

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

May 2008

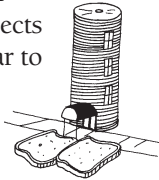
Boulder Valley School District
Reading and Literacy

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ Look-Alikes: *The More You Look, the More You See!*

In this hidden-picture book by Joan Steiner, a skyscraper is made of compact discs, and slices of bread form a sidewalk. Each page contains more than 100 objects that at first glance appear to be one thing, but then turn out to be something else.

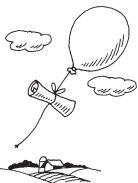


■ *Mama's Saris*

On her seventh birthday, an Indian American girl decides she's old enough to wear a sari. She feels proud and special when her mother lets her wear the traditional garment to her party. Pooja Makhijani's story celebrates family traditions.

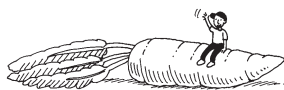
■ *The Silver Balloon*

Gregory ties a note to a balloon and lets it go, launching a pen-pal relationship with a distant farmer in this tale by Susan Bonners. When the two begin swapping interesting gifts, the shy youngster gains confidence in communicating with people. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *The Carrot Seed*

Ruth Krauss's simple classic is a perfect springtime read. A little boy plants a carrot seed and is convinced it will grow. Although everyone insists, "It won't come up!" he tends it patiently and is rewarded with a prize-winning giant carrot.



Read and create

A great story doesn't have to end with the last page. Your child can take the fun one step further by making a craft based on a book. He'll deepen his understanding of the story while boosting creative thinking. Here are three projects to try.

Characters

Let your youngster make character masks with paper plates. For example, he can create Franklin the Turtle from Paulette Bourgeois's series. He might paint the back of a plate green, cut holes for a mouth, a nose, and eyes, and glue on a craft stick as a handle. He'll enjoy holding the mask and reading Franklin's lines.

Setting

Have your child build a story location, such as the huge mushroom that shelters animals in Mirra Ginsburg's *Mushroom in the Rain*. He can paint a Styrofoam bowl brown like a mushroom and glue an empty toilet-paper roll on the inside for a stem. Suggest that he tell the story in his own words, using his mushroom cap as a prop.

Plot

Teach your youngster about sequencing with a story mural. Read *The Apple Pie Tree* by



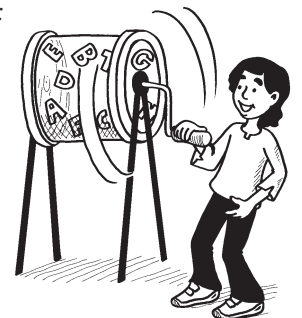
Zoe Hall, and ask him to choose three events (watching the tree bloom, picking apples, baking a pie). He can paint each scene on a paper grocery bag and write a sentence describing the action. Then, have him tape the bags together in order and hang his mural on the wall. ♥

Topsy-turvy words

Encourage your youngster to play with language. She'll build her vocabulary by learning about these types of wordplays:

● **Anagrams** are words made by rearranging the letters of other words. For example, *lemon* can become *melon*. See if your child can make new words from *cat* (*act*), *seal* (*sale*), or *pool* (*loop*). Encourage her to make anagrams out of words in everyday places (her spelling lists, books, signs).

● **Palindromes** are words that are spelled the same forward and backward. *Examples: mom, eye, kayak, racecar.* Suggest that your youngster look for palindromes by thinking of short words that begin and end with the same letter. *Idea:* Show her that phrases can also be palindromes, such as *never odd or even*. ♥



Month-by-month writing

Keep your youngster's handwriting, spelling, and communication skills sharp while school's out. She can practice with these month-by-month ideas.

June

- ✍ Write a thank-you letter to this year's teacher.
- ✍ List three summer goals. *Examples:* Read 10 books, learn to swim, keep my room clean.



- ✍ Start a journal about your favorite summer activity (bike riding, gardening). Add an entry each week.

July

- ✍ Write a paragraph about how you celebrated Independence Day.

- ✍ In the car, keep a list of all the state names you see on license plates.
- ✍ Invent a new outdoor game, and write out instructions. For instance, combine jump rope and hopscotch to create "jumpscotch."

August

- ✍ Make a guest list and create invitations for a cookout.
- ✍ Send e-mails. Let family and friends know what you're doing each week.
- ✍ Practice writing your full name, address, and telephone number. Label your notebooks and other school supplies for the fall. ♥

Fun with Words

Newspaper learning

With thousands of words in every issue, newspapers are a great way to build your youngster's reading skills. Grab a paper, and try these activities.



Matching game

Have your child cut out several photographs and their captions separately. Mix them up. Matching the captions and the photos will improve his reading comprehension.

Scavenger hunt

List items in the newspaper (car ad, crossword puzzle, weather forecast), and ask your youngster to find and circle each one. He'll build research skills as he looks through the pages.

ABC order

Together, find the names of 5–10 countries, states, and cities in headlines or stories. Let your child copy each one onto an index card and arrange the cards in alphabetical order. This will help him practice spelling and learn about geography. ♥

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

Book heroes

My son Josh loves books about television and movie heroes. I was happy these stories motivated him to read, but I wished he would branch out a little.

We asked our librarian for ideas. She suggested stories about real-life heroes, like firefighters and animal rescuers. She also thought Josh might enjoy biographies of explorers, astronauts, and other adventurers.

The librarian helped us search the computer database, and we browsed the biography section. We went home with *Firefighters A to Z* by Chris Demarest, *Baby Whale Rescue* by Caroline Arnold and Richard Hewett, and *A Picture Book of Lewis and Clark* by David Adler.

Josh really liked the books, and he's especially interested in reading more biographies. He's still crazy about movie characters, but he has learned there are real-life heroes out there, too. ♥



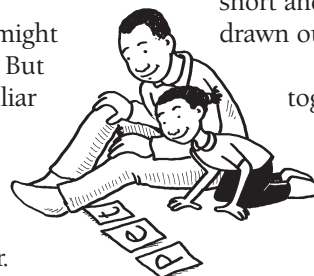
Q&A

Ready to read

Q My daughter learned her letters and sounds this year. But she's having trouble putting them together to sound out words in books. How can I help?

A Letters and sounds might seem easy on their own. But an entire page of unfamiliar words can be tough.

Start with a three-letter word, such as *pet*. Write each letter on a separate scrap of paper.



Lay the letters in order, a few inches apart. Ask her to tell you the sound each letter makes. *Note:* Be sure she is saying the sounds correctly—they should be short and sharp, rather than long and drawn out.

Gradually move the letters closer together and ask her to say the sounds faster and faster until they run together. By the time the letters touch, they should sound just like *pet*. ♥