



Dennis-Yarmouth Title I Newsletter

Volume 1 issue I

From the Title I Coordinator

Welcome As October rolls in as a fat pumpkin, Title I is up and running in all our Title I schools. If you have not met with your child's Title I teacher, please make an appointment and be sure to sign the Home/School Compact. We need to have a signed one on file for every child in Title I.

Next month, November, is Massachusetts Family Literacy Month. Watch for notices from your child's school for events to celebrate this month. Listed below are some activities that you could practice at home. And while we ask you to do them in the month of November, we hope that they will become a practice which will remain for the rest of your lives.

- © Set aside time each day for literacy related activities, such as, reading with your child for 20—30 minutes per day.
- © When you watch a video or movie, read the book version and discuss the story.
- © Share and discuss current news, sports, cultural, or school events.
- © Host a reading, science, art, dance, or music activity at your home and ask neighbors to take turns as hosts.
- © Create family portfolios reflecting pictures, stories, poems, and drawings with captions.
- © Support schools in coordinating family literacy/learning hours before and/or after school.
- © Develop a family action plan for wellness, such as nutrition, stress management, exercise, etc.



- Parents on the Title I Board of Directors:
- MES: Darlene Johnson Morris
- MMS: Kathy Boltz
- EHBi: Leigh Ann DeVasto
- SAE: We need someone to volunteer

IN THIS ISSUE

Home School Connection
p. 2-3

Math+Science Connection
pp. 4-5

Reading Connection
pp. 6-7

Building Readers Readiness
pp. 8-9

Building Readers Elementary
pp. 10-11

Reading Connection Intermediate
pp. 12-13

Recipes for Success
pp. 14-15

Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION®

September 2016

Dennis Yarmouth Title I Program



SHORT NOTES

I can visualize it

Whether your child is reading or doing math, being able to “see” the material can help her understand it. For example, have her sketch a scene from a story or draw a map of the setting. Or she might use objects to solve a math problem. For $15 \div 3$, she could arrange 15 barrettes into 3 equal groups to find the answer (5).

Update your information

Has your contact information changed since spring? Check that your youngster's school has your correct home address, phone numbers, and email addresses on file. That way, teachers and staff will know the best way to reach you about school events, concerns with your child, or emergency closings.

Trait of the week

Encourage good character all year long! Each week, vote on a trait to celebrate, such as respect, honesty, or tolerance. Ask your youngster to create a poster illustrating the trait, and hang it up. Then, family members can look for examples and jot them on the poster. At the end of the week, read the examples aloud—and vote on a new trait.

Worth quoting

“If you can dream it, you can do it.”
Walt Disney

JUST FOR FUN

Q: Where can you find hippos?

A: It depends on where you hide them!



Launch into learning

Three...two...one...blast off! It's a brand-new school year, and your child's mission is to learn. With these tips, he'll land in class ready to succeed.

3...Build excitement

Help your youngster get revved up about what he'll learn this year. To find out what's ahead, attend back-to-school night, talk to his teacher, and check the school website. Find topics you think will interest him, and read about them together in library books or online.

Look for hands-on opportunities to get him excited, such as visiting a public garden or planting seeds at home if he's going to study plant life cycles.

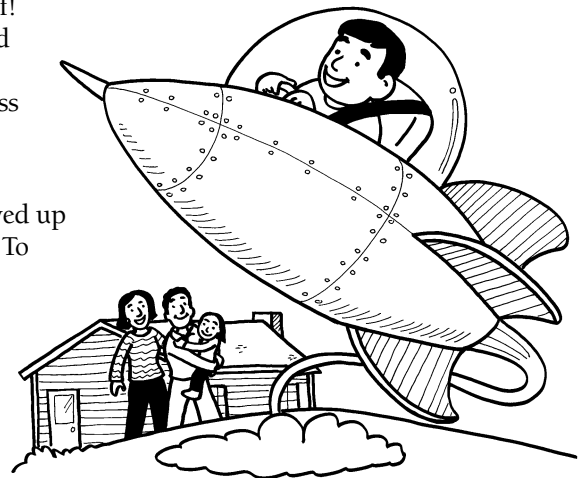
2...Set goals

Specific, doable goals are critical to any successful mission. Let your child write goals and “due dates” on strips of construction paper (“I will finish long-term projects one day early so I have time to review them”). He can loop the strips together into a paper chain, then

cut off each link as he achieves the goal. With hard work, he'll be able to say, “Mission accomplished!”

1...Develop routines

Your youngster will blast off ready to learn if he is well rested, well fed, and active. Set a bedtime that gives him the recommended 9–11 hours of sleep. Make sure he wakes up early enough to enjoy a healthy breakfast. Also, try to see that he gets at least an hour of physical activity a day.♥



In school every day

Did you know that attending school regularly will affect how well your youngster does this year *and* in later grades? Use these suggestions to help her get an A+ in attendance.

● **Stay healthy.** Remind your child to wash her hands with soap and water before eating and after using the restroom or playing outside. Also, work with your pediatrician if your youngster has a chronic condition, such as allergies or asthma, that could cause her to miss school.

● **Address problems.** If your child wants to stay home when she's not sick, ask why. Talk to her teacher if this happens frequently or if you suspect a bigger issue. For example, struggling with schoolwork and being bullied are two common reasons for wanting to avoid school.♥



Building friendships

Children with friends enjoy school more, develop important social skills, and even do better academically. Here are ways to help your child build and strengthen friendships.

Find shared interests. Suggest that your youngster ask classmates what they do in their spare time and ask follow-up questions to show she cares. ("What's your favorite skateboard trick?") Then, she could talk about her own interests, whether she likes solving her Rubik's Cube or crocheting hats. She and a classmate may discover new activities to



share—which can naturally lead to friendships.

