

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

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Martinsville City Public Schools  
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## Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

### ■ *Biscuit Finds a Friend*

(Alyssa Satin Capucilli)

In this adorable story for beginning readers, Biscuit the puppy befriends a lost baby duckling. Even after Biscuit helps him find his family, the little duck continues to follow his puppy friend. Part of the Biscuit series. (Also available in Spanish.)

### ■ *The Listening Walk*

(Paul Showers)

A girl takes a walk with her dad and

enjoys all the sounds of their neighborhood. From crickets to lawnmowers to woodpeckers, the book features many familiar sounds—and it just may inspire your family to go on a listening walk of your own.



### ■ *Before We Eat: From Farm to Table*

(Pat Brisson)



Food doesn't grow in a supermarket! Using simple language, this nonfiction book explains to children where food comes from.

Your youngster will discover how farmers plant seeds, grow crops, and tend animals to give us fruit, vegetables, grains, and milk.

### ■ *How to Draw a Dragon*

(Douglas Florian)

"Dragons, when they wake, are grumpy, and their heads are rather bumpy." Through clever rhymes, this how-to book teaches young artists to draw dragons.

Your child will be eager to try his hand at drawing his own dragons after reading the book!



## Read with an eagle eye

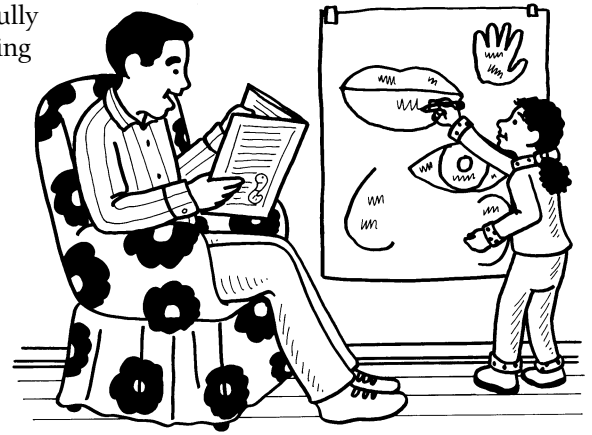
Close reading is reading carefully and thoughtfully—really thinking about what a passage says and what it means. Noticing and reflecting on the words an author chooses is one way for your youngster to practice reading closely.

### Senses

Which words or phrases appeal to your child's five senses? On a sheet of paper, have her draw a large eye, ear, mouth, nose, and hand to represent seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching. As you read a book aloud, she can write words on the pictures to match the senses. For example, if she hears "bowls of spicy chili," she might write "spicy chili" on the mouth.

### Feelings

Your youngster can use clues from a story to tell how characters feel. Encourage her to listen for words that describe or hint at emotions. ("The bunny hopped in *delight*." "The queen *sighed*.") Then, ask her to act out each feeling. She might hop around to show the bunny's delight.



Can she explain why the character felt that way? ("The bunny was happy because she found a carrot.")

### Time and place

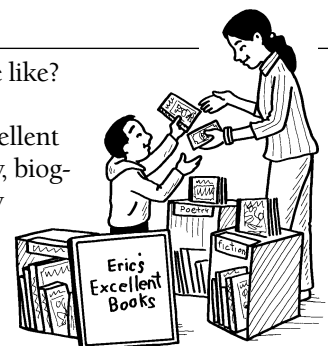
Authors add details to give readers a sense of when and where the story happens. A sentence like "Mornings were cold and dark now when she woke for school" suggests that it's winter. Read a book without showing your child the illustrations. Next, let her draw a picture of the setting. She could use details about the weather, clothing, and activities to imagine the time and place. ♥

## My own bookstore

If your child opened a bookstore, what would it be like? Suggest that he find out by creating a pretend one.

He could start by making a store sign ("Eric's Excellent Books") and arranging books by type (fiction, poetry, biographies), topic (animals, sports), or alphabetically by author. Then, he could add price tags ("50 cents") and write a calendar of events ("Story Hour").

