

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

October 2016

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *Where Are My Books?*

(Debbie Ridpath Ohi)

While a little boy named Spencer sleeps, his beloved books disappear. He soon discovers they're being stolen by squirrels who love to read. Instead of getting angry, Spencer opens a "library" and lets the squirrels borrow and return his books.



■ *My Colors, My World / Mis colores, mi mundo*

(Maya Christina Gonzalez)

Young Maya and her cute bird friend search for colors in their sandy desert neighborhood. From the pink sunset to the yellow pollen to Papi's black hair, they spot beautiful colors everywhere. A bilingual story told in English and Spanish.

■ *Last Stop on Market Street*

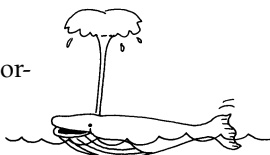
(Matt de la Peña)

Take a ride on the city bus with CJ and his nana as they travel to a soup kitchen. On their journey, CJ wonders why they live in the "dirty" part of town and don't own a car. Then, CJ realizes that although they don't have much money, they can help people who have even less.



■ *The Blue Whale*

Does your youngster know that a blue whale blows water as high as seven people standing on each other's heads? Or that a baby whale drinks 50 gallons of milk a day? This nonfiction picture book uses fun comparisons to help young readers imagine the enormous animal's size.



Listen and understand

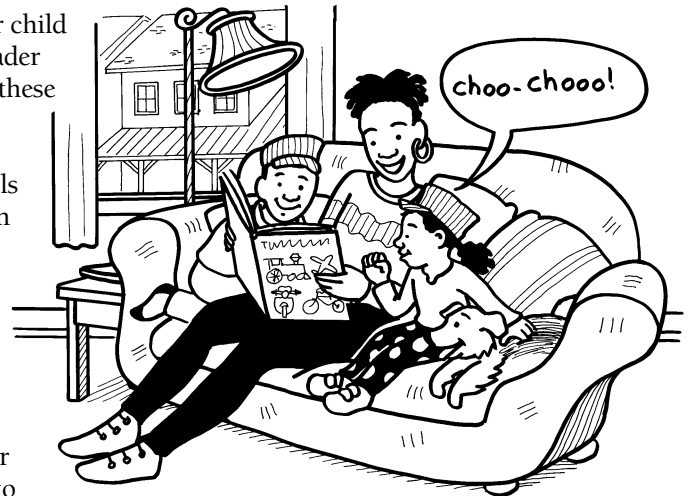
Reading aloud to your child can make her a better reader and a better listener. Try these story-time suggestions to boost her listening comprehension. The skills she develops will come in handy when she reads to herself, too.

Let's get acquainted

Before reading, help your youngster make a personal connection to the book. You'll spark her curiosity and set her up to understand it. *Example:* "This little girl is in kindergarten just like you" or "This book shows different dog breeds. I wonder if there's a border collie like ours."

Encourage participation

A good listener is an *active* listener. Give your child a special role—perhaps she'll do a particular motion every time she hears a certain word or line. If you read *The Pout-Pout Fish* (Deborah Diesen), she could puff out her cheeks and pout when you read "I'm a *pout-pout* fish..."



Or while listening to a nonfiction book about transportation, maybe she'll add sound effects (car horn, train whistle).

Shed light on new words

When you come across a word you think your youngster doesn't know, weave a quick explanation into your reading. You'll help her understand what's happening without interrupting the story's flow. *Example:* "They were *stranded* on the island—they were *stuck*—so they had to search for food."♥

Magazine storytelling

For these storytelling activities, your youngster will need a stack of old magazines—and his imagination!

Help your child cut pictures from magazines. He can keep them in a paper bag labeled "My story bag." Each day, let him pull one out and tell a story about it. Encourage him to look closely for details to use. He might notice a saxophone player on a city street corner or a frog on a lily pad in a pond.