Be a good friend. Talk to your child about what you value in your friendships, and ask about hers. You might say, "I can always count on Debbie at work to help me think of ideas when I'm stuck."

Perhaps your youngster will say, "Maddie invites me to play at recess even when she's with the older girls from her class." She'll realize which traits she values in a friend, such as dependability and loyalty. Discuss ways she could show those traits, too (helping friends study, making them feel included).

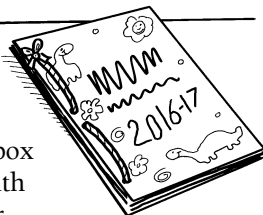
Note: Does your child struggle to make friends or complain she has no friends? Have her teacher recommend a classmate who may be a good match. Then, contact the other parent to arrange a get-together.♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

My school-year memory book

Encourage your youngster to create a personalized memory book this school year. It will give him a place to save schoolwork he's proud of and provide a nice keepsake for both of you.

1. To make the front and back covers, have him cut off the large panels of a cereal box and cover them with construction paper.



2. Let him write his name, the year, his school, and his teacher's name on the front. He can decorate both panels with stickers or drawings.

3. Hole-punch the covers, thread yarn through, and tie loosely so it's easy to untie and add pages.

4. As the school year goes on, he might add graded assignments, artwork, programs from plays or concerts, and notes from teachers.

Keep his memory book in a special spot so you can both enjoy looking through it this school year—and beyond.♥



Q & A

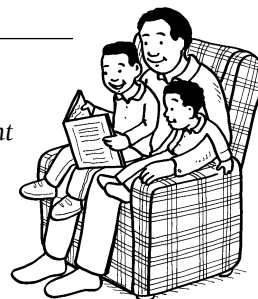
A reading habit

Q: This year, my son has a daily homework assignment to read for 20 minutes. What should we do to make sure this happens?

A: Reading every day is one of the best ways for a child to become a strong reader, and it's great that you're eager to help.

Some evenings, you could invite him to read to you. He'll practice reading, and you'll get to hear how he's doing. On other nights, hold family reading time where everyone quietly reads their own books, newspapers, or magazines. Your son might also enjoy reading aloud to younger siblings.

Here's another suggestion: If you normally read him a bedtime story, try ending your nightly routine by reading one chapter aloud. Does he want to know what will happen next? He can continue reading on his own for 20 minutes to find out!♥



PARENT TO PARENT

Stay safe online

My daughter Sierra brought home an "online safety contract" that listed classroom rules for using the Internet. After we read it together and Sierra signed it, we decided to create our own version at home. We borrowed some ideas from the school form like:

- Keep usernames and passwords private.
- Do not post personal information online.
- Only respond to messages from people you know.



- Then, we added a few rules of our own:
- Turn on "safe mode" when using a search engine.
 - Do not create social media accounts.

Sierra helped me write out the contract, and everyone in our family signed it. We posted it by our computer as a reminder. While I still supervise my kids online, I feel better having a written agreement as an extra layer of protection.♥

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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Math+Science Connection

Beginning Edition

Building Excitement and Success for Young Children

September 2016

Dennis Yarmouth Title I Program



TOOLS & TIDBITS

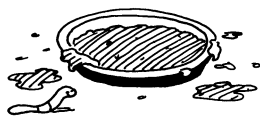
Measure your name

Ask your youngster how long his name is.

He'll probably tell you the number of letters, which is one way of measuring. But what if he wrote it down and measured it with paper clips or dry macaroni? How many paper clips long is his name? Have him write his name larger and smaller. How do his measurements change?

Mud pies

Science learning can occur anywhere, even in a patch of mud. Encourage



your child to pose questions while she squishes

mud between her fingers. She might wonder what will happen to her mud pies overnight. What if it rains? Or what would the mud's texture feel like if she added sand? Let her experiment and observe what happens.

Book picks

■ *One Hundred Hungry Ants* (Elinor J. Pinczes) will delight your youngster as he follows these silly ants intent on dividing into smaller and smaller groups.

■ Whether exploring plants, ice, or engineering, your child will find something to love in *The Curious Kid's Science Book: 100+ Creative Hands-on Activities for Ages 4–8* (Asia Citro).

Just for fun

Q: How do fish pay for things?

A: With sand dollars.



Down—and up—for the count

Counting crayons, counting toys, counting girls, counting boys—this is just the beginning of a life full of numbers! Try these clever counting activities with your youngster.

Number stack

Use blocks and a die for this fun counting game. The first player rolls the die and stacks that number of blocks, counting as she goes. (Roll a 4, stack 4 blocks, and say, “1, 2, 3, 4.”) The next player rolls and counts to make her own stack. Keep rolling and adding. After three rounds, who has the highest tower?

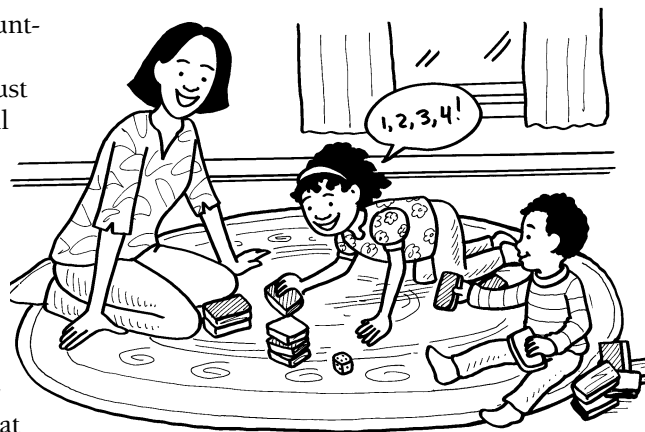
A whole handful

Fill a bag with 10 small items (pom-poms, marshmallows, beads). Let your child reach in and grab a handful. Have her look at the handful, estimate how many she grabbed, and write down the number. Then, she can count the objects. How close was her estimate? Put the items back, and now it's your turn to

grab, estimate, and count. Learning to estimate will help her see if her math answers make sense. *Tip:* When she's comfortable estimating up to 10 objects, try again with 20.

