

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

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Harmony Elementary School
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Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ Flat Stanley

In Jeff Brown's classic tale, a little boy is flattened by a bulletin board. At first, Stanley's unusual problem leads to adventure—he travels through the mail in an envelope and can even fly. But what happens when Stanley gets tired of being flat? (Also available in Spanish.)



■ All the World

A family enjoys a busy summer day together in this rhyming story by Liz Garton Scanlon. As you read, your child will recognize familiar experiences like a playful morning at the beach, a shopping trip to a farmers' market, and a summer rainstorm.

■ The Story of America's Birthday



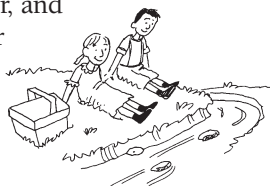
Why do we celebrate Independence Day?

Patricia Pingry's nonfiction book

explains how the United States became a country. Your youngster will get an introduction to the American Revolution and the Declaration of Independence, and he'll read about traditions like fireworks and parades.

■ Summertime in the Big Woods

This story for little readers is part of a series adapted from Laura Ingalls Wilder's original Little House books. Young Laura is growing up in a 19th-century pioneer family. School's out for the summer, and she spends her days playing outside and helping with chores.



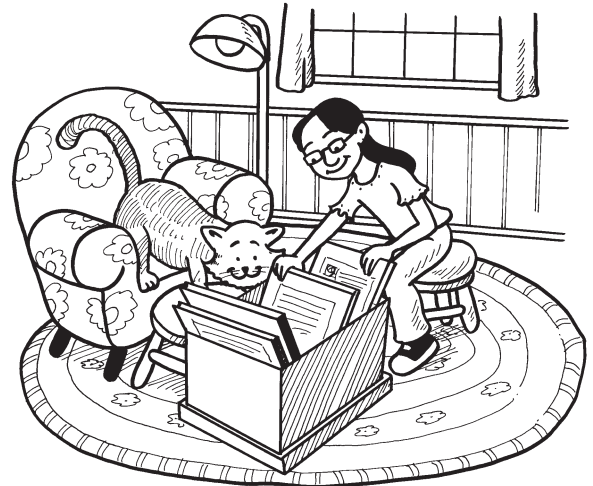
What should I read?

Sofia loves stories about princesses and dogs. Aaron wants to read more books by David Shannon and Mercer Mayer. These children have discovered strategies for picking out books—an important step toward becoming a lifelong reader. Try these hints to help your youngster find stories she'll enjoy, too.

Choose a book by its cover.

Your child may be drawn to a book because of its title and the picture on the front. Encourage her to go with her instinct and pick it up. She can look at the first few pages of a story to get a better idea of whether she might enjoy it.

Ask an expert. Encourage your youngster to talk to a librarian, a bookseller, or her teacher. Your child might ask which books they liked when they were little, or what books are popular with kids her age now. She'll see that talking with other book lovers is a wonderful way to get suggestions.



Use an online bookstore. Help your youngster search for favorite books at www.amazon.com or www.barnesandnoble.com. When she clicks on a title, the site will show similar books that customers purchased—and she might find titles she would like to try. Your child can also click on an author's name to find more books by that person.

Tip: Let your youngster keep a box or basket with several books in the order she plans to read them. As she finishes a story, she can add another to the back of the stack.♥

Reading buddies

The next time your child invites a friend over, encourage him to make it a "reading playdate" with these ideas:

