

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

December 2017

South-Western City Schools

## Book Picks

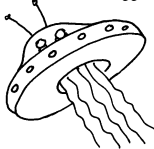


### Read-aloud favorites

#### ■ *Alien in My Pocket #1: Blast Off!*

(Nate Ball)

Zack McGee thinks he dreamed that a 4-inch-tall alien crashed into his bedroom. But Amp is real. Now, Zack must protect his pocket-sized visitor, rebuild a rocket, and send Amp home before more aliens invade. The first book in the *Alien in My Pocket* series.



#### ■ *This Is How We Do It*

(Matt Lamothe)

Curious readers get a sneak peek at the lives of seven kids from seven countries—what they eat for breakfast, how they travel to school, what they do for fun, and more. This fact-based book shows your child the ways in which cultures around the world are similar and different.

#### ■ *I Don't Want Curly Hair* (Laura Ellen Anderson)

Books, tape, balloons—the curly-haired girl in this rhyming story will try just about anything to tame her unruly locks. When she makes a friend who is unhappy with her super-straight hair, both children gain a new appreciation for what they have. (Also available in Spanish.)



#### ■ *The Marvelous Thing That Came from a Spring* (Gilbert Ford)

Richard James was an engineer for the U.S. Navy when he accidentally invented the Slinky. This nonfiction book tells how the spring that could “slink” down stairs became a toy that generations of children have played with since 1945.



## Get together and write

Turn family time into fun reasons for your youngster to write with these clever projects.

### “Handy” gift guide

Let your child trace around your hand on paper and label it with your name. Next, tell him five things you like (basketball, spaghetti), and help him print one on each finger. He can make a “hand” for each family member—including himself. Staple the pages together into a book, and use this “handy” guide to make or buy holiday and birthday gifts.



### Record book

Which family member will blow the largest soap bubble? Who can hold a single note the longest while singing? Brainstorm a list of challenges, and help your youngster write one per page in a notebook. Hold contests, and have him record the results. (“Mom held the longest note—for 35 seconds!”)

### Quote board

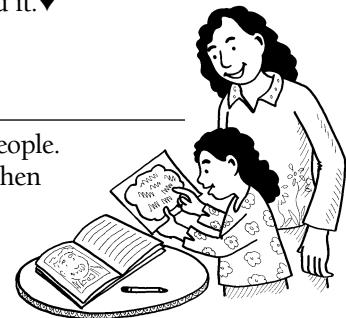
Give each person a different-color marker, and write your favorite sayings on a poster board. Be sure to include who said them, too. You could write funny or inspiring quotes from books, movies, or even relatives. For example, your child might write, “Just keep swimming”—Dory from *Finding Nemo*. Hang the poster where everyone can read it. ♥

## Meet someone famous

Biographies tell fascinating tales about real people. Together, read a few picture-book biographies, then try these ideas.

● **Word cloud.** Encourage your youngster to draw a cloud on paper and fill it with important words from a biography. For Albert Einstein, she might write *genius* and *invention*. Let her use her “word cloud” to tell you all about the person—she’ll practice reading closely for key information.

● **Just like me!** As you read, suggest that your child look for things she has in common with the subject of the biography. Perhaps she’s brave like Amelia Earhart or loves to dance like Martha Graham. Making personal connections will boost her reading comprehension. ♥



# I can read that book!

Your youngster will be excited to pick books at the library that she can read all by herself. Suggest these strategies to help her find books she will feel confident reading.

**Use the “five-finger” rule.** Have your child read the first few pages of a book. For each page, she should hold up one finger every time she comes to a word she can’t read. If she holds up two to four fingers per page,



the book is probably a good one to try. One finger may mean it’s too easy, while five likely mean it’s too hard for her to read on her own right now.

**Find a “yardstick.”** Ask your youngster to show you a book she already reads easily. Then, help her use that book to “measure” a new one. Do both books have about the same number of words per page? Do they both include words that are about the same length? If so, the book may be a good match.

*Note:* Be sure to let your child check out a few books that are a challenge for her—listening to you read them aloud is a great way to stretch her reading ability.♥

## Fun with Words

### A (word) family of snowmen

Is it a family of snowmen or a family of words? It’s both! With this cute snowman activity, your youngster can explore *word families*, or rhyming words that end with the same letter combination.



Ask your child to choose a word family. Perhaps he’ll pick the *-at* family (*cat*, *bat*) or the *-un*

family (*sun*, *fun*). He can write the “family name” at the top of a piece of paper.

Then, take turns saying words that belong in that family. Your youngster can draw and label a snowman for each “member.” The *-ake* family might have a “snowdad” named *Cake*, a “snowmom” named *Lake*, a “snowboy” named *Make*, and a “snowgirl” named *Shake*.

Keep adding words—and “family members”—until you can’t think of any more. Then, he can choose a new word family and start again.♥



## Q&A

### Encouraging “self-talk”

**Q** I’ve noticed that my son talks to himself while he plays. Is this typical?

**A** Yes. In fact, “self-talk” during play is something you could encourage your youngster to do. As he chats with an imaginary friend or narrates what he’s doing, he’s building speech and language skills.

Try putting interesting items with his toys. You’ll give him new words—and activities—to incorporate into his play. You might say, “Here’s a *whisk* to put in your kitchen” or “I thought you might like this *bandanna* for your dress-up box.” Don’t be surprised to hear him talking about the object as he plays chef or cowboy. (“Howdy, partner. I’ve got a *bandanna*, too!”)♥



## Parent to Parent

### Homemade audiobooks

At our parent-teacher conference last month, the teacher said my daughter is working on *fluency*—reading smoothly and at a good pace. The teacher had a fun idea to help her practice at home. She suggested that we make our own audiobooks starring Nicole as the reader!

My daughter picked a book and read it aloud a few times, and then I recorded

her. When she listened to the recording, she immediately wanted to try again—“to make it sound better,” she said. It took a few attempts, but she was pleased with the final result.

Now, making audiobooks has become a hobby, and Nicole is beginning to read more smoothly. Right now, she is recording a story for her little brother to listen to in the car when we travel over winter break.♥



## OUR PURPOSE

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

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