

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

November 2008

Baton Rouge Center for Visual and Performing Arts

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites



■ Rain Makes Applesauce

What does rain have to do with applesauce? Youngsters will find out as they laugh their way through this story by Julian Scheer. The title may seem silly, but the logic is explained: apple trees need rain to grow, and applesauce comes from apples!

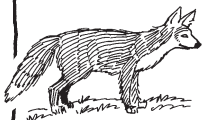


■ Saving Samantha

A farm family nurses an injured baby fox back to health. Although Samantha becomes like a pet, family members must release her when she grows up. They watch with pride as she

finds a mate and has cubs of her own.

A true story by Robbyn Smith van Frankenhuyzen.



■ Keisha's Doors

Monica is confused because her little sister won't talk or play with her. When Keisha is diagnosed with autism, her family learns to communicate with her and accept her differences. Told through Monica's eyes, Marvie Ellis's story helps young readers understand autism. (Contains English and Spanish text.)

■ Freckle Juice

Andrew wishes he had freckles like his friend Nicky. He wants them so much that he agrees to give a friend 50 cents for a "freckle juice" recipe. Find out what happens in this humorous book by Judy Blume.



Writing around the house

Invite writing into your house, and make it part of daily life in every room. Then, watch as your child's spelling, vocabulary, and handwriting skills flourish!

Living room

Let your youngster make a "coffee table" book by decorating a three-ring binder with stickers. Load it with note-book paper, and encourage him to fill the pages with his own stories, poems, movie reviews, knock-knock jokes, or even journal entries from the dog's point of view. Keep it on the coffee table for guests to read. *Idea:* Encourage visitors to leave notes on blank pages.

Kitchen

Take turns adding a word or sentence to the calendar each day. The catch? The date tells you how many letters to use. On the first of the month, write a word

with one letter (a). A two-letter word (he) goes on the second day, and a three-letter word (the) on the third. As the numbers get higher, family members can write sentences. *Example:* Write "I love fall" on the ninth day.

Bedroom

Help your child create a "word wall." Have him tape 26 index cards—one for each letter of the alphabet—to a piece of poster board. When he reads a book or studies his spelling list, he can add words to the cards (*examples:* frog on the F card, purple on the P card). His word wall will be a reference for him to use when he's doing homework or writing stories.



Basement

Stock a cabinet with games that involve writing, like Scattergories or Balderdash. Hold regular game nights, and invite friends or relatives. Add a crossword puzzle book, word searches, and other games that your child can play on his own.♥

Reader's toolbox

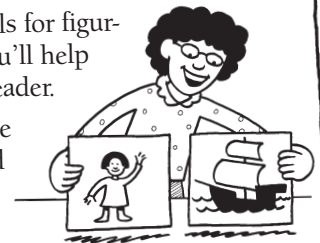
"What's this word, Mommy?"

"Can you sound it out, Chelsea?"

Give your child tools for figuring out words, and you'll help her become a better reader.

● Look for clues. "The sky was gray. It started to thunder." Your youngster can use the other words on the page to help her with the unfamiliar one. She might ask herself, "What happens when the sky is gray?" Also, suggest that she look at the picture for hints to the word's meaning.

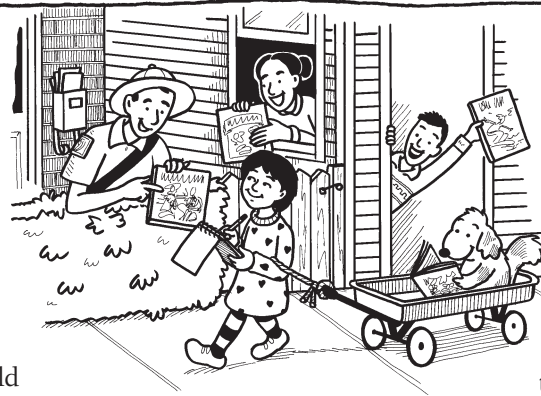
● Look for words within words. Help your child find shorter words to help her read a longer one. For instance, point out *friend* and *ship* in *friendship* and *house* and *keep* in *housekeeping*.♥



Finding new books

Picking out her own books is a great way for your youngster to become interested in reading. Try these ideas for helping her find stories she'll enjoy.

★ **Collect recommendations.** Have your child call or e-mail friends, cousins, or neighbors to ask for book suggestions. Also, give her a small notebook and pen to carry with her. When someone recommends a book, help her write down the title and author.



★ **Check reading lists.** Ask the school or community librarian for lists of books your youngster might like. *Examples:* Newbery Award or Caldecott Award winners, the Notable Children's Books list from the American Library Association. Post the lists at home, and let your child pick out titles and then check off the ones she reads.

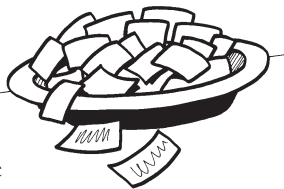
★ **Visit reading Web sites.** Your youngster can find books recommended by other kids at sites like www.goodreads.com or www.kidsbookclubbook.com/book_recommendations. Or help her use online bookstores (www.amazon.com, www.barnesandnoble.com), where she can enter titles she likes and see similar books listed. *Note:* Be sure to supervise your child when she uses the Internet.♥



Appreciation pie

Let your child share what he's thankful for while he practices beginning sounds and learns about a poetry technique called *alliteration*.

All you need are slips of paper, pencils, and a pie pan. Have everyone write down things he or she is thankful for, making as many words as possible begin with the same sound. *Examples:* "fantastic family and friends" or "cute, cuddly cat." Explain that this technique is called alliteration. It's a way that some poets make their verses sound interesting or even silly.



Encourage family members to fill out as many slips as they can, and put them all upside down in the pie pan. Take turns pulling them out and guessing who wrote each one. Finally, use the slips to put the ideas together into your own family thankfulness poem.♥

Q&A Terrific 20

Q I know I'm supposed to read to my son for at least 20 minutes each day. What's the best way to spend this time?

A When most people hear "read aloud," they think of storybooks. But stories are just one possibility. Try nonfiction or poetry the next time you read to your child. Or get a wordless book (such as *Flotsam* by David Wiesner), and either you or your child can tell the story from the pictures.

Encourage him to read with you, too. Choose a book designed for two readers, such as *Farmer's Garden: Rhymes for Two Voices* by David Harrison. You each pick a part and read your own lines. This will work with regular books also. Just divide up the pages or the characters.

When you and your youngster discover all the possibilities, read-aloud time will fly by—and may end up being longer than 20 minutes!♥



Parent to Parent Editing everywhere

Recently my daughter and I walked by a sign with a misspelled word—*lunch* had an *e* at the end. I pointed it out to Nicole and told her that's why it's important to check over her work.

Now everywhere we go, we "edit." We find errors, and I ask her to help me fix them. We've found apostrophes that don't belong (*book's* instead of *books*) and sentences

that don't begin with capital letters ("we fix cars").

If Nicole isn't sure of how a word should be spelled, we look it up in the dictionary when we get home. She has learned a lot about grammar, spelling, and capitalization. She has even become a "detective" when it comes to her own writing—she rereads carefully and corrects mistakes she finds.♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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