

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

January 2016

Kiel School

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *Winter Bees & Other Poems of the Cold* (Joyce Sidman)

How do animals like bees and swans survive the long, cold winter?



This collection of beautiful poems explains that even though we may not see some animals in winter, they are alive—and busy! Includes boxes with scientific facts and a glossary.

■ *The Adventures of Beekle: The Unimaginary Friend* (Dan Santat)



On a special island, imaginary friends are born and wait

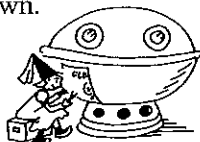
for children to imagine them into the real world. Beekle, an adorable marshmallow-like creature, gets tired of waiting. Read about his adventures as he swims to the real world and meets a little girl who is just right for him.

■ *Only One You* (Linda Kranz)

Although the characters in this story are made up, your child can use its advice in real life. A boy named Adri listens to his mother and father as they lovingly urge him not to follow the crowd, to look for beauty everywhere, and to make new friends. (Also available in Spanish.)

■ *Interstellar Cinderella* (Deborah Underwood)

In this space-age fairy tale, it's Cinderella who rescues the prince. Cinderella loves to repair broken appliances in her stepmother's castle, and her talent comes in handy when the royal spaceship breaks down. What will happen when the prince asks for Cinderella's hand in marriage?



Build vocabulary with books

A book is the perfect place to find new words. That's one reason children who love reading tend to have rich vocabularies. Here are ways to help your youngster learn words from books.

A well-rounded reader

To expose your child to different kinds of words, choose different kinds of books to read. For example, in folktales and historical fiction, she may notice old-fashioned words (*alas*, *blacksmith*). In books about plants or animals, she'll see science terms (*sprout*, *nocturnal*). And stories set in other countries can teach her words from around the world (*crepe*, *sari*).

Vocabulary-rich retellings

While you read to your youngster, help her jot down unfamiliar words. Talk about their meanings, or look them up in a dictionary together. Then, encourage her to retell the story to you—using the words on her list. (“The tortoise moved at a *steady* pace. The hare was too *boastful*.”) Saying the words in sentences of



her own will help her understand and remember them.

Favorite words

Ask your child to pick out her favorite new word in a book, and have her be on the lookout for the same word in other books or in conversation. For instance, she might read about a “*precious* little kitten” and notice “*precious* gems” in a non-fiction book on minerals. Seeing and hearing a word in various settings can help her “get” all its meanings. *Idea:* Suggest that she draw pictures showing a word in several contexts.♥

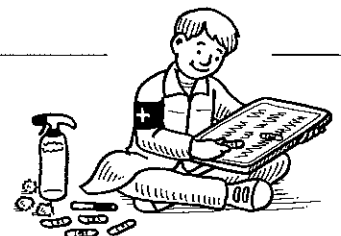
Sentence “first aid”

An author's job isn't finished when he writes the last word—he still needs to edit! Encourage your child to practice editing by using fun first-aid supplies to fix sentences.

Start by having him put punctuation marks (periods, commas, quotes, question marks, exclamation points) on small bandages. Also, get cotton balls and a spray bottle of water.

Then, write a sentence on a dry-erase board or chalkboard, making a few mistakes for him to correct (uncapitalized name, missing punctuation). He can use wet cotton balls to clean up “boo-boos,” write his corrections, and add bandages to punctuate your sentence properly. Next, let him write a sentence for you to fix.

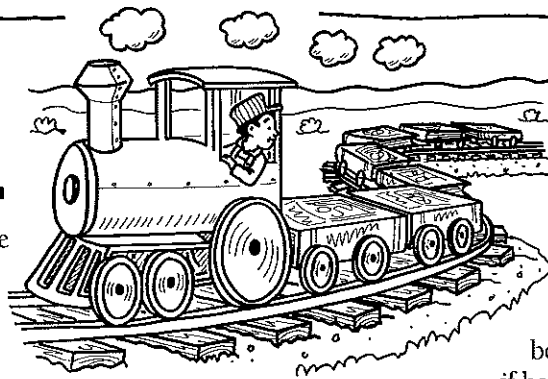
Note: Have him remove only half of the paper backing so bandages can be removed from the board more easily.♥



This book reminds me of...