Forward and back

Name any two-digit number. Challenge your youngster to count the next three numbers (for 17, she would count “18, 19, 20”). Then, ask her to count *backward* three numbers from your original number (“16, 15, 14”). Now she names a number for you to count from, forward and backward. 🦋



On a roll

Will a dinner roll actually roll down a hill? What about a fork? Let your child play junior scientist by classifying (sorting into groups) objects by whether or not they roll.

Suggest he build a ramp by propping one end of a cookie sheet on a box. Together, gather household items like rolls, silverware, toilet paper, cards, shoes, and balls.

Have him predict which items will roll. He should place the items, one by one, at the top of his ramp and let go. Which ones roll? After he sorts the objects into two piles—those that roll and those that don't—ask him what's similar about each group. He might say the ones that roll have rounded edges, while the ones that don't roll have straight edges. 🦋



Stay in shape

Exercising your youngster's thinking muscles by identifying shapes and their characteristics is a great way to pass time.

● **I can spy it.** At home or on the go, play I Spy with shapes. Your child might spot a sign and say, "I spy a circle." Then, you try to identify what he's spying. Now it's your turn to spy a shape and have him find the object.

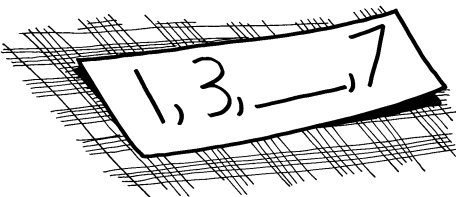


● **I can move it.** Let your youngster draw a game board with 20 squares, marking the ends "Start" and "Finish." On separate scraps of paper, have him draw a square, rectangle, triangle, and pentagon. Put the scraps facedown. On each turn, a player picks a slip, counts the shape's sides, and moves a token that number. For example, if you get a triangle, you would move 3 spaces. First to the finish line wins. *Variation:* Add shapes like trapezoids and hexagons. Or move by the number of vertices (corners)—your child will see that the number of vertices equals the number of sides.

Q & A Follow my pattern

Q: My daughter is learning about patterns at school. What are some ways to practice with her at home?

A: Working with patterns will help your child think logically and also prepare her for more complex math like multiplication and algebra later on.



Ask your daughter to act out a noisy-wiggle pattern of actions and sounds—and then you have to figure out what goes next. She could clap, jump, jump, whistle, clap, jump, jump. You would continue her pattern by doing what's next (whistling). Take turns making up fun patterns for each other to complete.

Make patterns with numbers, too. You could say, "1, 3, 5" and ask what comes next (7). Or write down a pattern and leave a blank: 1, 3, —, 7. She supplies the "5" to complete the sequence.

SCIENCE LAB

Something smells good

Your child will learn how her sense of smell affects taste in this yummy experiment.

You'll need: two flavors of pudding or yogurt, blindfold, spoons

Here's how: Blindfold your youngster so she can't see the food, and have her pinch her nose. Then give her a taste of each flavor. Ask her if she can identify the flavors.

What happens? It will be hard for her to tell the difference between the two foods.

Why? The brain uses taste *and* smell to recognize what we're eating. When the sense of smell is blocked, the brain often can't tell the difference between foods of similar textures.

Idea: Have your child unplug her nose partway through eating—can she identify the flavors now? Try again with the blindfold only. Or do the experiment with food that has a different texture, such as fruit chews or jelly beans.



MATH CORNER

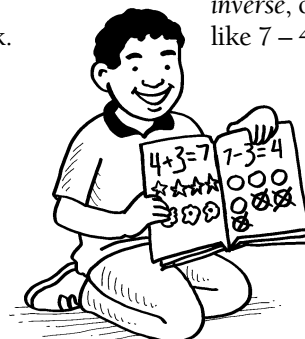
The pluses and minuses

Hot and cold... day and night... addition and subtraction. Show your youngster how addition and subtraction are opposites when he makes this book.

Help him stack several pieces of paper together, fold them in half, and staple them together along the crease. On a left-hand page, he can write and illustrate an addition problem, such as

$4 + 3 = 7$, using stickers, drawings, or thumbprints. On the facing right-hand page, have him write and illustrate an *inverse*, or opposite, subtraction problem like $7 - 4 = 3$ or $7 - 3 = 4$.

Encourage your child to fill the other pages with more inverse problems, perhaps $5 + 6 = 11$ and $11 - 6 = 5$, or $8 + 8 = 16$ and $16 - 8 = 8$. When he finishes, he can read his addition and subtraction book to you!



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Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

September 2016

Dennis Yarmouth Title I Program

Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ **Dad's First Day** (Mike Wohnoutka)

In this twist on a first-day-of-school story, Oliver's dad is the one who is nervous. Oliver is excited, but his dad isn't ready for summer to end or for his son to start school. Your child will laugh as the dad complains of a tummy ache and ends up having a tantrum when it's time to leave Oliver at school.



■ **Ruby Lu Brave and True** (Lenore Look)

Ruby Lu lives in Seattle with her family. She loves to put on backyard magic shows and dress up. But she doesn't love going to Chinese school on Saturdays. This first book in the Ruby Lu series includes "Ruby's Fantastic Glossary and Pronunciation Guide" with Chinese words.

■ **Edmund Unravels** (Andrew Kolb)

A ball of yarn named Edmund always loved adventure and travel. But whenever he went too far, he'd unravel, and his parents had to wind him back up. As he gets older and bigger, Edmund goes farther away to explore the world. The farther he goes, the smaller he gets, and eventually he misses the familiar tug from his family.



