

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

May 2019

Keystone Oaks School District

Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ *Same, Same but Different*

(Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw)

Two boys with an ocean between them become best friends in this story about similarities and differences. Pen pals Elliot and Kailash both like to climb trees—but Elliot's tree in America has a treehouse, while Kailash's tree in India is full of monkeys. What else will they discover as they exchange letters?

■ *Sofia Martinez: My Family Adventure*

(Jacqueline Jules)

There's one adventure after another for seven-year-old Sofia. She goes to hilarious lengths to stand out from her older sisters, make a piñata for her grandmother's birthday, and find an escaped pet mouse. A glossary helps readers learn the Spanish words sprinkled throughout the story. Book one in the Sofia Martinez series.



■ *Digger, Dozer, Dumper*

(Hope Vestergaard)



Trucks have many jobs! Your child can learn about their work as he reads this collection of 16 poems, each featuring a different vehicle. Colorful illustrations show everything from street sweepers to fire trucks, and rhyming verses describe their jobs—cleaning, rescuing, and more.

■ *Sky Boys: How They Built the Empire State Building*

(Deborah Hopkinson)

This true story offers amazing facts about the New York City landmark. For example, steel columns were sunk 55 feet underground to support the 365,000-ton tower, and the builders took lunch breaks on beams dozens of stories high.



Be a nonfiction explorer

Lemonade, swimming, the zoo... no matter what's on your child's agenda while school is out, he can read to learn more about it! Try these tips for nonfiction reading before or even during summertime activities.

Learn how

Have your youngster think of something new he'd like to try, such as running a lemonade stand or putting on a magic show. Together, read books that might help him succeed. For instance, he could learn how to make change from a picture book about counting money. Or he could read a book of magic tricks to find out how to dazzle his audience.

Discover facts

Take books along wherever you go. Maybe your child will read a book of world records at the pool and tell you who swam the fastest or the farthest ever.



Or if you're traveling on an airplane, pack a book for him to read about how planes fly.

Go beyond books

Suggest that your youngster collect and explore other nonfiction materials. He might get a map of the zoo, a takeout menu at the pizza parlor, or a calendar of events at the park. Ask him to read words he recognizes (*tiger, cheese, hike*). He could circle his favorite animals or pizza toppings, or highlight park programs he wants to attend.♥

Revise and edit

How can your youngster make her writing shine? By polishing it! Here's how.

● **Revise.** Encourage your child to read her story aloud. What could she add or rearrange? To decide, she might think, "Did I leave out anything important?" or "Are the events in the right order?" Ask questions to help her add details or clear up confusion. ("Who is Chloe?")

● **Edit.** Now it's time to edit for capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Have your child read her story once to check for each type of error. If you spot a mistake she overlooks (say, a word that should be capitalized), help her figure it out. ("What should the first word in a sentence start with?")♥



Writing “on location”

Inspire your youngster to practice writing vivid descriptions whether she’s outdoors or at home. She’ll have fun using *adjectives*, or descriptive words, with these ideas.

Nature on the playground. Take pencils and paper outside, and try this activity. Each of you secretly spots something

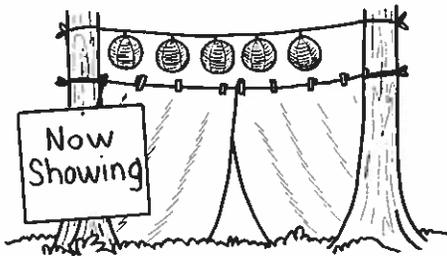


in nature and writes a description that includes at least two adjectives—but doesn’t name the object. Your child could write, “I see something *big*, *white*, and *fluffy*,” and you might write, “I see something *short*, *yellow*, and *green*.” Trade papers, then take a look around, and try to guess what the other person is describing (cloud, dandelion).

Scenes from afar. Your child can write descriptions of faraway places without ever leaving home! Have her cut out pictures of different types of scenery from old magazines. *Examples:* tropical beach, snowy mountain, the surface of Mars. She could glue each photo on a separate page of a notebook and write about it, using adjectives to bring her sentences to life. (“Mars looks *red* and *dusty*. Some parts are *rocky*, and others are *smooth*.”)♥

Neighborhood theater

Lights, camera, action! Let your youngster put on a play based on a favorite storybook, and she’ll work on reading, writing, and speaking.



First, help your child turn the book into a script by writing the dialogue on a sheet of paper. Then, make a copy for each character. Your youngster and friends and family can choose roles.