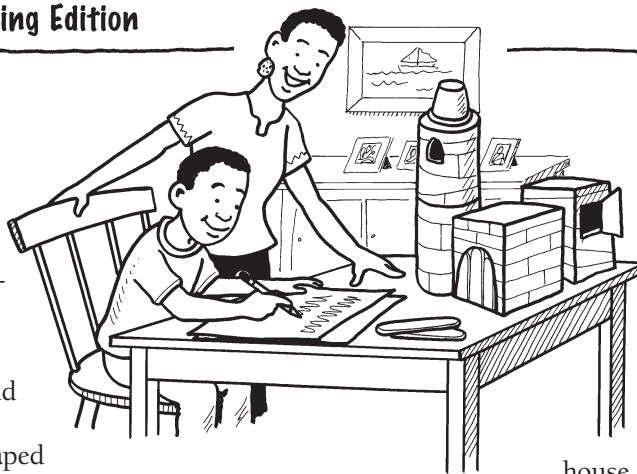
- Have him ask his friend to bring over a few books. Then, your youngster can pick out several of his own to share.
- As they read, suggest that they try using a different voice for each character. For instance, a frog might speak in a croaking voice, or a snake could exaggerate the "s" sound. This will help your youngster learn to read with expression.
- Let the children try different ways of reading together. First, they might take turns reading aloud to each other. For the next book, they could alternate pages or read in unison. That way, they'll both get a chance to participate.♥



Fairy tale fun

Once upon a time, there was a child who loved to read, write, and play. He discovered that fairy tales gave him fun opportunities to do all three. Your youngster can be this child... here's how!

● Make a game using words from fairy tales. First, let your child write "Start" and "Finish" in opposite corners of a poster board. Then, draw a two-inch-wide S-shaped path connecting the corners, and mark off spaces along the path. Help your youngster write a "fairy tale word"



(beanstalk, magic, wolf) in each space. To play, roll a die and move a marker the number of spaces shown. As you land on each space, read the word and tell how it's used in a fairy tale. Continue until all players reach "Finish."

Fun with Words Compound words

If your child learns the words *pan* and *cake*, she'll be able to read *pancake*—a compound word. This game will encourage her to read short words and combine them to read longer ones.

1. Introduce your youngster to compound words. Ask, "If you put together *sun* and *flower*, what do you have?" (*sunflower*) Then, help her brainstorm a list of 10 compound words. If she's stuck, say a word (*book*), and ask her to think of compound words that include that word (*bookcase*, *bookmark*).



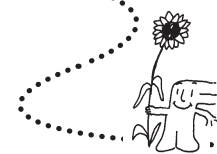
2. Have her write the two words in each compound word on separate index cards. Lay them facedown in four rows of five cards.

3. Take turns flipping over two cards and saying the words. Ask your child if the two words together sound like a real word. ("Is there such a thing as a *bookflower*?") If they make a compound word, keep the cards and take another turn. If not, turn the cards back over, and your turn ends. Keep playing until all the matches are made.♥

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 Stronger hands

Q My daughter doesn't like writing or using scissors—she says her hands get tired. How can I help her?

A Try some outdoor activities that will let your daughter enjoy summer weather while she strengthens her hand muscles.

For instance, playing in a sandbox or digging in the dirt is good exercise for little hands. Give your child a pail and shovel, and encourage her to dig and scoop.

Or let her make ice-cube watercolors! Have her add a few drops of food coloring to a cup of water and pour the water into an ice-cube tray. When it freezes, she can use the cubes to paint on paper. Another idea is to let her "paint" the sidewalk with just a bucket of water and paintbrushes. She may also like to use sidewalk chalk to draw pictures, write words, or make a hopscotch board.♥



Parent to Parent Learning to spell

I was concerned because my son Quinn spells words like they sound instead of the correct way. When I asked his teacher about this, her answer surprised me. She said "invented spelling" is normal for his age! As Quinn gets older, she said, he'll spell more and more words correctly. In the meantime, she gave me some ideas for ways to help him become a better speller.

First, she suggested that I have Quinn post a list of words he's learning how to spell on his bedroom wall. He can use it for reference when he's writing.

Then, she recommended that I get him a children's dictionary. That way, if he asks me how to spell a word, I can help him look it up. She explained that once he's comfortable using the dictionary, he'll be able to find words on his own.♥

