Agent* (Linda Urban)

While searching a dryer for a lost sock, Milo is sucked into the world of giant ogres. There, he makes a shocking discovery—his dad is a secret agent being held prisoner. It's up to Milo, a mysterious girl, and a giant turkey to rescue his father and save humankind from an ogre attack.

■ *Roller Girl* (Victoria Jamieson)

Astrid and Nicole have been best friends forever. But when Astrid goes to roller derby camp and Nicole chooses dance camp, they begin to grow apart. Roller derby turns out to be harder than Astrid expected, but she learns to persevere and to make new friends in this Newbery award-winning graphic novel.



■ *How to Cook in 10 Easy Lessons* (Wendy Sweetser)

Does your child know how to saute or knead? Each cooking lesson in this book includes recipes with step-by-step pictures.



Your youngster will be making carrot and pecan muffins or macaroni and cheese with cherry tomatoes in no time! Part of the Super Skills series.

■ *The Red Bicycle: The Extraordinary Story of One Ordinary Bicycle* (Jude Isabella)

A boy named Leo donates "Big Red," his bicycle, to a group that helps people in West Africa. When the bike arrives in Burkina Faso, it is used to deliver food and medicine and is even used as an ambulance. This non-fiction book includes information on groups that arrange for bike donations.



It's cool to read

What's cooler than an air-conditioned library in summer? Chilling out with a good book! While school is out, head to the library with your child to stock up, and use these ideas to keep her reading.



Self(ie) motivation

Combine photography and reading to encourage your youngster to read books everywhere. When she reads in a new place (bus stop, swimming pool, cousin's house), let her take a picture of herself holding the book. At the end of the summer, she'll have a unique memento of books she read and places she visited.

Read-only zone

Kids love to create and spend time in their own special spots. Suggest that your child make one just for reading. She might put lawn chairs in a shady spot outside or build a fort indoors with blankets over furniture. Have her fill her space

with books and magazines and snuggle up inside to read.

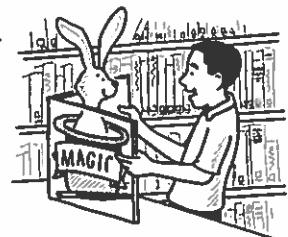
Book-sharing fun

Encourage your youngster to read to others this summer—she'll practice reading aloud fluently as she helps her community. Check with assisted living homes to see if they can use a young guest reader. Or she might hold story time in the yard for younger neighbors. Even if the books are easy for her, she'll benefit from explaining words and ideas to the little ones. Also, your child may be able to read to dogs! Contact libraries and animal shelters about programs. 📖

Check out the library!

Exploring the library is a great way to spend summer break. Use this checklist for your youngster to find a different item each time he visits.

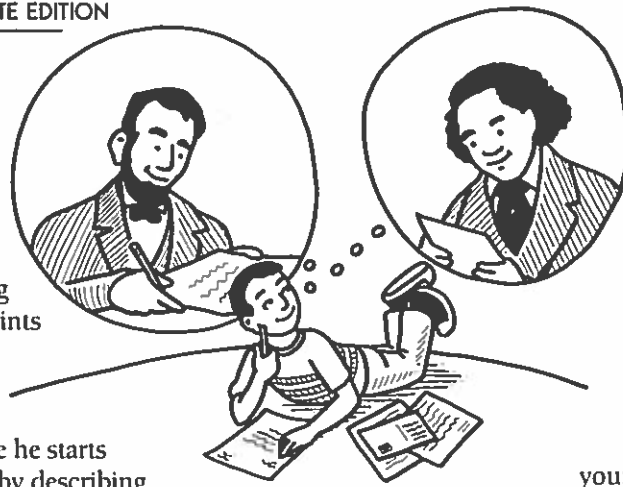
- A biography.** Encourage him to borrow a book on an explorer he studied in school or a person with a career he may want someday.
- A bilingual dictionary.** Can he learn to say *drums* and *guitar* in Italian or Korean?
- A magazine he has never read.** He could flip through one on the environment or one that publishes children's creative writing.
- Novels by a writer he hasn't tried.** Suggest that he ask a librarian to recommend an author who writes books similar to ones he enjoys.
- A nonfiction book of activities.** He might like a volume of crafts, magic tricks, or science experiments. 📖



A story of letters

Encourage your child to tell a story entirely through letters, postcards, diary entries, emails, text messages, or tweets. This is known as *epistolary* writing—and it's an interesting way to practice writing from different points of view. Here's how.

Let your youngster invent two characters who will write a series of letters or postcards back and forth. Before he starts writing, he could develop the characters by describing them to you in detail. He should sketch out their ages, appearances, personalities, backgrounds, and interests.



Then, based on what your child knows about his characters, he can write in their voices. Ask him to think about what each writer might say and how he would sound. For instance, what kinds of words would a medieval knight or a 22nd-century scientist use? What format would they each write in?

Variation: Suggest that your youngster compose a series of tweets or online posts between historical figures. He'll enjoy imagining how Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass would communicate on Twitter or Facebook. 📱



Parent 2 Parent

Words for sale

Our family loves word games like Upwords and Word Rummy, and we're always looking for new words to use when we play. My daughter Sienna's recent writing assignment gave us an interesting idea.

Sienna had to pick five words she didn't know and write an advertisement for each one. The ads were



supposed to convince her classmates to make the words a regular part of their vocabulary. For example, Sienna's ad for *plethora* read, "Looking for a fun way to talk about all the sunny days we're having or how many pairs of shoes you'd like? Use *plethora*! It's a word that means *abundance*."

Now when we hear or read new words, we write and illustrate ads for them and post them on our refrigerator. We're "sold" on this clever way to learn new words for our conversations—and our word games! 📖

Fun with Words

Don't take it literally!

Perhaps your youngster has "gone on a wild goose chase" or "killed two birds with one stone." These are idioms—phrases that don't mean exactly what they say. Try this version of charades so your child will understand the meanings when idioms come up in books or conversation.



Materials: 10 slips of paper, pencil, bowl, idiom books

Write 10 idioms on separate slips of paper. *Examples:* "In a pickle," "On cloud nine," "Raining cats and dogs." For ideas, consult a book like *Scholastic Dictionary of Idioms* (Marvin Terban). Together, talk about what they mean. It's fun to think about where they might have come from, too.

Mix up the slips in a bowl. Take turns drawing one and acting it out for other players to guess. The first person to guess correctly keeps the slip. The player with the most slips wins. Then, find more idioms, and play again. 📖

Q&A

Distracted online reading

Q When my son reads online, he spends more time clicking on links than reading. How do I get him to stop jumping around?

A Online reading is filled with distractions, but with practice your child can get into the habit of staying focused and reading more deeply.

The "one window" rule is helpful for many kids. Have your son close all other computer windows (games, email, chat), leaving only the one that he's reading. He should

also disable pop-up notifications—they're distracting, too.

Then, if he wants to click on a link within an article or story, he could open it in a new tab. That way, your youngster can stay focused on his reading and switch to the tab when he's finished.

Tip: Try installing a free app like

Readability (readability.com) that allows him to read websites without all the links and ads. Or consider a browser extension, such as Stay-Focused for Chrome, that limits his access to distracting sites. 📱



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