

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

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## Book Picks

### Read-aloud favorites

#### ■ *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site*

Sherri Duskey Rinker's book is full of cute bulldozers, cement mixers, and cranes. They work hard all day, scooping and digging, and then at night, they go to sleep—just like your child.



#### ■ *Winter's Tail: How One Little Dolphin Learned to Swim Again*



This is the true story of Winter, a baby dolphin who lost her tail. Rescuers took her to a special aquarium where she got an artificial tail.

Now Winter is famous and even gets fan mail. Read about her in this inspiring tale from Juliana, Isabella, and Craig Hatkoff.

#### ■ *Abuela*

Any youngster who has wondered what it would be like to fly will enjoy Arthur Dorros's book. Rosalba loves to go places with her grandmother. One day, she imagines that they fly above New York City and look down on the Statue of Liberty, Central Park, and even her daddy's office. (Also available in Spanish.)

#### ■ *The Day the Crayons Quit*

Duncan's crayons are refusing to color. The gray one is exhausted from coloring giant animals like rhinoceroses and hippopotamuses. And the pink crayon says Duncan thinks it's only for girls. Now Duncan must find a way to make the crayons happy so they'll color again. A funny story by Drew Daywalt.



## Tips for fluent reading

When your youngster understands a story and feels confident reading it, he'll sound more *fluent*. Here are three ways to support him on the path to reading fluency.

### 1. Repeated readings.

Does your child ask you to read the same books over and over? This is not only comforting to him—it will also improve his fluency. Suggest that he read along with you. Even if he's relying on memory, he'll get a chance to practice his best "reading voice."

**2. Audio books.** Recorded stories provide a good way for your youngster to hear fluent reading. You can find them on tape or CD in the children's section at the library, or you can download them in MP3 format from an online bookstore. As he listens, let him follow along in the printed book. He will learn to read new words by hearing and seeing them at the same time.



And the more words he knows, the more fluent his reading will be.

**3. Page previews.** Ask your child's teacher to recommend stories with just a few lines of text per page and with pictures that closely match the story. Before your youngster reads each page, have him look at the picture and use it to help him identify unfamiliar words. That way, the flow of his reading won't be interrupted by tripping over words. ♥

## Read all about it!

The newspaper might have lots of pages and long articles—but that doesn't mean your child is too young to enjoy it. Introduce her to the paper with these ideas:

- Let her see you reading the newspaper, and share age-appropriate news. ("Look—this article says our local high school band is going to march in the Thanksgiving parade.")

- Help your youngster read the weather report. Suggest that she cut out weather symbols and glue them on a calendar to show what the weather will be like each day. She could write the weather word (*rainy, sunny*) under each symbol. ♥



# Make a writer's den

Want your youngster to write more? Having a special place for writing may encourage her to do just that. Try these suggestions for creating a spot that she'll look forward to using.

## Pick a place

Get your child excited by telling her you're going to make a cozy "writer's den." You might put a desk or a small table in her room or in a corner of the dining room. Or she could sit in a beanbag chair and write on a clipboard. Encourage her to go to her spot often and think up a story!



## Stock it

Suggest that your youngster gather lined paper, construction paper, colored pencils, and pens from around the house. Give her safety scissors and a stapler, too. She might cut paper in halves or fourths and staple the pieces together to make blank books. Having many options can spark her creativity and keep her interested.

## Decorate the walls

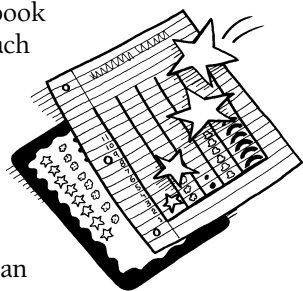
Help your child choose decorations that make her writer's den look inviting *and* help her write. For instance, she could hang up inspiring pictures (postcards of scenery or famous paintings, sports photos from magazines). And you might help her create signs with reminders ("Use describing words," "Put periods after sentences").♥

## Fun with Words

## Word graph

Combine the pleasure of a read-aloud with the fun of stickers. This activity blends language arts and math while helping your child recognize commonly used words.

With your youngster, make a graph by drawing vertical lines on a piece of notebook paper. Under each column, he should write a word that appears often in books (*play, like, friend, they, are*). Then, he can number the spaces up the left side of his graph.



Give him a sheet of small stickers. Read a book to him, and every time he hears one of the words, have him place a sticker in the appropriate column. When you finish, ask him which word was used the most or the least. Suggest that he make a graph for a different book or with different words. How do the results compare?♥

## Q&A

## Be a stellar speller

**Q** How can we make studying for spelling tests fun for our son?

**A** Get the whole family involved, and spelling will be more enjoyable!

Try this spelling contest. Have your son write each of his words on a separate sticky note and put them facedown on a table. Take turns sticking a word to your forehead (without looking at it). Another family member spells the word, and the player "wearing" it has to pronounce it. Then, it's the next person's turn.

Also, when you go places, have your child carry his list in the car. He can call out a word, and everyone should look for the letters—in order—on license plates. He might find the *l* in *lock* on one plate, his sister could see *o* on another, and you may notice *ck* on a third.♥



## Parent to Parent

## Taking care of books

My daughter, Jenna, just learned about taking good care of books in kindergarten. Now she's trying to teach her little brother, Kyle, to do the same. The other day, she had a fun idea.

She turned an old first aid kit into a "doctor's kit" for books. Inside, she put tape for repairing torn pages and an eraser for getting rid of stray pencil

marks. She also drew pictures to illustrate book-care tips that her teacher taught her, like making sure hands are clean before reading, not writing on pages, and putting books away nicely.

It's cute to watch Jenna share her love of books with her brother. She "read" her list of tips to him and had Kyle hand her the tape to fix a few torn pages.♥



## OUR PURPOSE

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

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