

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

October 2019

Keystone Oaks School District

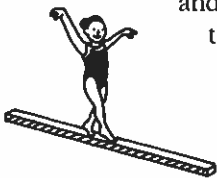
Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ *Gymnastics Time!* (Brendan Flynn)

This nonfiction book takes readers inside a gym to see gymnasts in action. It explains basic facts about the sport, such as how to get started and what equipment the athletes use.



Part of the Sports Time series.

(Also available in Spanish.)

■ *We Don't Eat Our Classmates*

(Ryan T. Higgins)

Penelope Rex is a little dinosaur who ate her classmates on the first day of school. (Could she help it if they were delicious?) Now no one wants



to be friends with her. It takes a lesson from the class goldfish to put Penelope on the right track.

■ *Space Taxi: Archie Takes Flight*

(Wendy Mass and Michael Brawer)

Archie Morningstar is excited to spend Take Your Kid to Work Day in his dad's taxi. But when he climbs in the car, he discovers that his dad is a taxi driver for aliens from outer space. Instead of a trip around the city, Archie is on an intergalactic adventure! The first book in the Space Taxi series.

■ *A Full Moon is Rising*

(Marilyn Singer)

Poetry, geography, and culture come together in this volume. Each poem is about a full moon in a different part of the world. A special section offers interesting facts about each place mentioned in the poems.



Writing is practical

Show your youngster how useful writing can be by giving him real-life reasons to put pencil to paper. Here are a few ideas.

To-do lists

What does your child want or need to do this week? Help him make lists to keep track. He might list Lego structures he plans to build (castle, rocket) or chores he needs to complete (water plants, dust). Or maybe he'll list upcoming events, such as going to the book fair and eating dinner with Grandma. He can check off each item as he finishes it.



Reminders

Let your youngster be your secretary and write reminders for you. *Examples:* "Buy milk." "Sign field trip form." Provide a pad of sticky notes (and a little spelling help) for him to jot them down. Then, set up a place to leave the notes where you will see them. Encourage reading practice by leaving notes for him, too.

Memory book

Suggest that your child start a notebook of favorite memories. Each night before bed, he could write and illustrate three things he wants to remember about the day. *Examples:* Jumping in a pile of leaves, listening to his teacher read a good book, learning a funny joke.

Note: If your youngster is just learning to write, ask him to write letters or words he knows, and help him fill in the rest.♥

A record of my reading

These ongoing craft projects will help your child keep track of books she reads this year—and show her how she's progressing as a reader.

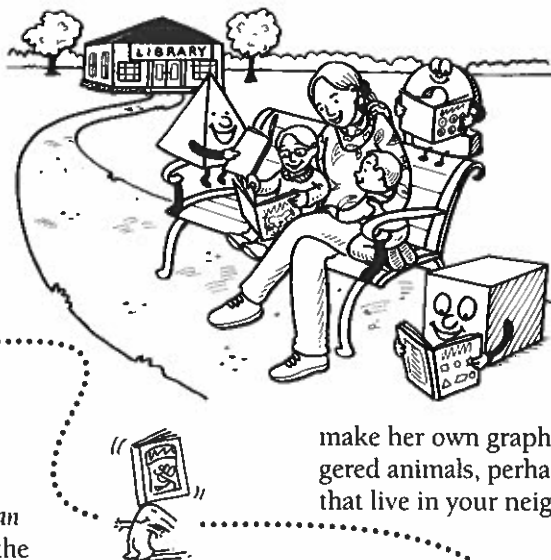
- **Paper chain.** Help your youngster write each book title on a strip of construction paper. She can link the strips together to form a colorful chain that will get longer the more she reads. *Idea:* Suggest that she use different-color strips for different types of books (green for animal tales, purple for poetry).
- **Patchwork quilt.** Have your child write book titles on separate construction-paper "quilt" squares. Encourage her to decorate each one—maybe she'll make a red-and-white striped square for *The Cat in the Hat* (Dr. Seuss). Now help her tape or staple the squares together in rows and columns for a quilt that grows throughout the year!♥



I can learn from nonfiction!

Nonfiction books are fun for your youngster to read—and they build knowledge she needs in school now and later. Help her become a fan of nonfiction with these tips.

Explore school subjects. Let your child check out nonfiction library books that are related to topics she studies in school. As she learns about



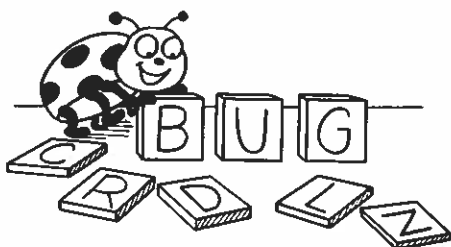
numbers and shapes, for example, read math picture books. Or she could find a biography of a historical figure she's studying. She'll learn new facts and gain a deeper understanding of the topic.

