

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

February 2016

Martinsville City Public Schools
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Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *Bridges Are to Cross* (Philemon Sturges)

Llamas cross a rope suspension bridge in Peru, big ships pass beneath a drawbridge in England, and trains travel over a double-cantilever steel bridge in Scotland. In this nonfiction book, young readers will see pictures of bridges around the world and learn how they're designed and used.



■ *If You Give a Pig a Pancake* (Laura Numeroff)

When an adorable piglet climbs through the kitchen window, a little girl offers him a pancake. Then the pig wants one thing after another, including a bubble bath, a field trip—and more pancakes. Your child can predict what the pig will request next as the story comes full circle. Part of the *If You Give* series. (Also available in Spanish.)

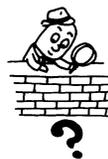


■ *Ling & Ting Share a Birthday* (Grace Lin)

Six-year-old twins Ling and Ting face a few mishaps on their birthday as they dress up and open gifts. Their creativity and cooperation save the day in this collection of short stories for early readers. A cute look at similarities and differences between twins.

■ *What Really Happened to Humpty?* (Jeanie Franz Ransom)

Did Humpty Dumpty really fall off the wall, or was he pushed? This sequel tells the story from the point of view of Humpty's detective brother, Joe. Now several nursery rhyme characters are suspects in his investigation! A funny read-aloud sprinkled with egg jokes.



The magic of graphics

Charts, tables, graphs, and more—your child will read a lot of graphics in school. Help him prepare with these ideas for reading graphics in everyday life.

Name the facts

Your youngster may be surprised by how much information a graphic can provide at a glance. Have your family look at the weekend weather chart. Together, make a list of all the facts you learn from it. If your child sees a snowflake in the "Friday" column, for instance, he may want you to help him write, "It might snow on Friday!" How many facts will you list?

Go on a nutrition mission

While grocery shopping, tell your youngster he's on a nutrition mission. First, show him how to read the table on a nutrition label. For example, tell him that "4g" next to "protein" on a box of rice means 1 serving has 4 grams of protein. Can he find yogurt with fewer than 10 grams of sugar per serving? How about bread with more than 2 grams of



fiber? He'll practice reading tables—and get an introduction to nutrition labels.

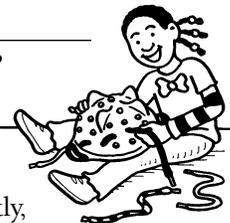
Match it up

Let your child see how text and graphics work as a team. Find three kid-friendly newspaper or magazine articles that include graphics. Cut out the articles and graphics separately, and mix them all up. Read the articles to him, and see if he can match each graphic with its article. For instance, he might say that a graph showing Asian elephants and Bengal tigers goes with the article about endangered species.♥

Colorful handwriting boosters

What does finger paint have in common with a colander? Both can improve your youngster's handwriting! Try these suggestions for building hand strength and coordination:

- For a squishy yet mess-free paint activity, help your child spoon finger paint into a small freezer bag. Seal the bag tightly, and have her move her finger gently over the bag to form letters, numbers, and shapes in the paint.
- Give your youngster a colander and shoelaces or a ribbon. She can weave the material in and out of the holes. Add even more fun by encouraging her to use different colors and to weave up, down, or diagonally.♥



Family storytelling

Anyone can be a storyteller! Here are creative ways to enjoy family storytelling as your youngster practices language and writing skills.

Story stones. Collect rocks outside, draw simple chalk pictures (stick figure, sun) on them, and put the stones in a basket. Then, the first person selects one and begins a story based on the drawing. (“The alien came from a planet with a purple sun.”) She passes the basket to the next person, who picks a rock and adds a line to the story. Keep your story going until you run out of stones. Erase your drawings, make new ones, and play again.



Memory beads. Tell a story based on a family memory. You’ll need a bowl of beads and a ball of yarn. Decide what your story is about (say, adopting your dog). Take turns choosing a bead, saying one line of the story, and stringing the bead onto the

yarn. (“When we saw Maisie wagging her tail for us, we knew she was the one.”) Once your story is complete, tie the yarn so the beads can’t fall off, and hang it in a special spot to remember the tale.♥

Fun with Words

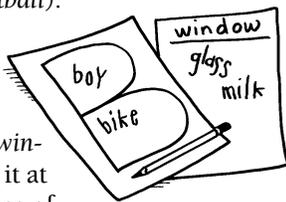


Word brainstorms

Stretch your child’s thinking and vocabulary with these two word activities.

1. Fill the letter. Ask your youngster to choose a letter (say, *B*) and write it large enough to fill a sheet of paper. Take turns writing words inside it that begin with the letter (*boy, bike*). Can you fill up the entire letter? *Variation:* Make it more challenging by using only words with more than one syllable (*balloon, basketball*).

2. Play a word association game. Pick a word, such as *window*, and write it at the top of a piece of paper. Underneath, your child writes the first word he thinks of (*glass*). Based on that, you write the next word that pops into your mind (*milk*). Continue for two minutes. Look over your list, and talk about why you chose each word. Now, start over with a new word.♥



Parent to Parent

A reading playdate

Recently, my son Tyler mentioned that he loves reading with his friends in school. I suggested that the next time a friend visits, they could read together. Secretly, I thought it would be a great alternative to the video games they usually ask to play.

Tyler invited his friend Jack over, and they decided to read a book that Tyler had checked out of the school library. They took turns reading the pages aloud. I noticed that Jack read more smoothly than Tyler, who tripped over a few words. I was impressed to hear how patient Jack was—he even helped Tyler sound out the words. When they finished the book, I heard them reading riddles to each other from a joke book and cracking up.

The boys had fun, Tyler got in some good reading practice—and not once did they ask to play video games!♥



Q&A Write to a pen pal

Q When I was little, I had a pen pal in another state. This sounds like a good way for my daughter to practice writing and to learn about life in a different place. Any ideas?

A Start by talking to neighbors or family friends. Someone may have a niece in another country or a grandparent in assisted living who would enjoy exchanging letters with your child.

Once you find someone, help her write her first letter.

She could introduce herself by writing about her family, school, or hobbies, for example. Explain that she should also ask questions to show interest and to give her pen pal something to respond to. (“What is it like to live where it’s warm all the time?” or “What was your favorite school subject when you were my age?”)

She’ll be excited to receive a letter in reply! Help her read it. Then, she can keep the fun going by sending another letter to her pen pal.♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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