

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

May 2019

School District of La Crosse

Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

Same, Same but Different

(Jenny Sue Kosteck-Shaw)

Two boys with an ocean between them become best friends in this story about similarities and differences. Pen pals Elliot and Kailash both like to climb trees—but Elliot's tree in America has a treehouse, while Kailash's tree in India is full of monkeys. What else will they discover as they exchange letters?

Sofia Martinez: My Family Adventure

(Jacqueline Jules)

There's one adventure after another for seven-year-old Sofia. She goes to hilarious lengths to stand out from her older sisters, make a piñata for her grandmother's birthday, and find an escaped pet mouse. A glossary helps readers learn the Spanish words sprinkled throughout the story. Book one in the Sofia Martinez series.



Digger, Dozer, Dumper

(Hope Vestergaard)

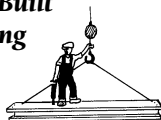
Trucks have many jobs! Your child can learn about their work as he reads this collection of 16 poems, each featuring a different vehicle. Colorful illustrations show everything from street sweepers to fire trucks, and rhyming verses describe their jobs—cleaning, rescuing, and more.



Sky Boys: How They Built the Empire State Building

(Deborah Hopkinson)

This true story offers amazing facts about the New York City landmark. For example, steel columns were sunk 55 feet underground to support the 365,000-ton tower, and the builders took lunch breaks on beams dozens of stories high.



Be a nonfiction explorer

Lemonade, swimming, the zoo... no matter what's on your child's agenda while school is out, he can read to learn more about it! Try these tips for nonfiction reading before or even during summertime activities.



Learn how

Have your youngster think of something new he'd like to try, such as running a lemonade stand or putting on a magic show. Together, read books that might help him succeed. For instance, he could learn how to make change from a picture book about counting money. Or he could read a book of magic tricks to find out how to dazzle his audience.

Or if you're traveling on an airplane, pack a book for him to read about how planes fly.

Go beyond books

Suggest that your youngster collect and explore other nonfiction materials. He might get a map of the zoo, a takeout menu at the pizza parlor, or a calendar of events at the park. Ask him to read words he recognizes (*tiger, cheese, hike*). He could circle his favorite animals or pizza toppings, or highlight park programs he wants to attend. ♥

Discover facts

Take books along wherever you go. Maybe your child will read a book of world records at the pool and tell you who swam the fastest or the farthest ever.

Revise and edit

How can your youngster make her writing shine? By polishing it! Here's how.

● **Revise.** Encourage your child to read her story aloud. What could she add or rearrange? To decide, she might think, "Did I leave out anything important?" or "Are the events in the right order?" Ask questions to help her add details or clear up confusion. ("Who is Chloe?")

● **Edit.** Now it's time to edit for capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Have your child read her story once to check for each type of error. If you spot a mistake she overlooks (say, a word that should be capitalized), help her figure it out. ("What should the first word in a sentence start with?") ♥



Writing “on location”

Inspire your youngster to practice writing vivid descriptions whether she’s outdoors or at home. She’ll have fun using *adjectives*, or descriptive words, with these ideas.

Nature on the playground. Take pencils and paper outside, and try this activity. Each of you secretly spots something

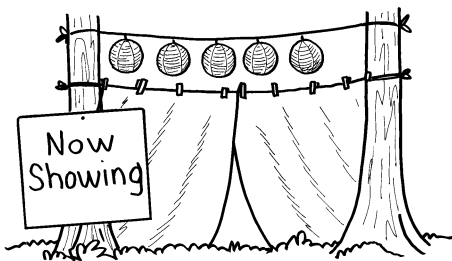


in nature and writes a description that includes at least two adjectives—but doesn’t name the object. Your child could write, “I see something *big*, *white*, and *fluffy*,” and you might write, “I see something *short*, *yellow*, and *green*.” Trade papers, then take a look around, and try to guess what the other person is describing (cloud, dandelion).

Scenes from afar. Your child can write descriptions of faraway places without ever leaving home! Have her cut out pictures of different types of scenery from old magazines. *Examples:* tropical beach, snowy mountain, the surface of Mars. She could glue each photo on a separate page of a notebook and write about it, using adjectives to bring her sentences to life. (“Mars looks *red* and *dusty*. Some parts are *rocky*, and others are *smooth*.”)♥

Neighborhood theater

Lights, camera, action! Let your youngster put on a play based on a favorite storybook, and she’ll work on reading, writing, and speaking.



First, help your child turn the book into a script by writing the dialogue on a sheet of paper. Then, make a copy for each character. Your youngster and friends and family can choose roles.

Suggest that actors read their lines aloud a few times to rehearse. Encourage them to ham it up, using voices that might sound like their characters. They could also make scenery on poster board and use household items as props.

Now it’s show time! Invite neighbors to be the audience, and videotape the performance. Finally, hold a film premiere where the cast can watch the tape.♥



Fun with Words

Active spelling games

Your child can balance and hop his way to better spelling with these games.

Balance like an acrobat

Make a duct tape “tightrope.” Your youngster can spell words, taking one step for each letter. If you say *block*, he’d take five careful steps. If he spells it correctly without stepping off, give him another word. If not, his turn ends. Once he reaches the end of the tightrope, he scores one point for each word he got right. Then, he gives you words. After five rounds, the person with the most points wins.



Hop like a bunny

Let your child use chalk to write the alphabet in big letters scattered across a driveway, sidewalk, or blacktop. Then, call out a word (say, *hat*). He spells it as he hops to each letter—if he gets the word right, he earns one point per letter. Now he says a word, and you spell and hop. The first player with 10 points wins.♥

Parent to Parent

A reading campout

My sister recently reminded me about how much we loved making tents and reading in them when we were little. She said she felt grown-up helping me read, and I remembered how I wanted to practice reading so I’d sound just like her.

I decided to try a “reading campout” with my kids, Molly and Liam. We checked out library books and pitched a tent in the backyard. Then, my

husband and I sat in lawn chairs with our own books while the kids read. We heard Molly helping Liam sound out words. When it was her turn to read, we listened to her explain the meanings of words to her little brother.

Since that night, our kids have asked for more reading campouts. Now we’re planning a real camping trip—and Molly and Liam are already deciding which books they want to take and read to each other!♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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