

# Reading Connection

Working Together for Learning Success

May 2021

Martinsville City Public Schools  
Empowering Success One Learner At A Time

## Book Picks



■ **Gabby Garcia's Ultimate Playbook**  
(Iva-Marie Palmer)

Gabby is a star baseball player and a popular student at her middle school. When she suddenly has to move and change schools, she tries to stick to her “playbook” for success but realizes she might have to change her plans. The first book in the Gabby Garcia series.



■ **National Parks of the U.S.A.**  
(Kate Siber)

From Death Valley to Acadia, explore 21 national parks with one book. Readers will find beautiful illustrations and learn about the parks’ diverse landscapes. Includes maps, facts about plants and wildlife, and information on how to protect our parks.



■ **Tap Dancing on the Roof: Sijo (Poems)** (Linda Sue Park)

Learn about sijo, a traditional type of poetry from Korea. Sijo usually has a funny twist at the end that makes readers think. This book has poems with topics ranging from breakfast to long division. After reading them, your youngster might be inspired to write a few sijo of his own.

■ **The World According to Humphrey**  
(Betty G. Birney)

Being the class pet is a big job for little Humphrey. The hamster helps a shy girl speak up, finds friends for a lonely janitor, and has his own notebook. Then the regular teacher returns, and she hates hamsters. Can Humphrey win her over? Book one of the Humphrey series. (Also available in Spanish.)



## A summer full of books

“I’m going to read that book next!” If your child has a list of books she wants to try, she’s more likely to read regularly this summer. Suggest these ideas to help her find books that appeal to her, and then she can check them out from the library.



### Armchair travels

Your youngster might not tour the canals of Venice or go to an Antarctic research station this summer, but she could read her way through those places! Encourage her to choose books about locations she studied in school or wants to visit. She might read a novel set in Italy or a nonfiction book about the South Pole. She’ll explore places, people, and events around the world.

### Book trailers

Help your child find book trailers online—they’re like movie trailers, but for books. She can type “book trailers for kids” into a search engine. She’ll get a taste of what a book is about and decide whether to put it on her to-read list. *Idea:* She could make her own trailers for books she enjoys and share them with friends.

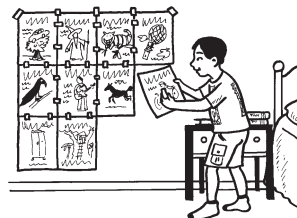
### Showtime!

Let your youngster look for movies based on books. She can pick ones she’d like to watch and add the book titles to her summer reading list. After she reads the book and watches the movie, have her tell you how the two versions were similar and different. Which one did she like better, and why? ■

## Track summer reading

Let your youngster see for himself how many books he can read while school is out. Share these clever ways for keeping track.

● **Make a quilt.** As he finishes a book, suggest that he draw a picture showing his favorite part. He can tape the pages together and hang his growing “quilt” on his bedroom wall.



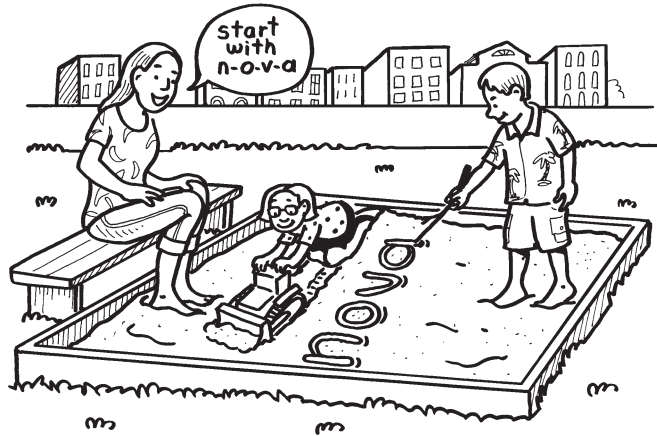
● **Create a passport.** Have your child use a small notebook as a reading passport. He could draw a “stamp” and write a short book review on each page.

● **Craft a paper chain.** Encourage him to write the title and author of each book on a strip of paper, loop the strips together, and snake the chain around his room. ■

# Play listening games

Whether your child is participating in a class discussion or you're telling him how to do a chore at home, he needs good listening skills. Practice with these silly games.

**Unusual instructions.** The object of the game is to spell a word using specific directions. Secretly choose a word, such as *novel*. While your youngster listens closely, give him fun instructions for spelling the word. For example, "Start with *nova*. Then, change *a* to *e* and add *l* to the



end." When he gets the right word, it's his turn to think of a word and give you directions.

**Forbidden word.** In this game, family members must listen carefully to catch each other using a "forbidden word." Ask your child to choose a word that might be hard to avoid, such as *eat* or *play*. The first person caught using it has to attach a safety

pin to his shirt. If he catches someone else, he transfers the pin to that person. 📌

## Parent & Parent

### TV writing

My daughter Jessie always wants to watch her favorite cartoon. One day when she'd had enough screen time, I suggested she try writing her own cartoon episode.

She considered several different story lines for the characters. After picking her favorite, Jessie started writing about a little platypus who went on a mission to save the world. Because she knows the show so well, it was easy for her to imagine how the characters would behave in a new situation.



To fill out her plot and add details, Jessie decided to make a storyboard. She drew each scene and glued them in order on poster board. She is proud of her original cartoon episode, and now she and her siblings are practicing a skit version to put on for us! 📺

## Thank-you notes for teachers

After the challenges of this school year, it's extra important to show appreciation for teachers. Help your child write a thank-you note with these three steps.

1. He can begin with an explanation of why he's writing: "Dear Mr. Redding, I want to thank you for all the help you gave me this school year."
2. Next, have your youngster write a few sentences telling why he is grateful. *Example:* "You made virtual learning interesting and made us feel like we were together in the classroom."
3. Finally, suggest that he sum up his thanks and wish his teacher a good summer: "Again, thank you for everything. I hope you have a nice summer." He could close with "Gratefully" or "Sincerely," followed by his signature. *Tip:* He can deliver his notes by mail or email. 📧



## Fun with Words Match the rhyming pairs

A "Hink Pink" is a two-word phrase that hints at a pair of rhyming words. For instance, "insect snuggle" can be a "bug hug." Use this fun activity to build your child's vocabulary.

Together, write a dozen Hink Pinks and answers on separate slips of paper. To come up with them, you might pick something in the room or out the car window (a cup) and think of a word that

rhymes with it (pup). Then, look in a dictionary or thesaurus to find a synonym for each word ("pup cup" = "canine chalice").

Mix up the pairs, and arrange them facedown in even rows and columns.

Take turns flipping over two slips and reading them aloud.

If they match ("big rig" and "enormous truck"), keep them. If not, turn them back over. The person who gets the most matches wins the game. 📌



**OUR PURPOSE**

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

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