

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

October 2018

Keystone Oaks School District

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *This Book Just Ate My Dog!*

(Richard Byrne)

When Bella takes her dog for a walk across the pages of this book, he “disappears” into the crease. Everyone who comes to help find him disappears, too—including Bella. It’s up to the reader to rescue them all in this fun picture book.



■ *Inspector Flytrap in the da Vinci Cold!*

(Tom Angleberger)

Meet a Venus flytrap who solves mysteries. He travels by skateboard and has a clue-eating goat sidekick. In this first book in the Inspector Flytrap series,



the clever plant cracks a case about smelly cookies, follows the trail of a missing rose, and more.

■ *Living Things and Nonliving Things: A Compare and Contrast Book*

(Kevin Kurtz)
The bright photos in this book encourage readers to compare things they see every day and ask questions. Do all living things move? Do all non-living things stay still? The answers may surprise your youngster!

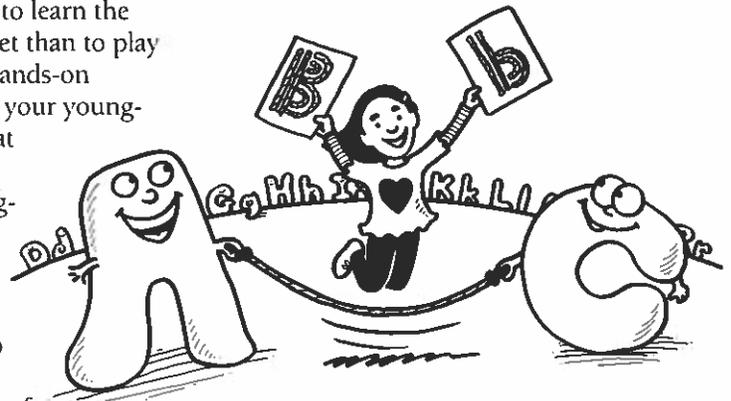
■ *United States Capitol*

(Julie Murray)
Take a glimpse inside the U.S. Capitol in this nonfiction book. Readers learn who works in the Capitol, what jobs they do, and why the building plays an important role in the American government. Part of the U.S. Landmarks series. (Also available in Spanish.)



A-B-C...play with me

What better way to learn the letters of the alphabet than to play with them? These hands-on activities encourage your youngster to look closely at each letter’s unique features so she recognizes the letters when she reads.



Crafty letters

Ask your child to pick any letter, and write a large version of it on paper for her to trace over with glue. She can cover it with craft supplies (glitter, yarn, toothpicks). Talk about each letter’s lines, curves, or loops. (“What will you use for the slanted lines of the A?” or “Good idea to use yarn for the curve of the P.”)

Secret-letter bag

Can your youngster identify a letter by touch? This activity helps her notice small differences between letters. Secretly choose two magnetic letters with similar features, and put them in a brown paper

bag. Examples: E and F, M and N, or O and Q. Have her reach in without looking, feel both letters, and name them.

Letter match

Use a set of uppercase letter tiles from a game, or let your child make her own “tiles” by printing each capital letter on a separate scrap of paper. Place the letters in a bowl. Now help your youngster write all the lowercase letters randomly on a sheet of paper. Take turns drawing a tile from the bowl and placing it over the matching letter on the paper (A on a, B on b).♥

“What did you read in school today?”

Reading is a big part of your youngster’s day at school. Show interest by asking about books he listened to or read. Here’s how.

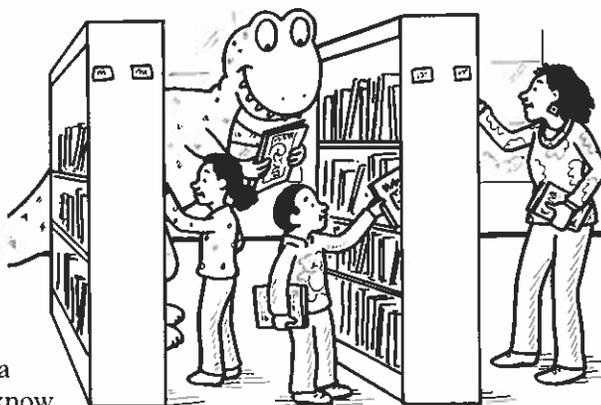
1. Have your child tell you the title of a book his teacher read aloud or that he read by himself.
2. Ask him what he learned from the book or what it was about. Maybe the teacher read a nonfiction book on pumpkins—can he describe how pumpkins grow? Or perhaps he chose a graphic novel about dragons during silent reading time.
3. Suggest that he draw a picture of his favorite part of a story. Let him describe the action in the book, using his drawing as a guide.♥



Make the most of library visits

Regular trips to the library make reading a habit that will benefit your child throughout his school years—and his life. Try these tips for putting library visits into your family routine.

