

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

February 2013

Sweetbriar Elementary School

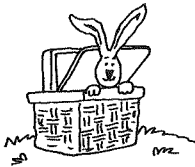
## Book Picks



### Read-aloud favorites

#### ■ *The Further Tale of Peter Rabbit*

Actress Emma Thompson's book is inspired by Beatrix Potter's Peter Rabbit stories. The mischievous bunny ends up in Farmer McGregor's picnic basket. He is carried from his home in England all the way to Scotland, where he meets a rabbit family and enjoys new adventures.



#### ■ *What Presidents Are Made Of*

Jimmy Carter was a peanut farmer, Ronald Reagan loved jelly beans, and George W. Bush once owned a baseball team. These are some of the facts your child can discover in this nonfiction book about U.S. presidents. Illustrated by Hanoch Piven.

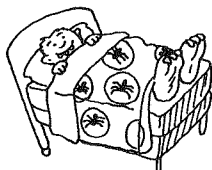


#### ■ *Clifford the Firehouse Dog*

Clifford is a big red dog owned by a little girl named Emily Elizabeth. In this story by Norman Bridwell, Clifford visits a fire station and gets a chance to rescue people and put out a fire. Includes a list of fire safety rules. (Also available in Spanish.)

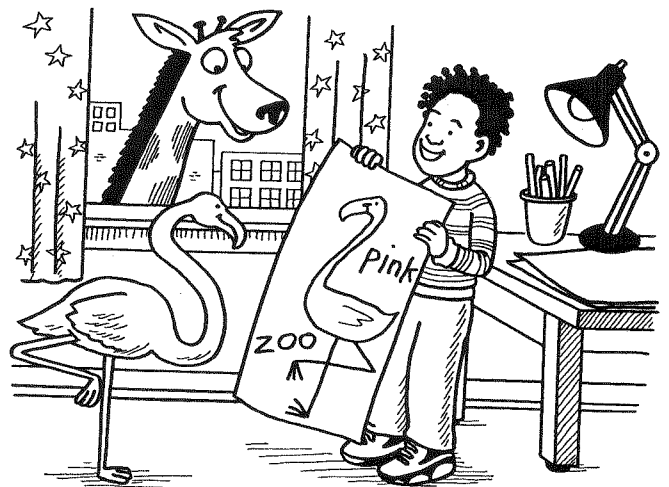
#### ■ *Goodnight, Little Monster*

What is bedtime like for a monster? In Helen Ketterman's book, it involves brushing fangs, washing scales, and putting on spider pajamas. Your youngster will enjoy seeing the loving monster mommy tuck in cute Little Monster and turn on his eyeball night-light.



## Draw and write

For little ones, drawing and writing go hand in hand. You might have seen your child add letters or words to his artwork or write a story to go with a picture he has drawn. He can use these steps to practice writing when he draws.



### 1. Color a picture.

After an outing, let your youngster draw a picture about his experience.

When you get home from the zoo, for example, he can sketch animals he saw. Or if he goes to the dentist, he might draw himself getting his teeth cleaned.

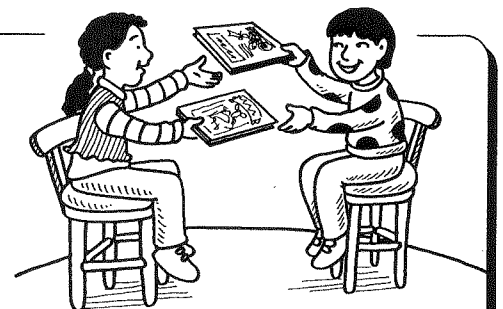
**2. Talk about it.** Have your child tell you about his picture. He can describe what is happening, say who the people or animals are, or name objects. Ask questions to help him think of more details to draw. *Examples:* "What were the flamingos doing?" "What tools did the dentist use?"

**3. Write.** If your youngster is just starting to write, suggest that he add words to the drawing. He might label items ("feathers") or make dialogue bubbles to show what people are saying ("Open wide!"). If he's a more experienced writer, he could write a story on a separate sheet of paper. Help him brainstorm words to use in his tale (*pink, toothpaste*). Write them down for him—he can refer to the list as he writes, which will give him confidence. ♥

## Books + friends = fun!

When your youngster gets together with a friend, let them make reading part of the fun! Encourage them to try these ideas:

- Exchange favorite books. They might discover new series or types of books they've never read before (mysteries, biographies).
- Have them play "story hour"—they can take turns sitting in a chair and being the reader. For a bigger audience, they might read to dolls and stuffed animals, too.
- Talking about a book can help your child get more enjoyment out of it. Suggest that she and a friend read a story together and discuss their favorite parts. ♥

