

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

October 2018

Oxford Public Schools

Title I

## Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

### ■ *This Book Just Ate My Dog!*

(Richard Byrne)

When Bella takes her dog for a walk across the pages of this book, he “disappears” into the crease. Everyone who comes to help find him disappears, too—including Bella. It’s up to the reader to rescue them all in this fun picture book.



### ■ *Inspector Flytrap in the da Vinci Cold!*

(Tom Angleberger)

Meet a Venus flytrap who solves mysteries. He travels by skateboard and



has a clue-eating goat sidekick. In this first book in the Inspector Flytrap series,

the clever plant cracks a case about smelly cookies, follows the trail of a missing rose, and more.

### ■ *Living Things and Nonliving Things: A Compare and Contrast Book*

(Kevin Kurtz)

The bright photos in this book encourage readers to compare things they see every day and ask questions. Do all living things move? Do all non-living things stay still? The answers may surprise your youngster!

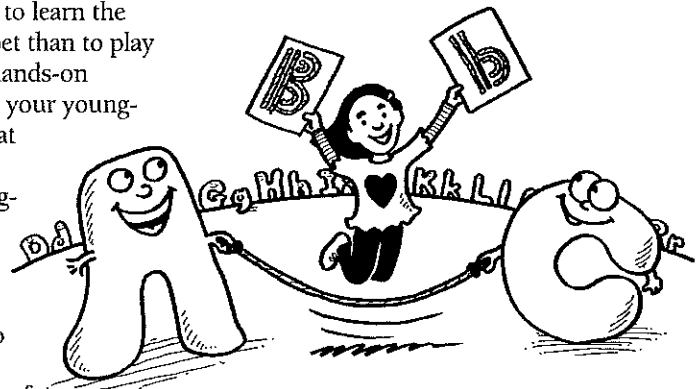
### ■ *United States Capitol*

(Julie Murray)  
Take a glimpse inside the U.S. Capitol in this nonfiction book. Readers learn who works in the Capitol, what jobs they do, and why the building plays an important role in the American government. Part of the U.S. Landmarks series. (Also available in Spanish.)



## A-B-C...play with me

What better way to learn the letters of the alphabet than to play with them? These hands-on activities encourage your youngster to look closely at each letter's unique features so she recognizes the letters when she reads.



### Crafty letters

Ask your child to pick any letter, and write a large version of it on paper for her to trace over with glue. She can cover it with craft supplies (glitter, yarn, toothpicks). Talk about each letter's lines, curves, or loops. (“What will you use for the slanted lines of the A?” or “Good idea to use yarn for the curve of the P.”)

### Secret-letter bag

Can your youngster identify a letter by touch? This activity helps her notice small differences between letters. Secretly choose two magnetic letters with similar features, and put them in a brown paper

bag. Examples: E and F, M and N, or O and Q. Have her reach in without looking, feel both letters, and name them.

### Letter match

Use a set of uppercase letter tiles from a game, or let your child make her own “tiles” by printing each capital letter on a separate scrap of paper. Place the letters in a bowl. Now help your youngster write all the lowercase letters randomly on a sheet of paper. Take turns drawing a tile from the bowl and placing it over the matching letter on the paper (A on a, B on b).♥

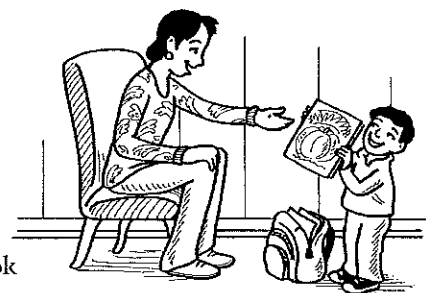
## “What did you read in school today?”

Reading is a big part of your youngster's day at school. Show interest by asking about books he listened to or read. Here's how.

1. Have your child tell you the title of a book his teacher read aloud or that he read by himself.

2. Ask him what he learned from the book or what it was about. Maybe the teacher read a nonfiction book on pumpkins—can he describe how pumpkins grow? Or perhaps he chose a graphic novel about dragons during silent reading time.

