

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

February 2012

Holyoke Public Schools
Curriculum Department

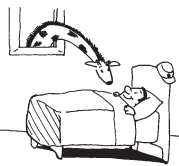
Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ A Sick Day for Amos McGee

Zookeeper Amos McGee always takes good care of his animals. So when he has a cold, the animals go to his house and take care of him. They play games, read to him, and make sure he is warm and comfortable. A tale of friendship by Philip Stead. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ Airplanes: Soaring! Diving! Turning!

Readers will discover many different kinds of airplanes in this fact-filled book by Patricia Hubbell. Your child will learn the purpose of each plane, from familiar passenger jets to hydroplanes and crop dusters.



■ Amelia Bedelia's First Valentine

Fans of grown-up Amelia Bedelia will love this story about the goofy housekeeper as a child. Amelia is confused by figures of speech, so on Valentine's Day, she thinks a "cutie pie" is something you eat, and she can't figure out how to wear her heart on her sleeve. The first book in Herman Parish's series about young Amelia.

■ Ten Grouchy Groundhogs

After being stuck in the ground all winter, the groundhogs are not in a good mood. In this cute story by Kathryn Heling and Deborah Hembrook, your youngster can count backward from 10 as each animal pops out of the crowded den on Groundhog Day.



Let's sing!

Your child might know "The Farmer in the Dell" and "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" by heart—but does she know what words like "dell" and "merrily" mean? She can use familiar songs to learn new words, play with rhymes, and practice reading and writing. Here's how.



Figure out meanings

When you sing with your youngster, talk about what the lyrics mean. If she doesn't know a word, see if she can figure it out from the context of the line. ("Mary had a little lamb. Its fleece was white as snow." What could *fleece* be?) Or help her look it up in the dictionary.

Write lyrics

Your child can learn about rhymes by making up lyrics to favorite tunes. First, have her pick a song and name the rhyming words. For example, "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" includes "star" and

"are," and "high" and "sky." Then, help her write her own rhyming lines. ("Sparkle, sparkle, little moon, where do you hide when it's noon?") Finally, sing the song with her.

Read song books

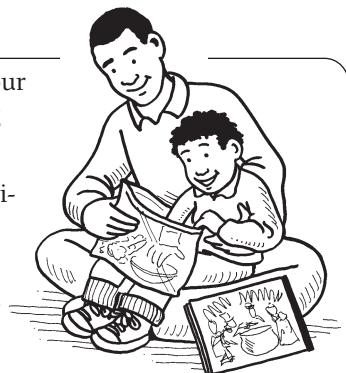
Ask a librarian for picture-book versions of songs, such as "My Favorite Things" or "Down by the Bay." When you read them with your child, have her point to things in the illustrations and find the matching lyrics ("raindrops on roses," "llamas eating their pajamas"). *Idea:* Encourage your youngster to write out the words and illustrate a song. ♥

Story-in-a-bag

These activity bags make reading extra fun. Let your youngster choose a book and place it in a zipper bag along with the following:

● **Props.** Add household items and toys that are similar to objects and characters in the book. Your child can use them to act out the story as he reads. For example, props for *Stone Soup* (Marcia Brown) could include rocks, a small bowl, and plastic vegetables.

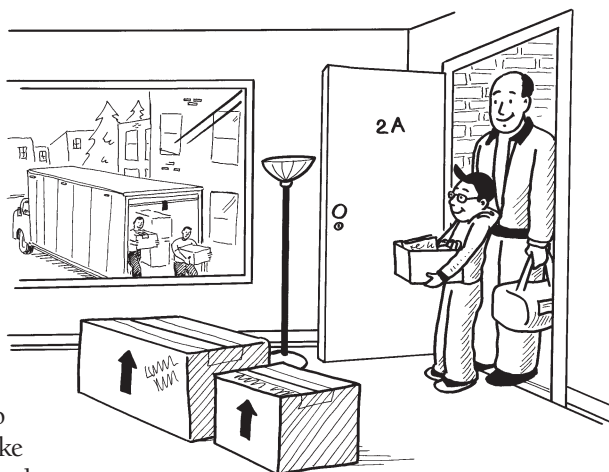
● **Craft supplies.** Include materials (paper, crayons, scissors, glue) so your youngster can do a project related to the book. He might design a bookmark showing what happens in the story or create a mask that looks like a character. ♥



