

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

April 2013

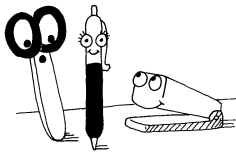
Haywood County Schools

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *The Little Red Pen*

No one will help Little Red Pen with her paperwork—not the scissors nor the stapler. After the poor pen falls into the trash, the office supplies must work together to rescue her. A funny tale by Janet Stevens and Susan Stevens Crummel.



■ *Teammates*

When baseball player Jackie Robinson became the first African American in the major leagues, many people didn't want him to play. Pitchers threw balls at him, crowds booed, and some teammates refused to sit with him. This is Peter Golenbock's true story of Robinson and the teammate who stood up for him.

■ *And Then It's Spring*



In this cute story by Julie Fogliano, a little boy plants a garden and waits patiently for the seeds to sprout. Your child will enjoy searching for signs of spring in the pictures and watching the turtle, bunny, and other creatures as they look forward to the new season.

■ *Fancy Nancy and the Posh Puppy*

Nancy's family is getting a dog. Everything in the little girl's life is fancy, so she assumes her dog should be fancy, too. In Jane O'Connor's book, Nancy learns that fanciness isn't the most important quality in a pet! (Also available in Spanish.)



Listening to your child read

As your youngster learns how to read, celebrate his new skills by letting him read to you. With these ideas, he can practice reading smoothly and using expression.

Set him up for success.

Help him pick stories he'll feel confident reading aloud. These might be books that you have read to him many times (say, a favorite bedtime story) or stories that have a repeating phrase. *Idea:* If he chooses a harder book, suggest that you take turns reading pages or paragraphs.

Offer encouragement. Pointing out what your child does well can help him do it again. ("Your voice sounded growly—just like a bear—when you read that line!") *Idea:* If he stumbles over a word here and there, tell him what it is so he doesn't get frustrated and can continue reading. If he hesitates over too many words, let him pick an easier book.



Make suggestions. Your youngster will read more fluently if he understands the story. If his voice sounds flat or he's reading too fast or too slow, stop to talk about what's happening in the book. ("Wow, that part was scary! How do you think the mouse feels?") Once he understands the plot, have him read it again.

Tip: Try to let your child read aloud every day. Even a few minutes will increase his confidence and help him become a more fluent reader.♥

My book cover

Designing a "book cover" can be a fun way to improve your child's reading comprehension. Let her pick a book and follow these steps.

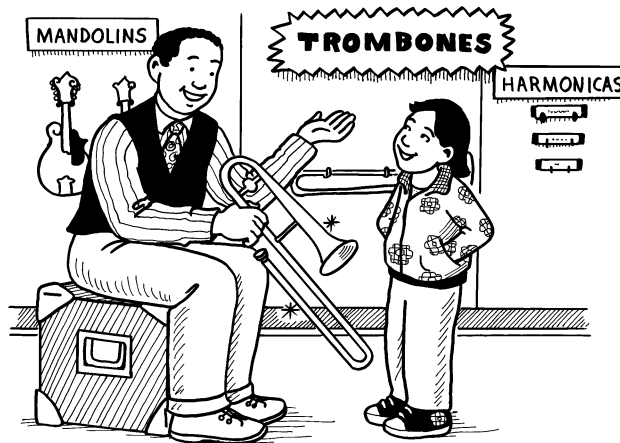
1. Talk about what the cover includes (title, author's name, picture, summary). Then, read the book.
2. Have her fold a piece of construction paper in half to make a pretend cover. On the front, she can illustrate the story—she might draw her favorite part, for instance.
3. On the back, help her write a summary. She could describe the main character and tell what happens to him. *Tip:* If she isn't writing yet, she can dictate her summary to you.
4. Let your youngster hang her cover near her book collection. Then, suggest that she make covers for other stories to display beside it.♥



New words everywhere

From your kitchen to the shops in your town to your child's schoolwork, the world is full of opportunities to use new words. Try these suggestions to help your youngster's vocabulary grow:

- Many new words pop up during everyday activities. When you cook, you might show her a *spatula*. During a walk, you could point out an *awning*. Also, try acting out unfamiliar words. ("That bunny *scampered* away when he saw us. Let's *scamper* like the bunny.")



- Seek out unusual words when you visit new places. At a farmers' market, you could name foods ("This purple vegetable is an *eggplant*"), and in a music store, you might identify instruments ("That *trombone* is shiny").

- Try to use words that you see on the work your youngster brings home. If you're sharing graham

crackers, you might ask, "Are these servings *equal*?" Or if she's learning about weather in science, you could say, "Look, it's raining hard. That's a lot of *precipitation*." ♥

Fun with Words Pick a vowel

What sound does the letter *u* make? It sounds like *uh* in *tub*, *oo*h in *tube*, and *u* in *universe*. Vowels (*a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*—and sometimes *y*) are tricky for beginning readers because they make many different sounds. This activity can help.



Have your youngster write each vowel on a separate slip of paper. Mix up the slips, and turn them over. Then, let him choose one, and work together to write a sentence with that vowel in every word. If he picks *a*, the sentence could be, "Grandma's cat ate a grape." What different sounds does he hear for *a*? Keep choosing slips until you've made a sentence for each vowel.

Variation: Write a sentence that contains no vowels other than the one he picks! For *e*, you might write, "Ed gets eleven eggs." ♥

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 Writing that makes sense

Q My son enjoys writing stories, but they often don't make sense. Should I help him?

A It's great that your son likes to write. When a child first learns to write, his stories don't always make sense to others. Gradually, he'll learn to write stories that flow logically.

For now, you can support him by listening as he reads his stories to you. You can also encourage him to add more information ("What did you do with your friends at recess?") or to clear up a part that's confusing ("Who said, 'Let's go home'—you, or your brother?").

Also, have him tell you stories. He might describe the new class pet or something funny that happened at lunch. He'll practice relating events in a logical order, and that can help his stories make more sense when he puts them down on paper. ♥



Parent to Parent

"Artsy" spelling practice

My daughter Lindsay was getting tired of studying for weekly spelling tests. One day when she was finger painting, she painted one of her words. I suggested that she paint the rest of them—and then I pointed out that she was finished studying for the day!

Now each week we come up with a different way to use art for studying her words. One week Lindsay

spelled with play dough. She flattened a handful of it and, using a toothpick, poked tiny holes in the dough to spell a word. Another time, I put paint into small eyedroppers so she could squeeze it onto paper, one drop at a time, to spell each word.

Lindsay is having fun with her words, and I'm glad that she's doing well on her spelling quizzes! ♥