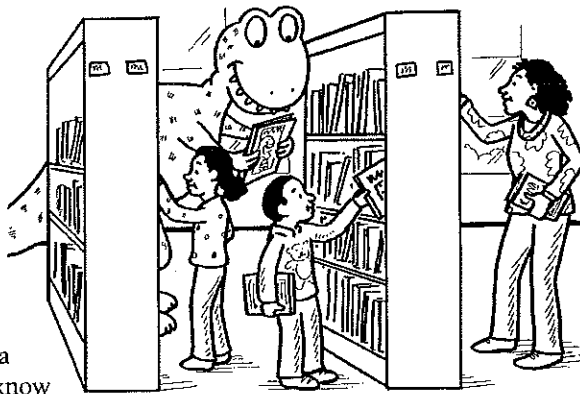
3. Suggest that he draw a picture of his favorite part of a story. Let him describe the action in the book, using his drawing as a guide.♥



# Make the most of library visits

Regular trips to the library make reading a habit that will benefit your child throughout his school years—and his life. Try these tips for putting library visits into your family routine.

**Before you go.** “Advertise” the library as a source of information. You might say, “I know you love construction vehicles. We should check out a book about them.” Show him how you use the library, too.



*Example:* “I need some slow-cooker recipes. I bet we’ll find a cookbook that’ll help.”

**While you’re there.** Take time to explore together and become familiar with the layout. The more at home your youngster feels, the more he’ll enjoy the library. He can share his discoveries with you, too. He may be excited to find a shelf of sports books or more titles in a favorite series.

**Back at home.** Suggest that your child showcase the books he checked out by creating displays like those he saw at the library. For instance, he could put plastic farm animals on a table with books about farms. He might even hold story hour for your family—just like at the library.♥

## Fun with Words Be a word collector

*Galaxy, crimson, caterpillar...* your youngster can grow her vocabulary by collecting words that look or sound interesting to her.

When your child finds a word she likes, help her write it on a craft stick and add it to a jar. *Tip:* If she doesn’t know a word’s meaning, look it up in a dictionary together.



Now encourage your youngster to play with her collection so the words become familiar. For instance, she might sort them into categories (colors, animals) or by number of syllables. Or take turns pulling out a random word and giving each other clues to guess it. For *crimson*, you could say, “My word is a color. It’s a shade of red.”

*Note:* It’s okay if your child chooses words she can’t read. Youngsters can say and understand big words like *triceratops* or *nectarine* long before they’re able to read them!♥

### OUR PURPOSE

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

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## Autumn writing

Fall is full of fun reasons to write. Encourage your youngster to write words or sentences with these seasonal activities.

### Fall shapes

Together, draw and cut out leaves, apples, and other fall shapes from construction paper. On each one, help your child write the object’s name (“leaf”) or something he does with it (“I like to jump in leaves”). Then, let him use the shapes to decorate his bedroom.



### Five senses

Your youngster can use his senses to enjoy autumn activities. Suggest that he make a five-senses chart with columns labeled “I saw,” “I heard,” “I smelled,” “I tasted,” and “I touched.” He can write words or draw pictures to go with the labels (an orange leaf beneath “I saw,” an apple pie under “I tasted”).♥

## Q&A Support for speech therapy

Q My daughter receives speech therapy at school. We do exercises at home that the speech therapist recommends, but are there other ways we can help her make progress?

A Reading with your child is a fun way to practice speech at home. Take turns reading aloud from a book. When it’s her turn, she can point out words that contain sounds she’s working on and say them out loud.



Help her find words with the target sound at the beginning, middle, and end so she practices saying it in all parts of words. For instance, if she’s focusing on *ch*, she might find *chair*, *ketchup*, and *beach*. While she reads, ask her to show you how the therapist teaches her to form the sounds with her lips and tongue.