Before you go. “Advertise” the library as a source of information. You might say, “I know you love construction vehicles. We should check out a book about them.” Show him how you use the library, too.



Example: “I need some slow-cooker recipes. I bet we’ll find a cookbook that’ll help.”

While you’re there. Take time to explore together and become familiar with the layout. The more at home your youngster feels, the more he’ll enjoy the library. He can share his discoveries with you, too. He may be excited to find a shelf of sports books or more titles in a favorite series.

Back at home. Suggest that your child showcase the books he checked out by creating displays like those he saw at the library. For instance, he could put plastic farm animals on a table with books about farms. He might even hold story hour for your family—just like at the library.♥

Fun with Words

Be a word collector

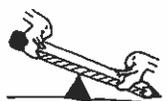
Galaxy, crimson, caterpillar... your youngster can grow her vocabulary by collecting words that look or sound interesting to her.

When your child finds a word she likes, help her write it on a craft stick and add it to a jar. *Tip:* If she doesn’t know a word’s meaning, look it up in a dictionary together.



Now encourage your youngster to play with her collection so the words become familiar. For instance, she might sort them into categories (colors, animals) or by number of syllables. Or take turns pulling out a random word and giving each other clues to guess it. For *crimson*, you could say, “My word is a color. It’s a shade of red.”

Note: It’s okay if your child chooses words she can’t read. Youngsters can say and understand big words like *triceratops* or *nectarine* long before they’re able to read them!♥



Autumn writing

Fall is full of fun reasons to write. Encourage your youngster to write words or sentences with these seasonal activities.

Fall shapes

Together, draw and cut out leaves, apples, and other fall shapes from construction paper. On each one, help your child write the object’s name (“leaf”) or something he does with it (“I like to jump in leaves”). Then, let him use the shapes to decorate his bedroom.



Five senses

Your youngster can use his senses to enjoy autumn activities. Suggest that he make a five-senses chart with columns labeled “I saw,” “I heard,” “I smelled,” “I tasted,” and “I touched.” He can write words or draw pictures to go with the labels (an orange leaf beneath “I saw,” an apple pie under “I tasted”).♥

Q&A Support for speech therapy

Q My daughter receives speech therapy at school. We do exercises at home that the speech therapist recommends, but are there other ways we can help her make progress?

A Reading with your child is a fun way to practice speech at home. Take turns reading aloud from a book. When it’s her turn, she can point out words that contain sounds she’s working on and say them out loud.



Help her find words with the target sound at the beginning, middle, and end so she practices saying it in all parts of words. For instance, if she’s focusing on *ch*, she might find *chair*, *ketchup*, and *beach*. While she reads, ask her to show you how the therapist teaches her to form the sounds with her lips and tongue.

Finally, be sure to read with your daughter just for fun, too. Not every reading experience needs to turn into speech practice—it’s important for her to read simply for the joy 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

Working Together for Learning Success

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Keystone Oaks School District



Book Picks

■ **Brand New School, Brave New Ruby** (Derrick Barnes)

The youngest of four kids, Ruby sets out to prove she can keep up with her smart (and sometimes mischievous) older brothers. She has just started at a new school, and she's ready to make a name for herself. The first book in the Ruby and the Booker Boys series.

■ **Get Coding!** (Young Rewired State)

Your child can learn and use coding skills to complete the "missions" in this how-to book. She'll read about how to build a web page, design an app, create a game, and more—all in a guide designed for beginners.



■ **Word of Mouse** (James Patterson and Chris Grabenstein)

Isaiah is a little blue mouse who can read, write, and talk. It's hard for a talking mouse to fit in, but when he meets Hailey, a girl who knows what it's like to feel lonely, they both learn how valuable friendship can be.



■ **Behind the Canvas: An Artist's Life** (Blanca Apodaca and Michael Servich)

Explore what it's like to be a real artist in this *Time for Kids* nonfiction book. Young readers will learn about various types of art and get an inside look at an artist's studio. Includes an interview with an artist and a glossary of art terms. (Also available in Spanish.)

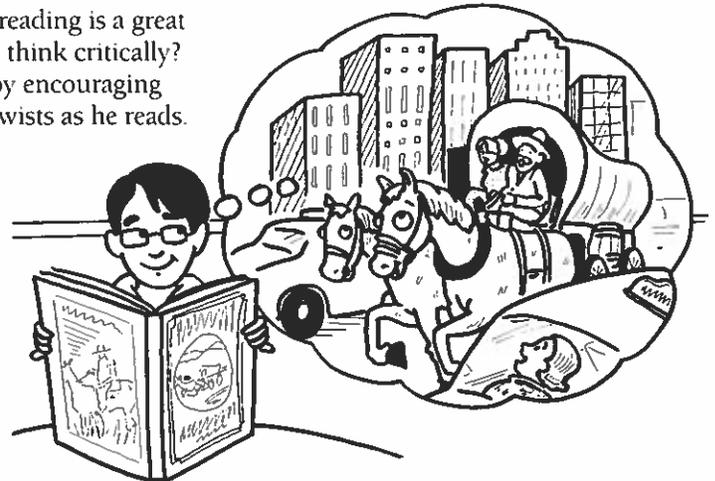


Books boost critical thinking

Did you know that reading is a great way to help your child think critically? Sharpen his thinking by encouraging him to imagine these twists as he reads.

