

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

October 2007

Boulder Valley School District  
Reading and Literacy

## Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

### ■ *My Wobbly Tooth Must Not Ever Never Fall Out*

Lola's loose tooth finally falls out. But when bedtime comes, she can't find it. As in Lauren Child's other Charlie and Lola stories, Charlie finds a creative solution for his little sister. He tells her to have good dreams so the tooth fairy can see her toothless smile while she sleeps.



### ■ *The Little Scarecrow Boy*

In Margaret Wise Brown's story, a young scarecrow can't wait until he's old enough to join his father in the cornfield. Until then, he has to stay home and practice six scary faces. One day he sneaks out and succeeds in scaring a big crow—and making his father proud.



### ■ *The Keeping Quilt*

Patricia Polacco's true story tells of the bright quilt that links her family to its past. Made from squares of family members' clothing from their Russian homeland, it is used for four generations as a blanket, a tablecloth, a tent, and more. (Also available in Spanish.)

### ■ *Pumpkin Day*

On a colorful fall day, a rabbit family visits the pumpkin farm. The little bunnies learn how gourds grow, and they pick out pumpkins to carve and eat. Nancy Elizabeth Wallace's book includes pumpkin facts, history, and jokes. Plus, it has tasty recipes for muffins, pie, and toasted seeds.



## Be a word detective

Learning to read is like cracking a code. And like a detective solving a case, a young reader can figure out ways to identify unfamiliar words.

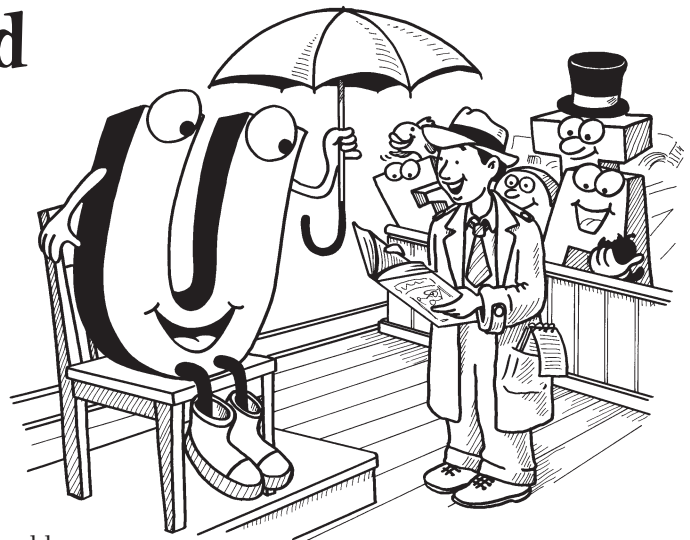
Teach your child these tricks to build his word-attack skills, and he'll be a reading sleuth in no time.

### Search nearby

When your youngster stumbles on a word, have him read the whole sentence for hints. *Example:* "When it began to rain, Maggie opened her umbrella." If he can't make out "umbrella," he can think about what someone would open in the rain. If that doesn't work, give your child a clue: "What starts with 'u' and is used when it rains?" Together, look at the word and sound it out.

### Find evidence

Encourage your youngster to look carefully at a tough word for letters that he recognizes. Does he know another word that begins or ends the same way?



For instance, "gravey" begins with "gr" like "green," and ends with "y" like "happy." He can use sounds from words he knows to help him read new words.

### Go step-by-step

Have your child use his finger or a small slip of paper to divide a word into syllables. Suggest that he cover up one syllable and say the other one. For example, to read "rescue," he would hide "cue" and say "res," and then cover up "res" and say "cue." After he reads the syllables separately, he'll be able to sound out the whole word. ♥

## List mania!

Looking for an easy way to get your youngster to practice writing? Have her make a list. She'll learn that writing has a purpose, and she'll work on spelling and handwriting, too. Ask her to:

- Make a list for a treasure hunt (white rock, feather, acorn).
- Jot down weekend activities, such as going to the playground or having a friend over.
- Keep track of a collection. Say, "Let's write down the names of all your dolls."
- Create a "wish list" for a birthday or holiday.

