

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

November 2006

Renton School District

## Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

### ■ *Russell the Sheep*

If people count sheep to fall asleep, what do sheep count? After counting his feet, then “six hundred million billion and ten” stars, Russell the sheep still can’t go to sleep. He finally dozes off after counting—you guessed it—his fellow sheep! A wonderful bedtime story by Rob Scotton.



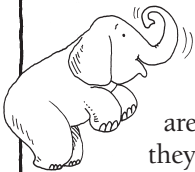
### ■ *The Red Book*

A book within a book within a book, this wordless story by Barbara Lehman tells of a little girl who finds a red book and soon becomes a character in the tale. She takes a magical journey where she meets a little boy who, just like her, found a red book.



### ■ *From Head to Toe*

Young readers will enjoy the repetitive refrain in this book from favorite author Eric Carle. Each page describes how an animal moves (“A monkey waves its arms”) and asks, “Can you do it?” Kids are encouraged to move as they read. (Also available in Spanish.)



### ■ *Fraction Fun*

Fractions are easier to learn if they’re tasty! David Adler’s book uses food to explain how a fraction is a part of something. Youngsters will be eager to try hands-on activities such as sharing pizza and weighing coins.

## Stop and read

The clock strikes eight, and Mom, Dad, and Joey all stop whatever they’re doing and pick up a book or magazine.

What’s going on here? The Smiths are helping Joey become a life-long reader. They have begun a daily Family Reading Break—time set aside to read for pleasure.

Bring this tradition to your house, and you’ll help your child develop a love of reading. Here’s how.

### Let him choose

Fill a basket with stories you think your youngster will like, and let him pick what to read. This will help him learn to make his own reading decisions.

*Tip:* Include old favorites, and make trips to the library to add new books.

### Involve everyone

Seeing parents and siblings reading will inspire and encourage your child. Let him hear you enjoying your book—laugh out loud if something is funny, or tell an interesting fact. Encourage your youngster to share his thoughts when reading time ends (“Who was your favorite character?”).

### Set the time

Try a 15-minute reading break for starters. Work up to 30 minutes—or



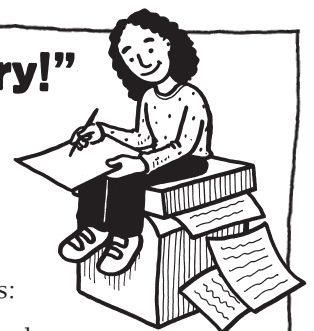
longer—as your child gets older. Scheduling the time will show that reading is important to your family.

*Note:* If your youngster is not yet reading, let him spend Family Reading Break turning pages, picking out words he knows, or making up a story to go with the pictures. ♥

## “That’s my story!”

Show your child how valuable her writing is by putting her efforts on display. Here are several ideas for treating your young author’s stories and poems as keepsakes:

- Have her label and decorate a box (“Jasmine’s Stories”). Add items as she writes them, and keep the box nearby.
- Post new pieces on the refrigerator.
- Frame poems and hang them on a wall.
- Take samples to your office so your youngster will see her work on display when she visits.
- Compile her writings into a coffee-table book. *Tip:* Use cardboard cut from cereal boxes for a cover. Punch holes and thread with ribbon or yarn to bind. ♥

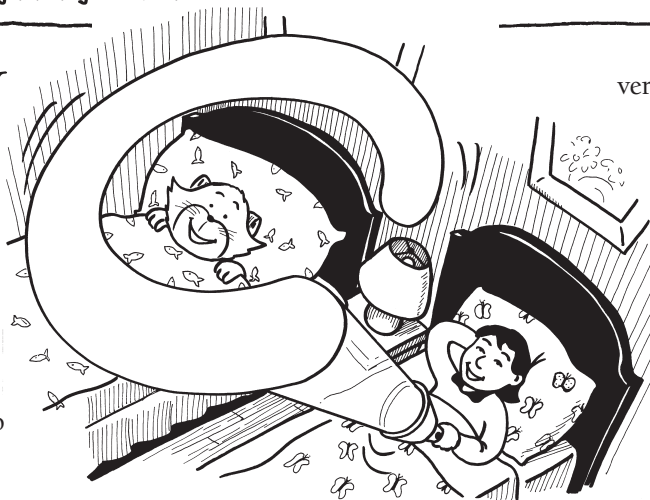


# Handwriting fun

“Why do I need good handwriting? I’m going to do everything on a computer anyway.”