Imagine where

Ask your youngster to pretend the story he's reading takes place somewhere different. What would change or stay the same if the characters lived in outer space instead of on a farm? The kids might still go to school, but maybe they ride there on a "rocket bus" or wear spacesuit uniforms.



Imagine when

How about if a story were set in another era? Perhaps your child is reading a novel about a wagon train journey in pioneer days. He might move it to the present day—with computers, cell phones, and other modern technology. How does he think the plot would

develop if the characters could communicate with distant relatives by Skype, navigate their journey with GPS, or film funny videos along the way?

Imagine who

What if a different character told the story? Your youngster might change the narrator from a sloth to a cheetah, for example. Then, instead of hanging out in a tree all day, the main character would speed through the jungle and discover exciting new adventures. 📖

On-the-go conversations

When you're out and about with your youngster, build her speaking skills with these everyday conversation starters.

● **Jobs.** Pay attention to businesses you pass, like a yoga studio, newspaper office, or day-care center. Talk to her about what jobs people might be doing inside.

● **Nature.** Wonder aloud about plants and animals you spot, such as why leaves change color or what horses grazing in a field are thinking about.

● **Sports.** Look for people being active—walking their dogs, playing basketball, or riding bikes. What are your favorite physical activities, and what do you like best about them? 📖



The best word for the job

Ran or dashed? Small or miniature?

There are so many words out there for your youngster to choose from when she writes. Try these activities to help her use precise words—the ones that really get across her meaning.

Find new verbs. Encourage your child to go through her writing and circle all the verbs (action words). Then, suggest that she replace general ones with more targeted options. For instance, “She *ran* through



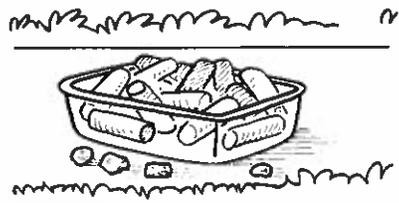
the forest” might become “She *dashed* through the forest.” Or “I *put* cinnamon on my toast” could change to “I *sprinkled* cinnamon on my toast.”

Discover adjectives. This game will help your youngster think of interesting adjectives (descriptive words). Have her pick an object (say, an orange). Set a timer for 3 minutes while each of you lists as many words as possible to describe it (*round, bumpy, tasty, delicious, sweet, juicy*). When

Fun with Words Sidewalk spelling bee

Play this outdoor spelling game to motivate your youngster to study his words each week.

1. Have your child use sidewalk chalk to write his spelling words randomly on a sidewalk or playground blacktop.



2. Let one player toss a pebble and announce the word it lands on or nearest to.

3. The other person, without looking, has to spell the word. If he gets it right, he writes his initials beside it. Then, it's his turn to toss the pebble and say a word for his opponent to spell.

4. When all the words have been claimed, the player who spelled the most words correctly wins.

Variation: Write words with markers on large sheets of paper, and toss a penny toward them. ▮



time's up, take turns reading your lists aloud, and cross off any duplicates. The person with the most remaining words selects the next item to describe. ▮

Q&A Better book reports

Q My son has to present a book report, and it's up to him to choose the book and the format. How can I support him?

A Begin by helping him find a great book to read. You might go to the library together, or share titles of books you loved when you were his age. Then, suggest that he get an early start so he has plenty of time to read before writing his report.

Next, encourage him to explore various formats. Does he have a flair for the dramatic? He might want to reenact a scene from the book. If he likes to draw, he could design a book jacket with key quotes from the story and a summary on the back. Or he might create a scene in a shoebox and tape his report to the side.

Finally, invite him to practice reading his report to you. He'll feel more prepared and confident presenting it in class. ▮



Learning with biographies

Reading biographies is a fun way to explore subjects like science, history, music, and art through the eyes of real people. Here are ideas:

- Help your child make connections to what she's learning in school by reading a biography of a person she's studying. Ask her to share facts from the biography that she remembers

from class—as well as new information she discovers.

- Suggest that your youngster look for similarities to her own life.

Maybe she's reading about a ballet dancer who came back from an injury. That could remind her of when she sprained her ankle and couldn't dance in her recital. She'll better understand the person's feelings and actions if she can relate to them. ▮



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