

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

September 2013

Paul Cuffee Charter School  
Title I Department

## Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

### ■ Pancakes for Breakfast

This wordless book by Tomie dePaola shows a lady gathering ingredients while imagining a stack of fluffy pancakes. As her pets watch hungrily, she collects eggs, milks a cow, and churns butter. Your youngster will enjoy telling a story to go with the pictures.



### ■ It's Back to School We Go!

What would your child's first day of school be like if he lived in Peru or India? What subjects would he study, and what would he eat for lunch? Ellen Jackson's tale describes the special day through the eyes of 11 children—each from a different country.

### ■ Ah, Music!



Aliki's nonfiction book will give your youngster an overview of music. She'll meet composers, discover musical instruments (including the human voice), and learn about styles like jazz and classical. Simple language explains concepts such as pitch, tone, and harmony. (Also available in Spanish.)

### ■ The Treasure

Isaac keeps dreaming about hidden treasure under a bridge near a castle. But when he goes in search of it, the treasure is not there. Can your child guess where he will find it in the end? A classic folktale, retold by Uri Shulevitz.



## Let's read together

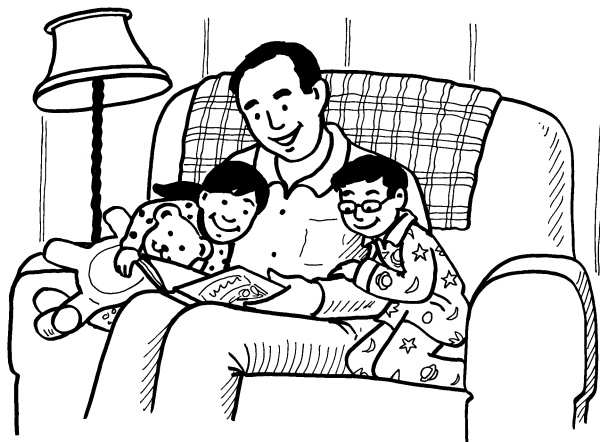
Reading to your child and listening to him read are two of the most important things you can do to raise a strong, enthusiastic reader. Consider these suggestions for making reading a regular part of your youngster's day.

### Surprise storytime

You and your child don't have to wait until bedtime to share a good book. Surprise him with unexpected read-alouds. Pull out a book, and snuggle up while dinner is in the oven. Or sneak a story into your bag, and read to him during a sibling's sports practice. He'll see that reading is something he can enjoy any time or place!

### School books

Ask your youngster to show you books he brings home from school. The teacher might want you to read them to him or let him read to you. Afterward, ask questions that encourage him to talk about the book. *Examples:* "That story



kept me in suspense—how did you think it would end?" "What did you learn that you didn't know before?"

### Reading buddies

Although it's nice to read one-on-one with each of your children, try sometimes reading to siblings together. Hearing each other's comments and questions—and discussing the book—will boost all of your youngsters' comprehension. *Tip:* Fit in even more reading time by encouraging your children to read to each other during playtime or in the car. ♥

## My word wall

Help your youngster feel more confident about writing by making a "word wall" in her room. When she writes stories or does homework, she can look at her wall for inspiration and help with spelling.

Have her start a word list for each letter of the alphabet. She could write every letter on a separate sheet of construction paper and add words that she sees in books (*airplane* on the A page, *wash* on the W page).

Or your child could create lists for various categories. She might make one page for colors (*red, purple, aqua*) and another for animals (*lion, frog, eagle*). ♥



# (Re)tell a story

After your youngster reads a book in school, her teacher might ask her to “retell” it. This helps your child understand what the book was about—and it lets the teacher check her comprehension. Here are fun ways to practice retelling at home.

**Make a retelling plate.** Suggest that your youngster decorate a paper plate with key events from a book. Say she



reads about seasons—she could draw four pictures around the plate and label them “Fall,” “Winter,” “Spring,” and “Summer.” Then, have her hold the plate and turn it around as she retells the book for you.

**Put on a puppet show.** Let your child make puppets out of brown paper lunch bags. She can use crayons to draw each character from a book on a separate bag. Offer to watch while she puts on a puppet show

based on the story. *Idea:* She could sketch the story’s setting on poster board to make scenery for her show. ♥



## Name games



Your child’s name is probably the first word he learned to write. These games let him use his name to learn about letters and sounds:



● Have your youngster write his own name in big letters on a sheet of paper and then cut it apart into individual letters. Mix up his letters, and time him as he puts them back in the right order. Then, he can repeat the activity and try to beat his time. *Variations:* He might play using his last name, too, or names of relatives, pets, and friends.

● Take turns naming a “rule” and seeing whose name is the “winner.” If you ask for the shortest name, family members can write their names, and your child could count the letters. Or you might look for the name with the most vowels, consonants, or silent letters. ♥

## OUR PURPOSE

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

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## Q&A

### It’s in the mail!

**Q** How can I encourage my son to write more this year?

**A** Youngsters love to send and receive mail. Why not suggest that your son write to friends and relatives?

He could send a friendly letter or a postcard. Have him write about his school, friends, and activities. Encourage him to ask questions for the person to answer when she writes back. Or he could write invitations to a party, thank-you notes for gifts, or holiday greetings. He might even draw a comic strip to send to someone.

Encourage your son to use his best handwriting and to check his spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Finally, help him address the envelope, and let him drop it in the mail. After he gets a letter back, he can write again! ♥



## Parent to Parent

### Reading in the kitchen

When school began, I posted the cafeteria menu on the refrigerator. My daughter, Carla, was excited that she could read some of the words. For example, she knew *pizza* from delivery boxes and *milk* from seeing it on milk cartons.

I realized that the kitchen was full of things for Carla to read—which is ideal, because we spend a lot of time there. I showed her our recipe box and

grocery list, and she found more words she knew, like *bake* and *apples*.

Now while I cook, I sometimes ask Carla to hand me ingredients. I’ll tell her to find the Swiss cheese in the refrigerator or the pinto beans in the pantry, for instance. She is learning to sound out words and to use pictures as clues to help her read. ♥

