

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

March 2018

Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ *Lady Pancake & Sir French Toast* (Josh Funk)

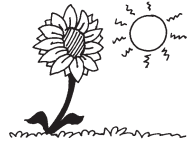
In this rhyming book, Lady Pancake and Sir French Toast race through the refrigerator to claim the last drop of maple syrup. Along the way, they must brave a mountain of mashed potatoes, an avalanche of beans, and other perils—as they learn a valuable lesson about sharing.



■ *Plants Can't Sit Still*

(Rebecca E. Hirsch)

While plants don't walk or talk, they do move! Your youngster will be delighted to learn that plants climb fences, tunnel underground, wiggle, and squirm.



This nonfiction picture book shows sunflowers turning toward the sun, a Venus flytrap snatching a fly, and more.

■ *Eerie Elementary: The School Is Alive* (Jack Chabert)

When Sam becomes a hall monitor at school, he thinks his job is to watch the students. Then he discovers that he's actually supposed to stop the creepy school building from eating students! The first book in the Eerie Elementary series. (Also available in Spanish.)

■ *How the Meteorite Got to the Museum* (Jessie Hartland)

Young readers can chant along with the repeating lines of this nonfiction book. The story follows the journey of a meteorite that crashed to Earth and was passed from person to person before winding up in a museum.



Ask your own questions

“Will the little elephant make a friend?” “How many volcanoes are there in the world?” Asking and answering her own questions can boost your youngster's comprehension as she reads or listens to a book. Suggest these strategies for each stage of the reading process.



Before

Encourage your child to think of questions before she even opens the book. Say there's a girl with a bike on the front cover, and the back cover says she got a job to pay for the bike. Perhaps your youngster will wonder, “What kind of job did the girl get?” or “How much did her bike cost?” Looking for the answers will help her pay attention to details in the story.

During

Wondering about a book's topic can keep your child focused on the text. Try this guessing game. Read a page, and think of a question. (“How big do sharks get?”) Say, “Guess what I wonder” and give hints (“I'm wondering something about size”). Once she guesses your question, it's her

turn to read while you figure out what she wonders (“Do sharks sleep?”).

After

Together, brainstorm questions to ask after finishing a book. For fiction, your youngster might list “What problem did the characters solve?” or “What would I do in this setting?” For nonfiction, she could suggest, “What new facts did I learn?” or “What did this book make me want to know?” This helps her better understand and remember the story or the information. ♥

Reading at the grocery store

The supermarket is packed with words. Try these ideas to help your child learn them:

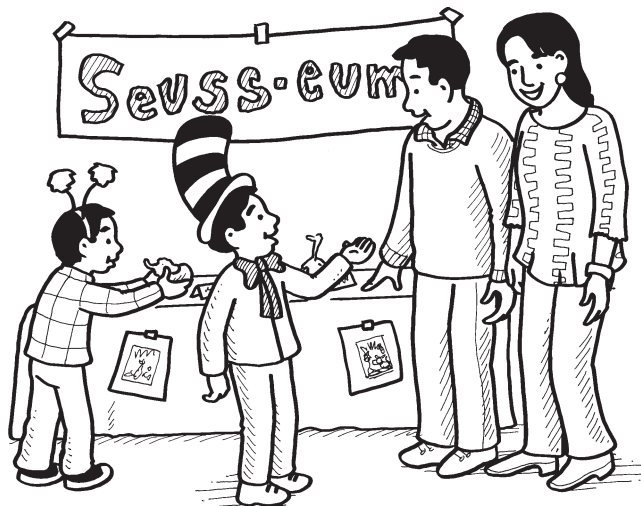
- Give your youngster coupons for items you need, maybe *spaghetti* or *napkins*. When you reach the right aisle, his job is to match the word on the coupon to the product on the shelf. Have him hold the coupon up to the package and spell the word aloud.
- Play “Which one?” At the cheese display, you could say, “Which one says *cheddar*?” In the spice section, you might ask, “Which one says *paprika*?” Together, sound out the words on different labels to find the right one. ♥



Celebrate Dr. Seuss

Dr. Seuss's creative characters and silly language made him one of the most popular children's authors of all time. Celebrate his March 2nd birthday with these reading and writing activities.

Make a "Seuss-eum." Your child could practice writing about books by creating museum-like displays for Dr. Seuss favorites. Read a book, then let him set out play dough sculptures of characters, drawings of his favorite scenes, and props related



to the story (green eggs, anyone?). Next, help him write an index-card plaque for each exhibit. ("Sam was the main character. He did not like green eggs!")

Be an actor. Acting out scenes from the books builds speaking skills. Write the titles of Dr. Seuss books on separate slips of paper, and mix them up in a bowl. Take turns drawing a slip and choosing a part of the book to act out. If you get *There's a Wocket in My Pocket*,

you might pretend to brush your teeth while saying "But that NOOTH GRUSH on my TOOTHBRUSH..." Everyone else tries to guess the book. ♥

Fun with Words

Spot the opposite

Playing with opposites is a fun way for your youngster to expand her vocabulary. Enjoy this game.

Secretly pick an item you see, and give your child a clue using an opposite. For a lamp that is



on, you could say, "I see something on a table that's the opposite of off." If she needs help, talk it out. "The opposite of off is on. Do you see something that is on?" Once she figures it out, she chooses an object and gives you a clue. For a Lego brick, she might say, "I see something on the rug that's the opposite of big."

Idea: See how many opposites you can think of to describe one thing. If your puppy is small, calm, and sleeping, your youngster could say, "Our dog is big, excited, and awake." ♥

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

Read-alouds for everyone

Q I try to read aloud to each of my three daughters every day, but sometimes there isn't enough of me to go around. Any suggestions?

A Sure! On days when you don't have enough time to read to each youngster separately, let everyone snuggle up while you read to them together. It's okay if a book is too easy for one child—she could help you read it to the others. And if a book is too hard for a little one, that's okay, too. She'll get a leg up from being exposed to big words and more complex plots.

If any of your girls has learned to read, she could read to the younger ones. They might create a reading "fort" using couch cushions and read during playtime or while you cook dinner, for instance. As they read or listen to books and talk about them, they will build reading skills. It's a win for everyone! ♥



Parent to Parent

A journal-writing tradition

My grandson Keith saw me writing in my journal and asked what I was doing. I explained that my grandfather got me started writing in a journal when I was a little boy. Keith said he wanted to start a journal, too, so I gave him a notebook.

He asked me what he should write about. I told him that I use my journal

mostly to store memories, but he can do whatever he wants—even draw pictures. He decided to sketch the two of us writing together in our journals, and he had me help him write a sentence about his picture.

Keith has stuck with his journal for a couple of weeks already. Now when he comes to my house, he can't wait to share what he has written and drawn. ♥

