

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

October 2010

Literacy Support Team

Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ *Wilma Unlimited*

This biography by Kathleen Krull introduces youngsters to Olympic runner Wilma Rudolph and a story of perseverance.

After surviving polio, Rudolph grew up to become the world's fastest woman. In 1960, she broke an Olympic record by winning three gold medals. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *The Gruffalo*



There's no such thing as a gruffalo... or is there? In Julia Donaldson's book, a clever mouse makes up a story about

a scary monster—a gruffalo—to keep the other animals from eating him. Find out what happens when the imaginary creature really shows up.

■ *Where's Waldo?*

The Great Picture Hunt!

Martin Handford's latest book about fictional world traveler Waldo begins in a portrait gallery. The subjects of the portraits are hidden in illustrations throughout the book. Children can also search for objects and play games that will challenge their observation skills.

■ *Ladybug Girl*

A ladybug costume and an imagination... that's all Lulu needs to entertain herself. Any youngster who likes to pretend will enjoy reading about the little girl's outdoor adventures.

First book in the Ladybug Girl series by David Soman and Jacky Davis.



Family writing center

Writing is a big part of everyday life. Show your child that your family is a writing family by creating a spot where everyone can find writing supplies—and reasons to write. You might use a table in your living room or a corner of the kitchen. Then, try these suggestions.

Write notes. Hang a bulletin board near your writing center where family members can post notes, lists, and reminders. You might ask your youngster to write notes for you. ("Can you write 'bank' on a sticky note so I'll remember to deposit this check?") Or you might start a grocery list and let your child add items he wants.

Send mail. Encourage your youngster to send mail, and he'll see how writing helps people stay in touch. Together, put mailing supplies (envelopes, stamps, labels) in a shoe box or basket. In another box, place index cards and construction paper for making postcards and greeting cards. You



can add colorful pens, stickers, wrapping-paper scraps, and glitter glue for extra fun. Suggest that your child write a message and design a card. When he's finished, let him put it in the mailbox.

Report news. Explain that we use writing to record and share information. Have your youngster label a notebook "Family News" and put it in the writing center. Then, ask everyone to write short notes about household events. ("Danielle's dance team won on Saturday.") Read the notebook aloud once a week. ♥

Magazine fun

Encourage your child's interest in reading by introducing her to magazines. Here are ways to help her enjoy and learn from them:

- Visit the library or a newsstand and encourage your youngster to browse through the magazines. If she loves animals, she might like *National Geographic Little Kids* or *Your Big Backyard*. A child who likes stories and poems could try *Turtle* or *Humpty Dumpty*.
- Magazines teach your youngster to read a variety of formats. For example, an issue of *Highlights High Five* or *chickaDEE* might include a comic strip, a nursery rhyme, a story, and a recipe. Talk about how each one is different (the comic strip is funny, the recipe helps you cook).

Tip: Explain to your child that, unlike books, magazines contain many short items that can be read in any order and still make sense. ♥

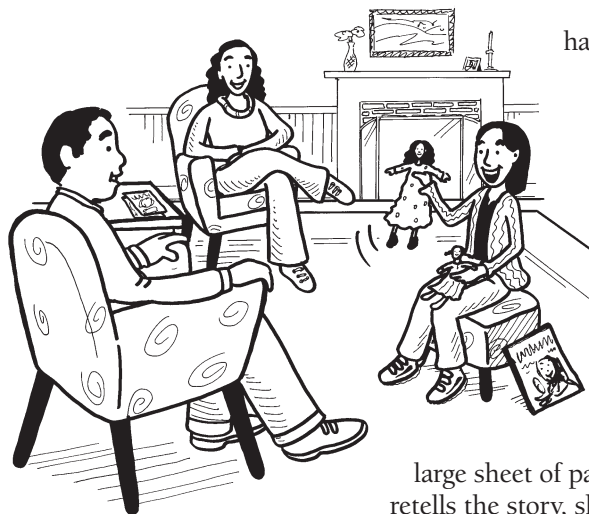


Read and retell

After your youngster finishes a story, her teacher might ask her to summarize it. This is a way for her to show that she understands the story—and to build her reading comprehension skills. You can try this at home with these ideas.

Use props

Small toys can keep your child on track when she summarizes a story. Let her look through her toys to find characters or objects that appeared in a book. She can



have them “act out” the story as she tells you what it’s about.

Make a storyboard

A “storyboard” can help your youngster tell story events in the right order. Ask her to look back through her book and pick out the major events. She can draw a picture of each one on a separate index card. Then, have her glue the cards in order on a large sheet of paper or poster board. As she retells the story, she can point to each drawing.

Tip: Once your youngster is comfortable using props and pictures to summarize a story, have her try doing it off the top of her head.♥

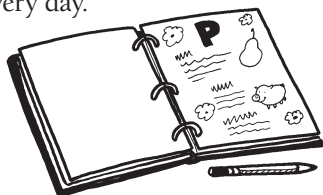
Fun with Words My dictionary

Help your child practice spelling and build his vocabulary by making his very own picture dictionary.

Start by showing him a children’s dictionary, and ask him to pick any word and read its entry aloud. Point out the definition, sentence, and picture. Then, give him a three-ring binder with 26 sheets of paper. At the top of each page he can write one letter, A to Z.

Encourage him to add a word to his dictionary every day.

He might use words he hears in conversation or sees in books. For each word, have him write its definition, use it in a sentence, and illustrate it. (“Acorn: A nut from an oak tree. That squirrel ate an *acorn*.”) *Note:* You can help him look up the word to find what it means, or talk about the word and let him write the definition in his own words.



Idea: When your child writes, he can keep his dictionary nearby to help him spell and find interesting words to use.♥

Parent to Parent Helping out

I volunteered in my older kids’ classrooms when they were young, but since going back to work I haven’t helped out in my youngest son’s class. I mentioned to his teacher that I’d like to be more involved, and she suggested that I start with the upcoming book fair.

She said the librarian needed evening helpers to set up the books and also to place book orders from home. She needed daytime volunteers, too, to help children choose books to buy. Since I couldn’t take time off that week, I offered to set up. The librarian also invited me to visit another week when I could take off to help my son’s class choose library books. I’m going to start doing that once a month, and I’m also going to order books from home.

I know my son will be happy to see me during his library time, and I’m really looking forward to volunteering in his school.♥



Q&A Building confidence

Q My daughter won’t try to read a word unless she’s sure she knows it. How can I help her become a more confident reader?

A Learning something new, like reading, usually means taking risks. The way you react to your daughter’s mistakes can help her feel more confident.

If she tries to read a word and guesses wrong, try to find something that she did right. For instance, if she says “house” instead of “home,” you might say,

“You’re right—that word starts with *h*, and it makes sense in the sentence. Can you think of another *h* word that would make sense here?”

Also, call attention to your own mistakes when you read aloud to your daughter. If you skip a word or read one incorrectly, you might smile and say, “Oops!” Then, go back and read the sentence with the right word. You’ll show her that it’s okay to make mistakes, and she can just try again.♥



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 Aspen Publishers, Inc.
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630
540-636-4280 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com
www.rfeonline.com
ISSN 1540-5648