

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

April 2018

Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ *We Dig Worms!*

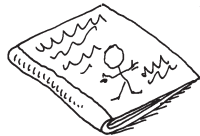
(Kevin McCloskey)

Little wiggly worms have big important jobs. This comic-style nonfiction book blends humor and facts to teach your youngster about earthworms. She'll learn where they live, how they help the soil, why they come out when it rains, and more.



■ *Daisy Dreamer and the Totally True Imaginary Friend*

Daisy is a daydreamer and doodler who spends most of her time pretending. When she receives a magic journal, Daisy's doodle of her imaginary friend Posey comes to life. Now she's off on a trip to the World of Make-Believe! The first book in the Daisy Dreamer series.

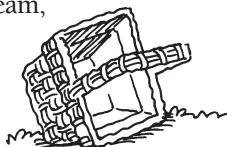


■ *Life in Numbers: Write Haiku*

Haiku are short poems that follow a pattern. This guide explains the history of haiku and gives your child advice for writing them. He'll find tips for finding topics, choosing words, and playing with structure to create powerful poetry. (Also available in Spanish.)

■ *The Lost Picnic*

Two children and their grandfather set off on a picnic, but along the way, their lunch falls out of the basket. Your youngster will enjoy using clues from the story to spot the missing watermelon, ice cream, and other foods in the busy illustrations.



Writing: Inspired by nature

Spring is the perfect time to head outside and encourage your youngster to use nature as inspiration for writing. Here are ideas for enjoying different types of writing in the great outdoors.



Rainbow list

Let your child decorate the sidewalk with a colorful list of nature words. Help him use green chalk to write the names of green things he spots (*grass, leaves, caterpillar*) and yellow chalk to list yellow things (*daffodil, butterfly, sun*). Can he find and list something for every color in his box of chalk?

and black feather. I think it came from a blue jay.")

Animal tales

What is that cute little chipmunk thinking about as he scurries around? What is the grasshopper doing? Your child can work on creative writing skills by writing a story from an animal's point of view. Maybe the chipmunk is training for a marathon. Or the grasshopper is having a jumping contest with his friends. Let your youngster illustrate his story and read it to you.♥

Nature guide

Give your youngster a basket for collecting items like pebbles, feathers, and twigs. Then, suggest that he use the collection to write a nature guide. He could sketch each object in a notebook and add a description. ("This is a blue

Read how-to books

Crafts, science experiments, drawing... there's a how-to book for just about every young reader. Try these tips for introducing them to your child:

- Encourage your youngster to choose books based on her interests. If she loves magic, she may like a book on performing tricks. If she's into science, she might pick a book of experiments.
- Help your child see how words and illustrations work together to explain things. For example, she could read the text and then follow a diagram to make a tricky fold for a paper airplane.

Idea: Suggest that your youngster write and illustrate her own how-to book about something she enjoys—perhaps building marble runs or making jewelry.♥

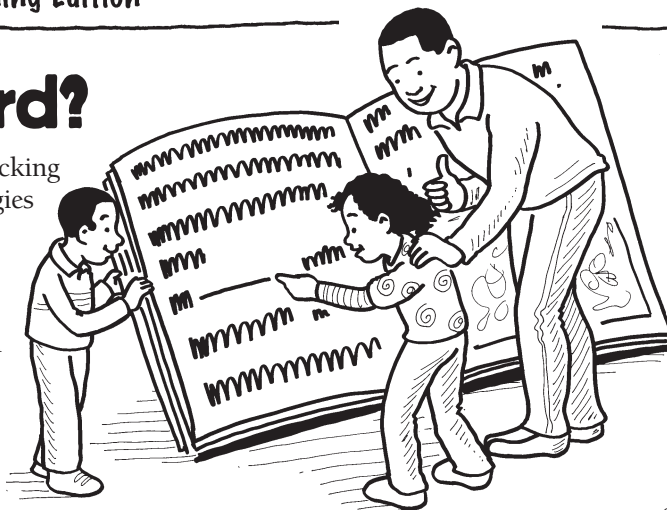


What's that word?

Reading new words is kind of like cracking a code. Share these code-breaking strategies with your youngster.

Break it up. Help your child split a longer word into separate syllables. Ask her to cover up the word with her hand. She can slide her fingers to reveal each syllable, reading them in slow motion as she goes. (“Un-der-cov-er. Undercover!”)

Switch vowel sounds. Long and short vowel sounds sometimes make words tricky. For instance, your youngster might misread *robot* as



rowboat if she thinks both Os are long. If a word doesn't sound right, she could substitute a different vowel sound to see if that works better.

Leave a blank. When your child comes across a word she can't easily sound out, suggest that she read the entire sentence, saying only the first sound of the unknown word. (“The dog jumped over the *fff.*”) Then, have her think of a word that starts with that letter and makes sense in the sentence (*fence*). She can try reading the sentence with the word to decide whether it's right. ♥

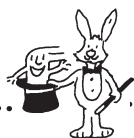
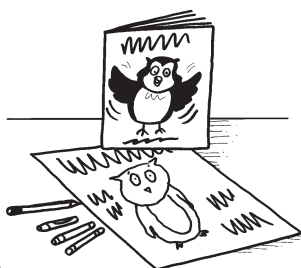
Characters with character

Storybooks are full of good role models for your child. This activity will get him thinking about positive character traits he has in common with his favorite fictional friends.

Identify traits

First, read a book together. Ask your youngster to pick a character to draw a picture of.

Then, help him think of good traits the character showed. For instance, maybe an owl demonstrates perseverance and a positive attitude about learning to fly. Help your child write the character traits in the margins around the drawing.



Fun with Words

Musical chairs

Put on a little music, and let your youngster and his friends practice spelling words they're learning in school with this version of musical chairs.

Set chairs (one per player) in a circle, and pick one player to be the leader. That person will be in charge of starting and stopping the music and calling out spelling words from a list.

To play, the leader turns on music. The children walk around the chairs and freeze in place when he stops the music. Then, the leader gives each person a different word to spell. If the speller gets it right, he sits down in the nearest chair. If not, he's out and removes a chair from the circle.

Once everyone has had a chance to spell, the leader restarts the music. Play until one person is left—he wins and becomes the new leader. *Note:* If you use up all the words on the list, play regular musical chairs with the remaining players to find the winner! ♥



Look at me!

Next, have him draw a “character sketch” of himself showing the same traits, say, while learning to roller-skate. As he discovers examples of good character in other books, he can draw more sketches. ♥

Parent to Parent

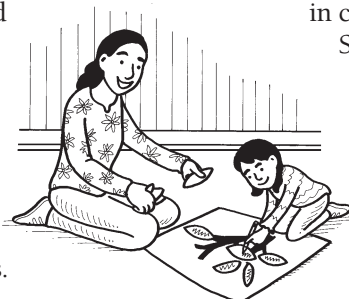
Our family tree

My daughter Tara recently had an interesting homework project—to make a family tree.

She had drawn a tree trunk and bare branches on paper, and she brought home a stack of green construction paper leaves. Her assignment was to write each family member's name on a separate leaf and put them in the right spots.

I helped Tara spell the names of her grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Then, she glued the leaves on the branches.

After Tara shared her finished tree in class, she got to bring it home. She likes to practice reading the names, and she takes pride in showing off the tree when relatives visit. Recently, she was excited to find out she'll soon need to add a new leaf—for her baby brother or sister! ♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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