

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

April 2006

Renton School District

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

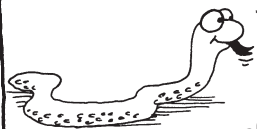
■ *A Picture Book of Jackie Robinson*

Learn about the life of baseball player Jackie Robinson in this biography. David Adler writes about Robinson's childhood, his career, and the challenges he faced as the first African-American major leaguer.



■ *Verdi*

Verdi the snake doesn't want to shed his skin and turn green like his elders—he thinks life will be slow and boring. Fans of Janell Cannon's



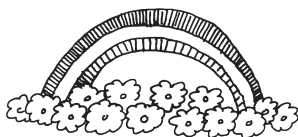
Stellaluna will enjoy this story of the python who's afraid to grow up.

■ *The Magically Mysterious Adventures of Noelle the Bulldog*

Noelle is happy to be adopted by a little girl. But she worries that she isn't as pretty or as fast as the other dogs. Soon this bulldog learns that she has special qualities too. A rhyming story by singer Gloria Estefan. (Also available in Spanish.)

■ *Planting a Rainbow*

In Lois Ehlert's story, a mother and child plant bulbs in the garden each fall and watch their flowers bloom in the spring. Your youngster will learn about the planting process and enjoy flowers in every color of the rainbow.



Conversations build skills

You may already know it's a good idea to read to your child each day. But do you know that your conversations with him are important, too? Speaking and listening skills are the foundation for successful reading and writing.

An easy time to build language skills like these is while playing with your youngster. Try this activity with your child:



1 Put a collection of related items in a paper bag. *Example:* pizza cutter, apron, cheese grater, green pepper, and mushroom. Have your youngster pull the items out one at a time and try to name them. If he needs help, say their names and encourage him to repeat them after you. Ask, "Which two items are alike? Why?" (The green pepper and mushroom are foods; the cutter and grater are tools.)

2 Play a game of pretend using the items. Emphasize new and interesting words as you play. "I'm going to put *anchovies* and *Italian* sausage on my pizza. Mmm, it tastes *spicy*." Encourage your child to join in. "What's on your pizza? How does it taste?"

3 Talk about what you and your youngster are doing as you play. Include words that show order. "First we pulled the pepper and other ingredients out of the bag." Ask, "What did we do *next*?" "The *last* thing we did was..." ♥

Books on tape

Want a way to give your child extra read-aloud time? Buy some blank cassettes, and record yourself reading her favorite stories. She'll gain reading practice as she follows along in her books. Get started with these tips:

- Practice reading the book a few times before you record.
- Relax, speak in a clear voice, and try to read with feeling.
- Use a bell or other sound to signal that it's time to turn the page.

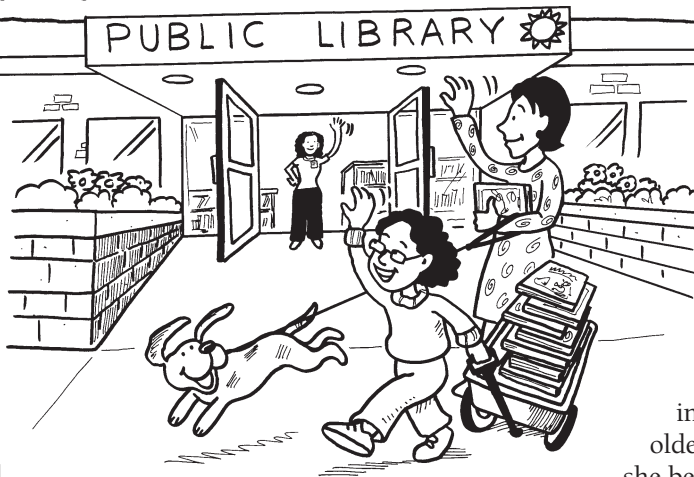
Note: The first few times your child plays the tapes, show her how to follow along. Soon she'll be pointing to the words or even reading out loud with your voice. ♥



Visiting the library

Did you know that National Library Week is April 2–8, 2006? Use this week as an opportunity to spend some time at the library with your youngster. Here's how to have a successful visit:

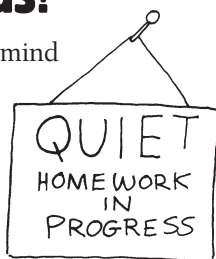
- If your child doesn't already have one, get her a library card. She'll feel that she "fits in" at the library, just like older readers.
- Introduce her to library resources, such as the computer or card catalog, and say hello to the librarian.



- Explain how the sections are organized. For example, show her that fiction books are usually grouped in ABC order by the author's last name.
- Decide in advance how many books your youngster can check out at a time. The number might increase as your child grows older, but it may decrease again as she begins reading longer books.
- At home, let your child help you choose a safe place to store the books, such as in a basket by the front door or on a bedside table. ♥

Focus, focus!

Does your child's mind frequently wander while he does homework? If so, consider these ideas.



Children concentrate better

when there are fewer distractions. Keep loud sounds to a minimum, and be sure toys are out of sight while your youngster is working.

Kids are less organized than adults in their approach to tasks. Help your youngster by reading directions with him so he knows exactly what to do. If he has several assignments, help him prioritize them. *Example:* He could do a reading assignment first, then study for his spelling quiz.

Your child may lose focus if a task is too easy or too hard. The ideal assignment is challenging enough to keep his attention, but not so tough that he becomes frustrated.

Note: Talk with the teacher if your child continues to struggle with homework. ♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

Resources for Educators,
a division of Aspen Publishers, Inc.
3035 Valley Avenue, Suite 103, Winchester, VA 22601
540-723-0322 • rfeustomer@aspenpublishers.com
www.rfeonline.com

ISSN 1540-5648

Q&A End-of-year conference

Q We have school conferences coming up with our children's teachers. What should we expect?

A The teachers will probably talk about what your children have learned this year. They might share books your kids have read and samples of their writing. If there are skills your youngsters still need to master, such as capitalization or punctuation, the teachers may give you suggestions for helping at home.

Ask your youngsters' teachers for ways to keep their skills sharp over the summer. Also, find out what they will be expected to know when they start school in the fall.

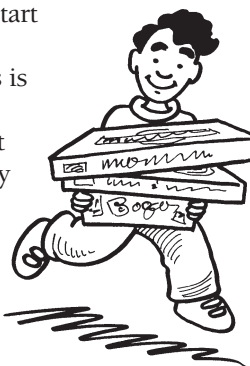
After the conference, be sure to praise your children for their accomplishments. "I saw your journal at school today—your writing has really improved this year." Let them know what you and the teachers discussed. ♥



Parent to Parent Family game night

Several years ago, our oldest child received a card game for his birthday. That's when we decided to start having family game nights.

One of our favorite games is Boggle. The kids love racing to see who can find the most words in three minutes. They also enjoy Hangman. We think of a word, and they take turns filling in letters. Both games give them lots of reading and spelling practice.



Almost every game we play helps them learn new skills. Chutes and Ladders teaches counting and prepositions ("climb *three* spaces up the ladder"). And even our youngest, who is five, loves Monopoly. She recognizes the street names by their color and first letter. She'll say, "Atlantic Avenue is the yellow street that begins with 'a.'"

We now have a large collection of games—and family game night is still a weekly tradition! ♥