

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

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Stonewall Jackson Elementary School  
Violetra Ward, Principal

## Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

### ■ *Little Owl's Night*

Little Owl is happy in the forest at night. He and his animal friends gaze at the moon and stars. But he's curious about daytime, so one night he tries to stay awake until the sun comes up. Will he get to see what happens when night ends? A cute story by Divya Srinivasan.

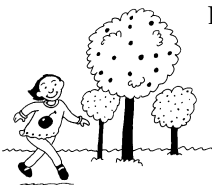


### ■ *Just Behave, Pablo Picasso!*

Jonah Winter's biography will introduce your youngster to a famous painter. But Picasso wasn't always famous. At first, some people didn't like his art because it was different. He kept painting, however, and eventually created a brand-new style called cubism. (Also available in Spanish.)

### ■ *Cherries and Cherry Pits*

In Vera Williams's book, a little girl loves to write stories about people eating cherries. The fact that they're always spitting out the pits gives her an idea. If she planted the pits and they grew into trees, she'd have enough cherries to share with people all over the world.



### ■ *My Baseball Book*

How many players are on a baseball team? How many innings do they play? Your child can learn the basics of baseball in this fact book by Gail Gibbons. The simple language and labeled drawings show the parts of a baseball diamond, the rules of the game, and more.



## Summertime is reading time

Whether your youngster is playing with toys, having a picnic, going out, or getting ready for bed, summer is full of opportunities to read. Use these suggestions to keep his skills growing while he's not in school.

### Playtime

Toys and books make a good combination. Try putting transportation storybooks with your child's cars and trucks, or adventure books near his toy figures. He can use his imagination to act out the stories with the toys.



### Mealtime

Stories, like family meals, are perfect for sharing. Carry a bag of books along on a picnic. After you eat, read aloud to your youngster, or let him read to you. You might also read stories that are related to what you eat. For instance, try *Lunch* (Denise Fleming), and then make a fruit salad with ingredients mentioned in the book.

### Activity time

Your child can read on the way to destinations or before you leave the house.

Try a book like *Maisy's Pool* (Lucy Cousins) if you're going swimming, or *Zoom!* (Diane Adams) on the way to a carnival or county fair. When you arrive, your child will be excited to do activities he just read about.

### Bedtime

Youngsters love bedtime rituals, and reading can be the coziest part. Let your child choose favorite stories to read at bedtime. By reading the same ones regularly, he'll soon learn the words. *Tip:* If he has a slightly later bedtime during the summer, have him use that time for reading on his own. ♥

## Hooray for reading!

Does your child love books? Let her share her joy of reading with others. Here's how:

- Suggest that she make a summer reading poster. Offer to take photos of her holding a favorite book in each hand or reading under a tree. Then, she can glue the photos to a poster board and add a slogan like "Reading is cool" or "It's summer! Let's read!" Hang her poster above a bookshelf or in a hallway at home.
- Let your youngster have a book swap party with friends. Each guest can bring several books she has read and leave with a few new ones. *Idea:* Have children come dressed as their favorite book characters—everyone can try to guess who they are. ♥



# Writing every day

Writing a little each day will get your youngster used to putting ideas and information on paper. Consider these quick activities:

- When your child finishes a dot-to-dot picture or a coloring book page, she can practice creative writing by adding a sentence or paragraph that describes it. *Example:* “The fire-breathing dragon was big and fierce.”



- Have a written conversation with your youngster by sending notes back and forth to each other. Try to use a few words she’s not familiar with so she can learn new ones. *Tip:* Suggest that she have a written conversation with a sibling or friend.

- Ask your child to keep track of something. Say she loves stuffed animals. Let her make

a list of all the ones in her room, including the type of animal and color. If she hasn’t named them yet, now would be a good time! Or have her inventory your family’s movie collection or write the names of all the cities or towns she has visited.♥

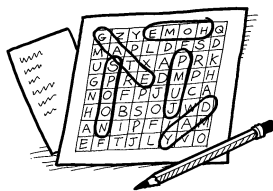


## Fun with Words Word puzzles

Word puzzles can improve your youngster’s spelling and vocabulary. Here are two you can make at home.

### Word search

Have your child write down any five words. Then, draw an 8 x 8 grid on a piece of paper. Write the words—down, across, or diagonally—one letter per box. Fill in all the other squares around them with random letters. Let your youngster search for his words and circle them. Next, have him make a word search for you.



## Parent to Parent

### Grocery store reading

Grocery shopping with my twins used to be a chore. Then, one day we saw a mother and two children who seemed to be having fun in the store. I noticed the kids were holding coupons and matching them to products on the shelves. I decided to try that with my girls.

The next time we went to the store, I gave each of my children a plastic bag with 10 coupons for items we needed to buy. I told them to read the coupons and try to find the items as we went up and down the aisles. Before I knew it, they were reading words like “family size,” “waffles,” and “paper towels.” As they found each item, they handed the coupon to me and put the product in our cart.

Now we play this reading game every time we go grocery shopping. The trips are a little more fun, and the girls are learning to read more words.♥



### Cryptogram

Ask your child to write the alphabet across the top of a sheet of paper. Below each letter, he can write a number, 1–26 (A = 1, B = 2, and so on). Take turns thinking of a word (*park*) and writing the corresponding numbers (16, 1, 18, 11). The other person has to use the code to figure out the word.♥

### OUR PURPOSE

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

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## Q&A Teacher appreciation

**Q** My son wants to give his teacher an end-of-year gift that shows what she has taught him. Any ideas?

**A** A handwritten, homemade gift is a nice way for your child to express appreciation for a good school year.

You might suggest that he write a poem about his favorite subject. He can mention characters from books the teacher read aloud or facts about explorers or inventors. Or he could write a nature poem and draw pictures of seeds,

flowers, trees, and rocks that he learned about. If your youngster isn’t writing much on his own yet, let him dictate what he wants to say. After you write it, he can copy it in his own handwriting.

A more experienced writer might make an alphabet book. Have him put one letter on every page and write and illustrate a memory from the year for each letter. *Example:* “A is for the apple orchard where we had our field trip. B is for the Berenstain Bears books we read.”♥