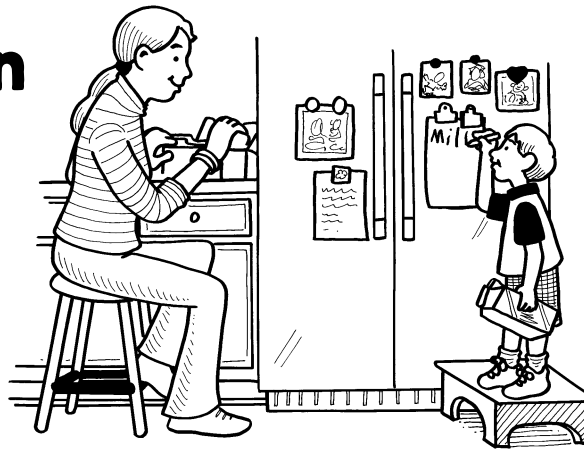
Or let him choose several photos and arrange them into a "storyboard." Explain that moviemakers use storyboards to plan what will happen first, next, and last in a movie. He could point to his storyboard as he tells his tale.♥



Write this down for me!

How often do you add an item to a grocery list, write down a reminder for yourself, or send mail to a relative? These are all examples of real-life writing that you can share with your youngster.

● **Ask for his help.** You could say, “I’m busy looking for recipes. Will you start the grocery list?” Hand him a notepad and a pencil, and encourage him to look in the refrigerator or pantry for help



You might even write to troops together. Visit operationgratitude.com/writeletters for information.♥

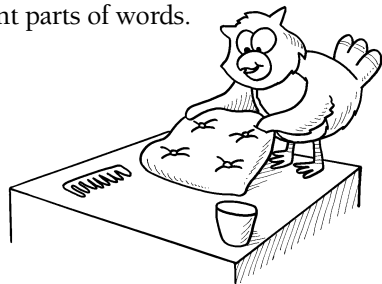
writing words like *milk* and *macaroni*. Or have him put a sticky note on the front door saying “Take grocery bags” or “Return library books.”

● **Send mail.** Fill a basket with paper, envelopes, postcards, note cards, and stamps. Then, suggest that your child write to friends and relatives. Show him how to include a greeting and a closing, and help him address his mail. *Idea:*

Fun with Words

Guess the sound

What do *pen*, *spoon*, and *can* have in common? They all end with the letter *n*! This word game lets your youngster identify sounds in different parts of words.



Take turns walking around the house and choosing three objects with the same sound at the beginning, middle, or end. Place the items on the table, and the other person has to figure out which sound they have in common. If your child picks a *comb*, a *cushion*, and a *cup*, you would say, “Beginning sound, *c*.” On your turn, if you choose a *remote*, a *hammer*, and a *lemon*, she would say, “Middle sound, *m*.”

Idea: Pick objects whose names share a letter combination, such as a *brush*, a *leash*, and a toy *clownfish* (ending sound, *sh*).♥



Parent to Parent

And the book award goes to...

My daughter Sarah recently noticed gold and silver seals on the covers of some books, and she asked what they were for. I explained they were awards the books had won.

Sarah thought it would be fun for us to give medals to books, too. She came up with categories like “Funniest book,” “Kindest main character,” “Coolest setting,” and “Best writing.” Now every time we go to the library, we pick a category and check out books that might qualify. At home, the whole family reads the books, and each person nominates her choice and presents an argument for why it should win. Then, we vote.

Finally, Sarah makes a medal for the winning book that lists the title, author, and year. Her choice doesn’t always win, but she’s practicing making arguments and talking about books.♥



Q&A Be a reading volunteer

Q I want to volunteer at my son’s school, but I’m not sure what I can contribute. I do love to read—could I use that to help out?

A Let your son’s teacher know when you’re available and that you enjoy reading. She might ask you to listen to students read or to read aloud to a small group or even the entire class. Or perhaps she’ll have you help students read math story problems. Try contacting the school librarian,

too. She would probably appreciate help shelving books or creating displays—and these are tasks that could possibly be done outside of school hours.

If you prefer to volunteer at home, you may be able to place book club orders or compile book titles for a unit the teacher is planning. As you’ll see, school is the perfect place for a parent volunteer who loves to read! And when you help out, you show your son that school—and reading—are important to you.♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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