

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

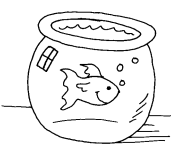
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Warren School -
Joanne Woodington, Literacy Specialist

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *Memoirs of a Goldfish*

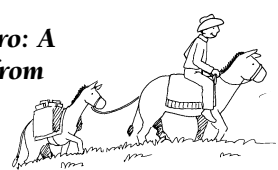


A goldfish's life isn't very exciting—or is it? In this story, a fish describes its days swimming around in circles, meeting new neighbors, moving to a different bowl, and eventually making friends. An unusual "memoir" by Devin Scillian.

■ *You Read to Me, I'll Read to You*


John Ciardi's volume of poetry is designed to be passed back and forth between parent and child. The 35 poems alternate between harder and easier so that you and your youngster can take turns reading them aloud to each other. Enjoy silly verses about the dreams of Arvin Marvin Lillisbee Fitch, the dangers of looking closely at shark teeth, and more.

■ *Biblioburro: A True Story from Colombia*



What if the library came to your neighborhood on the back of a donkey? This is Jeanette Winter's true story of a Colombian schoolteacher's traveling library, which brought books to children in remote villages. (Also available in Spanish.)

■ *Planting a Rainbow*

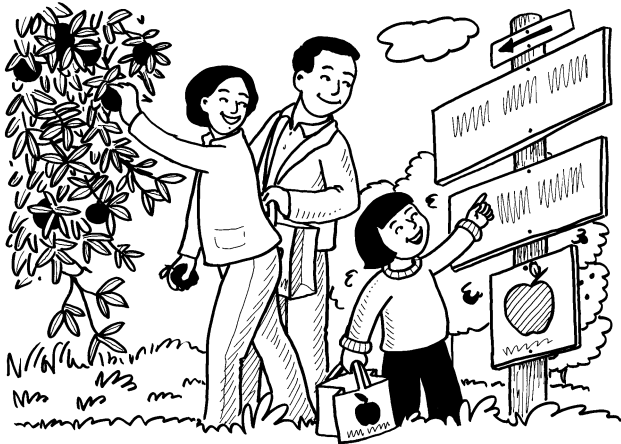


In the fall, a little girl and her mother plant bulbs in their garden. When spring comes, flowers will grow in every color of the rainbow, from red tulips to purple crocuses. Lois Ehlert's colorful book takes your child through a garden's annual cycle.

A town full of reading

Everywhere your child goes, there is something she can read! Here are ideas that will inspire her to read for information in a variety of places.

Look at signs



Think of questions that your youngster can answer by reading signs. At an orchard, you could ask her what kinds of fruit are available. On the playground, point out the safety rules, and have her tell you what ages the equipment is recommended for.

Collect freebies


In offices and stores, let your child pick up brochures, business cards, or catalogs. Then, help her read the information. For example, a brochure in a doctor's office might contain facts about healthy eating. And business cards name jobs that people have (Car Dealer, Store Manager). *Idea:* Suggest that she design a "business card"

for herself. If she takes gymnastics, her title could be "Gymnast," or if she likes to write, it could be "Author."

Read product labels

When you shop, ask your youngster to look for specific information—she'll learn to read carefully to find details. She might check a clothing tag to make sure an item is *machine washable*. Or you could have her find *cinnamon-flavored toothpaste*.♥

Family discussions



Regular conversations teach your youngster to take turns speaking and listening to others. Try these tips for making family discussions extra fun:

- Together, think of questions that will spark interesting conversations. (*Example:* "If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go?") Have your child help you write them on craft sticks to keep in a jar on the coffee table. Then, let him pull one out to start a discussion.
- Include others. You could invite a pet to "participate"—your youngster can pretend to speak for your dog, for instance. ("Today, I played fetch and caught the ball in midair!") A relative's visit is also a good opportunity for a family conversation, and it will give your child experience in talking to people of all ages or from different places.♥

Cut it out, write about it!

Children love to cut up old magazines. Give your youngster a pile of them, and let him find pictures and words he can use to practice writing. Consider these activities.

Meet my characters. Have your child look through magazines for people and animals to use as characters in a story. He can cut out his favorites and introduce them to you—this will help him think about what their roles will be in his tale. *Example:* “Meet Max, the boy who grew the world’s largest pumpkin.” Suggest that he glue the characters on paper and write the story underneath.



Read all about it. Ask your youngster to cut out a photo and, without looking at the caption, write a description. Have him read his description out loud, and then help him read the caption in the magazine. How is his version the same as or different from the original one?

Buy my product. Encourage your child to find an advertisement for a product that he thinks you’d like, such as a pair of sneakers or a vacuum cleaner. Then, he can design his own ad to persuade you to buy it. He could glue the picture of the product onto paper and add a slogan. *Example:* “Super sneakers: Run like lightning!”♥

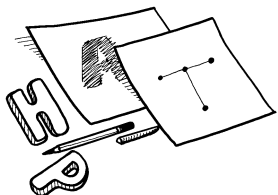
Fun with Words

Writing my ABCs

Struggling to form letters can keep a child from enjoying writing. Use these suggestions to help your youngster remember how to make each letter and get more comfortable with printing.

Letter rubbings

You’ll need a set of magnetic letters for this activity. Have your child place each letter of the alphabet, one at a time, underneath a sheet of paper. Next, she should rub the side of a crayon (wrapper removed) lightly over the letter. She can use a pencil to trace around the outline of each letter.



Q&A The right books

Q My daughter has a habit of picking out books that are too hard for her. Then she gets frustrated and stops reading. How can I help her choose the right books?

A You can try this system that some teachers use. She’ll be able to tell at a glance which books are a good fit for her.

Together, divide your household book collection into three categories: books she can listen to you read aloud, books she is able to read with help, and ones she can read all by herself. She can put each type of book on a different shelf or in a separate basket or box. As her skills improve, she’ll be able to reorganize them.

Tip: When you visit the library, encourage her to check out at least one book for each of her shelves. That way, she’ll be exposed to more challenging books even if she can’t read them on her own yet.♥



Connect the dots

Secretly think of a letter. On a piece of paper, make a dot-to-dot drawing in the shape of that letter. Ask your youngster to connect the dots and name the letter she formed. Then, let her make a dotted letter for you to complete.♥

Parent to Parent Be involved

I love to read, and I wondered if I could put my favorite hobby to good use by helping out with the reading programs in my son’s school.

I talked to the school librarian. She said the book fair is coming up, and she needs volunteers to set up, work at the check-out, and order books. In the

meantime, she suggested a few other things I can do at home or in school, like placing book orders or bookmarking websites that students can use for research.

I also asked my son’s teacher if she could use a reading volunteer. I had a great time reading a story to the class—and my son really liked seeing me at school.♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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