

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

May 2015

Paul Cuffee Charter School
Title I Department

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *Tim and the Iceberg*

(Paul Coates)

A little boy and his grandfather use their imaginations to stay cool on a hot day at the beach. Grandpa tells Tim stories, and then Tim sets off on a pretend trip to the North Pole to bring back an iceberg.



■ *Just One Bite* (Lola Schaefer)

Your youngster will learn about the eating habits of 11 animals in this nonfiction book. There's the whale that gulps down an entire giant squid and the butterfly that swallows just three drops of nectar. Each animal and its food are drawn to scale so your child can see exactly how much it eats in one bite.



■ *Moses Goes to a Concert*

(Isaac Millman)

Moses and his classmates are excited to go on a field trip to a concert. The students, who are all deaf, are surprised to find out the orchestra's percussionist is deaf, too. Includes conversations in sign language and a page showing the hand alphabet.

■ *A Different Princess: Knight Princess* (Amy Potter)

Amy thinks she's not your average princess. In fact, she tells her pet unicorn she's a brave knight princess—"cooler than Cinderella." Amy's mission is to rescue a little prince from a dragon, but she ends up rescuing the dragon instead. Part of the series *A Different Princess*. (Also available in Spanish.)



Summertime is story time

Make summer reading a family affair with regular read-alouds. Here are simple suggestions to help your child get the most out of the books you read together.

Your turn, my turn

Take turns picking books so your youngster gets a say. When it's your turn to choose, mix up fiction and nonfiction, including graphic novels, biographies, poetry, how-to books, historical fiction, and mysteries. You'll introduce him to many kinds of books that he'll read in school—and he may find a new favorite genre.

A two-way street

Inspire your child to really get involved in story time. For instance, let him set the pace. He may want to stop and point out a cute animal in an illustration or have you reread a funny part. Or maybe he'd like to read the main character's dialogue.

Q&As

Read-alouds give your youngster a chance to hear harder books than he can



read on his own. Encourage him to ask you if he doesn't know what a word means or can't understand what's happening. Ask him questions, too. ("Do you know what an ocelot is?" "What did you think of the ending?")

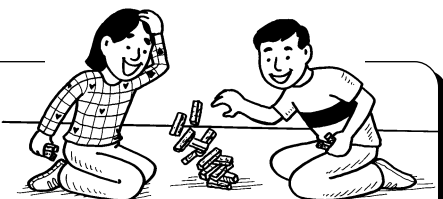
Guest readers

If you visit relatives, or they visit you, invite them to read to your child. It's good for him to hear different reading voices and styles. Maybe you can even go to a nearby library together, and they could show your youngster books they enjoyed when they were little. ♥

Fine-motor games

Let your youngster work on fine-motor skills this summer for better handwriting in the fall. Play these games together:

- This homemade version of Jenga can improve your child's hand-eye coordination. Cut four sponges into four strips each. Take turns stacking the pieces to build a tower. Keep going until one player's piece knocks over the tower—then start again.
- Strengthen your youngster's pencil grip with this idea. Give each player a clean, empty squirt bottle (for example, a mustard or ketchup bottle) and a cotton ball. Pick a starting line and a finish line. Squeeze your containers to blow air on your cotton balls, "racing" to move the balls from start to finish. ♥



Write while you play

Is there a doctor in the house? What about a chef or a banker? With these clever ideas, you can build in fun writing practice when your youngster plays.

Doctor. Suggest that your child make an eye chart by writing a giant “E” at the top of a piece of paper and rows of random letters underneath that gradually get smaller. A pad of sticky notes is ideal for writing “prescriptions,” and she can jot notes about patients on “forms” attached to a clipboard.



Chef. Ask your youngster to write menus showing what she’ll feed her dolls or stuffed animals. She might list spaghetti and meatballs for her doll or garden salad for a stuffed bunny. You could give her cookbooks or carryout menus to look for ideas. *Tip:* Have her write shopping lists for the ingredients she would need.

Banker. Help your child gather old checkbooks, ink pads and stamps, pretend money (bills and coins), and envelopes. Take turns being the teller and customer. She’ll get practice writing numbers and words as she fills out checks and deposit slips. ♥



My word garden

Watch your child’s reading and writing skills bloom with this springtime activity.

Have your youngster cut small circles from construction paper.

On each one, he can write a word beginning (*br, th, pre*) or ending (*ed, ing, tion*). Then, he should glue the circles to craft sticks to start making flowers.



Next, ask him to cut out flower petals. As he reads books, he can be on the lookout for words with the beginnings (*bridge, then*) and endings (*plopped, sailing*) he chose. When he finds a word, help him write it on a petal and glue it on the correct flower.

Once a flower has petals all the way around, it’s time to “plant” it! Your child might put soil in a shoebox and plant flowers there. Or he could stick them in your yard or garden. Each time he plants a flower, encourage him to practice reading all of his words. ♥

Q&A

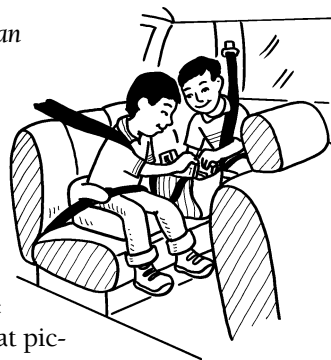
“Goody bags” for reading

Q We’re taking several car trips this summer. How can we encourage our children to read on the road rather than watch videos?

A Instead of taking electronics with you, try packing a reading goody bag for your youngsters. Books are a must-have! Include titles that are fun to read to each other, such as choose-your-own adventure stories. Add colorful bookmarks, too.

You could also put in travel brochures about the places you’re going. For instance, they might look at pictures and read about a children’s museum or a pick-your-own farm near their grandparents’ house. Include maps, and ask your kids to help you navigate. As you pass a sign for a town or a landmark, they could try to spot it on the map.

Finally, toss in decks of trivia cards. You don’t need to play a formal game—just use them to ask each other questions. It will help pass the time, and your children will practice reading while learning new facts. ♥



Parent to Parent

Show-and-tell

When my daughter Jayla was in preschool, I cleared a shelf on her bookcase to use as a “treasure shelf.” Each week, she’d put interesting items on it, such as souvenirs, school projects, photographs—and even a four-leaf clover she found.

The treasure shelf became a great conversation starter for her. At dinner, Jayla would often present show-and-tell about her treasures. Sometimes she’d even

write about an item and read the story to us. What a wonderful way to know what she was thinking and learning!

As a surprise, I occasionally added objects to the shelf. I chose books she’d like from the library, a newspaper article I cut out, and unusual stones I found outside.

Jayla will be seven soon, and she still loves her shelf. What’s more, her little brother Mark has been listening and watching—and now he’s ready to start his own treasure shelf. ♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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