

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

May 2018

Keystone Oaks School District

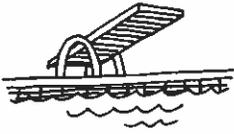
## Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

### ■ *Jabari Jumps* (Gaia Cornwall)

Jabari loves swim lessons. But now it's time for the final test—jumping off the diving board. Suddenly, Jabari can think of a dozen things he needs to be doing instead of diving into the pool. With a little help from his dad, Jabari finds a way to overcome his fear.



### ■ *Judy Moody & Stink: The Mad, Mad, Mad Treasure Hunt* (Megan McDonald)

A trip to Ocracoke Island, North Carolina, turns into a pirate adventure for Judy Moody and her brother. Readers join the fun of following a map and discovering clues in a search for buried treasure. (Also available in Spanish.)



### ■ *Me...Jane* (Patrick McDonnell)

As a little girl, Jane Goodall dreamed of growing up and living in Africa where she would help all the animals in the jungle. This picture-book biography tells the story of how Jane studied animals and nature and grew up to be a scientist famous for her work with chimpanzees.

■ *Money Madness* (David A. Adler)

Rocks, feathers, animals, and food have all been used as money throughout history. A cartoon Uncle Sam character leads this lively tour of currency geared toward young readers. The author uses humor to explain how money has changed over the years and the role it plays in our economy.



## Adventures in reading

Reading during summer break can help your child maintain—and even strengthen—her skills for the coming school year. Make books a part of summer with these activities.

### Go “on location”

Take family field trips inspired by book settings. Maybe you'll stop by a construction site or go out for ice cream. Have your youngster make real-life connections by pointing out things that remind her of the book (workers wearing hard hats, a display of sundae toppings).

### Aim for variety

Encourage your child to explore different topics and types of books with this idea. Put magnetic letters in a bag. Take turns drawing a letter and listing a topic that starts with it (*dancer* for D, *elephant* for E). When you visit the library, your youngster can use the list



to choose books like a biography of a dancer or a story about elephants.

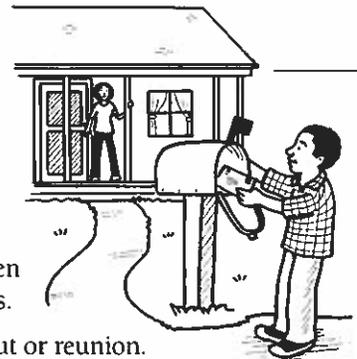
### Achieve a goal

Join another family to meet a shared reading goal. Together, choose a target, such as 50 books or 1,000 pages, and throw a celebration when you reach it. You could hold a game night or a taco party, for instance. Let your child keep track of your progress and check in with the other family regularly.♥

## Reach out and write

Staying in touch with friends and relatives gives your youngster practical reasons to write. Suggest these projects:

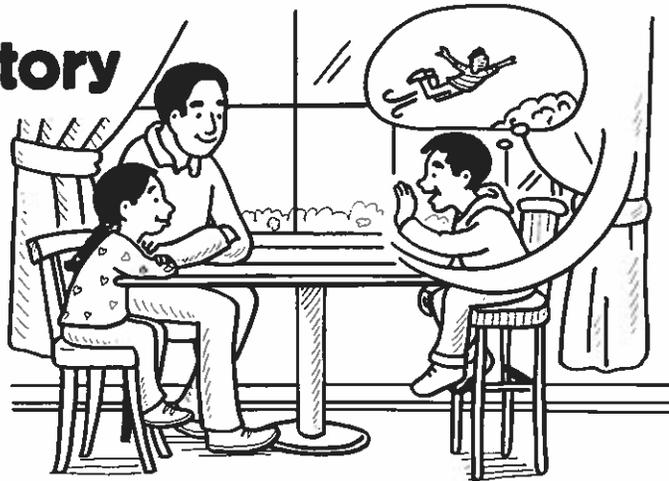
- Exchange weekly letters or emails with a classmate or cousin. Your child will work on asking and answering questions as he and his pen pal learn about each other's summer experiences.
- Use a computer to write invitations to a cookout or reunion. Help your youngster mail or email them to guests. Typing the date and time of the event and the addresses lets him practice writing numbers.
- Design greeting cards for birthdays or other celebrations. Your child can write a cute poem on the front, then add a personal message on the inside.♥



# Once upon a story

Telling stories improves your youngster's creativity and communication. Use these ideas to inspire him.

**Patchwork stories.** Take turns being the storyteller and letting your listener choose the setting, character, and problem. Perhaps your child will pick the ocean, a dog, and a lost toy. You could begin, "Once upon a time, a polka-dotted puppy went to sea in a submarine. At the



bottom of the ocean, he found his red ball that had been missing." Now trade roles, and it's your youngster's turn to weave a setting, character, and problem into a story.

