

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

October 2017

North Adams Community Schools

Title I

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *Zoey and Sassafras: Dragons and Marshmallows* (Asia Citro)

Zoey discovers that her scientist mother has been helping injured magical creatures since she was a little girl. Now Zoey (with her cat, Sassafras) is following in her mom's footsteps by using science to care for a sick dragon. The first book in the Zoey and Sassafras series.



■ *The Hole Story of the Doughnut* (Pat Miller)

The true story of how doughnuts got their holes starts in 1847 aboard a ship where teenager Hanson Gregory was working as a cook. Your youngster will love hearing how Gregory turned the breakfast cakes he fed the ship's crew into the popular treat.



Children around the world might speak different languages and live in different kinds of houses, but they can have the same feelings. That's the message in this colorful book that shows little ones hugging their moms, laughing with friends, and crying over scraped knees. (Also available in Spanish.)

■ *Bee: A Peek-Through Picture Book* (Britta Teckentrup)

Readers learn the meaning of "busy as a bee" in this nonfiction book about pollination. Peek-a-boo holes let youngsters zero in on the bee in each bright illustration, while short, simple text explains what the bee is doing.



Begin with a book preview

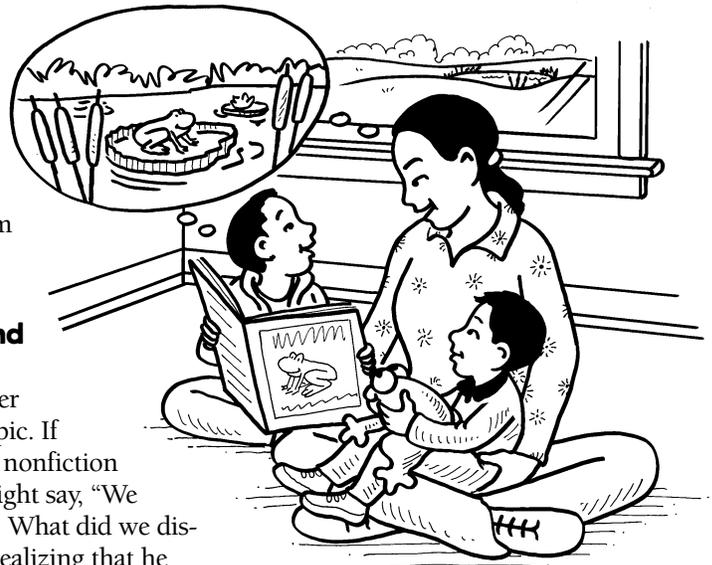
Before your child reads a book, take a few minutes to do a "sneak preview" together. Knowing what to expect will strengthen his comprehension and set him up for success. Try these strategies.

Bring up background knowledge

Help your youngster relate to the book's topic. If you're going to read a nonfiction book on frogs, you might say, "We saw frogs at the pond. What did we discover about them?" Realizing that he already knows something about the subject will get him ready to learn new facts.

Tour the scenery

Illustrations offer your child clues to what might happen on each page. Let him flip through the pictures and tell you what he sees. Encourage him to make predictions by asking questions like "What do you think will happen to the fly that's buzzing around the frog?"



Take a "word walk"

Ask your youngster to point out familiar words. He'll be excited to show you what he knows. Then, call his attention to words he may not know. ("A tadpole is a baby frog. Can you find the word tadpole?") He'll be better able to recognize words and read with confidence.♥

Strengthen writing muscles

Playing with art supplies builds your youngster's hand muscles and improves fine motor skills that she uses for writing. Consider these activities:

- Have your child roll play dough into a flat sheet and press a winding maze into it with her fingertips. Then, let her push a marble through the dough.
- Arrange small stickers on construction paper. Suggest that your youngster connect them all by drawing a line from one sticker to the next.
- Use a marker or highlighter to draw a simple picture (heart, star, smiley face) on white paper. Ask your child to trace over your drawing with a different-color highlighter. She can watch the ink blend to make a brand-new color!♥



Family signs

Whether you're celebrating a special occasion or writing a quick reminder, displaying messages around the house is a nice way for your youngster to practice writing. Here are ideas.

Banners. Add homemade decorations to celebrations. Together, come up with a greeting, and let your youngster write each word on a separate sheet of paper. For her little brother's birthday, she might write "Look who's turning 2! Happy birthday, Joey!" Then, use tape to attach the pages to a piece of yarn, and string them up clothesline-style.



Posters. Write each person's name on a slip of paper, and take turns drawing one from a basket. Next, each family member creates a poster to hang on the door of the person whose name she chose. Your child might draw a portrait of the person and add a few facts ("Mom likes to play tennis").

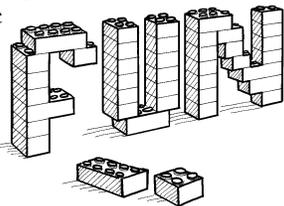
Reminders. Think of helpful signs to post around the house. Your youngster may want to write a reminder that says "Please feed me!" on the hamster cage. Or your family might work together on a sign that lists activities for the upcoming weekend. ("Go apple picking." "Jump in leaves.")♥

Fun with Words

Build-a-word workshop

Spelling practice gets a hands-on twist when your child uses Legos or other connecting bricks.

First, invite your youngster to build each word on his spelling list. He'll use thinking and problem-solving skills as he decides how to construct each letter.



Then, let him use the letters for spelling study. You could take turns scrambling letters for each other to put back in the correct order. Or he might display a word on a bookshelf—looking at it whenever he walks by will help him remember how it's spelled. Another idea is to take a photo of each word, print out the photos, and staple them together for a colorful study guide.♥

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
800-394-5052 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com
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Parent to Parent

Bag o' nonfiction

My son Paul had a fun show-and-tell assignment recently. He had to share at least five nonfiction items to read that weren't books. The teacher said they could be anything from a parent's business card to a grocery circular.

So while we were running errands, I handed Paul a tote bag and suggested that we collect free things to read. By the time we finished, he had a takeout menu, an office supply catalog, a schedule of fitness classes, a recipe card, and an instruction sheet from the craft store.

At home, Paul spread out his items, and I helped him read a few. He was surprised by how many different kinds of nonfiction there are, and he was excited to share his finds with his classmates.

Now Paul wants to collect reading material every time we go out. His tote bag is getting pretty full, but I'm happy that he's getting reading practice.♥



Q&A Musical reading

Q I've heard that music helps children learn to read. How can I use music at home to help my daughter?

A That's true! Music offers a fun way to call your child's attention to the sounds in words, which will help her figure out new words when she reads.

Try singing familiar songs in silly ways. For instance, swap the beginning sounds in some words (change "Row, row, row your boat" to "Bow,

bow, bow your roat"). Have your daughter tell what sounds you switched (B and R). Then, encourage her to come up with a swap of her own.

Or replace a word with one that rhymes with it. Ask your youngster what rhymes with *boat*, and use the word she gives you to sing the new verse together, such as "Row, row, row your *coat*." She'll enjoy deciding how the song will change if you're rowing a coat—or a goat!♥

