

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

December 2019

Weatherly Area Elementary School

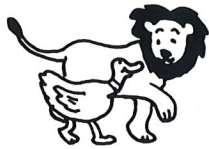
Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites



■ *How to Be a Lion* (Ed Vere)

Some lions believe there's only one way to be a lion and that Leonard is not doing it right. He's gentle and quiet, and his best friend is a duck!



When the other lions try to bully Leonard into changing, he must stand up for himself.

■ *A Ticket Around the World*

(Natalia Diaz and Melissa Owens)
Where would your child go if he had a ticket to any place in the world? The little boy in this book invites readers to explore 13 countries with him—and learn about languages, food, geography, cultures, and more along the way.



■ *Anne Arrives* (Kallie George)

The Cuthberts plan to adopt an orphaned boy to help on their farm, and they're disappointed when they get Anne instead. But Anne is determined to prove herself. The first book in the Anne series, in which *Anne of Green Gables* is adapted for beginning readers.

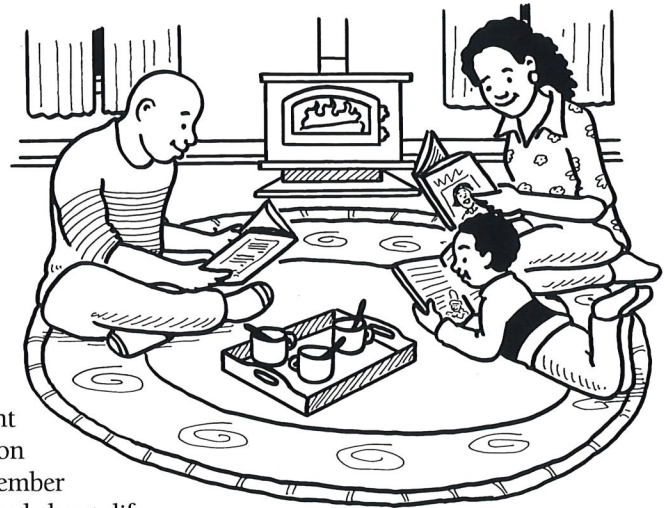
■ *Light Makes a Rainbow*

(Sharon Coan)
Learn all about rainbows in this non-fiction book. Simple explanations and colorful photos make it easy for readers to understand what makes rainbows appear. Includes hands-on activities. (Also available in Spanish.)



Winter literacy traditions

Keep your youngster's language arts skills strong during winter break. Fit reading, writing, speaking, and listening into family traditions with these activities.



Celebrate reading

Give books a starring role on special days by holding read-a-thons while you sip hot chocolate. For instance, you might read winter-themed books on the first day of winter (December 21). Or on December 31, read about different ways people celebrate New Year's Eve around the world.

Share news

Help your child launch an annual family newsletter. He could ask relatives to submit short articles about important events during 2019 and then write an article or two of his own. Have him add headlines, draw illustrations, and write captions to complete the first edition!

Tell stories

Swapping family stories during gatherings builds your youngster's speaking and listening skills. Pull out photos to spark ideas, perhaps ones taken at a wedding or reunion, and invite your youngster to contribute details as everyone reminisces. What songs were played at the reception? What games did he play with his cousins?♥

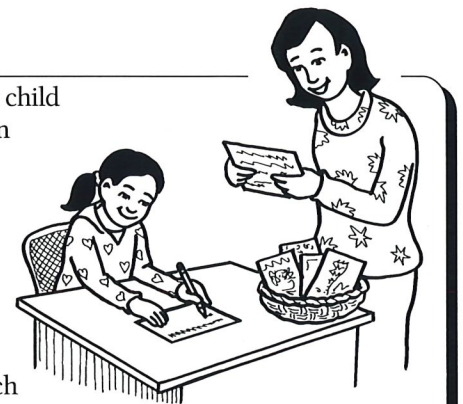
Inspired to write

Fill a basket with items that will give your child writing practice. Here are ideas for creating an "inspiration station."

● **Greeting cards.** Let your youngster cut cards in half and turn the fronts into post-cards. She can write messages on the blank sides and mail the cards to relatives.

● **File folders.** Ask your child to glue a magazine picture on one inside panel of each folder. Help her write a story about the picture and glue it on the other inside panel. She could add a title on the front.

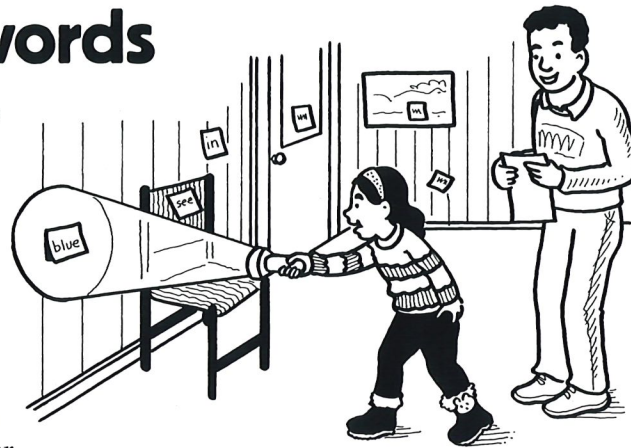
● **Homemade writing paper.** Have your youngster decorate the borders of plain white paper with stickers or stamps. Use a ruler to draw lines she can write on.♥



100 “magic” words

Did you know that just 100 words in the English language account for about half of the words beginning readers encounter? Ask your youngster’s teacher or search online for a list of these *high-frequency words*, and use them to play the following games.

