

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

April 2009

Larson Elementary School

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ Mom and Dad Are Palindromes

Your child will laugh out loud when a boy named Bob discovers that



he's surrounded by palindromes—words that are spelled the same forward and backward. Mark Shulman includes 101 palindromes like *kayak*, *race car*, and *Anna* in this fanciful book about words.

■ The Day It Snowed Tortillas

Can tortillas fall from the sky? Youngsters will find out in Joe Hayes's collection of folk tales.



These magical stories have been passed down through Spanish culture for hundreds of years and are ideal for reading aloud. Told in both English and Spanish.

■ Here's a Little Poem

This poetry collection is perfect for beginning readers. Compiled by Jane Yolen, it includes 60 short verses by Robert Louis Stevenson, Rosemary Wells, and other children's writers. Youngsters will be familiar with everyday topics in these poems, from little brothers and green vegetables to piggyback rides.

■ Baseball Saved Us

A young Japanese American boy is sent to a World War II internment camp with his family. He makes it through the ordeal by playing baseball games that his father helps organize—and hits a homerun in the camp championship. An inspiring story by Ken Mochizuki, whose own parents were in a camp.



Books, books everywhere

How do you raise a lifelong reader? One way is to make sure books are always on hand. Try this three-step plan for maintaining a family book collection your child will enjoy.

1. Organize

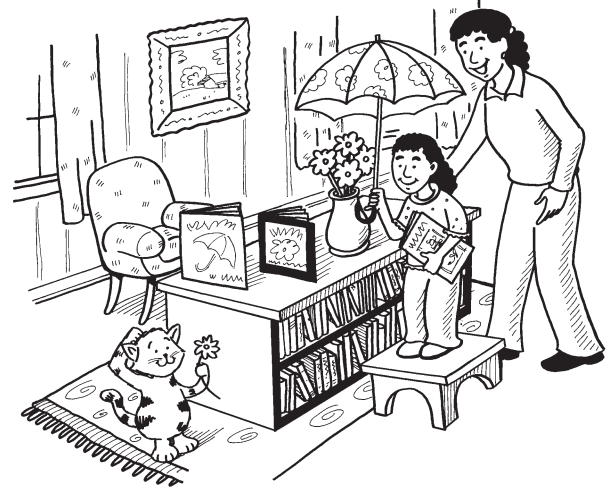
Together, shelve your youngster's books so she can always find one she wants to read. Have her sort them into categories (*example*: mysteries, sports, animals). Then help her arrange them in ABC order by the authors' last names within each group. You can also put books in boxes or baskets and scatter them throughout the house (bathroom, family room, bedroom) so she can read anywhere.

2. Decorate

Let your child make a display of seasonal stories on top of a bookcase—just like in the library. Suggest that she add toys or items that appear in the books. For a spring display, she might include an umbrella for *Yellow Umbrella* by Jae-Soo Liu or draw a picture of flowers for *Whose Garden Is It?* by Mary Ann Hoberman. Encourage her to change her exhibit each month—she'll read more stories as she decides what to feature.

3. Use

Create comfortable spots that invite your youngster to read. A beanbag chair or a pile of pillows between two bookcases makes a cozy nook. For bedtime stories, you might attach a book lamp to your child's headboard so you can turn off the other lights. Settle in together for regular read-alouds.♥



Writing fun

Encourage your youngster to write more often by making it fun to practice:

- Let him use interesting materials. He might squeeze out glue to "write" words on construction paper. Then, he can cover the letters with uncooked pasta, dried beans, cotton balls, or crumpled bits of colored tissue paper.



- Have your child recycle old greeting cards into poems or notes. Help him cut out a magazine picture, tape it to the cover of a card, and line the inside with white paper. He can use colorful markers or gel pens to write a rhyming verse or a note to a relative.♥

Create a book

With a few folds or cuts of paper, your child can be an author! Boost his writing and creativity skills with these two ideas for making books.

Zigzag story

Can your child tell a story in just four sentences? This zigzag book will teach him to choose words carefully and make each one count. Start by having him cut a piece of paper in half horizontally. Help your youngster fold the strip in half, then in half again. He can write and illustrate one sentence per panel. He'll have a four-panel book that stands up!



A tall, tall tale

Read your youngster a tall tale, such as the story of Johnny Appleseed or Paul Bunyan. Then, have him make his own "tall" tale. He can cut a piece of paper into three columns, tape them together into one tall strip, and write his story from top to bottom. Or he can type his tale on the computer. Help him set the left and right margins to three inches. When he's finished,

he can print the story, cut off the edges, and tape the strips together end to end. Let him hang his story on the wall—everyone will see how "tall" his tall tale is! ♥

Fun with Words Word treasure hunt

Help your child pay close attention to words, letters, and sounds with this game. She'll become a better reader and speller.

Materials: books, slips of paper, pencil, envelope

Ask your youngster to pick a book. Choose different kinds of words for her to search for (rhymes with *cake*, has two syllables, starts with a vowel). Write each item on a slip of paper, place the slips in an envelope, and print the book's title on the outside of the envelope.



Have your child read the book, or read it to her. Then, let her pull the slips out one by one and go back through the pages to find a word that fits each description. When she has found them all, let her pick types of words for you to search for. ♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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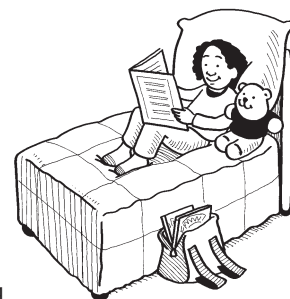
Q&A Silent reading

Q My daughter has started reading silently. How can I be sure she understands what she reads?

A Being able to read silently is a good sign—your child is growing into an independent reader. You can monitor her progress by having her read aloud occasionally. When she starts a new book, ask her to read the first page or chapter to you.

Then, after she has read a book, ask questions to check her understanding. Examples: "What was the story about?" "What was the main character like?" If she's unsure, remind her that she can reread sections or look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary.

Finally, help her pick out books at her reading level. You can get ideas from her teacher and then look for ones with similar vocabulary and the same number of words or lines per page. ♥



Parent to Parent Stories that comfort

My son seemed happy in school this year. But after spring break, he cried when it was time to go back.

His teacher told me she uses storytelling to help her son when he's sad. She makes up a story about a boy just like him and gives it a happy ending.

Before Andrew went to school the next day, I told him about a boy who had such a great vacation

that he didn't want it to end. Then, when the boy got to school, he had a good time seeing his friends, reading, and playing games. At night, he told his family all about his fun day.

Andrew liked the story and asked to hear another one. I promised him I'd have one ready for him when he got home, and he went off to school happily. ♥

