

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

September 2018

Oxford Public Schools

Title I

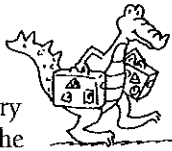
Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *There Is No Dragon in This Story*

(Lou Carter)

Dragon really wants to be a hero. He travels from fairy tale to fairy tale offering to rescue the characters, but everyone sends him away. Then, a giant's sneeze blows out the sun, and Dragon finally gets his chance. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *Keena Ford and the Second-Grade Mix-Up*

(Melissa Thomson)

Keena Ford's new teacher makes a special cake for each student's birthday. When Keena's birthday gets marked on the wrong date, will she tell the truth or celebrate anyway to get the cake? The first book in the Keena Ford series.



■ *The House That Jane Built*

(Tanya Lee Stone)

In the 1800s, a woman named Jane Addams was determined to make life better for those in need. This biography tells how she founded Hull House, a community center in Chicago, and helped people find housing and jobs. Addams then went on to become the first woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

■ *The Wing Wing Brothers Math Spectacular!*

(Ethan Long)

Humor + math = learning fun in this comic book-style story. Five duck brothers put on a comedy show. As they juggle pies and spin plates, readers can compare amounts, learn math facts, and more. Part of the Wing Wing Brothers series.

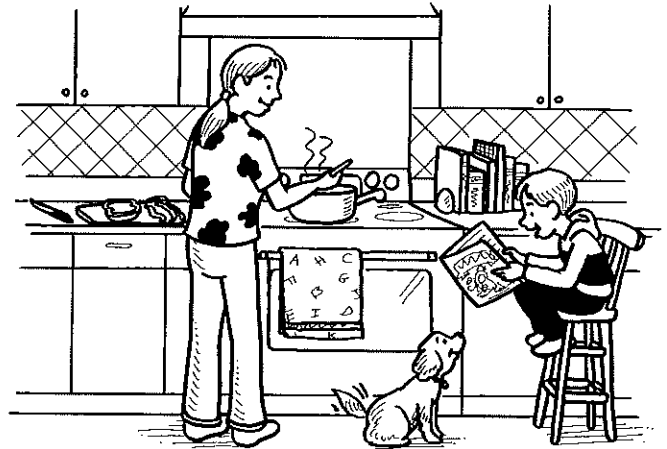


Family reading routines

Reading with your child each day helps him grow as a reader. And just a few minutes here and there really add up. Consider these suggestions for fitting more reading into busy days.

Mealtime practice

Serve up a side of reading! During breakfast, keep the cereal box on the table. You can help your child read the name of the cereal, the slogan, and any riddles or activities. While you make dinner, invite him to read a familiar storybook aloud, or let him browse through a cookbook for words he recognizes (*milk, pizza*).



highlight upcoming events like back-to-school night or picture day.

A reading surprise

Like a tooth fairy who leaves money, be a reading fairy who leaves reading material for your child. Tape comic strips to the bathroom mirror for him to read while he brushes his teeth. Place a poem on his pillow so he can enjoy it before bed. And stash a few books or magazines near his seat in the car.♥

School days

Together, read the papers your youngster brings home from school, perhaps a story he wrote in class or an announcement about a field trip. Also, post the school calendar on the refrigerator. Read it regularly with your child, and have him

Things I can write about

Your youngster's life is full of creative writing material, whether she's picking apples or riding her bike. Encourage her to collect story ideas with these steps.

1. Let your child decorate a box. She might cover it with stickers or wrap it with construction paper and draw pictures.
2. Together, brainstorm topics she could write about, like becoming a big sister or visiting a new playground. She can write or draw each idea on a slip of colored paper and store it in her box.
3. Have her pull out a slip for inspiration when she wants to write a story, or before school if she knows she'll get to write on a topic of her choice that day.♥



Stand up and write!

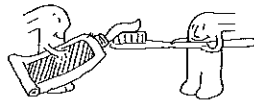
Writing on a vertical surface strengthens your child's arm and wrist muscles and improves the coordination she needs for handwriting. Plus, it's fun. Try these tips.

Windows. Have your youngster use dry-erase markers to draw and color shapes on a window, turning it into "stained glass." Be sure to take a photo of her work before she cleans the window!



Walls. Hang poster board on her bedroom wall, and let your child design a sign using crayons. She might write her name and draw a border of flowers, for example. Also, consider getting a small dry-erase board from the dollar store. Use it to play hangman or to leave messages for each other.

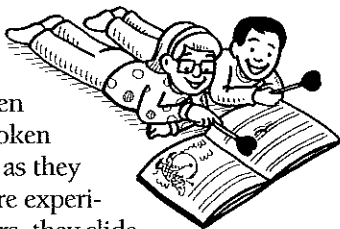
Outdoors. Encourage your youngster to make a crayon rubbing on a tree. She can hold paper against the bark and rub it with the side of an unwrapped crayon to see the pattern. If you have a wooden fence, suggest that she decorate it with sidewalk chalk. She can hose it off when she's done. ♥



Parent to Parent My magic reading wand

My daughter Brianna came home excited about the special pointers her teacher lets students use while they read.