Word search. Arrange Scrabble tiles in an 8 x 8 grid, spelling several of the words vertically, horizontally, or diagonally. Give your youngster a list of the words you hid. Can she find them all?



Flashlight tag. Pick 10 of the words and have your child copy them onto separate sticky notes. Place them randomly around a room. Hand her a flashlight, turn off the lights, and call out the words one by one. It’s her job to shine her “spotlight” around the room looking for the word. Ask her to read each correct word out loud when she finds it.

Note: Encourage your youngster to look for high-frequency words when she reads. She may be surprised how common they are—and by how many she can read all by herself.♥

Fun with Words Spot the comma

When you’re out and about with your child, try to spot as many commas as possible! You’ll help him learn where commas belong and what jobs they do.



See a comma? Read the words it goes with, and tell why it’s there. For example, your youngster might read “lettuce, tomato, and cheese” on a restaurant menu and say that those commas separate words in a series. Or maybe you’ll spot “December 12, 2019” on a newspaper (a comma goes between the date and year). Can he find a place where a comma should be or a comma that’s used incorrectly?♥

Parent to Parent Five-finger retelling

At school, my son Noah retells stories that he reads so the teacher can see how well he understands them. He recently learned a new retelling strategy that we’re enjoying at home: the five-finger retelling.

We read a story together, and Noah holds up each finger as he retells a different part. For his thumb, he introduces the main character. Then, he holds up a second finger and describes the setting. When he holds up his third, fourth, and fifth fingers, he explains what happened in the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

This has really helped Noah retell stories in sequence, and it works for more than books. We’ve used five-finger retelling to talk about everything from Noah’s day at school to sporting events we’ve attended.♥



Q&A Reading at the “right” level?

Q My daughter often wants to read books that are too hard or too easy for her. Shouldn’t she stick to books at her reading level?

A Reading levels help teachers select books that challenge kids just enough to make them better readers. But your child can also enjoy and learn from books that are above or below her level.

When she reads easier books, she gains confidence, becomes a more

fluent reader, and develops a love of reading. More difficult books challenge her vocabulary and comprehension skills and give her a sense of accomplishment—even if she doesn’t “get” everything.

Encourage her to explore any book she’s excited about. If she struggles with a book, offer to read it aloud. She’ll be more motivated to read, and the more she reads, the stronger her skills will grow.♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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Math+Science Connection

Beginning Edition

Building Excitement and Success for Young Children

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TOOLS & TIDBITS

Twice as big

Have your child draw a picture of a favorite object—say, a boat or a dinosaur. Now ask him to draw it again in different sizes, twice as big or half as big. He'll enjoy drawing while he learns about bigger and smaller.

Snack on science

Use fruit to sharpen your youngster's observation skills. Cut grapes, apples, and oranges in half so she can compare the cross-sections. Which ones contain seeds? Are the colors the same or different inside and out? Let her draw and label what she sees. Then, make fruit salad and enjoy the sweet snack together.



Book picks

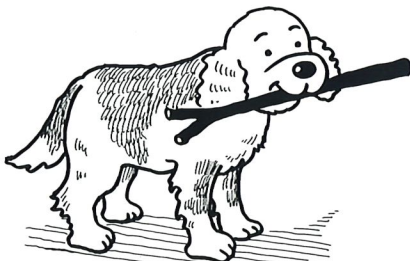
Every second counts in a championship soccer game! *Game Time!* (Stuart J. Murphy) is a soccer story that helps readers tell time.

Where Do Puddles Go? (Fay Robinson) invites youngsters to find out what happens to water after it rains.

Just for fun

Q: What do you call a boomerang that won't come back?

A: A stick.



Winter addition

These winter-themed activities encourage your youngster to add objects, practice addition facts, and find missing numbers—no snow required.

Dig in the snow

Fill a baking dish with sugar, and bury dry beans in the "snow." Your child can use a slotted spoon to dig up two scoops of beans and make them into an addition problem. If the first scoop has 7 beans and the second has 8, she would say " $7 + 8 = 15$." Have her count the beans to check her answer, then scoop up more to create a new problem.

Match the mittens

To work on facts to 10, let your youngster trace around each of her hands 5 times on paper and cut out the 10 "mittens." She should label the left mittens 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, and the right ones 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. Now she should make pairs that equal 10 and say each addition fact (" $5 + 5 = 10$ "). Suggest that she decorate each pair so the mittens match!



