

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

March 2009

Larson Elementary School

## Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

### Library Lion

Miss Merriweather is shocked when a lion walks into her library. After she scolds him for roaring, the lion promises to be good and is allowed to stay. He dusts with his tail and helps children reach high shelves. When trouble strikes, his roar saves the day. A cute tale by Michelle Knudsen.

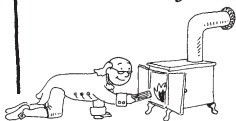


### The Other Side

Annie and Clover live on opposite sides of a fence in their segregated town. Since their mothers won't allow the girls to cross the fence, they decide to sit on top of it. Their curiosity—about the fence and each other—turns into friendship in this hopeful story by Jacqueline Woodson.

### Now and Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin

Gene Barretta's book explores the creations of Benjamin Franklin, from bifocal glasses to lightning rods. The historical figure worked as a politician, postmaster, writer, and more—yet still had time to invent many things we use today.



### Song and Dance Man

When Grandpa puts on an old top hat and starts dancing around the attic, his grandchildren get a glimpse of his former stage career. He plays the banjo, tap-dances, tells jokes, and performs tricks in this story by Karen Ackerman. (Also available in Spanish.)



## Reasons to write

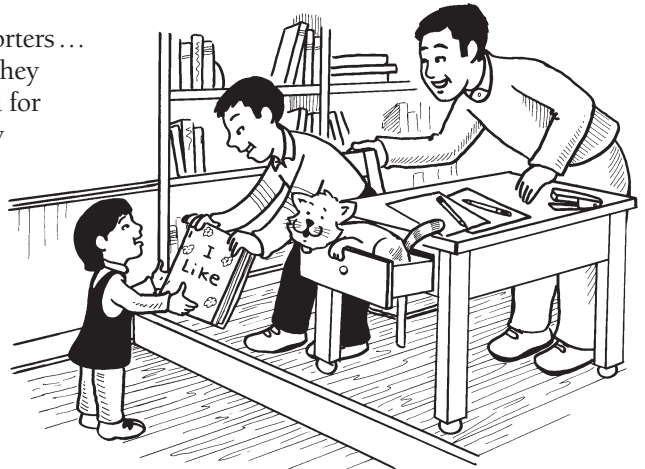
Authors, poets, news reporters... the world is full of writers. They write for many purposes and for many kinds of readers. Show your child ways he can use writing in his life.

### To entertain

Encourage your youngster to think about who will read his stories and poems. Then, he can practice writing for a specific audience. For instance, he might make a short book for his little cousin. Have him cut a sheet of paper into fourths and write the same sentence on every page, changing one word: "I like to *play*. I like to *eat*. I like to *sleep*." After he illustrates the pages, staple them together.

### To inform

Some writing, such as instructions or signs, provides information. Help your child make a list of rules for a family kickball game. Or he could make signs like "Wash your hands before eating" to



hang above the bathroom sink or "Wet paint" to put on the front door. Your youngster will learn to write simply and clearly.

### To persuade

Some writers try to convince people to see their point of view. If there's something your child wants (say, a bike), help him write sentences to persuade you: "It's good exercise. I'll wear my helmet." This will teach him to add supporting details to his writing.♥

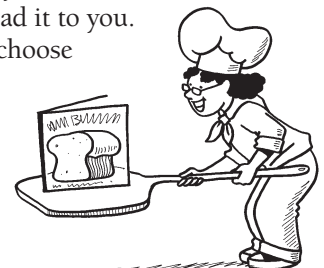
## Story + snack = yum!

Combine story time and snack time for a tasty read-aloud.

First, ask your youngster's teacher or the librarian for titles of books that mention food. You might try *Everybody Bakes Bread* by Norah Dooley, *The First Strawberries* retold by Joseph Bruchac, or *Cheese Louise!* by David Michael Slater.

Then, read the book to your child, or have her read it to you. Look through the pages for snack ideas. She might choose a recipe that's included, such as coconut bread in *Everybody Bakes Bread*. Or she could think of a snack using an ingredient from the story (strawberry applesauce, Swiss cheese melted on bread).

Finally, prepare and eat the treat together!♥



# Online reading

Looking for a wide variety of reading materials all in one place? Sit down with your youngster at the computer, either at home or in the library, to find fun reading opportunities like these:

- Beginning readers can follow along with stories or song lyrics read aloud at Web sites (try [www.rif.org/readingplanet/content/read\\_aloud\\_stories.msp](http://www.rif.org/readingplanet/content/read_aloud_stories.msp) or [www.storyplace.org/eel/other.asp](http://www.storyplace.org/eel/other.asp)). Encourage your child to listen to the same ones several times to help her recognize new words. Then, turn off the sound so she can read on her own.



- Kids' news sites get youngsters used to keeping up with current events. Try [www2.scholastic.com/browse/scholasticNews.jsp](http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/scholasticNews.jsp) or [www.timeforkids.com](http://www.timeforkids.com). At dinner, discuss the day's news and encourage your child to share what she read. She might print an interesting story and bring it to the table.

- Introduce your youngster safely to the world of blogging with blogs written just for kids. She can read about a fictional family trying to help the environment at <http://meetthegreens.pbskids.org/blog> or the travel adventures of real-life kids at <http://kidsblogs.nationalgeographic.com/blogs>. ♥



## Fun with Words Word play

Crash, boom, bang! When the sound of a word matches its meaning, it's an example of *onomatopoeia*. Use onomatopoeia to introduce your child to new words and show her how much fun language can be.

Start by reading a book like "Clang" *Went the Cymbals* (Dana Hall Jordan) or *If You Were Onomatopoeia* (Trisha Speed Shaskan).

Have your youngster point out examples of words that sound like their meanings.



Then, sit quietly for a few minutes and listen to noises inside or outside. Say words that describe the sounds you hear ("whoosh," "beep," "bark").

Finally, take turns making a sound and coming up with a word to match it. For instance, "shuffle" your feet along the carpet, "hiccup" loudly, or "clomp" through the kitchen. ♥

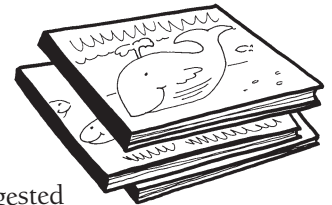
### OUR PURPOSE

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

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128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630  
540-636-4280 • [rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com](mailto:rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com)  
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## Parent to Parent

### Try nonfiction books



My husband and I like to read, so we were surprised that our daughter Anna didn't seem to enjoy books. When I talked to her teacher, she suggested we try nonfiction.

Mrs. Lake explained that some kids prefer books with photos and facts. Plus, she said, nonfiction prepares students to read textbooks by introducing them to diagrams, charts, and tables.

So we went to the library and checked out a few books about sea life, a topic Anna loves. To get her started, I told her I would read the paragraphs, and she could read the captions and boxes of facts.

Anna really liked the books, and she asked if we could get more like them. Now when we go to the library, she heads for the nonfiction section. Even better, I've noticed she reads on her own more often. ♥

## Q&A Conversation skills

**Q** My son doesn't seem to know how to keep a conversation going. How can I help him?

**A** Explain to your son that good conversations have two sides—speaking and listening. Then, practice by having lots of conversations together.

Demonstrate how to show you're listening by nodding when you agree with something he says. Also, remind him not

to interrupt—he should wait for you to stop speaking before he talks. He can respond by asking questions about the topic or referring to what you said ("It sounds like you..." or "I didn't know that...").

Finally, show your child how important eye contact is. Have a conversation with your eyes closed, and then repeat it while looking at each other. Ask him which way was more interesting. ♥