*Tip:* Be sure to use your child's list. For example, read over her weekend list, and find time for a few activities. ♥



# Excited about authors

Help your youngster fall in love with reading by encouraging her to find her own favorite authors. Here are some ways to get started:

- Get several books by the same writer. Many kids like stories by Cynthia Rylant, Maurice Sendak, or Gary Soto, for example. *Tip:* Books often include a picture and short biography of the author—share these with your child so she can get to know the person.
- After reading a book, visit the author's Web site. Your youngster can find out about the writing process and share her opinion in the guestbook. *Tip:* A couple sites to try are



those of Eric Carle ([www.eric-carle.com](http://www.eric-carle.com)) and Mem Fox ([www.memfox.com](http://www.memfox.com)).

- When your youngster finds a favorite writer, make a project out of reading all the author's books. She can look for titles in your library's online database or ask the librarian for help. *Tip:* When

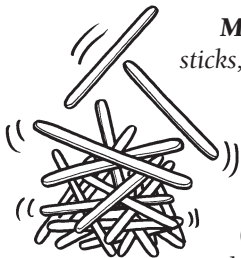
your child has read the whole collection, consider buying a copy of the one she likes best.

Finding one favorite author is likely to inspire your youngster to look for another writer she enjoys. Soon she will be reading more—and choosing more books on her own. ♥



## Fun with Words Word pickup

You probably remember playing pickup sticks as a youngster. Use this new version to build your child's reading skills.



**Materials:** 26 craft sticks, a felt-tipped pen

On each stick, write a word beginning with a different letter of the alphabet (apple, boat, color). To play, drop the sticks into a heap. The first player tries to pick up one stick without moving any others. If he succeeds, he reads the word and puts the stick next to him. If he moves a stick, his turn's over.

Players take turns choosing a stick and reading the new word along with the old ones. Keep playing until all the sticks are gone. The player with the most sticks wins.

*Note:* When no one can pick up a stick without disturbing the other sticks, scatter them again. ♥

### OUR PURPOSE

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

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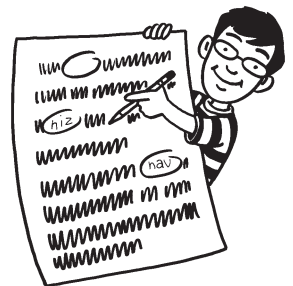
## Q&A Introduction to editing

**Q** *I've heard it's best to just have your child write and not worry about spelling or grammar. Is this true?*

**A** Letting your youngster be creative is always a good idea. But proper spelling and grammar are important, too. Luckily, you can have the best of both worlds.

Begin by having your child write a story. Explain that this is a "rough draft," and he can fix any mistakes later. When he's done, have him read over what he wrote. Does it make sense? Is there anything he wants to change? Together, cross out misspelled words, look them up, and write the correct spelling. Help him check for punctuation (capital letters to begin sentences, periods at the ends).

Finally, your youngster can type or neatly rewrite his story. When he compares the two versions, he'll be surprised by how much better the final one is. ♥



## Parent to Parent

### Read a story, draw a picture

For her middle school English class, my older daughter had to write in a journal what she thought about each book she read. This seemed like a great idea, and I wanted to try it with my younger child. Tina wasn't writing much yet, so I had her draw pictures instead.

We began with one of her favorite books, Arnold Lobel's *Frog and Toad Are Friends*. Knowing ahead of time that she was going to

draw seemed to help her listen more closely and understand the story better.

After we finished reading, Tina drew a picture of Frog and Toad surrounded by buttons of every color. She told me that was her favorite part—when the friends were searching for Toad's missing button.

Tina was so excited about this project that she immediately asked me to read another book so she could draw another picture! ♥

