

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

March 2007

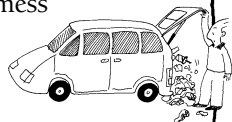
Renton School District

Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ **This Is the Van That Dad Cleaned**
Ketchup packets and candy corn litter the family van in this takeoff on the nursery rhyme “The House That Jack Built.” After cleaning the van, Dad takes the kids for a ride. While he’s driving, a new mess grows. A funny read-aloud by Lisa Campbell Ernst.



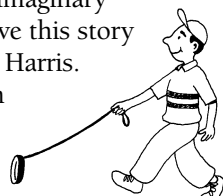
■ **The Pain and the Great One**
In Judy Blume’s book about sibling rivalry, the sister (“The Great One”) is jealous because her little brother (“The Pain”) is treated like a baby. But he complains that she gets to do things he can’t. In the end, each discovers life is more fun when the other is around.

■ **The Cloud Book**
Learning about clouds is exciting in this science book for youngsters. Tomie de Paola explains where clouds come from and how to use them to predict weather. Children will also learn to identify 10 types of clouds

by comparing them to things they know (cumulus clouds look like cotton balls).



■ **A Very Unusual Dog**
Jonathan takes his invisible dog to the park, lets him watch TV, and feeds him crumbs. His big sister teases him, but his grandmother believes Dog is real. If your child has ever had an imaginary friend, he will love this story by Dorothy Joan Harris. (Also available in Spanish.)



Writing practice

Children who like to write usually like to read, too. Build time for writing into your youngster’s everyday life with these easy ideas.

■ Describe family fun.

Take photographs of a family activity (flying a kite, washing the car). Then, help your child put the pictures in order and write a sentence about each one. This will help him work on sequencing skills as well as writing.

■ **Write a recipe.** After making lunch together, you and your youngster can write down how to make a peanut butter and banana sandwich: “Spread peanut butter on two pieces of bread . . .” Suggest that he make up a silly recipe, too (dandelion tacos, sweatshirt stew). He’ll have fun—and learn how to write clear directions.

■ **Be a news reporter.** Encourage your child to “cover” a family event, such as



a trip to the zoo. Explain that reporters begin by asking the “five Ws”: Who? What? When? Where? Why? Your youngster can interview family members, jot down their answers, and compose a story. This will help him develop skills he needs for writing school reports.

■ **Keep a diary.** Invite your youngster to record what he does or what he’s thinking about each day. He can dictate to you or write in a notebook he keeps by his bed. Your child will learn to write regularly—and he’ll enjoy reading about his own life! ♥

Reading checklist

Raise a youngster who loves to read by making books an important part of your home life. Here’s a handy checklist to use:

- I read to my child each day.
- We have a variety of books in different rooms for my youngster to read by herself.
- I let my child see me reading and hear me talking about what I’ve read.

I point out words I see (in stores, on street signs).

I ask my youngster to read to me.

We visit libraries, bookstores, book fairs, and used-book sales.

I choose books as gifts for holidays and birthdays. ♥



A world of books

Books can bring the world home to your child. Help her learn about people and places around the globe by reading stories and doing activities like these:

▲ When your youngster climbs into bed, children in Australia are eating lunch the next day. Stacey Schuett's *Somewhere in the World Right Now* explains time zones and describes other cultures. Ask your child what



she thinks is happening on the other side of the world right now.

▲ *The Seven Continents* and *The Four Oceans* are two nonfiction books by Wil Mara that introduce geography. Help your youngster locate the continents and oceans on a map. Put white paper over the map, trace the continents, and cut them out. She can lay them on the map to learn where they belong.

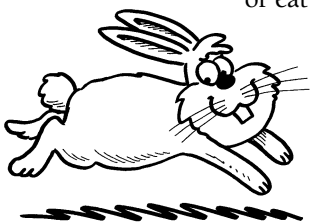
▲ Children's hair and skin are compared to cinnamon, walnut, and wheat in Sheila Hamanaka's *All the Colors of the Earth*. Your youngster will see that people come in many beautiful shades. Ask her to think of things in nature that match her friends' skin and hair color—and her own.♥



Fun with Words Letter charades

Play this twist on charades, and your youngster will have fun while learning about the beginning sounds of words.

Take turns acting out words that begin with a letter of the alphabet. The other players try to guess the letter. For *l*, your child might pretend to be a lizard or eat a lollipop. For *r*, he could run or hop like a rabbit. When playing with older children, make the game harder by choosing vowels



or consonants with more than one sound, such as *c* (circle, car) or *g* (gum, giant). Tell youngsters they have to act out at least one word for each sound the letter makes.

Tip: Limit kids to three guesses to keep them from simply calling out every letter of the alphabet.♥

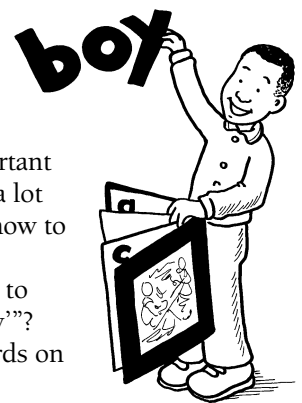
Q&A "Pretend" reading

Q Is it okay that my son is memorizing books instead of reading them?

A Memorizing books and pretending to read them are important prereading skills. Your youngster's behavior shows he knows a lot about books: how to hold them, how to turn the pages, and how to enjoy a story.

You can help him move on to actual reading by asking him to show you words he knows. *Examples:* "Where does it say 'boy'?" "Can you point to the word 'car'?" Do this for one or two words on each page.

Soon you'll find your child recognizing those same words—and new ones—in books that he is beginning to really read.♥



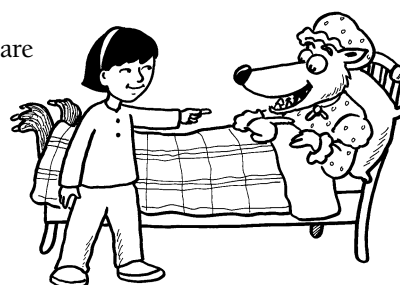
Parent to Parent Thinking questions

My daughter Chelsea used to clam up when she had to answer a "thinking" question about a book, like "What's your favorite part?" I asked her teacher about this, and she said it's a common problem.

Mrs. Porter told me that lots of times, kids are afraid they'll get the answer "wrong." She said to tell Chelsea not to worry, because her opinion can't be wrong. Say she's asked to name

her favorite character in "Little Red Riding Hood." She can choose anyone—even the big bad wolf—as long as she can say why (because he's smart).

The teacher also said Chelsea might be having trouble choosing an answer from all the possibilities. She suggested I encourage her to think out loud and list all her ideas. Then she can choose her favorite one.♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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