Throw the snowballs

Help your child find missing addends (numbers that are added together). Give her 20 cotton balls to throw into a bowl. Can she figure out how many landed in the bowl? If she missed 4, she would think, "Four plus what equals 20?" Then she could count up from 4 to 20 or subtract $20 - 4 = 16$. Finally, she should count the balls in the bowl to check. ❄️

An erupting volcano

Your child can watch a "volcano" erupt right before his very eyes with this hands-on model.

1. Go outdoors together, and help your youngster scoop soil (to represent a volcanic mountain) into a small plastic or paper cup.

2. Over newspaper, poke a small hole in the bottom of the cup. Have your child hold the cup in the air and insert an open toothpaste tube into the hole from the bottom. The toothpaste represents magma (melted rock).

3. What happens when your youngster squeezes the tube? (The "magma" swirls up through the "mountain" and eventually erupts as "lava.") ❄️

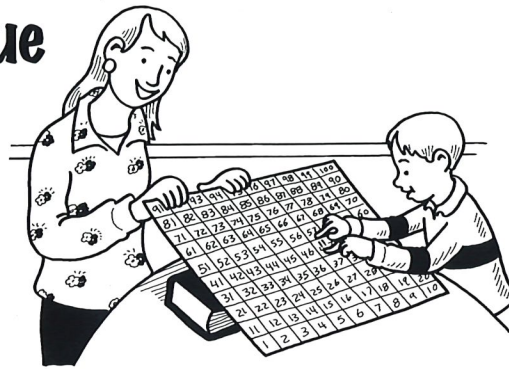


Play with place value

A hundred chart is a great tool for exploring place value. With this topsy-turvy version, your child can look at numbers in a different way! He'll work with numbers that get bigger as they climb up the chart—just as a block tower grows taller from bottom to top.

Draw a 10 x 10 grid. Starting in the bottom left corner, help him write 1–10 across the bottom row. Continue across each row until he writes 100 in the top right corner. Then, try these ideas.

Find my number. Pick a number, and give your youngster clues to find it. For 57, you might say, "My number is 10 more than 47." He would place his finger on 47 and either



count forward by 1s to 57 or move up 1 row to add 1 ten ($47 + 10 = 57$). How are 47 and 57 similar? (They each have 7 ones. Adding 1 ten only changed the number in the tens place.)

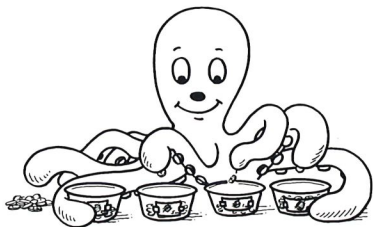
Identify the tens and ones. Cover a number (say, 65) with a bingo chip. Encourage your child to use surrounding numbers to figure out how many tens and how many ones the covered one has. Ask him what the other numbers have in common in the same row (6 tens) and column (5 ones). How many tens and ones are in the hidden number? (Answer: 6 tens and 5 ones, or 65.)



Q & A What's that coin?

Q: My daughter is learning how to recognize coins in school. How can she practice at home?

A: Let your child set up a coin station. Give her four bowls—one each for pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters—and put her in charge of sorting spare change.



Suggest that she make coin-rubbing labels for the bowls. She can tape each coin to a table, cover it with white paper, and rub lightly with the side of an unwrapped crayon. Help her write each coin's name ("quarter") and value ("25 cents") on its label.

Then, it's her job to match spare change to the rubbings and sort coins into the correct bowls. Soon, she'll recognize the coins automatically. *Idea:* She could count by 1s, 5s, 10s, and 25s to get the totals.

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SCIENCE LAB

Musical glasses

Why are some musical notes higher or lower than others? This experiment shows your youngster how pitch works.

You'll need: empty glass, pencil, measuring cup, water

Here's how: Ask your child to gently tap the side of the glass with the pencil. What does she think will happen to the sound if you pour water into the glass? Slowly fill the glass with water as she taps repeatedly.

What happens? The sound gets lower in pitch as you add more water.

Why? Striking the glass creates a sound wave that travels from the glass through the water. Water slows down the vibrations—so the more water, the slower the vibrations and the lower the pitch. When there's less water, the vibrations are faster, and the pitch is higher.

Idea: Suggest that your youngster measure different amounts of water ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup, 1 cup) into several identical glasses. She can tap the glasses to play a tune!



MATH CORNER

Gingerbread glyph

A *glyph*, or a pictograph, lets your youngster represent and analyze data. Try this family glyph activity to share information about your favorite things.

Materials: brown construction paper or cardboard, pencil, scissors, markers

Together, list survey questions and assign a gingerbread decoration to each possible answer. *Examples:* "Which season do you like best? Winter = round button, spring = square button,

summer = star button, fall = heart button." "Which meal is your favorite? Breakfast = red bowtie, lunch = blue bowtie, dinner = yellow bowtie, brunch = green bowtie."

Have each family member draw and cut out a gingerbread "person" and decorate it to show his favorites. Now compare them. How many people like summer the best? How many more people chose dinner than lunch?

