Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

January 2021

Seneca Valley School District

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ ***Flashlight*** *(Lizi Boyd)*
If you went outdoors at night, what would you see with your trusty flashlight? That's what the boy in this wordless picture book wants to find out. Your child can explore the woods as the boy meets charming characters and discovers the not-so-scary secrets the night holds.

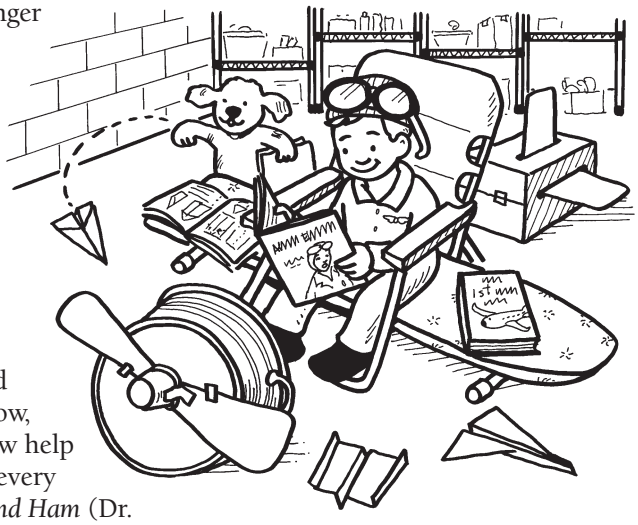
■ ***Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match / Marisol McDonald no combina*** *(Monica Brown)*

Marisol adores her world full of colorful clothing and creative games. The other kids think she's too "mismatched." In this bilingual English-Spanish story, Marisol decides to be more like her friends. But it doesn't take her long to realize she's wonderful just the way she is.

■ ***The Black Book of Colors*** *(Menena Cottin)*
What does red taste like? How does green smell? This black-and-white book gives readers insight into what it's like for visually impaired people to "see" with their other senses. The words in the book are also printed in Braille—a writing system of raised dots.

■ ***The Opposite Zoo*** *(Il Sung Na)*
Explore a zoo full of opposites, where animals of all types—shy and bold, slow and fast, and hairy and bald—live together. Your youngster can follow an adventurous monkey through enchanting exhibits to learn about opposites before the zoo opens again for a new day.

Flex reading "muscles"



Just like muscles get stronger with regular exercise, your child will become a stronger reader with regular reading practice. Help him work out his reading "muscles" all year long with these ideas.

Read the rainbow

Encourage your youngster to draw an outline of a rainbow with six stripes and label them red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. Now help him find a library book for every color, perhaps *Green Eggs and Ham* (Dr. Seuss) or *Harold and the Purple Crayon* (Crockett Johnson). After reading each book, he can write the title on the matching stripe and color it in.

Read with others

Let your child start his own book club! He could invite a few friends or family members to help choose a book to read. Then, suggest that they set a date to meet (in person or online) to discuss the book—and pick their next one. *Idea:* He can ask each member to bring at least one interesting discussion question to the meeting.

Read something new

Becoming familiar with different book genres prepares your youngster to read all kinds of books in school. Have him pick a topic (say, airplanes) and read books from various sections of the library. He might check out a story about a child's first airplane ride, a biography of Amelia Earhart, and a how-to book on paper airplanes.♥

Write me a riddle

Q: What building has the most stories?

A: The library!

Give your youngster practice writing questions and answers as she creates her very own riddles.

Let her think of an answer for a riddle, perhaps a favorite animal, food, or sport. She can use facts about the answer to write her riddle on one side of an index card. If she picks pizza, she might write, "I am round, cheesy, and can be delivered to your front door. What am I?" Then, have her write and illustrate the answer on the back.