I asked the teacher about this. She explained that children enjoy touching the pointers to each word as they say it aloud—and this helps them match written words to spoken ones. Then, as they become more experienced readers, they slide the pointer under the words (rather than tapping each one) so they read smoothly.



I suggested to Brianna that we find pointers to use at home. We filled a plastic jar with items like a bubble wand, a chopstick, a paintbrush, and a pencil with a heart-shaped eraser.

Brianna is always on the lookout for more "magic reading wands." When she finds one, she can't wait to try it out. I love that such a simple thing is boosting her reading skills. ♥

Q&A Vocabulary-boosting conversations

Q I've heard that kids with bigger vocabularies have an easier time learning to read and write. How can I help my son learn more words?

A You're right—a good vocabulary does help with reading and writing. Kids absorb many words just by hearing them regularly, so try weaving new words into everyday conversations.

When you talk to your son, use bigger words to expand on what he says. For instance, in response to "That siren is loud!" you could say, "You're right. It's *earsplitting*." Or if he says, "I let the air out of the balloon," you might reply, "It *deflated* really quickly."

Then, encourage him to use the new word often to help it stick in his mind. "What else can you think of that makes an *earsplitting* noise?" To jog his memory you might say, "Remember that jackhammer? That was *earsplitting*, too." ♥



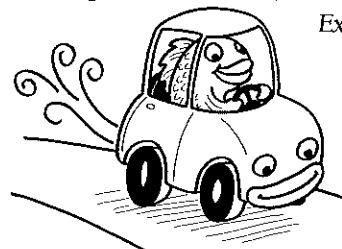
Fun with Words Nursery rhyme phonics

Playing with letter sounds prepares your youngster to decode new words. Read this nursery rhyme together, and do the activities that follow.

*Hey, diddle, diddle,
The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon.
The little dog laughed to see such sport,
And the dish ran away with the spoon.*

Rhyming words

Have your child tell you which words rhyme (*diddle* and *fiddle*, *moon* and *spoon*). He could circle the letters they have in common (*iddle*, *oon*).



Letter sounds

Ask him to listen for specific sounds. Can he tell you which words have a C sound (*cat*, *cow*) or a D sound (*diddle*, *fiddle*, *jumped*, *dog*, *laughed*, *dish*)? Where in the word does he hear the sound—beginning, middle, or end?

Silly swaps

Let your youngster make up his own verse by changing some of the words.

Example: "The horse jumped over the star. . . And the fish ran away with the car."

Note: Try these ideas with other nursery rhymes from library books or websites. ♥

OUR PURPOSE

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Math+Science Connection

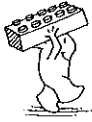
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Building Excitement and Success for Young Children

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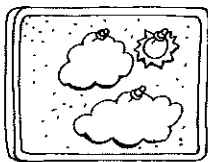
TOOLS & TIDBITS

Math talk

“Let’s add 3 flowers to the vase.” “We have zero light bulbs left.” Help your child become familiar with math words and phrases by weaving them into regular conversation. This also shows him that math is an important part of daily life. More examples: *half, equal, more than, less than, first, second, length, height, combine, take away.*

Make a weather board

Have your youngster decorate a bulletin board or a space on the refrigerator to show the weather. She could cut out weather symbols from construction paper (sun, clouds, raindrops, snowflakes, lightning bolts). Each day, she can hang up a background to match the sky (blue, gray) and add symbols that show what’s going on outside.



Book picks

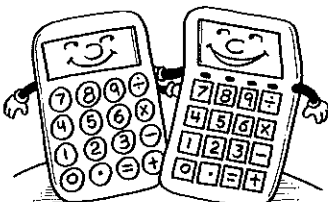
■ *Billions of Bricks* (Kurt Cyrus) is a rhyming story that encourages your youngster to count the bricks at a construction site.

■ A little moth teaches a curious kitten named Oscar about sources of light and explains what causes day and night in *Oscar and the Moth: A Book About Light and Dark* (Geoff Waring).

Just for fun

Q: What did one calculator say to the other?

A: You can count on me.



Begin with number sense

Get your youngster off to a terrific start to the school year math-wise with activities that build her *number sense*. What’s number sense? It’s the basic understanding of what numbers mean and how to work with them. Try these suggestions.

Set up games

When you play board or card games, involve your child with the setup. There’s likely to be math on the table! For instance, tell her that each person needs 1 token or 12 cards. She will practice counting, one-to-one correspondence (one object for each number)—and character traits like helpfulness and cooperation.

Count your exercises

Here’s a way to combine counting and physical activity. Have regular “family fitness moments” where each person does 10 jumping jacks, 15 sit-ups, or other exercises. The key? Your youngster counts aloud to keep track of your “reps” (that’s



“repetitions” in exercise talk). *Idea:* To work on writing numbers, she could keep a family exercise log.