■ **Ada's Violin** (Susan Hood)

Read the true story of an orchestra in Paraguay that plays instruments made entirely from recycled materials. Young Ada never thought she'd be able to play the violin until a new music teacher got creative with materials found in a landfill. (Also available in Spanish.)



Fall into reading

Autumn is quickly approaching! Your youngster can learn all about the new season while he practices reading for information. Here are fun opportunities.

Collect facts

How do pumpkins grow? Why do leaves fall off trees? Read non-fiction library books about fall, and encourage your child to listen for interesting facts. Then, let him cut out autumn shapes (pumpkins, leaves) from construction paper, and help him write down the facts. *Example:* "Pumpkins grow on vines." He could hang up the shapes for a colorful autumn display to read again and again.



Read autumn "news"

Take a walk around town, and look for fall-related announcements. A police station sign might remind drivers that students are back at school, a street banner may announce an autumn festival, and a sign in a store window could advertise

a fall sale. Ask your youngster to read any words he knows, and read the rest to him.

Research fall produce

Visit an apple orchard, a farmers' market, or the grocery store, and help your child discover fall fruits and vegetables. Together, read signs or brochures to learn about them. For instance, which apples are more popular for baking pies—Golden Delicious or Granny Smith? Where was the cauliflower grown? What is quince used for?♥

Show me what you wrote in school

Invite your child to "read" a story she wrote in class. You might be treated to an elaborate tale while she points to a drawing with random letters underneath—that's okay! She has picked up on the fact that printed words tell a story, and she is taking her first steps toward writing them.

Then, encourage her to talk about her writing by asking open-ended questions like these:

- "How did you come up with the idea for your story?"
- "What do you think will happen to the characters next?"
- "Does the story remind you of anything that has happened in real life?"♥



Alphabet fun

Lines, loops, circles, and tails...each letter of the alphabet has its own shape. And being able to instantly recognize every uppercase and lowercase letter is an important foundation for reading success. Try these activities.

ABC collage. Have your youngster cut out letters in different colors and sizes from cereal boxes, magazines, newspapers,



and catalogs. She can arrange and glue them onto paper however she likes. Take turns pointing to a letter and saying its name. This will help her recognize letters out of order and in various sizes and fonts.

Mystery letter. What has one big vertical line with three smaller horizontal lines attached to it? (A capital E.) Think of a letter, and give your child directions to draw it on

paper. For a lowercase g, you might say, "Make a circle at the top. Add a tail going down that curves up to the left." Can she tell you what letter she made? Next, she could give you one to draw. She'll learn to notice small differences between letters—a key to mastering letter recognition. For example, ask her what happens if she erases the bottom horizontal line on a capital E. She has an F!♥

Parent to Parent

Pictures contain clues

My son Jackson is just starting to read, and he often looks at the pictures to help him figure out words. I wondered if he should be sounding out words instead, so I asked his teacher.

To my surprise, Mrs. Thomas said using picture clues and sounding out words are both good strategies for early readers.



For example, Jackson might come to a word that starts with R and see a rainbow in the illustration. Using what he knows about beginning sounds, he could guess that the R word is rainbow. Mrs. Thomas said this builds confidence and teaches children to try different strategies.

She suggested that when Jackson and I choose library books, we get some with just a few words on each page and pictures that match. A librarian helped us find books, and Jackson is enjoying practicing his reading strategies at home.♥



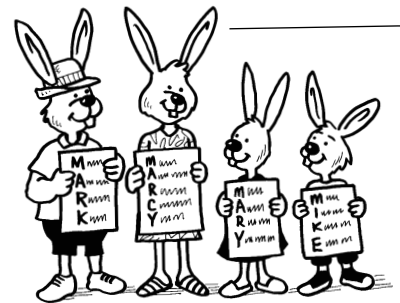
Fun with Words

Family acrostics

Your youngster will stretch his vocabulary as he selects just the right words to describe himself and his family.

On separate sheets of paper, have family members write their first names down the left margin. Then, each person adds a word or phrase that begins with each letter in his name and tells something about him. For instance, Luke might think of "Loves to laugh," for L and "Ultra strong" for U. *Note:* Keep a dictionary on hand in case anyone gets stuck.

When everyone is finished, read your acrostics to each other. Next, work together to make one with your last name. Maybe the Barr family will write, "Barbecue fans, Adventurers, Readers, Riders of bikes."♥



Q&A Fine-motor play

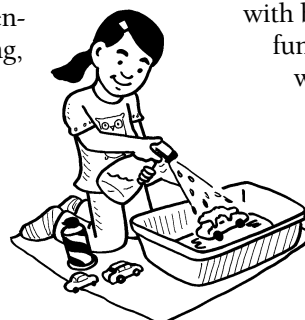
Q My daughter is just learning to use a pencil and cut with scissors. Can you suggest ways I can help her practice at home?

A Playtime is ideal for strengthening little hands for writing, cutting, and other fine-motor tasks.

For example, let your daughter make a car wash for her toy cars. In a sink or big plastic bin, she can squirt shaving cream onto her vehicles and use a spray bottle to rinse them off. Pressing the dispenser on the

shaving cream and squeezing the spray nozzle are both great workouts for her "writing muscles."

Or encourage your child to use kitchen tongs when she builds with blocks. She'll think it's fun to pick up each block with the tongs and add it to her tower. And she'll work on hand-eye coordination as she tries to see how tall she can make her building before it topples over.♥



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BUILDING READERS®

How Families Can Help Children Get Ready to Read

Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District
Title 1

Embrace reading activities during the new school year

Start the school year right by adopting some new reading routines! There are many great ways for the whole family to enjoy books together.