Read graphics. Many nonfiction books include charts, tables, maps, and diagrams like those your youngster will see in textbooks. When you read together, be sure to read the graphics, too, so she becomes comfortable with them. For instance, she'll learn to read the titles, captions, or data they contain. *Idea:* Suggest that she make her own graphic. After reading a chart about endangered animals, perhaps she'll draw a chart showing animals that live in your neighborhood.♥

Fun with Words

Real or nonsense?

How are the words *fan* and *can* related? They both belong to the *-an* word family! Give your youngster's reading and spelling skills a boost with this word family game.



1. Get a set of magnetic letters or letter tiles. Set aside the vowels, and mix up the consonants in a bowl.
2. Let your child choose a word family, such as *-an*, *-op*, *-ug*, or *-et*, and find the magnetic letters or tiles for his "family."
3. Take turns drawing a consonant from the bowl and saying it with the word family. Does it make a real word or a nonsense word? For instance, adding *b* to *-ug* makes *bug* (real). But adding *g* makes *gug* (nonsense).
4. If it's a real word, the player writes it down. When all the consonants have been used, the person with the longest list picks the next word family so you can play again.♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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Autumn fine-motor play

Your child's hands need to be strong and coordinated for tasks like writing and cutting with scissors. Try these fall-themed activities to give his little fingers a workout.



- Pumpkin pincushion.** Let your youngster stick pushpins all over a small pumpkin. Then, he could stretch colorful rubber bands between the pins to create designs.
- Apple tree.** Have him draw the outline of a tree on paper. He can place red pom-pom apples on his tree and then use tweezers to "pick" them up.
- Leaf rubbing.** Together, gather leaves from the ground outside. Encourage your child to tape one to a table, place a sheet of paper on top, and rub the side of an unwrapped crayon over it. The leaf's outline will appear!
- Seed signs.** Ask your youngster to create a sign for your door by gluing apple or pumpkin seeds onto paper to spell "W-E-L-C-O-M-E."♥

Q&A Working with the reading specialist

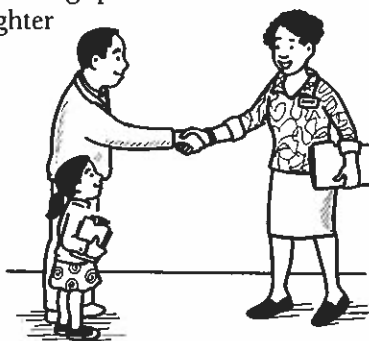
Q My daughter meets with the school reading teacher each week. How can I work with the teacher to help my child do her best?

A Start by asking the reading specialist what you and your daughter can do at home. For example, the teacher might suggest specific cues to give your child when she reads a word incorrectly. Or maybe she'll have ideas for word games that are

especially helpful for students who struggle with reading.

The specialist may also tell you what your daughter is doing well and where they're working on ways to improve.

Finally, be sure to attend all IEP (Individualized Education Program) meetings. The teacher will answer your questions, explain anything that you don't understand, and help you plan for your daughter's reading success.♥



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Working Together for Learning Success

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Book Picks

■ *H is for Haiku: A Treasury of Haiku from A to Z* (Sydell Rosenberg)

Organized alphabetically, this book full of haiku is the perfect inspiration to get readers to write their own poems. Each three-line poem starts with a different letter of the alphabet and covers a familiar topic like toys, weather, or pets.



■ *The Hyena Scientist* (Sy Montgomery)

Hyenas get a bad rap, but scientists who study them want to change your mind. With this

nonfiction book, readers will learn about the hyenas at a wildlife reserve in Kenya—types of breeds, how they hunt, and even how they play!

■ *Out of Left Field* (Ellen Klages)

Set in the 1950s, this story is about a young baseball player who wouldn't take no for an answer. Katy Gordon is the best pitcher in her neighborhood, yet she can't play Little League because she's a girl. So she heads to the library and uses research to argue that girls belong in baseball.



■ *Knight Kyle and the Magic Silver Lance (Adventures Beyond Dragon Mountain)* (Oliver Pötzsch)

Wearing his suit of armor, Knight Kyle joins his helpful band of friends to search for his great-grandfather's missing silver lance. These 13 short stories of joyful journeys in faraway lands will lead your youngster to one exciting ending.



Words in every subject

You know your child needs a strong vocabulary to do well in reading and writing. But did you know that vocabulary is important in math, science, and social studies, too? She can explore words in every subject with these three activities.

1. Find words

Whenever your youngster reads, suggest that she look for words related to school subjects. She might spot science words like *metamorphosis* in a comic book, *sodium* in a food advertisement, and *precipitation* in a weather report. Seeing how the words are used in real life will help her recognize and understand them in her textbooks.

