

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

November 2012

Paul Cuffee Charter School
Title I Department

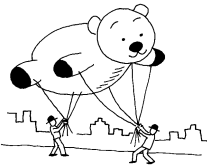
Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ **Balloons over Broadway**

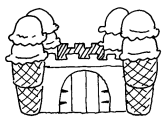
Giant balloons sail above New York City for the annual Thanksgiving Day Parade. In this true story, your child can learn about Tony Sarg, the puppet maker whose “upside-down marionettes” started this tradition more than 80 years ago. A fun read-aloud by Melissa Sweet.



■ **Ivy and Bean**

This first book in Annie Barrows’s series explains how Ivy and Bean became best friends. The little girls get off to a rocky start, but soon they are having fun—and making mischief—together. A good choice for youngsters who are starting to read chapter books.

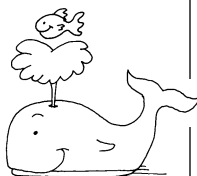
■ **The Ice Cream King**



Steve Metzger describes a magical world in this mouth-watering tale. When Teddy goes into a new ice cream shop, he discovers a castle made of cones, a sky that rains sprinkles, and a fudge volcano. Then, the little boy finds out there is one thing that can make his day even better.

■ **Rainbow Fish and the Big Blue Whale**

All the little fish are scared of their new neighbor—a whale. But Rainbow Fish bravely approaches the whale and learns that the gentle creature wants to be their friend. A story about differences by Marcus Pfister. (Also available in Spanish.)



All about me

Encourage your child to write about the topic she knows best: herself! Here are three fun autobiography projects that will let her practice writing.



Self-portrait

Ask your youngster to lie down on a long strip of white paper (or tape together several pieces of poster board). Trace around her body. Then, have her use crayons to give herself clothes, shoes, hair, and a face. Around her portrait, help her put “information bubbles” with facts about herself (“I was born in Texas,” “I play soccer,” “I like to paint”). Finally, she can illustrate her words with drawings (Texas flag, soccer ball, paintbrush).

Trading card

Let your child glue a small photo of herself onto an index card. On the other side of the card, help her write “stats.” She might include her age, information

about her family, and interesting facts. *Example:* “Ellie is 6 years old. She lives with her little brother, her mom, and her dad. She knows how to ride a bike without training wheels.”

Flap book

Suggest that your youngster make a book about her favorite things. Have her fold a sheet of paper in half horizontally and make several flaps by cutting from one edge of the top half to the fold. She can write one of her favorite things (food, color, book) on each flap. Underneath the flaps, she could draw pictures of what she has written. ♥

Bite-sized reading

When it comes to reading, every little bit counts. Try these ideas to help your youngster fit reading into different parts of his day:

- Introduce him to short stories. A librarian will be able to recommend volumes such as *Richard Scarry’s Bedtime Stories* (Richard Scarry) or *Five-Minute Tales* (Margaret Read MacDonald).
- Help your child find books of world records written for early readers. (Try titles by Scholastic and National Geographic Kids.) Point out that he can open to any page for a quick read.
- Suggest that he start a comic strip collection. He can clip comics from newspapers and slide them into a photo album or glue them in a notebook. ♥



Spot the details

What is an archaeologist? What do bears eat? Nonfiction books have the answers—and if your child reads carefully, he will find them. The following suggestions can help him read for details and boost his comprehension.

Read around the text. The pages of many nonfiction books are covered with “extras” that stories don’t have (headings, photo captions, an index, a glossary). Point out these features. Then, ask your youngster what questions he has about the topic that the book might answer. Say he’s reading *Archaeologists Dig for Clues* by Kate



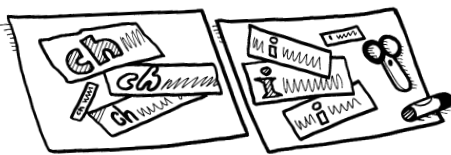
Duke. He might think, “What tools do archaeologists use?” or “What are fossils?” Help him read the book, and see how many answers he can find.

Pair fiction with nonfiction.

Together, read a story like *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* (James Marshall) followed by a nonfiction book such as *Bears* (Deborah Hodge). As you read the second book, encourage your child to look for ways that real bears are different from the fictional ones. For example, he might say that real bears eat things like grass, berries, fish, and insects, while the three bears eat porridge.♥

Fun with Words Sorting for sounds

This colorful word collage will help your child learn about *phonics*, or the link between letters and sounds.



Save cardboard food packages like cereal boxes and cracker boxes. Then, help your youngster cut out at least a dozen words, and read the words aloud with her.

Suggest that she choose a few that have something in common and glue them on a piece of paper. For example, a younger child could pick *cheese*, *chocolate*, and *cheddar* because they all start with a *ch* sound. An older child might choose *vitamin*, *iron*, and *icing* because they all have a “long i” sound.

Let her display her collages on the refrigerator or pantry door. She can add to them by cutting words from more boxes.♥

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 Alphabet fun

Q My daughter is learning the alphabet in school. What games can we play at home that will help her?

A Many games that you already play can help your daughter practice her ABCs. If you have Twister, turn it into Alphabet Twister by using masking tape to make a different letter on each circle. To play, spin the spinner and call out the directions and a letter that’s on the color you spun (“Left hand on C”). If you don’t have Twister, let your daughter draw colored circles on an old sheet and write letters inside the circles.

Also, look for household games that include letter tiles. You might hide the tiles in her sandbox or make “alphabet soup” by burying them in a bowl of uncooked rice. Encourage her to use a small plastic shovel or a pair of kitchen tongs to dig up the hidden letters. She can name each one that she finds. When she has them all, have her put them in order and point to them while she sings the alphabet song.♥



Parent to Parent Story-starter bank

Sometimes after I finish reading to my son Trevor, he wants to write his own story. It happened at bedtime recently—we read *Ginger* by Charlotte Voake, and he asked to write about *his* cats. I suggested that Trevor write down his idea so he’d remember it the next day.

In the morning, he said he had thought of more story ideas while he was falling asleep. So I taped a sign that read “Story Starters” to an old cookie jar. I

encouraged Trevor to cut “cookies” out of brown construction paper, write his ideas on them, and add them to the jar. He came up with things like “Fishing with Daddy” and “Raking the Leaves.” He also put a stack of blank cookies beside the jar and stored a few in the car for when he comes up with ideas away from home.

Trevor’s jar is filling up quickly! Now when he wants to write a story, he pulls out an idea and gets to work.♥