Have you heard that one from your child? Let her know that even in the computer age, she’ll have plenty of papers to write by hand. To encourage better handwriting skills, offer these fun ways to practice:

■ Try having your youngster write on a chalkboard, dry-erase board, or large sheet of paper taped to a wall. Practicing on a



vertical surface will help her build arm muscles and write more neatly.

■ Provide different writing tools, such as colored pencils, glitter glue pens, and watercolors. In a darkened room, let your child “write” on the ceiling with a flashlight. The variety will make handwriting practice more appealing.

■ Have your youngster use her finger to trace letters on her leg or hand. Take turns writing on each other’s backs and guessing the letters. Feeling the shape of the letters will help her remember how to form them correctly. ♥

## Mark it!

What’s better than your child’s favorite book? His favorite book with a bookmark inside that he made himself!

Try this creative activity to encourage your youngster to keep on reading. Start by helping him cut a 2 x 6 inch rectangle from construction paper. Then, have him decorate his bookmark with one of these mini “book reports”:



**1** After your youngster reads a book, he can write the title and a sentence about it on one side of the bookmark. On the other side, he can illustrate the setting or main characters.

**2** As your child finishes books, have him list the titles on his bookmark. Under each title, he can write two or three words that describe the book (“exciting,” “scary,” “funny”). When both sides are filled up, it’s time to make another one!

*Idea:* Laminate finished bookmarks by covering them with clear contact paper. Punch a hole in the top, put a 6-inch piece of yarn through the hole, and tie a knot. ♥



## Parent to Parent

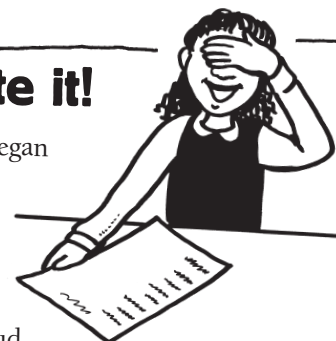
### See it, say it, write it!

Earlier this year, my daughter began struggling with weekly spelling quizzes. Yet when I asked Bianca to spell her missed words out loud, she usually got them right.

That gave me an idea. When Bianca got her next spelling list, I showed her how to look at a word, cover it up, picture it in her head, and spell it out loud before writing it down.

This really helped, but she knew she wouldn’t be able to say the words aloud during quizzes. So she came up with an idea of her own: “I can spell the word in my head while I’m picturing it, and then write it on my quiz.”

I’m happy to say Bianca did a great job on her next quiz—and now she uses the “see it, spell it” approach every week. ♥



## Q&A Software stories

**Q** I’m looking for software that will help build my son’s reading and writing skills. Any suggestions?

**A** Today’s software lets children read and write on the computer—and learn important skills along the way. Here are a few good titles to try.

### Chicka Chicka Boom Boom

In this animated version of the classic alphabet book, your youngster can hear the story and practice recognizing letters.



### Stanley’s Sticker Stories

This story-making software lets your child write, illustrate, and even record stories that will come to life on the screen. The tales can be played back or printed out.

### Mia’s Big Adventure Collection (The Search for Grandma’s Remedy)

Players use problem-solving and reading skills to help Mia the mouse get medicine for her grandmother. Nine activities and four levels of difficulty will keep your youngster challenged. ♥

## OUR PURPOSE

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

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a division of Aspen Publishers, Inc.  
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www.rfeonline.com

ISSN 1540-5648