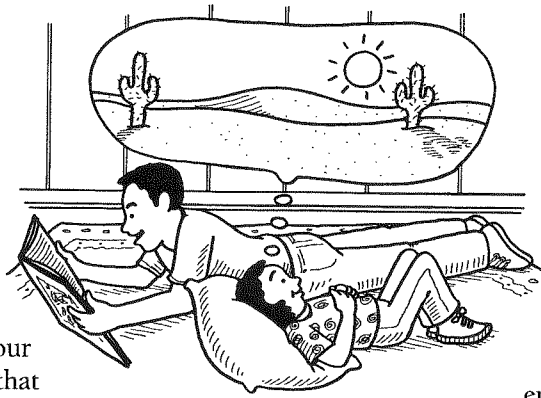


# Read between the lines

Learning to infer, or “read between the lines,” is one key to good reading comprehension. Here are ways to help your youngster make inferences when she reads.

## Describe the setting

Pick a book, and read a few sentences to your child (without her looking). Leave out words that give away the setting. *Example:* “Sand stretched in all directions...cacti dotted the landscape.” Can she infer where the story is set? If she isn’t sure, give her a hint (“Where do you see lots of sand and cacti?”).



## Look for lessons

Fables are great for reading between the lines. Read one by Aesop, and help your youngster figure out the lesson. For instance, *The Tortoise and the Hare* teaches that even if you’re slow, you can win if you just keep going. Have her point out parts that she used to make her inference (“The tortoise never stopped, and he took one good step after another”).

## Use prompts

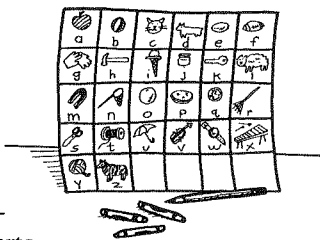
Questions that start with “Why do you think...?” or “How do you know...?” can encourage your child to infer. You might ask why she thinks a character behaved the way he did or how she knows it’s going to snow. Together, look for clues in the book that might help her answer the questions. ♥

## Fun with Words Learning about letters

Let your child make this alphabet chart to discover beginning sounds in words.

On poster board or a large sheet of paper, help him draw a grid with five rows and six columns. He’ll have one box for each letter of the alphabet and a few extra boxes that he can decorate.

Then, ask him to write a lowercase letter (a to z) in each square and draw a picture of something that starts with that letter. Or he could cut small pictures out of magazines and catalogs and glue those into the correct boxes (xylophone for x, yarn for y, zebra for z). Have him say each letter and word aloud so he can hear the sounds.



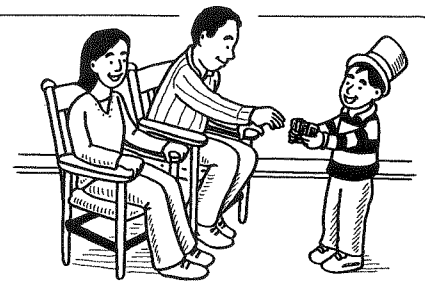
*Variation:* Let him choose a topic for his ABC chart. If he picks sports, for example, his pictures might include an archery set, a ball, and cleats. ♥

## Speaking clearly

By age 8, most children can correctly pronounce all the sounds in their language. You can support your youngster’s speech development with these tips:

- Using the telephone is a good way to practice speaking clearly. Teach your child how to answer the phone, and let him make phone calls on a regular basis.
- Encourage your youngster to put on performances for you, such as a magic show or a play. Or he can hold a family talent show. Have him use an empty paper towel tube as a microphone and announce each act.
- Get a book of tongue twisters, and read them aloud together. Or help him make up his own (“Logan loves lemon-lime lollipops”).

*Note:* If you are concerned about your child’s speech, talk to his teacher or pediatrician. ♥



## Parent to Parent Real-life writing

I work at home, and my daughter Nevaeh always used to interrupt me when I was on the phone. One day, I gave her pencil and paper. I told her to write a note if she needed something that wasn’t an emergency, and I would answer after I hung up.

Nevaeh liked the idea, and I realized it was a good way for her to work on writing and spelling. So I started thinking of other reasons for her to write.

When we had dinner guests, I asked her to make place cards. She wrote people’s names on folded index cards and put them at their places at the table. I’ve also had her post reminder notices on the refrigerator, like “Tomorrow is trash day” or “Early dismissal Friday.”

Nevaeh still writes to me when I’m on the phone, and sometimes she writes notes even when I’m not. I’m glad she’s getting extra writing practice—and that I’m better able to juggle work and family. ♥



**OUR PURPOSE**

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

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 ISSN 1540-5648