Suggest that she read her riddles to friends and family. Can she stump them?♥

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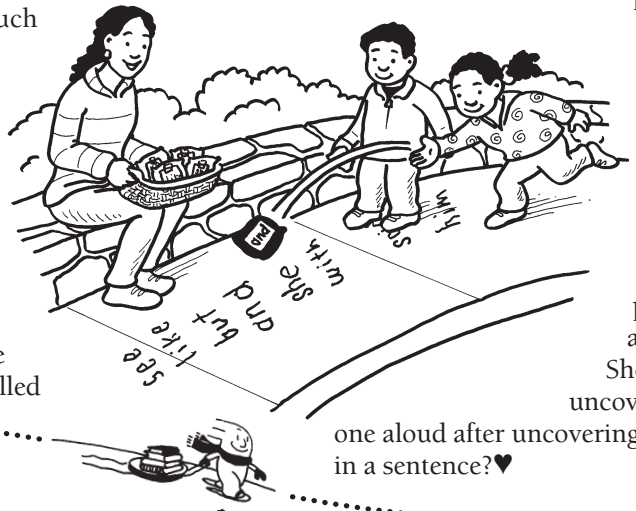
See the sight words!

Instantly recognizable words—such as *and*, *the*, and *play*—appear in many of the books your youngster reads. Ask her teacher for a list of these *sight words* or find one online, and try these activities to help your child learn them.



Beanbag toss. Together, write 10 sight words with chalk on a sidewalk or blacktop, and again with pencil on separate sticky notes. Tape each word to a beanbag (or a sock filled with dry beans and secured with a rubber band). Take turns picking a beanbag, reading the word, and tossing the bag onto the matching word. Whoever matches the most words is the winner.

"Treasure" hunt. Send your child on a search for "buried" sight words. Write 10 words randomly all over a sheet of paper. Lay the paper in a shallow baking dish and let her "bury" it in dry rice. She can move the rice around to uncover the words. Have her read each one aloud after uncovering it. Can she use each sight word in a sentence?♥

Q&A Read to understand

Q *My son will sometimes read every word in a story correctly and still be unable to tell me about what he just read. What should I do?*

A It's great that your youngster knows so many words. It's possible he's choosing books with plots that are too complex for him. Or he may not be paying attention while he reads—in this case, suggest that he read in a spot free from distractions like TV or people talking.

Also, while the teacher will let you know if she's concerned about his progress, you can tell her what you've noticed, too. She may suggest books he can read (and understand) at home.

Finally, try this strategy: Ask him to "preview" a book before he reads it. He can read the title, look at the cover, and flip through the pictures. Knowing what to expect will prepare him to understand the book.♥

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 Vowel patterns

Encourage your child to explore common vowel patterns that can help him sound out words. Here's how.

1. Write the letters A–Z on separate slips of paper, and make an extra set of vowels (a, e, i, o, u). Put all the vowels on the table or ground and the other letters (the consonants) in a paper bag.

2. Ask your youngster to pull two consonants from the bag and lay them on the table or ground.

3. Help him combine those consonants with any two vowels to make as many four-letter words as possible. For *m* and *t*, he could make *team*, *meet*, and *moat*. Have him read each word. He'll hear that *ea* in *team*, for instance, makes a long *e* sound.

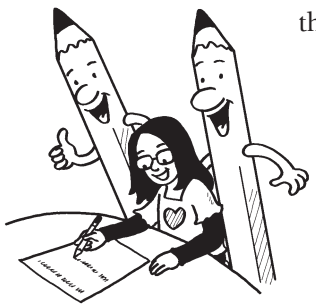
4. When you can't make any more words, return the consonants to the bag. Pick two new ones, and play again.

Note: The letter *y* is sometimes a vowel when it's used to make vowel patterns like *oy* in *toy*.♥

Parent to Parent Give your sentence a partner

My daughter Anna is learning to write stories in school. Up until this point, she was drawing a picture and writing one sentence underneath. Now she's ready to give her sentence a "partner," the teacher said, meaning to write a second sentence to support the first. So I'm helping Anna practice at home.

Sometimes I'll say a sentence like "It's snowing a lot." Then Anna comes up with a logical partner for my sentence, such as "Tomorrow we can go sledding." Next it's her turn to think of a sentence, and I'll give it a partner.



Anna seems to be getting the hang of this—the other day when I was reading to her, she noticed that a page had only one sentence. She said, "The author should have given that sentence a partner!" And I had to agree.♥