

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

April 2020

Birmingham Public Schools

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites



■ *Bots: The Most Annoying Robots in the Universe* (Russ Bolts)

What happens when a pair of robots discover a camera that Earth launched into space and forgot about? They become reality stars and broadcast their lives, of course! Your youngster will laugh at their funny adventures in this graphic novel. The first book in the Bots series.

■ *Girl Running*

(Annette Bay Pimentel)

In 1966, women weren't allowed to run in the Boston Marathon. Men said women weren't strong enough to finish the long race. But that only made Bobbi Gibb more determined to prove them wrong. This picture book biography portrays the determination of the first woman to run the race.



■ *The Lost Stone (The Kingdom of Wrenly)* (Jordan Quinn)

Clara and Lucas are unlikely friends who live in the magical kingdom of Wrenly. When the queen's emerald goes missing, the pair embark on a journey and meet everybody from fairies to wizards along the way. Book one in the Kingdom of Wrenly series.



■ *Skip Through the Seasons*

(Stella Blackstone)

This nonfiction book shows children enjoying the outdoors in each season. They ice skate in winter, play in spring rain, build sand castles in summer, and rake autumn leaves. The final pages are filled with facts about the calendar and seasonal changes. (Also available in Spanish.)



Mix up family reading time

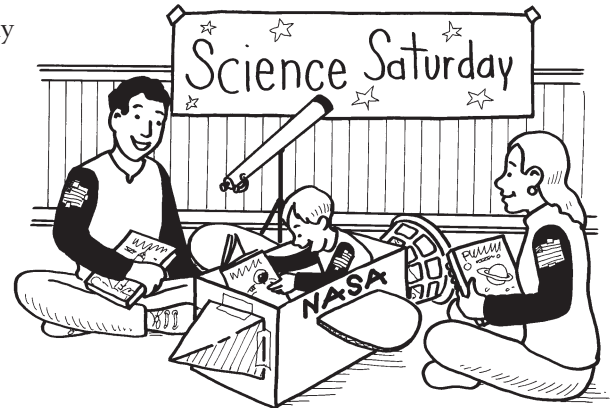
Enjoying books as a family every day can help your child grow as a reader. Try these suggestions for adding variety to reading time—and maximizing his learning.

Vary the format

Give your youngster chances to read aloud, listen to others read, and read independently. Some days, take turns reading books to each other. Other times, listen to an audiobook together, or have everyone read on their own. *Idea:* Include extended family by inviting them over to read or arranging a video chat.

Discover different materials

Expose your child to a wide variety of reading material with this idea. Make a “bingo” card by dividing a sheet of paper into five rows and five columns. In each square, help your youngster write the name of something to read. *Examples:* fairy tale, poem, recipe, biography, graphic novel, cereal box, newspaper, magazine. Each time your family



reads something on the card, your child gets to color the square.

Explore in depth

Reading several related books lets your youngster dig deeper into a topic or notice similarities between books by the same author. Brainstorm a list of themes like Science Saturday or Roald Dahl Week. Take your list to the library and check out books to match. As you read each book, compare it to the ones you read before. ♥

On-the-go storytelling

Boost your youngster's language skills and creativity by telling stories while you run errands. Use these ideas for inspiration:

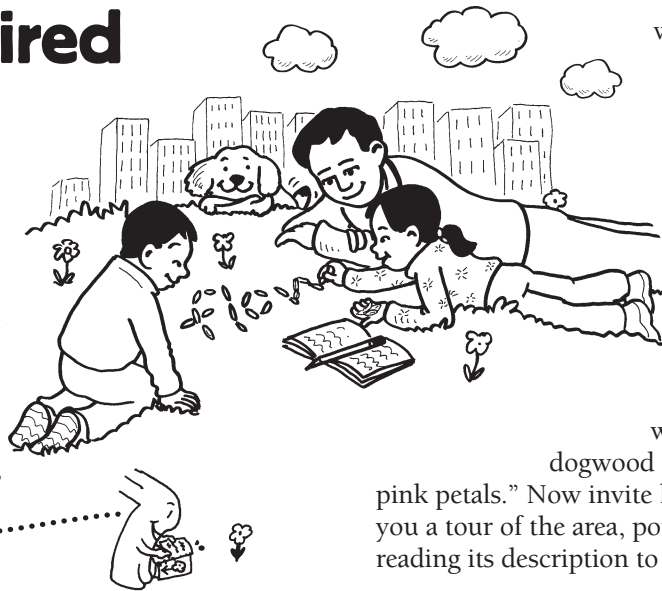
- Ask your child to choose a person or an animal who would make an interesting main character in a story. At the pet store, she might begin a story starring a colorful fish in an aquarium. She can give him a name and describe an adventure that he and his tankmates go on.
- Stuck in line at the post office or bank? Use it as the setting for a story you tell together. You might say, “Once upon a time, a little girl visited the post office.” Your youngster could add, “She wanted to mail herself to Grandpa, but there weren't enough stamps.” ♥



