

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

November 2019

Shafer Elementary School

Title I Reading

Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ *Do Not Lick This Book*

(Idan Ben-Barak)

The title of this picture book offers good advice—since, as the pages explain, germs are everywhere. A little microbe named Min gives readers a humorous introduction to germs, explaining where they live and what they do.



■ *Froggy Gets Dressed* (Jonathan London)

Froggy should be hibernating through the winter, but playing in the snow is more exciting. Soon, he's outside and ready to play—but he's not dressed for the weather. Early readers will love

predicting what Froggy has forgotten each time his mother calls him back inside. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *Katherine Johnson* (Thea Feldman)

Even as a little girl, Katherine Johnson knew she wanted a job using her favorite subject—math. But she didn't know that one day she would help NASA calculate flight paths for astronauts. This biography describes her life and work. Part of the You Should Meet series.

■ *The Treasure* (Uri Shulevitz)

In this retelling of a classic folktale, Isaac keeps dreaming about hidden treasure under a bridge near a castle. But when he goes in search of it, the treasure is not there. Where will he find it in the end?



Playing with ABCs

Recognizing the letters of the alphabet is one of the first stepping-stones on the exciting path to becoming an independent reader. Try these activities as your child learns her ABCs.

Alphabet train

All aboard! This playtime project encourages your youngster to write and play with letters. Let her collect small cardboard boxes. She can cover each one with construction paper and label it with a different letter of the alphabet (uppercase and lowercase). Then, punch holes in the boxes, and use yarn to string them together like cars in a train.

Alpha-doodles

Calling your child's attention to loops, lines, and curves helps her tell similar letters apart. Pick two lowercase letters, perhaps *p* and *q* or *v* and *w*. Have her print a big version of each letter and turn them into doodles. She might draw a



smiley face in the loop of the *p* and make the straight line into a ponytail by drawing a ribbon around it.

Letter search

Choose a word, and see if your youngster can find its letters on signs or labels. She'll learn to recognize letters with different fonts, which will help her read the print in various books. Before dinner, you could say, "We're having tacos. Go find *t-a-c-o-s*." Maybe she'll spot *t* on the package of tortillas, *a* on a jar of salsa, and so on.♥

I found a poem!

A pile of books next to your youngster's bed or at the library could inspire him to write a "found poem."

A found poem uses words your child finds in print—in this case, on book spines. Have him choose several books with fun titles and stack them so he can see all the spines. For example, his stack might include *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* (Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault) and *Zin! Zin! Zin! A Violin!* (Lloyd Moss).

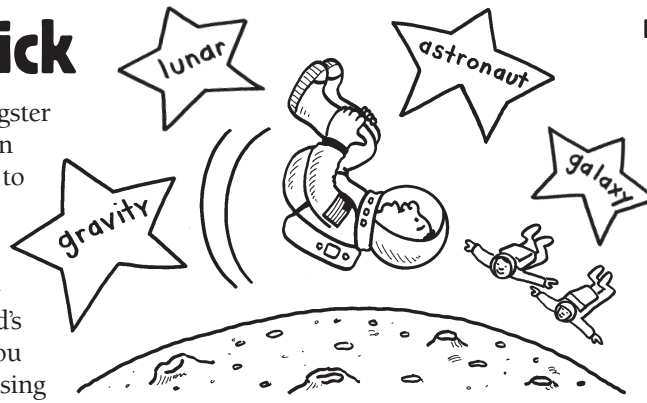
Now he can use the words to write a poem. It's fine for him to add words of his own, too. His poem might begin: "Chicka chicka zin zin / I like to play the violin."♥



Make words stick

To truly learn new words, your youngster needs to use them over and over again in different situations. Use these strategies to make new words a permanent part of his vocabulary.

See. Attaching words to something concrete helps to cement them in your child's memory. When you're out and about, you might point out construction workers using a crane to lift a load, or say the wind is *blustery* because it's blowing hard.



Explain. Ask your youngster to teach his little sister or his grandpa a word he learned today. *Example:* "Prefer means you like something better than something else. I prefer blue to red." Explaining the definition in his own words helps him make sense of it in a way that works for him.

Repeat. Look for opportunities to use new words in various contexts. For instance, if your child learned *gravity* while reading about space, you could take turns naming something that might happen if we didn't have gravity. ("Without gravity, it would be really easy to do flips in the air!")♥



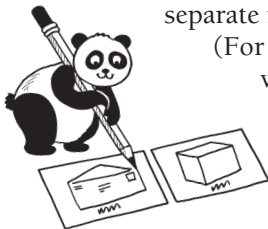
Compound combos

Thanks + giving = Thanksgiving! Here's an idea that lets your child learn about compound words, or longer words made up of two smaller words.

Make cards

Together, think of a dozen compound words (*mailbox, playground*). Have her write and illustrate the two words from each compound word on separate index cards.

(For *suitcase*, she would write *suit* on one card and *case* on another.)



Mix and match

Ask your youngster to form other compound words. She might think, "A *housefly* is a *fly* in the *house*. I could make *firefly* by using *fire* from *campfire* and *fly* from *housefly*." Or maybe she'll form *sunflower* by putting together *sun* from *sunrise* and *flower* from *flowerpot*. How many combinations can she find?♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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Getting the most out of audiobooks

My daughters love audiobooks. I mentioned this to one of their teachers and asked if listening to them counts as "real" reading. Mr. Jackson said audiobooks are great for readers of any age. Then he gave me an idea for using them to build the girls' comprehension skills.



Mr. Jackson suggested that I listen to audiobooks with my daughters. We could follow along in a print version so they make the connection between the words they hear and the words they see. He also recommended that we stop sometimes to talk about the book—just like we would if I were reading it aloud. We might discuss the characters, predict the ending, or go over a confusing part, he said.

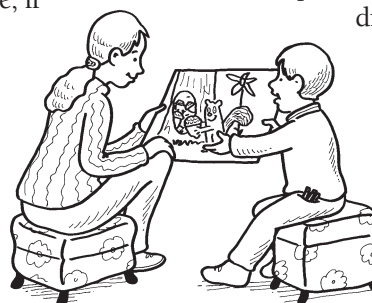
Since then, the girls and I have checked out several audiobooks from the library, and I think they're helping them become stronger readers.♥

Q&A Tell me about your drawing

Q While volunteering in my son's classroom, I noticed the teacher asking students to tell stories about pictures they drew. What's the purpose of this?

A Drawing a picture is one way your son tells a story. For instance, if he draws a squirrel with its cheeks full of nuts, he's communicating that the squirrel is collecting nuts. Describing the picture out loud encourages him to think it through and perhaps add more information.

After he finishes telling you about a picture, take the conversation a step further by asking questions. For example, you might say, "Where will the squirrel hide the nuts?" Or maybe you'll ask about the process that went into his drawing: "How did you choose the colors?"



Tip: Suggest that he write a story about his drawing—or offer to write down his story as he dictates it to you.♥