Here are two to try:

- 1. Turn dinnertime into storytime.** Every once in a while, choose a book to share during dinner. Read a story and then talk about it while you eat. Or eat first and then read for dessert. Take turns choosing which book to read. You could also plan themed dinners and serve foods that the characters in your child's favorite stories might eat!
- 2. Take book breaks while doing chores.** When you and your child are busy with cleaning tasks like dusting or vacuuming, stop and say, "Book break!" Then snuggle up with your child and share a story. Encourage her to call a book break occasionally, too.



"Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what we read ours."

—John Locke

Ease back-to-school nerves with books

New-school-year jitters are normal! You can calm your child's jangled nerves—and show her she's not alone—by sharing books about this very subject. Read the following books together:

- **Wemberly Worried** by Kevin Henkes (Greenwillow). Wemberly worries about everything. But of all the things she frets about, school is the scariest! Is she the only one who is scared about school? What happens when Wemberly meets another worrier on the first day of class?
- **First Day Jitters** by Julie Danneberg (Whispering Coyote Press). Who says only kids get shaky about starting school? Sarah has butterflies in her tummy, too—and she's not a kid at all (which will be a big surprise for little readers).

Singing can help your child learn language



Songs are terrific for sharpening your child's language skills. To take advantage of their benefits:

- **Listen to favorite songs.** Together, invent hand motions to go with the lyrics.
- **Create a songbook.** Compile a booklet of your child's favorite tunes and their lyrics. Refer to it whenever you and your child are looking for something to sing.

Source: L.K. Rath, Ed.D. and L. Kennedy, *The Between the Lions Book for Parents*, HarperCollins.

Reading should be fun, not stressful



One of the most important things you can do to promote reading is to inspire your child to love words and books. Don't think of reading as a serious, must-do activity. Loosen up and enjoy it!

Source: M. Fox, *Reading Magic: Why Reading Aloud to Our Children Will Change Their Lives Forever*, Mariner Books.

Use labels to teach new words



Boost your child's language skills by showing him how different words are spelled. Label everyday objects around the house. Over time, your child will become familiar with these words. You can label objects including:

- **Table**
- **Book**
- **Door**
- **Chair**

Source: V.L. Cohen and J.E. Cowen, *Literacy for Children in an Information Age: Teaching Reading, Writing, and Thinking*, Thompson Wadsworth.

Get creative and tell compelling tales

Terrific stories don't always come from books. Some of the most memorable are the ones you invent yourself!

When telling stories, remember to be engaged and energetic. Chances are your enthusiasm will be contagious, and your child will love what she hears.

If you're not sure what kind of story to tell, consider:

- **An event from your life.** Did you ever do anything silly or unusual as a kid? Kids like hearing about things parents did when they were young. Your child may also enjoy hearing a story from "when she was little"—something that she doesn't remember from when she was a baby.
- **A scene from a movie.** Do you recall a certain kid-friendly element from a favorite flick? Put it into your own words and share it with your child. Don't forget to describe the characters as well as the action of the scene.

Source: P. Myers, "Storytelling for Children," Child Development Institute, niswc.com/storytellingtopics.



Build your child's love of reading

When children appreciate books, they become lifelong readers. To nurture your child's love of reading:

- **Make it a habit.** Spend 15-20 minutes a day reading with your child. Bedtime is a good option, but choose whatever time works best for you.
- **Invite your child to "read" to you.** She doesn't have to read the exact words. Instead, encourage your child to tell you a story based on the pictures. She can also point out letters or words that she recognizes.



Approach the alphabet artistically

Help your child review the letters of the alphabet in a hands-on, artsy way. Physically creating the letters may help him remember the name of each letter and what it looks like. Together, you can make letters with:

- **Play dough.** Help your child roll out the dough with his hands and form it into the letters in his name. Then squish up the dough and make other letters.
- **Finger paint.** Write letters on a sheet of paper, and have your child trace over them with finger paints.
- **Sandpaper.** Cut letters out of sandpaper. Have your child trace the letters with his finger.



Books to delight your early reader

- ***Sleepyheads*** by Sandra J. Howatt (Beach Lane Books). It's time for bed, and creatures everywhere are tucked in. From caves to nests to beds, every sleepyhead is cozy and ready to get some sleep.
- ***Meet the Parents*** by Peter Bently (A Paula Wiseman Book). This book reminds children that parents do much more than order kids around. They are great for everything from mending teddy bears to tickling.
- ***Matilda's Cat*** by Emily Gravett (Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers). Matilda has a cat who seems to have unusual interests, including playing in boxes, climbing trees and attending tea parties!



Q: I'm thinking about getting my preschooler his own library card. Is he too young for this responsibility?

A: Not at all! Preschool is an excellent time to get your child his own card and to explain proper library etiquette. Once he knows he must speak quietly and treat books gently in order to visit the library, make sure you give him plenty of chances to use his brand-new card!

Do you have a question about reading? Email readingadvisor@parent-institute.com.

Building Readers®

How Families Can Help Children Get Ready to Read

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BUILDING READERS®

How Families Can Help Children Become Better Readers

Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District
Title 1

Help your child start the new school year excited about reading

What does it really mean when a child “can’t stand” reading? Sometimes it just means he hasn’t found the right reading materials yet. Try these ideas to turn your reader from reluctant to eager early in the school year:

- **Offer a variety of materials.** Take frequent trips to the library to give him plenty of options.
- **Be open-minded.** If your child prefers to read magazines or comic books instead of novels, that’s OK. What’s important now is to help him enjoy reading.
- **Consider your child’s interests.** Look for materials on topics he loves.
- **Move on.** If your child is bored by the second chapter of a book, let him pick a new one.



Source: C.A. Quick, Ed.D., “Helping Reluctant Readers,” KidsHealth, nswc.com/reluctantreaderroutines.

“The worth of a book is to be measured by what you can carry away from it.”