Writing inspired by nature

Spring is perfect for a walk in the park or a romp in the backyard. While your youngster explores the great outdoors, encourage her to practice writing, too. Here's how.

Use natural objects. Help your child gather pebbles, flower petals, twigs, and other items from the ground. She can "write"



words by arranging the objects to form letters. She might write her name with blades of grass, use twigs and stones to form her spelling words, or create a message for you using flower petals. ("I love you!") Let her "save" her writing by taking a picture of it.

Make a field guide. In a small notebook, have your youngster draw and color plants or animals she sees outside. Then, she could write about each one. *Example:* "Our

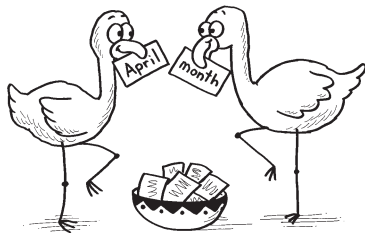
dogwood tree blooms in the spring. It has pink petals." Now invite her to use her field guide to give you a tour of the area, pointing out each plant or animal and reading its description to you.♥

Fun with Words

Proper nouns

This game will help your youngster identify proper nouns—names of people, places, and things that are always capitalized.

On 10 separate slips of paper, have your child write proper nouns (*Jack, Maryland, April*). Then, he should make 10 more slips, each with a common noun (*boy, state, month*) to match each proper one.



Mix up all 20 slips in a bowl, and take turns drawing two. If they match (*Chicago* and *city*, *Mrs. Jones* and *teacher*), keep both, and set them aside. If not, keep either one, and return the other slip to the bowl. As you draw more slips, you may also keep any noun that matches one you previously saved.

When all the slips have been drawn, the player with the most pairs of nouns wins.♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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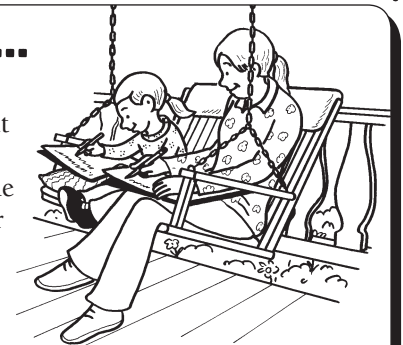
Parent to Parent

I like it because ...

My granddaughter Danielle was given a writing assignment that inspired the two of us to learn more about each other. She was asked to write one thing she liked and one thing she didn't, then explain her opinions. I knew she loved unicorns, but I had no idea she didn't like the color orange.

So I suggested that we each list five things we like and five things we don't, and write our reasons. We traded lists and took turns reading them aloud. I discovered that Danielle enjoys rainy days because they're cozy, and she learned that I've loved rock music ever since I started playing the drums in my teens.

This was a good way for Danielle to practice opinion writing and for us to bond. Now when she visits, I know not to put marshmallows in her hot chocolate—but cinnamon is just fine!♥



Q&A

Questions for better comprehension

Q I want to talk to my son about the books he reads. What kinds of questions should I ask him?

A Asking your child questions about books gets him thinking about what he reads, improving his comprehension skills. Try choosing questions that require more than a one-word answer. For example, rather than "Who is the main character?" you could ask, "What lesson did the main character learn?"

Also, encourage your youngster to dig deeper by asking questions with answers that aren't in the book. *Examples:* "What did you like best about the book?" "What would you have done differently if you were the king?"

Finally, suggest that your son pose his own questions.

He could get your opinion of a book or ask about a part that confused him.

Your answers will give him new perspectives and help him understand what he reads.♥