Finally, be sure to read with your daughter just for fun, too. Not every reading experience needs to turn into speech practice—it’s important for her to read simply for the joy of reading.♥

# Math+Science Connection

Building Excitement and Success for Young Children

October 2018

Oxford Public Schools

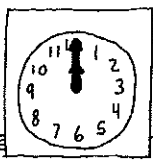
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## TOOLS & TIDBITS

### Telling time

Let your youngster practice writing and telling time by drawing a clock for each part of her day. She might draw a digital clock saying 7:00 a.m. and write "Wake up" next to it, and an analog clock showing 12:00 for "Lunch." Then, help her read a real clock when she does each activity.



### Marshmallow science

With your child, microwave a marshmallow for 30 seconds to see what happens. It gets bigger! Explain that air is the "secret" ingredient that makes marshmallows puffy. When air gets hot, it moves around faster—that's what made his microwaved marshmallow inflate. *Safety note:* Tell your youngster not to use the microwave alone.

### Web picks

At [mathcats.com](http://mathcats.com), your youngster can join the "cats" to balance objects on a scale, solve brainteasers, do math crafts, and more.

Let your child explore space science at [nasa.gov/kidsclub](http://nasa.gov/kidsclub). Includes a printable International Space Station activity book.

## Just for fun

**Q:** Which clown wears the biggest shoes?

**A:** The one with the biggest feet.



## See that shape!

Where could your youngster find a triangle in real life? How many sides does a hexagon have? These ideas will help your child recognize and compare everyday shapes.

### Create a collage

Give your youngster old catalogs or magazines, and have him cut out pictures of items that are all different shapes. Now he can glue the pictures on construction paper and tell you about the shapes he found. "The yield sign is a triangle." "The cheeseburger is a circle!"

### Play "Shape War"

This card game lets your child learn how many sides each shape has. On index cards, help him draw and write the names of different shapes, one per card: triangles, squares, rectangles, trapezoids, pentagons (5 sides), hexagons (6 sides), and octagons (8 sides). Shuffle the cards, and deal them in facedown stacks to each player. Flip over your top card, and count the sides of the shape—the high number



wins the cards. (In a tie, play a second card.) Collect all of the cards to win.

### Make a block sorter

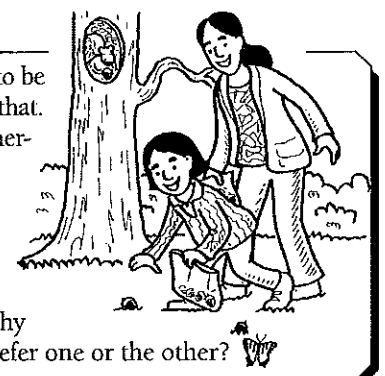
Suggest that your youngster sort his blocks by shape. Have him gather one block each with a circle, square, rectangle, and triangle on its *face* (its flat side). Help him trace around each face on a shoebox lid and cut out the shapes. Put the lid back on the shoebox so he can drop his blocks into the matching holes. As he sorts, encourage him to make connections between flat and solid shapes. ("The cube has six square faces.")

## Where did I put those acorns?

A fun way to learn about animals is to pretend to be one! With this acorn hunt, your child will do just that.

Go outside together, and look for squirrels gathering acorns. Does your youngster know that some species of squirrels hide all their nuts in one spot, while others hide them in multiple places?

Now, let your child gather a dozen acorns and put them in a bag. Indoors, hide the nuts for each other to find. Try both storage strategies. Why does your youngster think the squirrels might prefer one or the other?

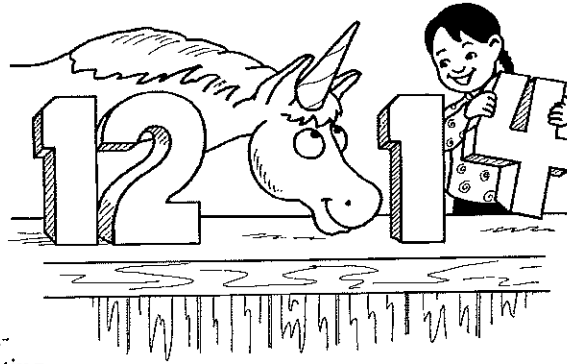


# Counting on

If you ask your child to count to 5 or 10, she'll probably start with the number 1. Help her learn to start at 3 or 6 instead—she'll practice *counting on*, an important part of number sense.

