

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

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Acworth Elementary School
Dr. Pamela Adeli, Principal

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *Groundhog Gets a Say*

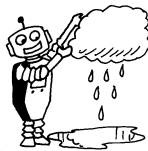
(Pamela Curtis Swallow)

Groundhog is tired of being famous just for predicting the weather, so he tells a reporter other interesting things about himself. For example, groundhogs whistle when they're in danger, create a "bathroom" in their burrows, and have teeth strong enough to gnaw through rocks.

■ *Once Upon an Alphabet: Short Stories for All the Letters*

(Oliver Jeffers)

Read a quirky story about each letter of the alphabet. J is about a door made of jelly, R features robots who steal rain clouds, and S has a cucumber that wants to be a sea cucumber. Enjoy your child's laughter as he learns about the sounds that letters make.



■ *A Tree Is Nice* (Janice May Udry)

What can you do with a tree? This book is full of fun—and practical—purposes for trees. Your youngster might nap in its shade or jump into piles of its leaves, for example. The story encourages readers to appreciate and care for trees. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *Locomotive* (Brian Floca)

Fact and fiction blend together as a family travels across America on the brand-new transcontinental railroad. Readers will find out how the railroad was built, how steam power works, and what the landscape looked like.



Build a rich vocabulary

It's simple: The more words your child knows, the more words she will understand and use when she reads, writes, and talks. Here are ways to weave new vocabulary into conversations at home.

Word choices

"Put on your pajamas."
"Please close the door." If you're like most families, much of what you say to your youngster revolves around the details of daily life. When possible, try using bigger or more interesting words. Talk about *evaporation* while waiting for water to boil. While you're doing her hair, have a conversation about *inherited traits* like having curly hair.

Playtime talk

Imaginary situations give your child the chance to use words that might not come up in regular discussions. Join her as she plays veterinarian or airport, and say, "Could you please *examine* my pet



rhinoceros?" or "I'd like to travel to a warm *destination*."

Grown-up conversations

Include your youngster in some adult conversations. She'll feel grown up, and she'll enjoy hearing and trying out new words. When guests visit, ask questions that invite her to join the discussion. *Examples:* "I loved the movie. What was your *opinion* of it?" "Would you like a *pastry*? We have muffins and scones."♥

Biographies 1-2-3

Your child can learn all kinds of facts from biographies—and enjoy these three benefits.

1. Exploring nonfiction. Kids are now reading more nonfiction in school, and picture biographies are a good way to read nonfiction at home. Your youngster could choose books about people who interest him, such as artists or scientists.

2. Discovering history. Encourage your child to read biographies of historical figures he studies in school. He'll dig deeper into the past as he uncovers information about their hobbies, families, and jobs.

3. Learning about good character. Biographies often describe how people overcame challenges or made a difference in the world. As your youngster reads, ask him to tell you about the person's good character traits.♥



A storybook museum

Let your youngster display his favorite books in his very own museum. He will pay attention to characters and settings—and practice retelling stories—as he sets up and shares his exhibits.

● **Find characters.** Ask your child to think about the people and animals in the story. Then, he can gather action figures and toy dinosaurs, aliens, or other creatures to represent them.

● **Design a setting.** Next, he could decorate a tabletop or bookcase shelf to show the setting. For a story set in outer



space, he might line a shelf with black construction paper and line up different-sized balls as planets.

● **Add a plaque.** Help your youngster make a sign describing his exhibit. He can include the title and author along with a few important details from the book. *Tip:* Make sure he displays the book, too.

● **Give a “tour.”** Finally, ask him to take you on a tour of his museum. He’ll practice retelling as he describes the story and his exhibit.

Idea: He could rotate his displays by choosing a new book each week. ♥



Fun with Words

All in the family

What do *band*, *land*, and *sand* have in common? They’re all members of the *-and* family. And if your child can write one word in a family, it’ll be easier for her to write the rest of them.



First, help her think of a word that has a lot of rhymes, such as *shake*. She could go through the alphabet and

try putting each letter in place of *sh* (*bake*, *cake*, *fake*, *lake*, *make*). Let her write down the words she comes up with.

Together, use the words to write a silly rhyming story. *Example:* “I’m going to bake a cake. Let’s eat the cake I make. I promise it’s not fake! We’ll have it with a vanilla shake.”

Take turns thinking of more word families, and make up more stories. ♥

Q&A Fit in more reading

Q Our evenings are so busy. How can we find more time to read with our daughter?

A Try reading a “wake-up” story. Start your morning with a read-aloud, and your child will look forward to waking up and enjoying a story with you. You could even listen to an audio book together while you eat breakfast.



Also, travel with books. Stash some in a tote bag in the car, and encourage your daughter to keep a few in her backpack. That way, she will always have something with her to read.

Finally, think short and sweet. When there isn’t time for an entire book, stop to read a handful of poems, a few pages of a world record book, an article from a children’s magazine, or some knock-knock jokes. ♥

Help wanted!

It’s chore time—and it’s also time to read and write! Try these suggestions, and you may find your youngster more motivated to do chores.

Make a checklist

Together, talk about everyday ways your youngster could pitch in around the house. Agree on a few, and have him list them on a piece of paper. He will keep track of chores and practice writing words like *table*, *clean*, and *kitchen*. Let him draw a box beside each chore to check off when he finishes. ♥

Create ads

“Advertise” for special jobs your child can do. You might write, “Hardworking child needed to straighten up the linen closet” or “Super cleaner wanted to help organize the garage.” Post the ad on the refrigerator, and help your youngster read it.



OUR PURPOSE

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

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