2. Use words

Give your child reasons to say vocabulary words aloud—that will make it easier for her to identify them in textbooks. If she's studying state history, you could visit a state park and talk to a ranger. ("What tribes are *native* to this area?") Or she might practice economics terms

while shopping. ("There must be a high *demand* for these sweaters. They need to increase their *supply*.")

3. Play with words

Games can make words a permanent part of your youngster's vocabulary. Take turns picking a letter (say, C) and a school subject (perhaps math), and set a timer for three minutes. Each player lists terms that begin with the letter and fit the category (*centimeter, calculate*). Compare your lists. The winner is the person with the most words that no one else has. 📖



What should I read?

One key to reading a lot is finding a steady supply of great books! Try these ideas with your youngster:

- Suggest that your child swap favorite books with a friend. He can lend books he liked or recommend that his friend get them from the library. Then, his friend could do the same thing.
- Ask your youngster to list a few books he loves. He can ask the librarian to help him choose similar books to read next.
- Give your child books you enjoyed at his age. You might even reread them so you can discuss them together. 📖



Ways to overcome writer's block

"I don't know what to write. I'm stuck!" If your child's story stalls out, help him get his pencil moving again with these tips.

Keep writing. For 10 minutes, have him write nonstop about anything that pops into his mind. When he reads his "free writing," a possibility for his story may jump out at him.



Add something new. Remind your youngster that a first draft is a "playground" for ideas. He could add another character to the story or give one of his existing characters a new problem to solve. The changes he makes might help him get unstuck.

Skip ahead. Encourage him to fast-forward and write another part of the story. Sometimes taking a detour will trigger an idea about the section that has him stumped.

Take a break. Suggest that your child set the story aside for a little while to go for a walk or read a book. Once he stops thinking so hard, the perfect solution may appear. 📖

Learning to study

My daughter Corina struggled with studying last year. She would read her textbook and then say she was done. This year, I reached out to her teacher for advice.



Her teacher said that to study effectively, Corina needs to be an "active reader." That means she should take notes while she reads, talk about the information to help her learn and remember it, and write down the answers to practice tests in textbooks.

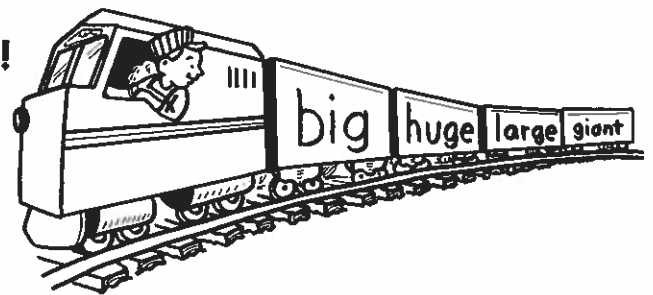
Now at dinner, I ask Corina what she studied that day, and then we discuss it. That has led to some interesting family talks.

Also, her teacher recommended that she study a little each night. So Corina starts each session by reviewing what she read the night before and then moves on to that day's material. I feel confident that this will be a better school year for Corina! 📖



Fun with Words Awesome adjectives!

There's a whole world full of adjectives out there for your youngster to use when she writes. Help her discover the awesomeness of adjectives with this twist on "I Spy."



The first player picks any object she sees and uses one adjective to describe it. ("I spy a *big* ball.") The next person repeats the sentence, adding another adjective that is a synonym (a word with a similar meaning): "I spy a *big, huge* ball." Continue adding synonyms, such as *large*, *whopping*, *enormous*, *immense*, and *giant*.

When you run out of words, the last player who thought of one chooses the next object and starts another round. *Idea:* Have your child keep track of the adjectives in a notebook. She'll have a personal thesaurus to use when she writes! 📖

Q&A Reading models

Q I know it's important for our son to see us reading, but my husband and I can't seem to find time to read. What should we do?

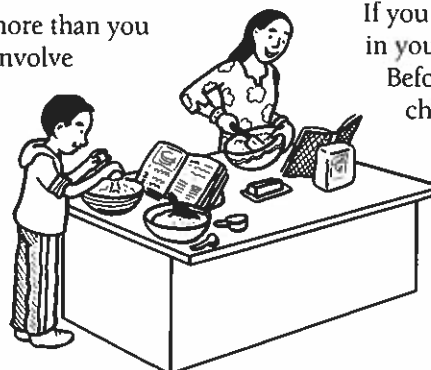
A You probably read more than you think. Most daily tasks involve some reading. Be on the lookout for them, and take every opportunity to let your son notice you reading.

When preparing meals, read recipes

and package directions aloud. During drives, point out road signs or billboards. Let your son see both of you reading the newspaper, magazines, mail, or email.

If you can, find a little time in your day for books.

Before reading to your child every night, you could each read a book silently. Seeing you read may motivate him to follow your example. 📖



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