

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

January 2007

Renton School District

## Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

### ■ *Zin! Zin! Zin! A Violin*

Ten shiny instruments “soar and roar” in Lloyd Moss’s musical counting book. Youngsters will learn the names of orchestra instruments, including violin, clarinet, and harp, and number words such as duo, trio, and quartet.



### ■ *Ramona and Her Mother*

Ramona Quimby always seems to find trouble, whether she’s dyeing herself blue or wearing pajamas to school. In Beverly Cleary’s fifth Ramona story, the seven-year-old gets used to having two working parents and learns an important lesson about family. (Also available in Spanish.)

### ■ *Owl at Home*

Owl doesn’t understand that he can’t be upstairs and downstairs at the same time or why the moon follows him home. The cozy stories in Arnold Lobel’s book tell of Owl’s adventures. Your child will be enchanted when Owl invites winter into his home and makes salty tea by crying into a kettle.



### ■ *All the Places to Love*

Living on a farm, Eli has learned about the beauty of nature. He can’t wait to show his new baby sister “all the places to love,” like the barn with the “soft sound of cows chewing”

and “the hilltop where the blueberries grew.”

A touching story  
by Patricia  
MacLachlan.



## Reading, writing, and imagination

Has your child ever read a story and wished for a different ending? Has he ever wanted to write to his favorite character?

Encourage him to use his imagination by writing in his own “reader’s notebook” after finishing a book. Try these activities to help your youngster build reading, writing, spelling, and vocabulary skills. In a spiral notebook:



### A beginning reader can ...

- Draw his favorite part of the story. Have him write or dictate labels for items in the picture. He can add sentences, such as “I liked it when the mouse built a house out of blocks.”
- Write to a character. *Example:* “Dear Emily Elizabeth, I have a dog, too. He is small and brown, not big and red like Clifford.” Your child could also ask questions (“Which farm animal was your favorite?”).

### An advanced reader can ...

- Create a map. Suggest that your youngster draw and label parts of the rain forest or the castle in the story. He might draw a path the character took.
- Write a new ending. Does your child wish dinosaurs were still around? In his version, maybe the dinosaurs have simply moved to another planet.

*Note:* Your youngster probably won’t want to write about every book he reads. Remember to encourage reading strictly for pleasure as well. ♥

## Mysterious reading

Clue your youngster into the fun of reading by introducing her to the world of whodunits.

Reading mysteries will help your child develop reasoning skills, as she uses tips in the story to solve the case. Help her by asking questions: “What clues have you come across?” “What do you think will happen?”

Look for mystery series, too. Reading several books with the same characters will allow your child to get to know their traits and learn to predict their behavior.

Try Cam Jansen mysteries by David Adler, Nate the Great books by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat, or the A to Z Mysteries series by Ron Roy. Younger readers might enjoy Adler’s Young Cam Jansen series. ♥



# Reading between the lines

The first time your child watched *The Wizard of Oz*, she may not have realized the whole story took place in a dream.

This kind of detail can be lost on a youngster who hasn't learned to infer, or "read between the lines." Give your child practice in this important comprehension skill with these strategies:

**1.** Show your youngster what it means to infer. Give her hints, and have her guess how you're feeling. Frown, shrug your shoulders, and scratch your head. Can she guess that you're confused?



**2.** Have her look at the pictures in books. Try reading Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*. Did your child know Max's adventure happened in his imagination? By looking at the illustrations, she'll see that Max couldn't have traveled far, because his dinner is still hot at the end of the story.

**3.** Ask your youngster to think about her own experiences. In *No Jumping on the Bed!* by Tedd Arnold, Walter's bed crashes through the floor. What happens if your child jumps on her bed? Does she think Walter's story is real or a dream? ♥

## Fun with Words

### ABC race

Dictionaries are great tools for learning about alphabetical order. Challenge your child to look up words quickly with this race-the-clock game.

First, make sure she knows how a dictionary is organized. Explain that words are listed from A to Z, and within each letter category, they are alphabetized by the second or even the third letter. Show her the guide words on the top

line: words on each page are in alphabetical order between those two words.

Next, write

10 words on separate scraps of paper. You might use words from your youngster's spelling list or a book she's reading. Or cut words from newspaper or magazine headlines.

Then, help her put the slips in ABC order. Set a timer (try 5 minutes for 10 words), and have her find each word in the dictionary. Encourage your child to use the guide words to search faster. ♥

### OUR PURPOSE

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

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## Parent to Parent

### "I've got mail!"

Sometimes our daughter is asleep by the time my husband gets home from work. To help keep in touch, he started sending Nina e-mails to read after school. The idea worked so well that she looks forward to her message every day.

As a bonus, the e-mails have helped improve her reading skills. I used to read the messages to her—now she reads them to me. Nina's writing also has gotten better, since she loves to write messages back. Of course, I have to help her type, but she is learning to do more of it herself.

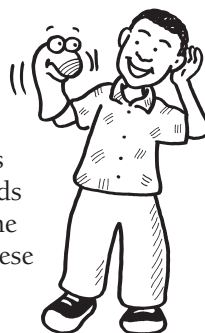
Nina is happy because she feels closer to her dad, and I'm thrilled that she's reading and writing so well! I told our neighbor about the e-mail messages. She doesn't have a family computer, so she has started leaving handwritten notes for her child to read after school. ♥



## Q&A Learn to listen, listen to learn

**Q** I think my son needs help with his listening skills. What can I do at home to give him practice?

**A** Listening is the earliest literacy skill. Working with your child to sharpen his ears will help him hear sounds in words and listen to the teacher at school. Try these two games for practice:



■ Put a sock on your hand, and have the "puppet" say a tongue twister ("Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers"). Then, have your youngster put the sock puppet on his hand and repeat the words.

■ Put small objects in film canisters or other non-see-through containers. Ask your youngster to shake them and guess what's inside. Try coins, salt, beans, and cotton balls. ♥