—James Bryce

Look for signs of fluency development

Fluency—the ability to read quickly, smoothly and with understanding of the text’s meaning—takes lots of practice to develop. In fact, it isn’t a one-time task. A child may read some books fluently, but then try more difficult materials, and need to work on fluency again. Developing fluency is an important step toward reading comprehension.

Your child is developing fluency when he:

- **Recognizes many words** immediately, or on sight.
- **Reads several words in a row** instead of having to pause and sound out each word.
- **Reads with expression** that makes sense with the text.
- **Understands the meaning** of what he’s reading.

Source: “What is Fluency?” Busy Teacher’s Cafe, nswc.com/fluencydevelopment.

Read-alouds boost vocabulary

A good way to expand your child’s vocabulary is to read aloud—especially from books at levels that she understands but might have trouble reading herself. For example, she might enjoy books about space but get frustrated with words like *meteorite*. When you read these words aloud, discuss them. Does the book reveal their meaning? If not, look them up together. Then try to use them at other times.



Have your child write letters to family

Encourage your child to write letters to family members who live far away, then send them in the mail. Suggest that she write about school, activities and friends. Remind your child to ask for a reply—not only will she get mail, she’ll also be developing her reading skills.



Music enhances reading skills

Language skills grow when children sing along to their favorite tunes. And rhyming patterns in songs can help boost their memory skills, too. To use music to build reading skills:

- **Read the lyrics** as you and your child listen to a song.
- **Sing favorite songs** together as a family.
- **Listen to music** (and sing along) in the car and while you do chores at home.



Source: L. Woodall and B. Ziembski, “Promoting Literacy Through Music,” nswc.com/literacymusic.

Reading doesn't have to be a solo activity

One of the keys to encouraging your child to read is to make reading appealing! One way to do this is to make it something you do together. You can:

- **Browse together.** Walk through a library with your child and get an idea of what he likes. Suggest books related to those topics.
- **Join the fun.** Take turns reading aloud, especially if a book is challenging.
- **Keep track of progress.** Keep a list of how much your child reads. Praise him for reaching milestones. Show that you're proud!
- **Attend library events together.** Ask about special activities and reading programs.
- **Be inspired by books.** After your child reads a book, do something related to it. For example, you might research or visit a place the author mentioned.



Source: "Fun Ways to Read With Your Child," Great Schools, nswc.com/lovereadingtogether.

Create a cozy reading area

Help your child create a special place at home to be her reading nook. You don't need a lot of space—just be sure to include:



- **A selection of appealing materials,** such as a shelf or small basket of books.
- **Comfortable surroundings.** Consider a soft chair or a pile of pillows. Don't forget good lighting!

For lower elementary readers:

- *The Worst Princess* by Anna Kemp (Random House). Princess Sue is not your ordinary princess. She'd much rather fight dragons than sit alone in a tower!



- *The Noisy Paint Box: The Colors and Sounds of Kandinsky's Abstract Art* by Barb Rosenstock (Alfred A. Knopf). When Vasya Kandinsky first got his set of paints, he painted along to the music and sounds of the city.

For upper elementary readers:

- *Emma's Poem: The Voice of the Statue of Liberty* by Linda Glaser (Houghton Mifflin Books for Children). Learn about Emma Lazarus' inspiration to write the inscription—a beautiful poem welcoming all to the United States—on the Statue of Liberty.
- *For the Love of Autumn* by Patricia Polacco (Philomel Books). Danielle has a kitten named Autumn. When Autumn runs away during a storm, Danielle's students work together to help her find her beloved cat.

Make comprehension a key reading goal

To succeed in school, your child must understand the materials she reads. Here are some simple ways to boost your child's comprehension whether she's reading a comic book or a textbook:

- **Remind your child** to sound out tough words. Review common words so she can recognize them instantly.
- **Build your child's vocabulary.** Introduce new words through experiences, instruction and reading itself.
- **Ask questions** to get your child thinking about how the information relates to what she already knows.
- **Encourage your child** to think about what she reads. She can also make predictions



about what will happen next or summarize a section she has read.

Source: M. Pressley, "Comprehension Instruction: What Works," Reading Rockets, nswc.com/comprehensioncomponents.



Q: Even though school just started, I'm worried about my child's reading skills. Is it too soon to contact his teacher?

A: No—the sooner reading struggles are identified, the better. The teacher is still getting to know your child, so your perspective is especially important. Working together gives your child his best chance for success. Be sure to ask the teacher what you can do to help at home.

Do you have a question about reading? Email readingadvisor@parent-institute.com.

Building Readers®

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Reading Connection

INTERMEDIATE EDITION

Working Together for Learning Success

September 2016

Dennis Yarmouth Title I Program



Book Picks

■ *The World According to Humphrey*

(Betty G. Birney)

Being the class pet is a big job for little Humphrey. The hamster helps a shy girl speak up, finds friends for a lonely janitor, and has his own notebook. Then the regular teacher returns, and she hates hamsters. Can he win her over? Book one of the Humphrey series. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *If: A Mind-Bending New Way of Looking at Big Ideas and Numbers*

(David J. Smith)

If 100 coins represented all the money in the world, half of the population would share one coin.



This nonfiction book scales down huge concepts in ways your youngster can understand. She will think about food, water, time, and more in a whole new way.

■ *Raymie Nightingale* (Kate DiCamillo)

Raymie thinks that if she can beat her rivals and win the title of Little Miss Central Florida Tire, her runaway father will come home. But something unexpected happens as the competitors prepare for the pageant—they become friends.

■ *Whoosh! Lonnie Johnson's Super-Soaking Stream of Inventions*

(Chris Barton)

Welcome to the world of Lonnie Johnson, inventor of the Super Soaker. This is the story of a young engineer who kept designing and building despite obstacles in his way. A true story of perseverance and dedication.



Motivated to read!

