

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *The Magic School Bus Lost in the Solar System*

Ms. Frizzle blasts her class into the solar system for some out-of-this-world science lessons. One of the Magic School Bus series by Joanna Cole. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *Doctor De Soto Goes to Africa*

In this tale by William Steig, the famous mouse dentist travels to Africa. But before he can repair the tooth of Mudambo the elephant, an unhappy monkey kidnaps him!



■ *The Whingdingdilly*

Scamp is bored with his life as a dog. Then Zildy the witch changes him into a Whingdingdilly. Life is anything but boring now—but is Scamp happy? Read this story by Bill Peet to find out.

■ *Babushka's Doll*

"It wasn't that Natasha was a truly naughty child." So begins the story of a little girl who needs some practice learning patience. The lesson begins when Natasha picks up her grandmother's doll. A magical story by Patricia Polacco.



Reading aloud

"I always stumble because I read too fast." "I'm afraid my child won't listen to me." "I was laughed at when I read aloud at school."

Do you have worries like these when you read aloud? You're not alone. Many parents avoid reading aloud to their kids. However, reading aloud is one of the best ways to help your youngster succeed in school. Keep these tips in mind:

- Everybody makes mistakes. If you make mistakes when reading aloud, your child will learn that it's okay for her to do so, too.
- Practice makes perfect. Find a book that you like and read it aloud by yourself until you feel comfortable.
- Involve your youngster in the story. Have her turn the pages. Or read one line and let her read the next.
- Take your time and don't rush the story. Your child can tell if you're in a hurry. Reading slowly will help you read clearly.
- As you feel more comfortable, try changing your voice to show the characters' feelings—joy, sadness, fear. These variations can make the story more exciting for both of you!
- Remember that you are helping your youngster learn to enjoy reading. Try different types of reading materials, such as comic strips and poetry.
- Above all, try to relax and enjoy the time you're spending with your child. ♥



Understanding stories

Does your child listen actively when you read aloud? It's a key to understanding what's happening in the story. Try these simple tips to build listening skills:

1. Ask your youngster to retell small parts of the story to you. Or ask him questions while you read. *Examples:* "What will happen next?" "Why do you think she did that?" Find the answers to the questions together.
2. After you've read a story together two or three times, skip a word or two. Ask your child to fill in the missing word or words. *Hint:* This works especially well with rhyming stories. ♥



Use what you know

Reading new words

Can your youngster read a word like “supercalifragilisticexpialidocious”? Maybe not! But did you know that your child can use words he already knows to read new words? Here’s how:

■ Start with your youngster’s name. Troy, for example, might have an easier time learning “tr” words such as “train.” You can use the “tr” consonant blend at the



beginning of his name to teach him other blends as well, such as “cr,” “pl,” and “st.”

■ Point out patterns in sight words your child recognizes.

Example: If your youngster knows “they,” he can learn “then,” “this,” and “that.” “Could,” “would,” and “should” are three common sight words that also share a pattern.

■ Break down syllables in a longer word, such as “yesterday.” Cover the entire word with a small slip of paper. Then, slowly slide the paper to the right to show each syllable one at a time (yes-ter-day). This works especially well for words with several syllables, such as “supercalifragilisticexpialidocious”! ♥

Fun with Words

Newspaper learning

With thousands of words in every issue, newspapers are a great way to build your youngster’s skills. Grab a paper, and try these activities.

Matching game

Have your child cut out several photographs and their captions separately. Mix them up. Matching the captions and the photos will improve her reading comprehension.



Scavenger hunt

List items in the newspaper (car ad, crossword puzzle, weather forecast), and ask your youngster to find and circle each one. She’ll build research skills as she looks through the pages.

ABC order

Together, find the names of 5–10 countries, states, and cities in headlines or stories. Let your child copy each one onto an index card and arrange the cards in alphabetical order. This will help her practice spelling and learn about geography. ♥

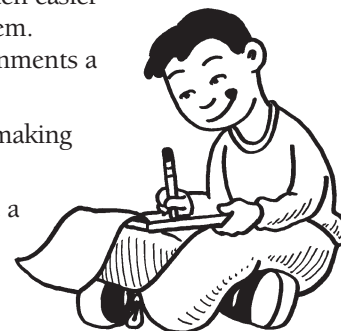
Q&A

Real writing

Q My son doesn’t enjoy writing. He will write a few words, such as his spelling lists. But when it’s time to write a paragraph or a story, he complains. Any ideas?

A Have your son try a few “real” writing tasks. It’s often easier for kids to write about things that have meaning for them. Encourage your child to give those longer writing assignments a try with ideas like these:

- ✎ Have him write what he remembers about the day (making a new friend, playing kickball, having pizza for lunch).
- ✎ Let him choose a cherished toy or animal and write a few sentences describing it. *Example:* “The bunny is soft. He hops fast.”
- ✎ Ask him to write lists of favorite songs, favorite characters in a movie, or ideas for his birthday. ♥



Parent to Parent

Simple reading practice

I’ve found a way to give my children reading practice—and improve their behavior at the same time. I write short notes to my kids and leave them around the house.

Sometimes I’ll mention my youngsters’ good behavior (“Thanks for helping with the dishes!”) or write reminders (“Please hang me up. Signed, Your towel”). Sometimes the notes are about

not-so-good behavior. (“I was disappointed when you yelled at me. Can we talk about it?”) I make sure to leave notes for treats, too (“Let’s go fly your kite this afternoon!”).

I look for unique places to put the notes, such as on their pillows, in front of the dog’s water bowl, or pinned to the shower curtain. The kids enjoy discovering the notes and reading them aloud. ♥



O U R P U R P O S E

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