Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

March 2021

Seneca Valley School District

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ ***Goodbye Winter, Hello Spring*** *(Kenard Pak)*

Explore the magic of the changing seasons in this joyful story of a boy and his dog who welcome the colors, animals, and flowers of spring. Your child can follow along as snowy winter nights transform into sunny spring days.

■ ***Art Play! Activities for Preschoolers*** *(Meredith Magee Donnelly)*

This book designed for little hands will inspire your youngster to make a magic wand, create a home for a stuffed animal, draw while dancing, and more. The easy-to-follow ideas use everyday supplies and focus on the process of making art.

■ ***Mango, Abuela, and Me*** *(Meg Medina)*

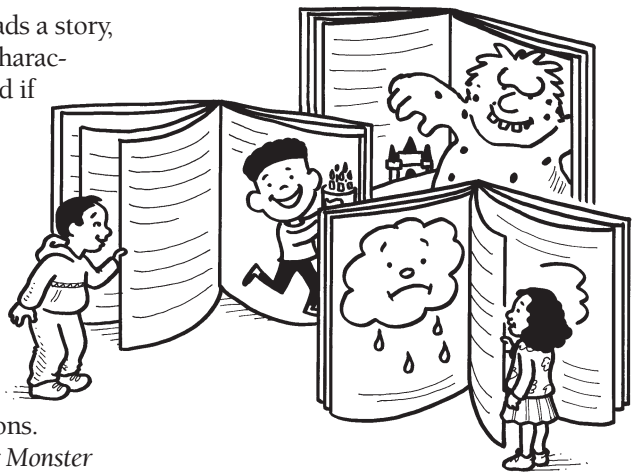
When Mia's Spanish-speaking *abuela* (grandmother) moves in with her family, the little girl isn't sure how they'll be able to communicate. Still, she's determined to learn Spanish and teach her *abuela* English. With the help of a parrot named Mango, Mia and her *abuela's* relationship flourishes. (Also available in Spanish.)

■ ***The Napping House*** *(Audrey Wood)*

In the house where everyone naps, you would think everything was calm. And it is—until too many people and animals climb into the cozy bed. Your youngster will love discovering what happens in this silly story when one too many creatures try to take a nap.

Boost empathy with books

When your youngster reads a story, he might feel happy if one character wins a soccer game or sad if another's best friend moves away. Books can help him understand others' feelings in real life, too. Try these ideas to boost his empathy—and his reading comprehension.



Explore feelings

Ask a librarian to help you find books about emotions. She might suggest *The Color Monster* (Anna Llenas) or *The Boy with Big, Big Feelings* (Britney Winn Lee), for instance. Read the stories to your child, and let him look for words that describe characters' feelings (happy, sad, scared). Then, you can each share a time when you felt those emotions.

"Read" pictures

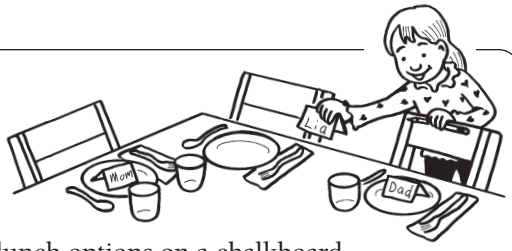
Have your youngster look at the pictures in books and try to figure out how characters are feeling. He might say a girl with her mouth open looks surprised or that a monster with a red face looks mad. Together, read the page to find out why the character feels that way.

Handle tough times

Seeing how characters deal with challenges, like being bullied or starting a new school, can help your child cope with his own struggles. As you read, encourage him to predict how a character might handle a difficult experience. What might your youngster do in the same situation? Read on to find out what happens.♥

Writing in the kitchen

Bring writing into the kitchen to show your child everyday ways she can practice:



- Let your youngster make place cards for each person at the table.
- Suggest that she write a menu for lunch options on a chalkboard or piece of paper.
- Ask her to help you make a grocery list. She might copy words from food packages to spell them.
- Have your child use mailing labels or write on freezer bags to identify leftovers. She can write what's inside and the date.