**Tall tales.** Stretch a real-life event into a tall tale, or a story that includes exaggeration. You might say, "One day, I went down the slide, floated off the

end, and started to fly." Your child picks up where you left off and adds his own exaggeration. "I flew up to the top of a tree and played tag with a squirrel." Keep going wherever the tale leads until someone can wrap it up with "The end."♥

## Fun with Words

### My picture thesaurus

Draw, doodle, and sketch are all slightly different words for illustrate. Your youngster will practice writing and discover more synonyms, or words with similar meanings, as she creates her own picture thesaurus.

**Materials:** paper, stapler, crayons

Staple together several sheets of paper to make a book.



On each page, help your child write three words that have similar meanings. *Examples: cold, frosty, frozen.* (You could use a real thesaurus for ideas.)

Next, have her illustrate each word. She might draw a glass of lemonade for *cold*, a milkshake for *frosty*, and an ice cube for *frozen*.

Let her read her thesaurus to you. As she comes across new words, she can add them and their synonyms. *Idea:* Encourage her to use her thesaurus when she writes stories—she'll have a variety of words to choose from, which will make her writing more interesting.♥



### Parent to Parent

### Read...and reread

When my son Tyler read aloud, he would say one word at a time, so his sentences sounded choppy. I told his teacher that he was so focused on figuring out the words, he'd lose track of what the story was about.

She said she was working with Tyler to help him recognize more words automatically, which will improve his fluency. She explained that repeated reading could make him more fluent, too, and she suggested this strategy.

First, Tyler reads a sentence from a book the way he normally does. Then, I pretend to "change the channel" by clicking on an imaginary remote control three times. After each click, I name a character, such as a mouse or a lion, and Tyler rereads the sentence in that voice.

Using silly voices makes it fun for Tyler to practice repeated reading. Now each time he rereads a passage, he reads a little more smoothly and with better expression.♥



### Q&A Ready for kindergarten

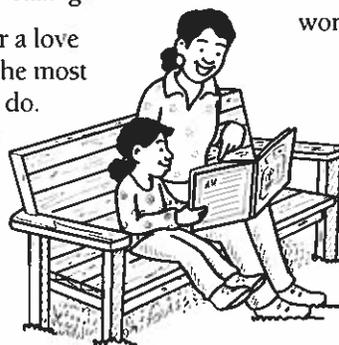
**Q** My daughter starts kindergarten in the fall. What should I be doing to get her ready for reading?

**A** Giving your daughter a love of books and reading is the most important thing you can do. The best way to accomplish that is to read with her every day.

When you read together, point to the words as you say them. Your child will learn

that we read books from top to bottom and from left to right. She'll also pick up the idea that letters on the page make words that tell the story.

Talk about stories and ask questions, too. Simply inviting your daughter to describe her favorite parts or predict what might happen next gives her a stronger connection to books and will deepen her love of reading.♥



#### 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 Reading Connection

Working Together for Learning Success

May 2018

Keystone Oaks School District



## Book Picks

### ■ *The Great Treehouse War* (Lisa Graff)

Winnie has an unusual living arrangement after her parents' divorce. She's supposed to spend three days a week with her mom, three days with her dad, and one day in a treehouse near both homes. Frustrated by her parents' efforts to outdo each other, Winnie decides to stay in the treehouse—but the situation gets out of hand when 10 of her friends move in!

### ■ *I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives*

(Caitlin Alifirenka and Martin Ganda with Liz Welch)

This inspiring true story describes the friendship between two unlikely pen pals: Caitlin, a 12-year-old from suburban Pennsylvania, and Martin, a 14-year-old from a poor village in Zimbabwe. The friends tell their tale through alternating points of view.



### ■ *Peak* (Roland Smith)

Climbing is in Peak Marcello's genes. But when he is arrested for scaling a skyscraper, he realizes he has taken his passion too far. He's sent to live with his long-lost father, who runs an adventure company. Is he really up to the challenge of being the youngest boy to climb Mount Everest?



### ■ *Girls Think of Everything* (Catherine Thimmesh)

This biography collection describes the inventions of a dozen women and girls. Through hard work and creativity, they developed items ranging from chocolate chip cookies to solar-heated houses. Includes a time line of important inventions by females.



## Read around your community

Now starring: Reading! Keep books front and center this summer with community outings that will motivate your child to read.

### At the library

Kick off the season with a trip to the library, where your youngster can sign up for the summer reading program. Ask a librarian if there's a kids' book club—or encourage your child to start her own. Discussing books with others is fun, and it boosts comprehension.



### In the bookstore

Explore local book shops, and browse the shelves for used books or low-cost paperbacks. Also, plan to attend events they sponsor like author visits, poetry readings, or puppet shows. If you're going to meet a children's writer, your youngster may want to read one of his books ahead of time and write down questions to ask him. *Idea:* Traveling this summer? Tour bookstores in other towns.