## “Unicorn” counting

This game encourages your youngster to think about which number comes next, the first step in counting on. Together, count to 20, taking turns saying the numbers. The catch? On any turn, you may say “Unicorn” rather than the next number. For instance, if your child says 12 and you



say “Unicorn,” she must think, “What number comes after 12?” When she realizes it’s 13, she’ll know to say 14 next.

## Roll and count

A roll of the dice determines which number your youngster will count *from* and *to*. First, have your child roll 1 die. This is the number she’ll start counting at (say, 3).

Then, she should roll 2 dice and add them together (perhaps  $5 + 4 = 9$ ).

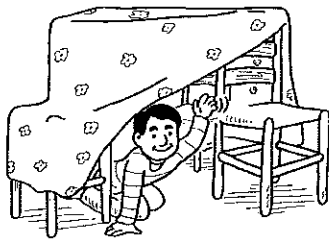
The total indicates which number to count to. So she would count from 3 to 9—by saying, “3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.” Now it’s your turn to roll and count.



## SCIENCE LAB Engineer a play fort

Building forts out of chairs and sheets is a childhood tradition. Encourage your youngster to think like an engineer and make the sturdiest fort possible.

He might start by simply placing a sheet over several chairs. He can go in and out of his fort a few times to test it. What happens? The ceiling may sag, or the sheet might slip off the chairs.



How could your child improve his design? Maybe he’ll put another chair in the middle to support the ceiling. Or perhaps he will place heavy books on the chairs to keep the sheet in place.

Now let him enter and exit the fort again. If the sheet still sags or falls down, he can redesign—and retest—until his fort is sturdy enough to play in!

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## PARENT TO PARENT

### Different strategies, same solution

In school, my son is learning to find different ways to solve the same math problem. At dinner one night, he asked if he could give us a problem and see how everyone came up with solutions.

Andy chose  $24 + 24$ . I was surprised by how many ways we found to solve it—and by the “heated” debate that followed!

Andy added the tens ( $2 \text{ tens} + 2 \text{ tens} = 4 \text{ tens}$ , or 40) and then the ones ( $4 + 4 = 8$ ) to get 48. My teenage daughter Lisa insisted it was easier to think in terms of money. She said 1 quarter is worth 25 cents, 2 quarters equal 50 cents, and 24 is 1 less than 25, so the answer is 48. And I said that  $24 + 10 = 34$ ,  $34 + 10 = 44$ , and  $44 + 4 = 48$ .

It was fun to debate about different strategies. And now we’ve decided to make “Dinner Problem of the Day” a nightly event.



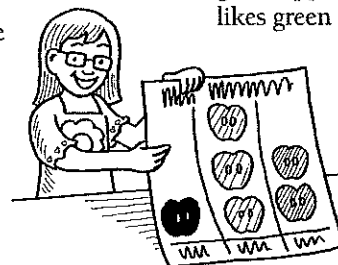
## MATH CORNER Apples: Taste and graph

Find out which apple wins the popularity contest with this taste test and colorful apple-print graph.

**Materials:** red, yellow, and green apples; paper and pencil; poster board; red, yellow, and green paint

1. Slice apples, and have your child set them out for everyone to taste.

2. Your youngster can ask each person which color apple they like best and record their answers.



3. Help her create a graph by dividing poster board into three columns labeled “Red,” “Yellow,” and “Green.”

4. Cut apples in half, and let her dip the cut sides into paint to stamp an apple print for each person’s vote. (Stamp a green apple in the green column if Mom likes green apples best.)

5. Encourage her to use her graph to report on the data. How many more people liked red apples than yellow ones? Which two colors got the same number of votes?