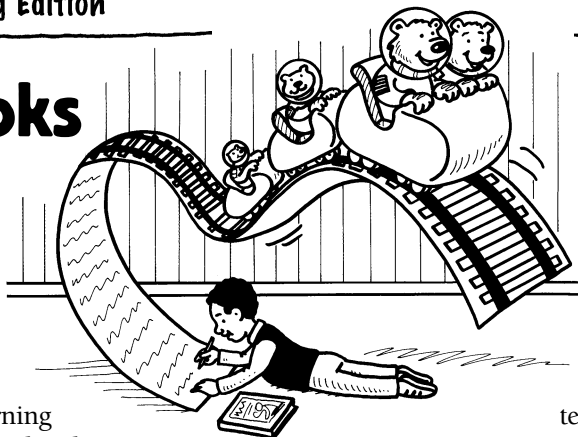
Now it's time for family members to shop! Ask your youngster to recommend books—he'll practice summarizing stories and giving opinions. Finally, "buy" a book with play money so he can make change. *Idea:* Have him hold story time. As he reads aloud, he'll work on reading smoothly and with expression. ♥



# Write about books

Books can inspire your child to write. Suggest these ideas for having fun with writing after he reads fiction or nonfiction.

**Hold a quiz show.** Read a book to your family. Have your youngster write questions about it on separate index cards. Spread them out facedown, and take turns pointing to one. Your child plays “host,” turning over the cards and reading the questions aloud. Whoever correctly answers the most chooses a new book to read. Then, let your youngster write new questions, and play again.



**Continue a series.** What if the Berenstain Bears went to Mars, or Frog and Toad rode a roller coaster? Your child can use the familiar plot format from a series he loves to write the next installment. For example, he may know the bear cubs always run into a problem and their parents teach a lesson about good character to help solve it.

**Write an argument.** Encourage your youngster to look critically at an author’s decision or a piece of information in a book. Maybe he thinks Jack should not have climbed up the beanstalk, or perhaps he believes Pluto should be considered a planet again. He could explain his viewpoint and give reasons to support it. ♥

## Fun with Words

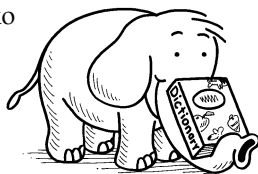
### Dictionary games



When your youngster is familiar with the dictionary, she’ll be comfortable looking up words. Use a children’s dictionary to play these games.

#### Word detective

Together, flip to any page. Take turns secretly choosing a word for the other player to guess.



Give clues like “I start with E. I am an animal. I have three syllables.” After your child finds the word (*elephant*), she can read the definition. She’ll discover that a dictionary also gives a word’s part of speech and shows how to pronounce it.

#### Speed search

Give your youngster practice using the dictionary’s *guide words* with this game. Show her the words at the top of the page, and explain that all the words on a page fall between those two words in ABC order. Then, browse through the dictionary and pick a random word (*lilac*, *pumpkin*) for her to find. When she spots your word, help her read the entry. Next, she can give you a word to locate. ♥

## Sing, read, and write

You can use songs to help your youngster practice reading and writing. Here’s how:

- Check out library books of songs. Your child can sing along while you run your finger under the words in a book, such as *The Wheels on the Bus* (Paul O. Zelinsky) or *Old MacDonald Had a Farm* (Salina Yoon). Look back through the pages, and ask her to point out words she knows like *round* or *cow*.



- Encourage your youngster to create her own songbook. Have her write each line of a favorite song on a separate sheet of paper. She could illustrate the lyrics and staple the pages together. Or she might make up her own version (“The Wheels on the Bike” instead of “The Wheels on the Bus”). Then, let her turn the pages as you sing the song together. ♥

## Q&A Spelling confusion

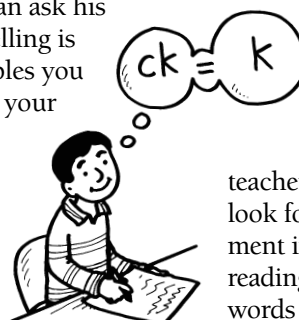
**Q** My son often spells words in unusual ways. He’ll write *laeck* instead of *lake* or *wight* for *white*. Should I be concerned?

**A** Probably not. You can ask his teacher whether his spelling is on track, but the examples you gave actually show that your son knows a lot about how words are spelled.

When a child first learns a spelling pattern, he might try to use it every time he hears the sound it

represents. Your son knows that a vowel plus silent e (*lake*) makes a long vowel sound—he just forgot that a consonant goes between them. He also learned that *ck* sounds like *k* and *igh* makes a long *i* sound.

Teachers call this “using but confusing”—and they look at youngsters’ misspellings to decide what to teach next. If his teacher isn’t concerned, then you can look forward to seeing steady improvement in his spelling. In the meantime, reading regularly will expose him to words that are spelled correctly. ♥



### OUR PURPOSE

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

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