Making connections between two or more books, or “text-to-text” connections, can boost your youngster’s reading comprehension. Try these ideas.

Connection train. Suggest that your child line up books that are connected into a “train.” For example, he might put *Beezus and Ramona* (Beverly Cleary) next to *Where the Wild Things Are* (Maurice Sendak) and say, “They both have kids with big imaginations.” Perhaps he’ll place *Franklin’s Baby Sister* (Paulette Bourgeois) next because it and



Beezus are both about getting along with younger siblings. How long can your youngster make his book connection train?

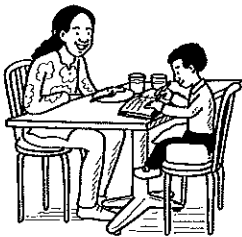
Book pairs. Let your child pick out a fiction book and a nonfiction book that are related. For instance, if he chooses a story with kangaroo or koala characters, he could find a nonfiction book on Australia or marsupials. Read both books together, and ask him to tell you how the fiction and facts are connected. (“Real koalas love to be around other koalas, just like the ones in the storybook.”)♥



Q&A Be a reviewer

Q My son loves to write stories, but he’s not as excited about opinion writing—which his class is doing a lot of this year. How can I help him enjoy it more?

A Would your son like to be a food critic? How about a book reviewer? He can practice sharing his opinion by writing reviews.



First, suggest that he jot down notes while eating in a restaurant or reading a book. He might write, “Creamy cheese sauce, spiral pasta too chewy” or “Funny part on page 4.” Then, help him write his review, using his notes to back up his opinions. What kind of noodle would have been better with the sauce? Why did he think the book was funny?

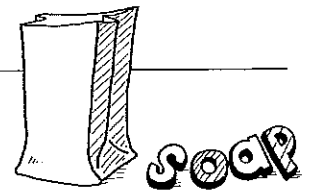
Finally, let him mail or email the review to his friends or relatives. He could ask them to reply with their own opinions, and that may motivate him to write more opinions in the future.♥

Fun with Words

Play with letter patterns

Encourage your child to explore common letter patterns that can help her recognize words. Play this game together.

1. Get a set of magnetic letters or letter tiles. Have your youngster lay a, e, i, o, u, and y (the vowels) on the table and place the consonants in a paper bag.
2. Ask your child to pull two consonants from the bag and put them on the table.
3. She should combine those two letters with any two vowels to make a four-letter word. (A younger child can use one vowel to make a three-letter word.) If she draws s and p, for example, she could make soap. Help her say the word—she will hear that oa makes the long o sound.
4. Then, she puts the vowels back. Take turns using the same consonants and any two vowels to form new words (say, pose or pies).
5. When you can’t make any more words, return the consonants to the bag. Pick two new ones, and play again.♥



Stellar speaking roles

Good oral language skills help lay the foundation for reading and writing. Suggest that your youngster take on these fun roles to practice speaking.

Tour guide. Let your child take you on a tour of your neighborhood or town. She can point out landmarks, businesses, and tourist attractions. (“And here’s our legendary Pancake Palace.”)

Auctioneer. Have your youngster pretend she is auctioning off household items. Her job is to describe each

item, take bids, and announce, “Going once, going twice, sold!”

Air traffic controller. Ask your child to give you instructions for flying a toy or paper airplane. She’ll need to speak clearly and be specific about when you should take off, how high to fly, and where to land.



Weather reporter. Help your youngster check the weather forecast for tomorrow. In her own words, she can give a bedtime report so everyone can choose the right clothes for the next day.♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

Resources for Educators, a division of CCH Incorporated
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630
540-636-4280 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com
www.rfconline.com
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