

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

December 2019

Weakley County School System

## Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

### ■ *How to Be a Lion* (Ed Vere)

Some lions believe there's only one way to be a lion and that Leonard is not doing it right. He's gentle and quiet, and his best friend is a duck!



When the other lions try to bully Leonard into changing, he must stand up for himself.

### ■ *A Ticket Around the World*

(Natalia Diaz and Melissa Owens)

Where would your child go if he had a ticket to any place in the world?

The little boy in this book invites readers to explore 13 countries with him—and learn about languages, food, geography, cultures, and more along the way.



### ■ *Anne Arrives* (Kallie George)

The Cuthberts plan to adopt an orphaned boy to help on their farm, and they're disappointed when they get Anne instead. But Anne is determined to prove herself. The first book in the Anne series, in which *Anne of Green Gables* is adapted for beginning readers.

### ■ *Light Makes a Rainbow*

(Sharon Coan)

Learn all about rainbows in this non-fiction book. Simple explanations and colorful photos make it easy for readers to understand what makes rainbows appear. Includes hands-on activities. (Also available in Spanish.)



## Winter literacy traditions

Keep your youngster's language arts skills strong during winter break. Fit reading, writing, speaking, and listening into family traditions with these activities.

### Celebrate reading

Give books a starring role on special days by holding read-a-thons while you sip hot chocolate. For instance, you might read winter-themed books on the first day of winter (December 21). Or on December 31, read about different ways people celebrate New Year's Eve around the world.

### Share news

Help your child launch an annual family newsletter. He could ask relatives to submit short articles about important events during 2019 and then write an article or two of his own. Have him add headlines, draw illustrations, and write captions to complete the first edition!



### Tell stories

Swapping family stories during gatherings builds your youngster's speaking and listening skills. Pull out photos to spark ideas, perhaps ones taken at a wedding or reunion, and invite your youngster to contribute details as everyone reminisces. What songs were played at the reception? What games did he play with his cousins?♥

## Inspired to write

Fill a basket with items that will give your child writing practice. Here are ideas for creating an "inspiration station."

● **Greeting cards.** Let your youngster cut cards in half and turn the fronts into post-cards. She can write messages on the blank sides and mail the cards to relatives.

● **File folders.** Ask your child to glue a magazine picture on one inside panel of each folder. Help her write a story about the picture and glue it on the other inside panel. She could add a title on the front.

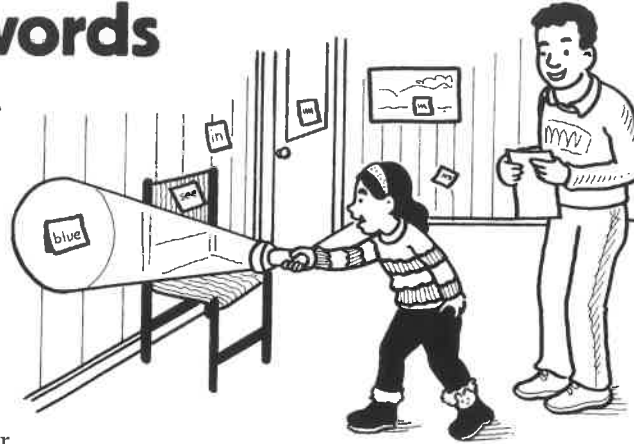
● **Homemade writing paper.** Have your youngster decorate the borders of plain white paper with stickers or stamps. Use a ruler to draw lines she can write on.♥



# 100 “magic” words

Did you know that just 100 words in the English language account for about half of the words beginning readers encounter? Ask your youngster’s teacher or search online for a list of these *high-frequency words*, and use them to play the following games.

**Word search.** Arrange Scrabble tiles in an 8 x 8 grid, spelling several of the words vertically, horizontally, or diagonally. Give your youngster a list of the words you hid. Can she find them all?



**Flashlight tag.** Pick 10 of the words and have your child copy them onto separate sticky notes. Place them randomly around a room. Hand her a flashlight, turn off the lights, and call out the words one by one. It’s her job to shine her “spotlight” around the room looking for the word. Ask her to read each correct word out loud when she finds it.

*Note:* Encourage your youngster to look for high-frequency words when she reads. She may be surprised how common they are—and by how many she can read all by herself.♥

## Fun with Words Spot the comma

When you’re out and about with your child, try to spot as many commas as possible! You’ll help him learn where commas belong and what jobs they do.



See a comma? Read the words it goes with, and tell why it’s there. For example, your youngster might read “lettuce, tomato, and cheese” on a restaurant menu and say that those commas separate words in a series. Or maybe you’ll spot “December 12, 2019” on a newspaper (a comma goes between the date and year). Can he find a place where a comma should be or a comma that’s used incorrectly?♥

## Parent to Parent Five-finger retelling

At school, my son Noah retells stories that he reads so the teacher can see how well he understands them. He recently learned a new retelling strategy that we’re enjoying at home: the five-finger retelling.

We read a story together, and Noah holds up each finger as he retells a different part. For his thumb, he introduces the main character. Then, he holds up a second finger and describes the setting. When he holds up his third, fourth, and fifth fingers, he explains what happened in the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

This has really helped Noah retell stories in sequence, and it works for more than books. We’ve used five-finger retelling to talk about everything from Noah’s day at school to sporting events we’ve attended.♥



## Q&A Reading at the “right” level?

**Q** My daughter often wants to read books that are too hard or too easy for her. Shouldn’t she stick to books at her reading level?

**A** Reading levels help teachers select books that challenge kids just enough to make them better readers. But your child can also enjoy and learn from books that are above or below her level.

When she reads easier books, she gains confidence, becomes a more

fluent reader, and develops a love of reading. More difficult books challenge her vocabulary and comprehension skills and give her a sense of accomplishment—even if she doesn’t “get” everything.

Encourage her to explore any book she’s excited about. If she struggles with a book, offer to read it aloud. She’ll be more motivated to read, and the more she reads, the stronger her skills will grow.♥



**OUR PURPOSE**

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

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