

# Reading Connection

INTERMEDIATE EDITION

Working Together for Learning Success

November 2017

North Adams Community Schools

Title I

## Book Picks

### ■ *My Side of the Mountain* (Jean Craighead George)

It's the 1950s, and Sam doesn't want to live in his cramped New York City apartment with his family anymore. He runs away to the Catskills and learns to live on his own. A coming-of-age story for young nature lovers. (Also available in Spanish.)



### ■ *Science in Ancient Egypt* (Geraldine Woods)

Does your youngster know that ancient Egyptians used the sun to tell time, made paper from plants, and designed tools to lift and move heavy objects?



This nonfiction book explains many things we have learned from this long-ago civilization.

### ■ *Trauma Queen* (Barbara Dee)

Thirteen-year-old Marigold wants to go to school, make friends, and, most of all, avoid embarrassment. That's hard to do with the unusual way her mother teaches the drama class at her new school. A hilarious look at mother-daughter relationships.

### ■ *A Bad Case of the Giggles* (Compiled by Bruce Lansky)

This funny collection of poems on everything from stinky feet and hiccups to spaghetti and hand-me-down clothes is practically guaranteed to make readers love poetry. Includes more than 60 poems by numerous poets.



## Building word power

Did you know that a strong vocabulary paves the way for your child to become a fluent reader, a better writer, and a more confident speaker? Try these everyday strategies to increase your youngster's word power.



### Create crosswords

Encourage your child to make a crossword puzzle for you to solve. She'll boost her vocabulary as she collects unfamiliar words from books and uses dictionary definitions to write clues. *Idea:* Have a crossword puzzle night. Get crossword puzzle books from the dollar store. Take turns reading clues aloud, and fill in the answers. Or make your own puzzles, and swap.

might realize that *principal* is the amount of money you have. Or a recycling symbol near the car wash chemicals may be a hint that *biodegradable* relates to environmental conservation.

### Search during errands

At the bank, supermarket, or car wash, ask your youngster to be on the lookout for new words. Can she figure out the meaning of words like *principal* or *biodegradable* by using context clues? For instance, if a sign at the bank says, "Interest is paid on your *principal* monthly," she

### Make a word wall

Set aside a bulletin board or a space on a kitchen wall where family members can post interesting words they read or hear. During dinner, talk about where you found the words and why they're interesting to you. Then, try to sprinkle the words into your conversation. Each week, have every person choose her favorite new word. ■

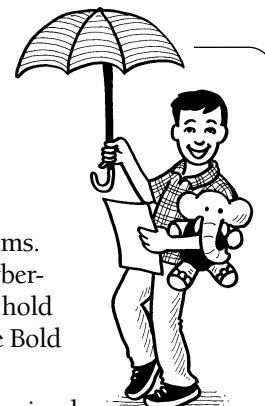
## Host a poetry slam

This family "poetry slam" lets your child enjoy poetry and practice speaking in front of others.

**Find.** Have your youngster pick out poetry books from the library or print poems from websites. Then, each family member can choose one to memorize or read.

**Perform.** On the big night, take turns performing your poems. For extra fun, use props. Your youngster could juggle strawberries while reciting "Wild Strawberries" (Shel Silverstein) or hold an umbrella and a stuffed elephant as he recites "Behold the Bold Umbrellaphant" (Jack Prelutsky).

**Discuss.** Boost your child's reading and listening comprehension by talking about the poems. Ask questions like "What do you think the poem's message is?" or "Why do you think the poet chose that topic?" ■



## What's the scoop?

Encourage your youngster to practice informational writing by pretending he's a "roving reporter" when you visit with relatives this month. These steps will ensure he gets the scoop on all the family news that's fit to print.

**1. Ask questions.** Have your child list the six questions reporters ask: *who, what, when, where, why* (the "5 Ws") and *how*. He can use them to think of questions when he interviews family members. *Examples:* "What school did you go to?" "When did you graduate?"



**2. Add details.** Suggest that your youngster dig for details that support and clarify facts. Prompts like "Tell me more about..." and "Could you explain..." may lead him to discover which foods his cousin tried on his trip to Korea or what inspired his grandmother to run a marathon.

**3. Check facts.** Your child should consult books or websites to confirm information. For example, he could check the ingredients for Korean specialties or find out how many miles are in a marathon (26.2).

**4. Write and publish.** Once your youngster has all the facts, it's time to write! Suggest that he write an article about each relative he interviewed or one long article combining his information. Then, he could distribute copies to family members. 📖

### Fun with Words

## Menu games

Restaurant and take-out menus are chock-full of opportunities for your children to practice reading skills. Here are two ideas.

### Search for words



Go on a word hunt with your youngster. Who can find the longest word? The word with the most syllables? You might ask her to find a synonym (a word with the same meaning) for *delicious* (*mouth-watering*). Or see if

she can find an antonym (an opposite) for *chilled* (*steaming*).

### Find the food

Choose an ingredient (zucchini, alfredo sauce, garlic), and have your child find a menu item that contains it. If the menu has photographs, point to a picture of a dish she doesn't know, such as chicken Parmesan, and cover up the name. Let her study the picture and then read through the menu descriptions to find one that matches. 📖

### 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 2 Parent

## Be a guest reader

At my daughter's parent-teacher conference, I met her reading teacher, Ms. Connor. She let me know that she was looking for parent volunteers, so I signed up to come in twice this month.

For my first time volunteering, I read with small groups of students. The teacher explained that hearing someone read aloud encourages kids to view books as a source of pleasure. Then, I had some students read to me, which she said helps them improve their reading fluency and listening skills.

My daughter was excited to see me in her class, and I really enjoyed reading with her and her classmates. Next, I've signed up to take part in the book donation program coming up. We are going to ask other parents and the community to contribute used books for a classroom library. 📖



### Q&A

## Branching out as a reader

**Q** My son only likes to read stories about sports. Any ideas for getting him to try something new?

**A** It's great that your son enjoys reading and has go-to favorites.

To help him discover a variety of books, try taking him to a library or bookstore and pointing out displays showcasing mysteries, new releases, classics, or how-to books. Sometimes children get into the habit of going straight to the same section every time. If you

explore together, a different type of book may catch his eye.

Also, since he's a sports fan, biographies of athletes may be a natural fit. Reading these real-life stories may lead to an interest in biographies about inventors, musicians, or world leaders.

Another idea is to steer him toward books about sports history. Reading about the origin of the Olympic Games or the impact of the civil rights movement, for instance, may encourage interest in other history books. 📖