Suggest that actors read their lines aloud a few times to rehearse. Encourage them to ham it up, using voices that might sound like their characters. They could also make scenery on poster board and use household items as props.

Now it’s show time! Invite neighbors to be the audience, and videotape the performance. Finally, hold a film premiere where the cast can watch the tape.♥



Fun with Words

Active spelling games

Your child can balance and hop his way to better spelling with these games.

Balance like an acrobat

Make a duct tape “tightrope.” Your youngster can spell words, taking one step for each letter. If you say *block*, he’d take five careful steps. If he spells it correctly without stepping off, give him another word. If not, his turn ends. Once he reaches the end of the tightrope, he scores one point for each word he got right. Then, he gives you words. After five rounds, the person with the most points wins.



Hop like a bunny

Let your child use chalk to write the alphabet in big letters scattered across a driveway, sidewalk, or blacktop. Then, call out a word (say, *hat*). He spells it as he hops to each letter—if he gets the word right, he earns one point per letter. Now he says a word, and you spell and hop. The first player with 10 points wins.♥

Parent to Parent

A reading campout

My sister recently reminded me about how much we loved making tents and reading in them when we were little. She said she felt grown-up helping me read, and I remembered how I wanted to practice reading so I’d sound just like her.

I decided to try a “reading campout” with my kids, Molly and Liam. We checked out library books and pitched a tent in the backyard. Then, my

husband and I sat in lawn chairs with our own books while the kids read. We heard Molly helping Liam sound out words. When it was her turn to read, we listened to her explain the meanings of words to her little brother.

Since that night, our kids have asked for more reading campouts. Now we’re planning a real camping trip—and Molly and Liam are already deciding which books they want to take and read to each other!♥



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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Book Picks

■ *Samantha Spinner and the Super-Secret Plans* (Russell Ginns)

When Samantha's uncle disappears, he leaves her with a rusty red umbrella—and a lot of questions. Join her on a worldwide adventure where she must solve puzzles to figure out what the umbrella is for and save her uncle.



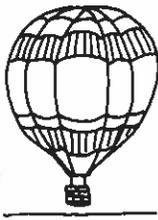
■ *Cricket in the Thicket: Poems about Bugs* (Carol Murray)

In this book of nonfiction poetry, readers explore many types of bugs. Each page includes a short poem, interesting facts, and realistic graphics. Your child will learn about cicadas, ants, daddy longlegs, and more!



■ *The Twenty-One Balloons* (William Pène du Bois)

While flying his hot-air balloon, Professor Sherman lands unexpectedly on a volcanic island full of diamonds and spectacular inventions. But once the professor learns the wealthy residents' secrets, he finds himself unable to leave.



■ *Two Truths and a Lie: It's Alive!* (Ammi-Joan Paquette and Laurie Ann Thompson)

Each chapter of this book includes three sections—two are true and one is false. It's up to readers to use their research skills to figure out which part is made up. Includes an answer guide and research tips. Book one in the Two Truths and a Lie series.

A summer full of books

Children who read for fun build background knowledge, learn new vocabulary, and become better writers. Here are ways to make reading an everyday part of your youngster's summer.

Keep reading materials available

When reading is convenient, your child will be more likely to read for pleasure. Leave a pile of magazines on the coffee table, keep graphic novels on the nightstand, put the newspaper on the kitchen table, and stash books in the car.

Try a reading challenge

Have your youngster check libraries, bookstores, or parks and recreation departments for free summer reading programs. Many sponsor contests or book clubs, too. Help her stick with the plan by setting a goal, perhaps to read a certain number of pages per week or books per month. *Tip:* She might even

start her own challenge and invite friends to join.

Tie books to activities

Summer outings can be a springboard for reading. After a fair, concert, or carnival, your child can visit the library to find related books. A trip to a state fair could encourage her to check out books about raising rabbits. Watching a fireworks display may lead her to read about the science of colors. ▮



Storytelling tips

Family storytelling night boosts your child's imagination and his speaking skills. It's also a great way to bond. These tips can help you get started.

● **Tall tales.** Ask each person to name a family memory. Then, take turns telling a story that exaggerates what actually happened.

(“The road trip took so long, everyone had a birthday before we got home.”)