Idea: Keep slips of paper or a notepad in a kitchen drawer to encourage regular writing.♥

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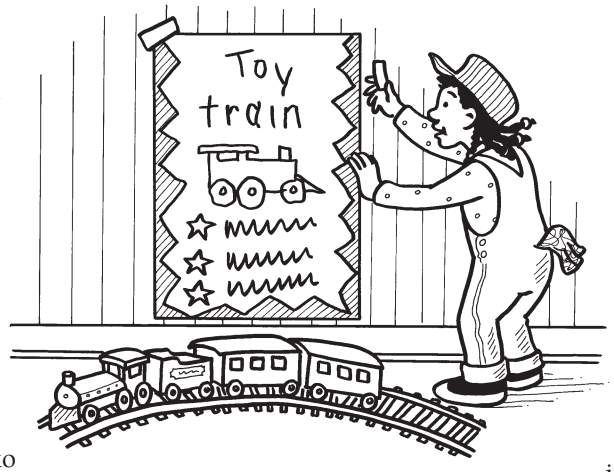
Persuade me!

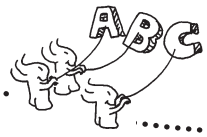
Persuasive writing gives your child a chance to express her opinions—and to convince others that she has a good point. These activities will let her put her persuasive skills to work.



Advertisements. Suggest that your youngster draw a picture of a favorite product, such as a toy or her sneakers, and write an ad that would inspire others to buy it. For a train, she could write, "Trains are fun to play with. This train goes fast down the hills. Kids will love it." Let her read her ad to you. She could hang it up like a billboard—or make more ads and staple them together to create a catalog.

Family message board. Leave persuasive messages for each other on a whiteboard, a bulletin board, or a space on the refrigerator door. Encourage your child to write recommendations for things like family outings or meals. She should also list reasons in an effort to persuade you. *Example:* "Let's hike on Saturday. It's going to be sunny. Hiking is fun." When possible, try her ideas!♥

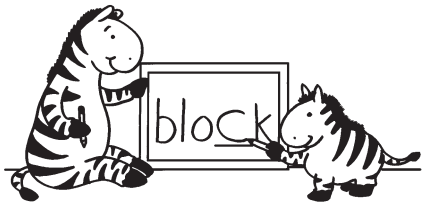
Q&A



Spelling progress

Q *My first grader sometimes leaves out letters in words when he writes. Is this something I should be concerned about?*

A When children begin writing, they often write only the letters for the sounds they hear. So it's common for them to leave out letters. If your son writes *blok* (*block*), he's showing that he hears the *b*, *l*, *o*, and *k* sounds—and that he still needs to learn that *k* is spelled *ck* in some words.



As he learns new sounds and spelling patterns, he'll spell more words correctly. Help him with this idea. Say he's learning in school that *oa* sounds like *o*, and he writes *cot* (*coat*). Write the word, leaving a blank in place of the missing letter (*co_t*). Ask him to say the word aloud (*coat*), and see if he can fill in the blank (*a*). Now have him write a word with a missing letter for you to figure out!♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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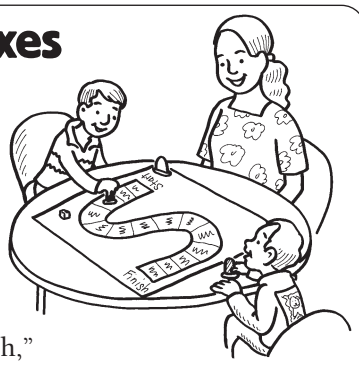
Fun with Words

Roll-and-read suffixes



Rain, *rained*, *raining* … your youngster can change a word by adding an ending like *-ed* or *-ing*. Play this game to help him explore *suffixes*.

Materials: *poster board or construction paper, pencil, die, one game token per player*

Help your child draw an S-shaped gameboard path, label opposite ends "Start" and "Finish," and add lines to make spaces. On each space, have him write a word that can use the suffix *-ed*, *-ing*, *-er*, or *-s*, such as *play*, *dance*, and *call*.

Put your tokens on "Start," and take turns rolling a die and moving your token that number of spaces. Pick a suffix that makes sense and use the new word in a sentence. For *call*, your youngster might say, "I *called* Nana on the phone today." Reach "Finish" first to win.♥

Parent to Parent

Film a book trailer

My daughter Liza loves to watch book trailers online. They're like movie previews—but for books! So she decided to create one of her own.

She practiced reading the book title (*Knuffle Bunny*), the author's name (Mo Willems), and the summary on the back. She also used sticky notes to bookmark her favorite pages so she could show them to her audience.

When Liza was ready, I recorded her giving an introduction and talking about the pages she had chosen. She wrapped up her trailer by leaving her audience with a question: "Will Trixie be reunited with Knuffle Bunny?"

My daughter has made several trailers since then, and she's building her speaking skills and learning to talk about books. I help her email them to our relatives and friends so their children can watch—and hopefully find new books to read.♥

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