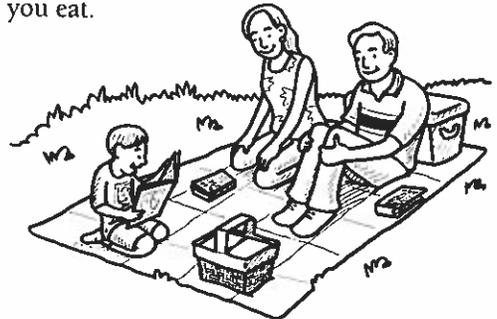
### Onstage

Help your child read the newspaper or look online to find concerts or plays. Pick one to see, and get in the spirit by reading a related book. Before a bluegrass concert, your child could read about the history of that style of music. Or for a community theater production of *Alice in Wonderland*, you might read the Lewis Carroll classic together. 📖

## Celebrate books

Create your own family fun by inviting books to your summer activities. Consider these tips:

- Pack a picnic basket with lunch *and* books. Head to a nearby park, and enjoy reading outside. Your youngster might read aloud a chapter from a novel before lunch. Then, let each person relax with his own book after you eat.

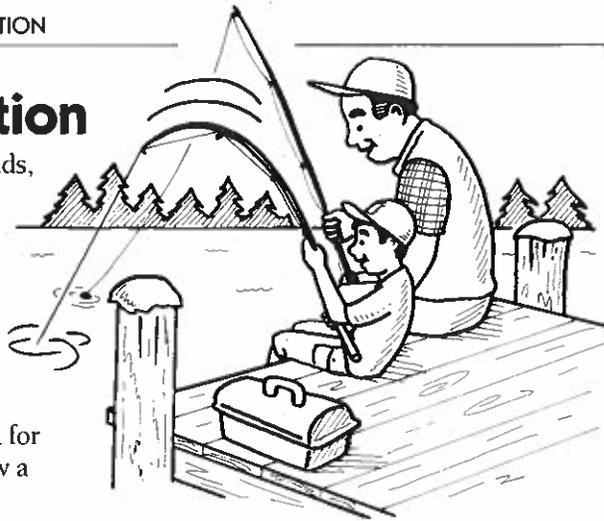


- Add reading to a family gathering like an Independence Day celebration or a birthday party. Take turns reading from books of jokes, trivia, or world records. *Idea:* Encourage your child to read to younger siblings and cousins. 📖

## Write creative nonfiction

Whether your child is swimming with friends, stargazing at camp, or visiting grandparents, special memories make great nonfiction writing material. Share this advice to help him write a true story.

**Find an exciting angle.** Encourage your youngster to pick out something fun or unusual about an event and build his story around it. Maybe his friend brought a cool raft for everyone to float on, or perhaps your child saw a shooting star.



**Create images.** Your youngster can help readers “see” the story by setting the scene. Rather than “I caught a fish,” he might write, “Grandpa and I sat on the wooden dock overlooking the clear blue lake when, suddenly, I caught a big fish!”

**Share the emotion.** Suggest that your child describe how people in

his story felt. His characters will seem more real if he writes a sentence like “The campers gasped in awe as the starlight soared across the night sky” or “Grandpa’s face shone with pride when he saw my catch.”

### Fun with Words

## Road trip games

Word games are a tried-and-true way to strengthen vocabulary and pass time in the car. Here are two to try.

### Buzzwords

Let your child choose an interesting word on a sign, such as *delicatessen* or *boulevard*. You say a word that her word brings to mind (*pastrami*). Your youngster adds a word that’s related to yours, and so on. Continue until no one can think of a word. The player who said the last one picks a new word. Then, play again.

### License plate words

Ask your youngster to read the letters on a license plate. Take turns saying a word that includes all the letters in the order they appear. For TLB, you might pick *tollbooth*, *toolbox*, *tailbone*, and *trailblazer*. If you say a word that doesn’t contain those letters in that order, or you can’t think of a word, you’re out. The last player remaining is the winner.



## A household writing center

Families can share ideas and stories with this interactive writing center. Have your youngster set aside a spot that includes paper, pencils, pens, and envelopes. Together, enjoy these suggestions.

● **Fill an “idea envelope.”** Jot ideas on slips of paper, and put them in an envelope. (“We should go tubing!”) Visitors to the writing center can build on the ideas. (“The Outdoor Adventure Center offers discounts on tubing on Sunday afternoons.”)

● **Provide inspiration.** Place a seashell, a photo of a cute baby animal, or another item in the station. Each person writes a story about the object and seals it in an envelope. When everyone is finished, read your tales aloud to each other. You will see all the different stories the same item can inspire!



## Q&A Should my child try e-books?

**Q** I’ve recently started reading e-books. I enjoy them, so I thought I might suggest that my fourth-grade son try some. But are print books better for kids?

**A** For many people, there’s something special about holding a book and turning the pages. This is especially important for beginning readers. But since your son is older, he might experiment with both print and e-books.

One advantage of e-readers is that they hold a large number of books. If you travel, your child can “pack” as many titles

as he likes. Also, by downloading books from the public library for free, he’ll have a huge selection available at the touch of a button.

On the other hand, youngsters can easily be distracted by apps while they’re reading e-books. So have your son either turn off internet access or use a device that’s just for reading.

Regardless of which book format your child likes, he’ll be reading—and that’s what’s most important.



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