Reading is more than a fun way to pass the time—it's also a key to success in school and on the job. Keep your child interested in reading with these ideas.

Make time

Help your youngster work reading into his day wherever possible. Share jokes over breakfast, put magazines in the bathroom, and slip a book into his backpack to read when he has a few minutes. *Tip:* Visit the library regularly so your child has a steady supply of interesting reading material.

Build interest

Look for a "hook" that will make your youngster want to read. If he's a natural problem solver, get him the first volume of a mystery series. A child who dreams about outer space might love science fiction. For a budding athlete, try a biography of a sports hero or a book of records. Whatever his passion, there's a book for it!

Read for a reason

Make your youngster the directions reader or movie-review reader in your



house. You'll give him reasons to read, and he'll feel important. For instance, when you're putting together a bookcase, he can read the instructions aloud. Or he might read reviews to choose a video for family movie night.

Be an example

The more your child sees you read, the more likely he is to view reading as a part of everyday life. Talk about the novel or nonfiction book you are enjoying and the books you are looking forward to. Then, ask what books he would like to try next.

Polish your writing

A few finishing touches can make the difference between a so-so paper and one that shines. Remind your youngster to review these things before she turns in assignments.

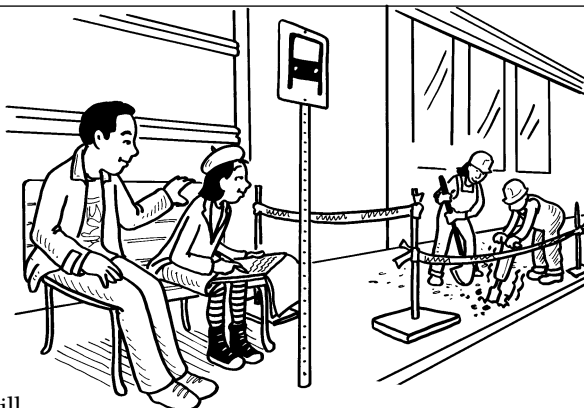
- **Originality.** Encourage your child to double-check that what she has written is her own work. She should understand that copying someone else's words is plagiarism.
- **Clarity.** Have her read her paper out loud, listening to be sure each sentence is clear and makes sense. Are there any fragments or run-on sentences? Did she leave out any words?
- **Grammar.** Misspelled words, missing punctuation, and forgotten capitalization will hurt her grade. Suggest that your youngster reread her work once for each type of error.



Think like a writer

Authors have a keen sense of observation. They notice things around them that may inspire their writing, such as an interesting news story or the scent in the air before a rainstorm. Here are ways your child can see the world like a writer, too.

Words. Paying attention to words in books, on signs, or during conversations will help your youngster spice up her own stories and poems. Have her make a three-column list for storing these words as she discovers them: “Unusual nouns,” “Specific verbs,” and “Colorful adjectives.”



Sights and sounds.

Encourage your child to start a journal of things she sees, hears, smells, touches, and tastes. She might describe the clanging and beeping at a noisy construction site, for instance. Later, she can draw on her descriptions to add concrete details to her writing.

People. Writers often fictionalize real people. Ask your youngster to imagine people she knows as characters in her stories. She might base a hero on her cousin who is good at fixing things or create a chef inspired by her aunt. Using real-life people as models may make her fictional characters more realistic. ■

**Fun
with
Words**

Spelling “hot potato”

When does p-o-t-a-t-o spell *fun*? When your family plays this familiar game with a spelling twist!

Stand in a circle. One player calls out a word from your youngster’s spelling list or the dictionary. Then, he says the first letter and quickly tosses a small toy or beanbag “hot potato” to the player beside him. As each person catches the potato, he gives the next letter in the word and tosses the potato on.



Remind your child to listen carefully so he can think about which letter comes next. Say a wrong letter, and you’re out for that round. When the word has been spelled correctly, the last person spells the entire word aloud. Choose a new word, and play again. ■

OUR PURPOSE

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

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**Parent
2
Parent**

Siblings as reading buddies

My older son, Mark, just started fifth grade. As one of the “big kids” in elementary school, he is paired with a kindergarten “reading buddy” who needs help. That gave me an idea. Since my first-grader, Dylan, is struggling with reading, I suggested that Mark and Dylan become reading buddies at home.

I knew Dylan would learn from his big brother—what I didn’t realize was that the arrangement would help *both* boys. Mark typically reads silently, but by reading to his brother, he hears his own mistakes and corrects them. As a result, he is reading more fluently, and he seems to be getting more confident, too.

When it’s Dylan’s turn to read, I smile hearing Mark give his little brother hints about how to figure out big words. And Mark said that now he remembers strategies to use when he’s stuck, even though he’s “older” now! ■



Q&A

After-school literacy fun

☉ We’re looking for after-school activities for my daughter. Any suggestions for ones that would help her with language arts?

A Book clubs, poetry circles, and conversation groups for English-language learners are all great ways for youngsters to practice reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Drama club is a good fit, too. If your child lands a role in the school play, she’ll need to read her lines many times as she memorizes them. And

singing in the chorus requires reading words *and* music. Even a photography club can boost reading and writing skills. Your daughter could read about new picture-taking techniques and write captions for her photos.

Ask about after-school programs at

your youngster’s school, and check with the public library or community center. Then, help your child pick out the ones she likes best. ■



Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

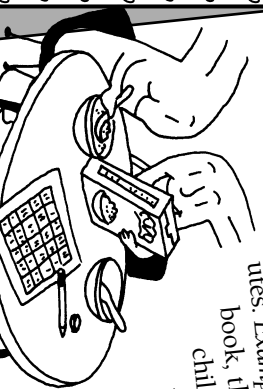
SEPTEMBER 2016

READING

Boxes of reading

There are things to read all over the place—let your child discover lots of them with this idea.

