

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

May 2006

Renton School District

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *Everything to Spend the Night from A to Z*

What would you take on a trip to Grandpa's house? The little girl in Ann Whitford Paul's alphabet book packs everything from an apple to a zipper. But what really important thing does she forget?



■ *From the Bellybutton of the Moon and Other Summer Poems/ Del Ombligo de la Luna y Otros Poemas de Verano*

Francisco X. Alarcón's collection of bilingual poems was inspired by his childhood visits to relatives in Mexico. Family, nature, and culture are a few of the themes in this book, which will appeal to both English- and Spanish-speaking youngsters.

■ *Stanley's Great Big Book of Everything*

Andrew Griffin's reference book is similar to the one on the Stanley television show. Children can learn fun facts about their favorite animals, including polar bears, crocodiles, and kangaroos. Filled with colorful illustrations.



■ *You Are My I Love You*

Lovable teddy bear characters say goodnight in this book by Maryann Cusimano about a parent's love. "I am your open arms; you are my running leap," the mother says as she tucks her little bear into bed.



Warm up to reading

Want to motivate your child to read while school is out? Try making reading a part of summertime fun. Here's how.

Link family activities with reading.

Check out a baseball book, such as Brad Herzog's *H Is for Home Run: A Baseball Alphabet*, and go to a local softball game. Or read a patriotic book before you watch fireworks on Independence Day. Try *America the Beautiful*, an illustrated version of the song by Scholastic.

Turn playdates into book clubs. Your youngster can ask her friends to bring over a copy of the same book. They can read together (take turns reading pages, read silently, or read aloud), talk about the story, and enjoy a snack.

Use books as inspiration for projects. For example, read *Maisy Makes Lemonade* by Lucy Cousins and help your child set

up her own lemonade stand. Or play with homemade bubbles after reading *Pop! A Book About Bubbles* by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley.

Give rewards for reading. Help your child set a reading goal for the summer. Each time she reads a book, write the title on a strip of paper. Link the strips together to make a paper chain. Challenge her to make a chain that is as long as she is tall. Then, celebrate her success with a special summer treat, such as ice cream. ♥



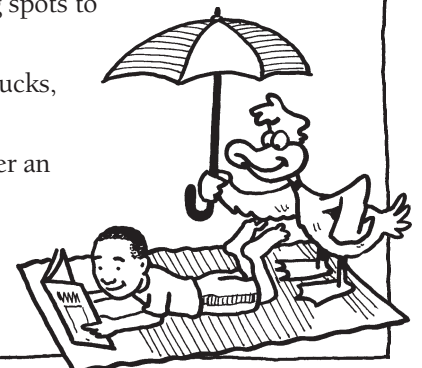
Reading hot spots

Warmer weather opens up a whole world of possibilities when it comes to finding a place to read. And reading—like eating—is more fun when you're outside! Here are a few ideas for summer reading spots to enjoy with your child.

In the park: Find a bench by the lake, feed the ducks, and read away.

At the pool: Stretch out on towels or chairs under an umbrella, and enjoy a story together.

After dark: Pitch a tent in the backyard or make one using a blanket or sheet. Grab a flashlight, and read bedtime stories. ♥



Boost thinking skills

Thinking and reading go hand in hand. You can boost your child's thinking smarts by asking questions about what he reads. Here are several skills with questions to build each one.

Problem solving

Good thinkers can come up with their own solutions to problems. After reading a story together, ask questions like, "What was the main character's problem in the story? Could she have solved it in a different way?"

Creativity

Creativity is an important thinking skill. Help take your youngster's imagination beyond the story he's reading. "Could this book have taken place on the moon? What would have been different?" or "What would change if the main character were a monkey instead of a hippopotamus?"



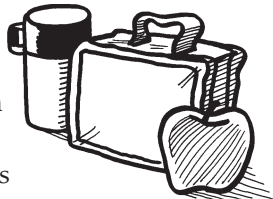
Reflection

Paying attention to your own thinking is known as reflection. Ask your child for his reaction to a story he has read. "How did you feel when you read the part where the little boy was afraid of the dark? Why do you think you felt that way?" ♥

Forget something?

Whether you want to help your child remember her lunch box in the morning or learn the alphabet, here are some tips to strengthen her memory:

■ Play simple memory games. For example, say to your youngster, "I'm going on a trip, and I'm taking an apple." Your child repeats your sentence and adds another item that begins with "b" (ball). Take turns repeating and adding items in alphabetical order. The game ends when someone forgets an item or you reach the letter "z."



■ Turn reminders into questions. As your youngster starts out the door, instead of saying, "You forgot your library book," ask, "What do you need to take to school?" You'll teach her to create her own mental checklist. *Tip:* Show her how to turn her mental checklist into a written list. It's great writing practice. ♥

Parent to Parent

Sand writing

My son David never showed much interest in writing until we went to the beach during our vacation. Soon, he discovered he loved to write—in the sand! We used our fingers, toes, and beach toys to write our names. Then, David asked me to help him write other words, such as "ocean," "wave," and "dolphin."



Since then, I've been looking for other ways to encourage David to write. We've written in his sandbox, with twigs in the dirt at the playground, and even on the sidewalk using a paintbrush and water. Just the other day, I found him "writing" on a picture he'd drawn. Although David has just begun learning how to spell, he had put several letters under his drawing for his name. It seems our fun in the sun is paying off! ♥

Q&A Spelling made easy



Q I'm looking for a new way to help my daughter learn her spelling words. Any suggestions?

A Make spelling a family event with a weekly word hunt. Each time your

youngster brings home more spelling words, have the whole family look over the list. Talk about what the words mean, and help your child use each one in a sentence. Then, have everybody copy down the words to make their own list.

During the week, look and listen for the spelling words. For example, your child might see a word in one of her textbooks, and you could hear one used during a meeting at work. Write down where you find each word, and share it with the rest of the family. See who can find the most words by the end of the week. ♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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