

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

May 2007

Reading on Eagles Wings

Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ *A Tree Is Nice*

What provides shade for people, a home for birds, and a place for a fort? A tree! Janice May Udry's story lists other things a tree is good for, like climbing and swinging from branches. The book explains how to plant your own tree, too. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *Dandelion*

Dandelion the lion gets too dressed up for a "come as you are" tea and taffy party. He wears a brand-new checkered jacket and even takes a dandelion bouquet with him. Hostess Jennifer Giraffe doesn't recognize him and asks him to leave. Don Freeman's story shows it's best to be yourself.



■ *Gone Wild: An Endangered Animal Alphabet*

This alphabet book features a rare animal on every page. Each one is drawn to look like its beginning letter: from A for (Chinese) alligator to Z for (Grevy's) zebra. David McLimans explains why the animals are endangered and gives facts about their habitats.

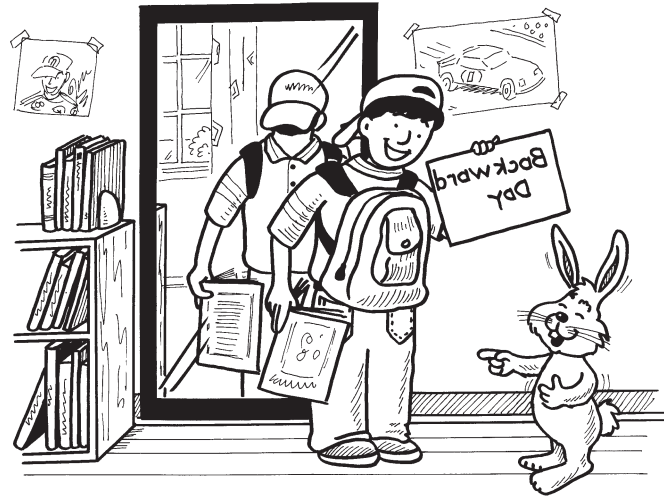


■ *Adèle & Simon*

Barbara McClintock tells of two children strolling through Paris in the early 1900s. Distracted by parades and acrobats, little brother Simon loses his drawing, crayons, scarf, and other things. Readers will enjoy searching for lost items in each picture and tracing the children's route on a map.

Celebrate reading

Encourage your child to read all summer by turning books into reasons for celebration. All you need are trips to the library and a few made-up "holidays" like these.



Backward Day. Wear clothing backward, walk backward, and read books about doing things backward, such as *Silly Sally* by Audrey Wood or *Princess Backwards* by Jane Gray. Have your youngster write his name and other words he knows backward. Hold them up to a mirror, and ask him to read them.

Science Day. Together, read books about science. Make a list of the things your child learns. Read the items aloud—your youngster will be amazed by all he can find out from books. Two series to try: *The Magic School Bus* by Joanna Cole or *Let's-Read-and-Find-Out Science*.

Purple Day. Wear a purple shirt, eat some purple grapes, and get out purple crayons and markers. First, read *Harold and the Purple Crayon* by Crockett Johnson and *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* by Kevin Henkes. Then, have your child draw a purple picture like Harold did or write notes like Lilly's teacher did.

Idea: Celebrate the end of summer—and your youngster's reading progress—with a book picnic. Have him invite a few friends and ask each to bring a favorite book to share. You can take along stuffed friends, too, and read *The Teddy Bears' Picnic* by Jimmy Kennedy.♥

Make your own books

Making books can be as much fun as reading them. Here are two easy ideas:

1. Make a "My Favorite Foods" book out of six paper plates. Your youngster can decorate one plate as the cover and draw meals and snacks on the other five. Below each picture, she can write about the food. Punch two holes along one side of the plates, thread yarn through, and tie tightly to bind.
2. Create an art book with your child's school projects. Have her mount her favorites on small poster board sheets and write a caption for each at the bottom. Staple the pages together with a cover: "Nora's 2006-07 Art Projects".♥



Summer writing

Writing is special when your youngster shares it with others. Have her work on letter-writing skills this summer, and she'll enjoy running to the mailbox to send—and receive—mail.

▲ **Find a pen pal.** Your child can correspond with a friend who's on vacation or has moved away. Suggest topics: "The best thing I did this week was..." or "This summer I want to..." For extra motivation, give her a supply of colorful stationery, envelopes, and pens.

▲ **Create postcards.** Have your child make postcards for a grandparent or a favorite cousin. Take a picture of your



youngster doing something fun outside (running through a sprinkler). Help her write a short note and the address on the back. (Make sure your photos are at least 4 x 6 inches.)

▲ **Write a letter to the editor.** Is there an issue your youngster cares about? Maybe she wishes more people would adopt pets. Read her a few letters to the editor, and help her put ideas down. *Note:* Let your child know the editor can't publish all the letters received, but that her letter will be read. ♥

Fun with Words

Word pairs

Help your child practice reading skills and have fun in the process with this homemade card game.

Start by writing at least six pairs of words (synonyms, rhyming words) on index cards, one for each word. To play, put the cards facedown in three rows of four. Players take turns flipping over two cards at a time. If the cards "match," the player keeps them. Continue until all of the cards are gone. Whoever has the most cards wins.

Make cards for different skills. First, you might use rhyming words (*week, seek; tan, van*). Another day, you can play with antonyms (*up, down; many, few*) or synonyms (*hot, warm; pants, trousers*). To build vocabulary, write a word on one card and its definition on another, and see if your child can match words with their meanings. ♥



Parent to Parent

Listen up, silly!

Some days I felt like I repeated everything I said to my daughter. Once, to find out if she was listening, I said, "There's a porcupine in the front yard!" Danielle immediately looked out the window. That's when I realized I could get her attention by being silly.

Soon I found other ways to get her to listen, too. She likes to catch me making mistakes, so I'll say the wrong thing on purpose. When it's time for lunch, I might say, "Breakfast is ready!" We also enjoy taking quiet "listening walks." We tell each other when we hear sounds like a cat meowing, a train rumbling, or someone practicing the piano.

There are still times Danielle doesn't seem to hear me—but not as often as before we started our listening games! ♥



Q&A Wrapping things up

Q I haven't been able to volunteer at school this year because of work. I'd like to take an afternoon off to help before the year ends. What can I offer to do?

A Schools are busy preparing for summer, so this is a great time to pitch in. Talk to your child's teacher. She may need to take an inventory of classroom supplies or put together student portfolios to send home.

You might be able to help youngsters type in the computer lab or on classroom computers. Or perhaps you can read to children while the teacher works with students who need extra help.

Also, consider asking the office staff how you can lend a hand. They may need you to make copies, file papers, or stuff envelopes. Remember, any time you can give will be appreciated. ♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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