Connecting with books

“We live in a tall apartment building, just like the family in this book!” It’s easier for your child to understand a story if he can relate to it. Here are tips for helping him connect with books:

- When you’re reading a book that reminds you of something, point it out to your youngster. *Example:* “I ride a train like that to work.” Then, encourage him to do the same. You might ask, “Who does that character look like?” or, “Have you ever been to a place like that?”



- Use your child’s experiences to increase his understanding of a story. For instance, ask him to use what he knows about birthdays to predict what will happen during a party in the book (“The kids are probably going to play games and eat cake”).

- Help your youngster find books that are related to an upcoming event in his life. If you’re moving, try *Boomer’s Big Day* (Constance McGeorge).

Talk about how the character feels (confused, nervous) and what your child might experience (packing belongings, meeting new neighbors). ♥

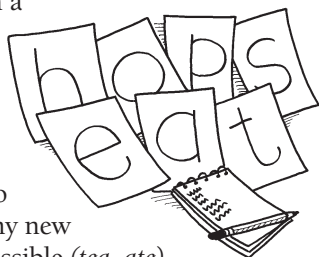
Fun with Words

Rearrange a word

What do “Abby” and “baby” have in common? They are *anagrams*—words that have the exact same letters in a different order. Your child can learn to unscramble words with this anagram activity.

Have your youngster start by writing each letter of the alphabet on a separate sheet of paper. Then, think of a three-letter word (*eat*), and put the letters for the word on a table or on the floor.

Ask your child to rearrange the letters to spell as many new words as possible (*tea, ate*).



Next, give her a four-letter word and see if she can spell new words using those letters (*care, race; hops, shop*). Then, switch roles and let her think of anagrams for you.

Idea: Have your child keep a running list of all the words the two of you spell—she’ll have a collection of anagrams. ♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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Q&A

Choosing read-alouds

Q I know it’s important to read aloud to my daughter, but I’m not sure how to pick the right books. What do you suggest?

A It’s a good idea to read a wide variety of books, from fairy tales to nonfiction, so that your daughter will be exposed to many genres.

Books with repeating lines are especially fun to read aloud. Youngsters love hearing, “I’ll huff, and I’ll puff, and I’ll blow your house down!” from *The Three Little Pigs*. Detailed illustrations, like those in books by Jan Brett, hold children’s attention because there’s so much to look at on each page. And be sure to read books that you enjoyed when you were little. Knowing that you liked a book when you were her age will get your child excited about reading it.

Finally, when you’re considering a book, read the first few pages to decide whether you think it will capture your youngster’s attention. If the story appeals to her right away, she’ll want to keep listening. ♥



Parent to Parent

Write an instruction manual

My son Rodney loves Play-Doh, and he always comes up with such creative ideas. One day, I suggested that he write directions for his inventions so his friends or siblings could make them, too.

Rodney decided to write an instruction manual for putting together a Play-Doh cheeseburger. He took a photo of each step—making the bun, forming the patty, slicing the cheese, and creating the toppings. He

glued each photo on a sheet of paper, and I helped him write directions underneath. For example, to go with his picture of a Play-Doh tomato slice, we wrote, “Roll red dough into a ball. Flatten it.”

Then, Rodney and I stapled together the pages of his manual. When his friend Jesse came over after school, Rodney showed him the booklet, and Jesse was able to follow the instructions easily.

Next, Rodney wants to write directions for creating a real ice cream sundae! ♥