Do math on-the-go

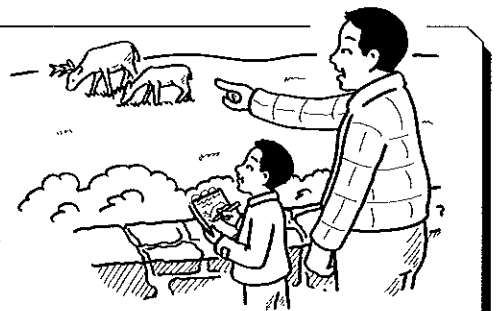
Insert math into everyday moments when you’re out with your child. Trying to find her new friend’s home? Ask her to read the house numbers until she comes to the right one (say, 127). Need 4 avocados for tonight’s guacamole? Ask her to count them at the grocery store. It won’t be long until your youngster understands how numbers relate to real life. 🦋

My “life list” of animals

Encourage a lifelong interest in animals with this simple idea. Suggest that your child begin—today!—to keep a “life list” of all the animals he sees.

He can jot down the name of each animal he notices, whether he’s outside playing, walking in a park, or on the way to school. He might add details like the animal’s color, body covering (fur, scales, feathers), and what group it belongs to (mammals, reptiles, birds).

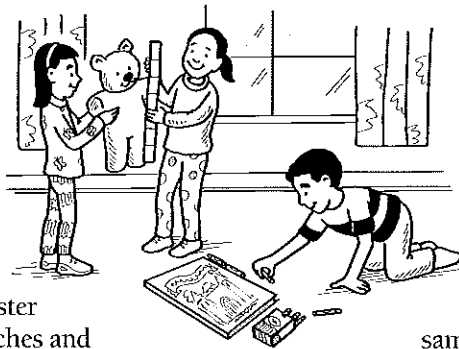
Not sure of the animal’s name or group? He could draw a sketch or take a photo. Then, look it up together online or in a library book. 🦋



What can I measure with?

How many jelly beans long is a paper towel? How many pretzel sticks wide is your youngster's backpack? Using familiar objects to measure things around the house will prepare your youngster to use standard measurement units like inches and centimeters. Here's how.

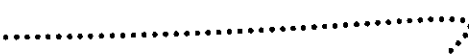
1. Show your child why it's important to measure with same-size units. Each of you can get used crayons (worn down to various lengths) and measure the same book by taking turns



lining up your crayons from one end to the other. Let your youngster count his crayons and then yours—the number will probably be different. Ask him why (the crayons aren't all the same size).

2. What would happen if the crayons were all equal in length? Now have your youngster measure the book a few times with new crayons to find out. (He'll use the same number of crayons every time.)

3. Give your child a strip of cardboard to create a ruler using a unit of measurement he picks. Perhaps his ruler will be 12 jelly beans or 6 pretzel sticks long. Now take turns naming a household item and predicting how many long it is using the unit he chose. He can use his ruler to check the estimates.



MATH CORNER

Ways to make a number

Here's an activity that lets your child see how many ways there are to express the number 6, the number 12—or any number.

Together, go through old magazines, and cut out pictures with various numbers of objects. Mix up the pictures in a bag, pull one out, and ask, "How many?" The simple answer might be "6 bananas." But what other way could your youngster express that number of bananas? Take turns coming up with answers, such as:



- 2 groups of 3 bananas
- 3 groups of 2 bananas
- 1 banana + 5 bananas
- 9 bananas – 3 bananas

When you run out of possibilities, pull out another picture, and start over. *Tip:* Let your child glue each picture onto a sheet of paper and write the options as you go. He'll have a record of all the ways to make that number.

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SCIENCE LAB

Let's have a magnet race

Hold a "race" with your youngster so she can discover how magnets "pull" items across the floor.

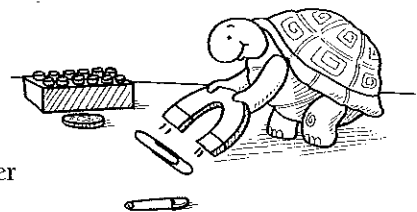
You'll need: masking tape, magnets, small household objects (metal paper clip, plastic paper clip, building block, safety pin, eraser, penny)

Here's how: Mark a start line and a finish line on the floor with tape. Each player selects any object and places it at the start line. On "Go," players hold their magnets close to—but not touching—their items and try to move them to the finish line.

What happens? Some objects will follow a magnet while others won't.

Why? The invisible force from a magnet attracts objects like metal paper clips because they're made of iron, a magnetic metal. It won't attract items made of plastic or ones that don't contain iron.

Tip: As you race with different objects, have your youngster sort them into piles of magnetic and nonmagnetic. What can she tell you about how they're alike or different?



Q & A That isn't how I learned math!

Q: It seems like my daughter isn't being taught math the same way I was. Why has it changed?

A: If you talk to people from different generations, you'll probably find they were all taught math in different ways—and today's generation is no exception.

Your daughter is learning concepts rather than just memorizing facts. She's also using different approaches like drawing pictures or acting out problems. And she's being prepared for more advanced math. For

example, if she can explain why $6 + 4 = 10$, she'll be able to talk herself through solving $60 + 40 = 100$.

Ask your child to teach you to solve problems she brings home. This reinforces what she's learning and shows you more about today's math. Also, try to

attend math nights or send any questions you have to her teacher. The more comfortable you are with how your daughter is learning math, the more you'll be able to support her.

