

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

December 2007

Boulder Valley School District
Department of Reading and Literacy

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites



■ *The Yawn Heard 'Round the World*

Youngsters will get a fun geography lesson in this rhyming story by Scott Thomas. Sarah says she isn't tired, but she can't help yawning. Soon her yawn flies down the hall, out the window, and around the globe—from a man in Cuba to a bird in Paris and several other spots, and back to sleeping Sarah.



■ *Mommy?*

The pictures tell most of this story by Maurice Sendak. A little boy searches for his mother in a haunted house. Instead of being scared, he plays tricks, such as unwrapping a mummy and putting a pacifier in a monster's mouth. When he has outwitted all the creatures, he finds his mother. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *Big Tracks, Little Tracks: Following Animal Prints*

Youngsters can learn to be animal detectives with this nonfiction story by Millicent Selsam. Figure out how footprints, scents, and other clues can help identify animals like rabbits, skunks, and deer. The question-and-answer format makes the book fun to read.

■ *The Incredible Book Eating Boy*

If you ate books, would you get smarter? Henry does, in this silly story by Oliver Jeffers. But eating too many books eventually makes him sick, and the stuff he has learned gets all mixed up. In the end, Henry decides stories are more fun to read than to snack on.



See it, hear it, touch it

How does your child learn best? Does he need to see something, hear it, or actually touch it to remember the information?

Knowing and using your youngster's learning style can help you improve his reading skills. Try these ideas for each kind of learner.

Visual learners

If your child learns best by seeing, he will especially enjoy the pictures in a book. Let him browse the pages first to get a sense of what the story is about. Point to a picture (for example, a hat), and ask him to tell you what it is. Then, find the word "hat" on the page, put your finger under it, and say, "hat." Your youngster will learn to connect printed words to spoken words.

Auditory learners

If your youngster learns best by hearing, have him try "singing" a story. Encourage him to vary his speed, volume, and voice for different sections (slow at the beginning, fast during exciting parts)

or characters (high, squeaky voice for a mouse or deep, loud voice for a lion). Also, he can improve his memory by retelling a story that you read to him.

Tactile learners

If your child learns best by touching or doing, let him hold the book and turn the pages while you read. Look for books with flaps to open or textures to touch. To build comprehension skills, give him props to use as you read. *Example:* envelopes, stamps, and a teacup for *The Jolly Postman* by Janet and Allan Ahlberg. ♥



., !, or ?

"What's that upside-down 'i'?" Jenny asked her father as he read to her. After a moment, he realized his daughter was asking about an exclamation point.

When your youngster begins to notice punctuation in books, try to encourage her to use it in her own writing. You can start with the punctuation marks at the ends of sentences.

Explain that periods are used most often. Exclamation points show excitement, and question marks end sentences that ask something. Have your child put a period after each sentence she writes and then go back and give the most exciting one an exclamation point ("That was so scary!"). Finally, she can read her sentences aloud to check for ones that ask questions. ♥



Reading on your own

Whether for homework or fun, reading alone can turn your youngster into a lifelong book lover. Here are five ways to encourage her:

1. With your child, pick out a story she can read on her own. It could be a familiar book or one that's at the same level as those she already reads alone. Look through it briefly, and ask her to read the first page to you. Then, let her finish reading the book herself.
2. Stick around to help if necessary. If your youngster can't figure out a word, have her try sounding it out. If she asks for



help often, that may be a sign she needs an easier book.

3. Give her slips of paper to remember spots to share when she finishes. She might mark her favorite page or show you a new word she learned.

4. If your child struggles or doesn't enjoy silent reading, consider reading part of a book aloud to her and then letting her read the rest. Or read an entire book, and have her reread it later.

5. Encourage your youngster to set goals. For example, she might read one chapter a night or aim to finish a book each week.♥

Gifts: Beyond books



Sammy couldn't wait to open his brightly wrapped birthday gifts. As he tore the paper off one present, he found a children's magazine. Attached was a note telling him he



could look forward to a new copy in the mail each month. He also got baseball stationery and

colored pens. Sammy couldn't wait to start writing letters to his friends.

The next time you're buying gifts for your child or a friend, think about something that will inspire him to read and write. A storybook always makes a nice present. But if you want something different, try these ideas:

- ▲ a word-related board game
- ▲ a book of word puzzles
- ▲ baskets for storing books
- ▲ a writing journal
- ▲ alphabet stamps, stickers, or stencils
- ▲ a junior cookbook
- ▲ a beanbag to rest on while reading ♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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Parent to Parent

Library traditions

Ever since I was a little girl, I have loved the library. I wanted

my girls to grow up feeling the same way. Plus, I knew they'd be better readers if we took them to the library regularly and made it fun.

We try to visit our library at least every other week.

When we arrive, each child rushes to choose a book for us to read. We sit in the children's section, where they have comfortable couches and chairs and families are allowed to read aloud quietly.

On each trip, we also explore a new section, such as craft books, biographies, or books on tape. When we finish, the girls pick books to check out, including something from the new area. That way, they get to know all that's available at the library—and they learn about new subjects, too.♥



Q&A Learning English

Q Our family speaks Korean at home. Our son is learning to read and write in English in school. How can we help him?

A Your child has a wonderful opportunity to become bilingual at a young age. Continue speaking Korean to him at home while also practicing English.

You can look for a picture dictionary to help your youngster learn English words. Consider

labeling items in your home in both Korean and English. Also, make flash cards with the Korean word on one side and the English word on the other.

Keep reading to your child in Korean, but let him read to you in English. At bedtime, you could do one story in each language. Together, you'll practice English—and keep your youngster's native language skills strong.♥