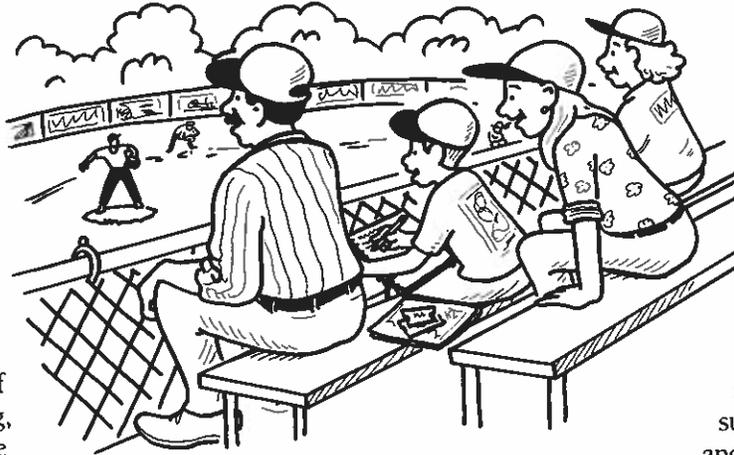
● **Myths.** Encourage your youngster to think of a weather event (flood, volcano), and work together to invent an explanation for how it came about. (“Many years ago, a great blue whale got a very bad cold. He passed it to other whales around the world. Now when they sneeze, there's a flood.”) ▮



Put memories in writing

Your child can make a book of summer memories—and practice writing all summer long. Start with a three-ring binder, and consider these suggestions.

Journal. Have your youngster create a separate page for each of his summer activities (stargazing, baseball, fishing). He could write brief diary entries with the dates and a few sentences telling what happened. *Example:* “June 25. Took a night hike with Dad. I counted 50 fireflies!”



Memorabilia. Encourage him to paste ticket stubs, maps, and programs from special events into his memory book. He can write a caption for each one. (“These tickets are from a baseball game we went to. Our team hit two home runs!”)

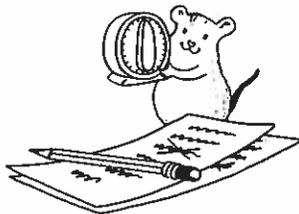
Objects. Have your child fill zipper bags with summer treasures, such as seashells, pebbles, and leaves. Suggest that he include

an index card describing the items. For instance, he might write, “These are seashells I found at Myrtle Beach with Grandma.” Then, he could tape each bag to a page in the binder. 📁

Fun with Words

3, 2, 1 vowels

This three-minute game will stretch your child’s vocabulary and improve her spelling.



Get a timer, or use a watch with a second hand, to time each one-minute round. In round one, each player lists all the words she can think of that have three different vowels (the same vowels may occur more than once). *Examples:* *reaching, capitol, information.* For round two, write words that use just two different vowels (*classmate, separate, textbook*). And in the final round, list words that repeat the same vowel (*September, Alabama, tiring*). *Note:* Each word must contain at least two syllables.

When time runs out, compare lists, and cross off duplicate and misspelled words. Score one point for each word left on your list. The player with the most points wins. 📁



Be a tour guide

If you travel this summer or you’re expecting visitors, make your child the official family tour guide. These ideas will let her do research and read for information:

- Get brochures from a hotel lobby. She can learn about tourist sites (museums, factories that offer tours) and activities (miniature golf, parks). Suggest that she make a list or spreadsheet with columns for prices, hours, and other details.
- Have your youngster read the extended forecast on a site like *weather.com*. She could recommend a packing list of clothes that are appropriate for the weather.
- Encourage her to check newspapers, local magazines, and the visitor center website for coupons. She might find discounted tickets for theme parks, shows, or other attractions. 📁

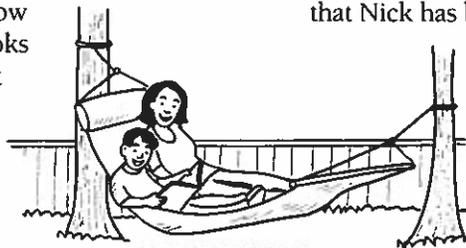


Parent 2 Parent

Improving comprehension

When my son Nick struggled with reading comprehension tests, I met with his reading specialist to learn how I could help him at home.

Mr. Stephens suggested “Hi-Lo Books,” which Nick can check out from the school library. He said these “high interest–low vocabulary” books have stories that older children enjoy and are written at a lower reading level.



The reading specialist also suggested that we play vocabulary games at home—he said a big vocabulary helps with comprehension. In our favorite game, I say a word like *home*, and Nick names synonyms, or words with similar meanings, such as *house* and *apartment*.

Mr. Stephens’s ideas are working. Now that Nick has books he can understand and enjoy, he reads more often on his own. And his grades improved this quarter—not only in reading, but in social studies and science, too. 📁

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