Ingredients: pencil, paper, penny, reading materials
On a large sheet of paper, have your youngster draw a grid with five rows and five columns. Brainstorm 25 items that can be read in a few minutes. Examples: daily newspaper riddle, haiku from a poetry book, the back of a cereal box, a postcard. Ask your



child to write the name of each item in a square. Each day, take turns tossing a penny onto the grid several times. Together, find and read the items named in the boxes that the penny lands on. When you have read everything on the grid, make a new one.

MATH

Measure and graph

Measure up some math fun with this activity for family or friends.

Ingredients: pencil, paper, tape measure

Have your youngster list everyone's name down the left side of a piece of paper. Across the top, he should write several measurements to take for each person (height, length of left leg, diameter of right wrist).

Help him measure each person, writing the results on the chart as he goes. (You can measure him.) Then, he can make bar graphs comparing each set of measurements. Let him use the graphs to report his findings. Who has the longest leg? Which two people are the tallest?



Refrigerator Poster
Just hang your *Recipes* poster on the refrigerator and sneak in an activity when you have a few minutes. These fun activities will help develop school success and positive behavior. Check off each box as you complete the "recipe."

SCIENCE

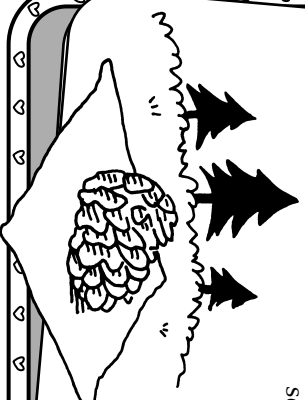
Pinecone surprise

Your youngster will be fascinated to see a pinecone open and close in this experiment.

Ingredients: pinecone, bowl, water, can of soup, paper towel
Together, find a pinecone on the ground. Let your child place it in a bowl, cover it with water, and weigh it down with the soup can so it doesn't float.

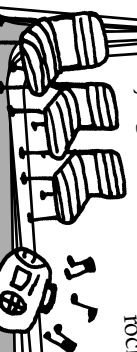
After 15–20 minutes, the cone will begin to close up. Once it's completely shut, your youngster can lay it on a paper towel to dry overnight. The next day, she'll see the cone will be open again!

Why does she think this happens? (You can explain that a pinecone holds the seeds of a pine tree. When it rains, the cone's scales soak up water and bend until they close. The closed cone protects the seeds by keeping them dry.)



MUSIC

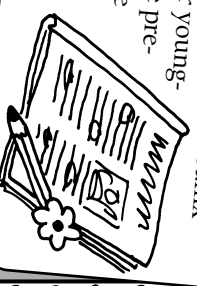
Introduce your child to a variety of music with this musical chairs game. Set out one chair per player. Turn on the radio while players circle the chairs in time to the music. Remove one chair, and turn off the music. Everyone sits down. The person left standing is out. Play again, trying a different station (classical, rock, country)



for each round.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Look through a magazine article together for words with prefixes (word beginnings) and suffixes (word endings). For example, *rewrap* is *wrap* with the prefix *re-*, and *careful* is *care* with the suffix *-ful*. Can your youngster find three prefixes and three suffixes?



Recipes for Success

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SEPTEMBER 2016

Character Corner

WRITING Story scroll

Your child can have fun writing a short story on a scroll to roll up and read.

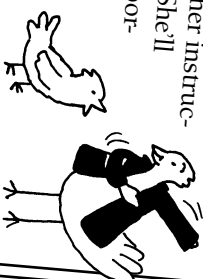
Ingredients: paper, pencil, crayons, tape, 2 paper towel tubes

Ask your youngster to think of a topic to write about, such as a pet or a family camping trip. Have him write each sentence or paragraph on a separate sheet of paper and draw a picture to illustrate it.

When he has finished, he can make a scroll by taping the pages together, in order, into one long vertical strip. Then, he should tape the top of the first page to one tube and the bottom of the last page to the other tube. Help him roll the pages onto the bottom tube. Now listen as he reads his story aloud, unrolling one scene at a time.

FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

Give your youngster a chance to tell you what to do. Ask her to explain, step by step, how to complete a simple task. *Examples:* putting on a coat, preparing an ice cream cone. Follow her instructions *exactly*. She'll learn how important it is to be precise!



OBSERVATION

Challenge your child's powers of observation. Draw a silly face. Let him look at it for 10 seconds, and put it away. Have him try to copy your picture as closely as possible. Switch roles, and he can make a drawing for you to copy.



COORDINATION

Make a "tighrope" (about 6 feet long) outside using sidewalk chalk or inside with tape. Ask your youngster to walk the line while reciting a tongue twister over and over ("Six thick thistle sticks," "She sells seashells by the seashore"). Can she make it across without falling off laughing?



GRATITUDE

Encourage your youngster to make thank-you bags to practice expressing gratitude. Have family members write thank-you notes to put in each other's bags throughout the week. ("Thank you for taking me to the ball game!") Choose a night to read your notes aloud.



TEAMWORK

Show your child how much fun teamwork can be by playing "Beat the Clock." Pick a job you can work on together, such as putting away the groceries. Set a timer for five minutes, and cooperate to finish the job before time's up.



TRUSTWORTHINESS

Read a few newspaper advertisements with your youngster. Are they accurate? Or do they stretch the truth ("The best deal ever!") or leave out important details? Talk about ads that are misleading—and why it's important to tell the whole truth.



MATH

Build your child's mental math skills by having her figure out sale prices. If an item costs \$15.95 and the sign says, "Buy one, get another one half price," suggest that she round the price to the nearest dollar (\$16). Then, she can divide by 2 (\$8) and add \$16 + \$8 to get the total price (\$24 for both items, or \$12 each).

Buy 1
Get 1
1 1/2 Off

Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)