

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

## Book Picks

### Read-aloud favorites

#### ■ *The Magic School Bus Lost in the Solar System*

Ms. Frizzle blasts her class into the solar system for some out-of-this-world science lessons. One of the Magic School Bus series by Joanna Cole. (Also available in Spanish.)



#### ■ *Doctor De Soto Goes to Africa*

In this tale by William Steig, the famous mouse dentist travels to Africa. But before he can repair the tooth of Mudambo the elephant, an unhappy monkey kidnaps him!



#### ■ *The Whingdingdilly*

Scamp is bored with his life as a dog. Then Zildy the witch changes him into a Whingdingdilly. Life is anything but boring now—but is Scamp happy? Read this story by Bill Peet to find out.

#### ■ *Babushka's Doll*

"It wasn't that Natasha was a truly naughty child." So begins the story of a little girl who needs some practice learning patience. The lesson begins when Natasha picks up her grandmother's doll. A magical story by Patricia Polacco.



## Reading aloud



"I always stumble because I read too fast." "I'm afraid my child won't listen to me." "I was laughed at when I read aloud at school."

Do you have worries like these when you read aloud? You're not alone. Many parents avoid reading aloud to their kids. However, reading aloud is one of the best ways to help your youngster succeed in school. Keep these tips in mind:

- ★ Everybody makes mistakes. If you make mistakes when reading aloud, your child will learn that it's okay for her to do so, too.
- ★ Practice makes perfect. Find a book that you like and read it aloud by yourself until you feel comfortable.
- ★ Involve your youngster in the story. Have her turn the pages. Or, read one line and let her read the next.

★ Take your time and don't rush the story. Your child can tell if you're in a hurry. Reading slowly will help you read clearly.

★ As you feel more comfortable, try changing your voice to show the characters' feelings—joy, sadness, fear. These variations can make the story more exciting for both of you!

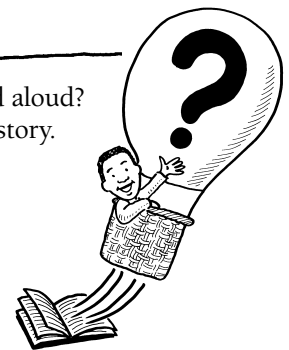
★ Remember that you are helping your child learn to enjoy reading. Try different types of reading materials, such as comic strips and poetry.

★ Above all, try to relax and enjoy the time you're spending with your youngster. ♥

## UNDERSTANDING STORIES

Does your youngster listen actively when you read aloud? It's a key to understanding what's happening in the story. Try these simple tips to build listening skills:

- ▲ Ask your child to retell small parts of the story to you. Or ask him questions while you read. *Examples:* "What will happen next?" "Why do you think she did that?" Find the answers to the questions together.
- ▲ After you've read a story together two or three times, skip a word or two. Ask your youngster to fill in the missing word or words. *Hint:* This works especially well with rhyming stories. ♥



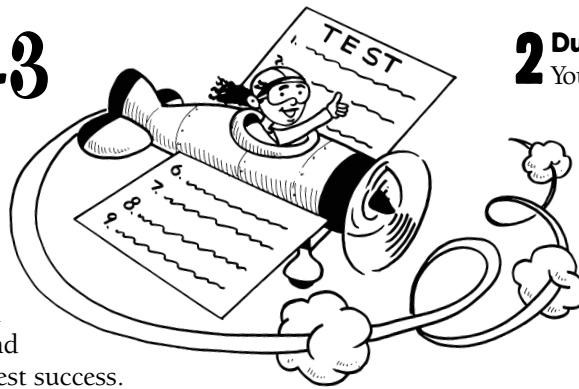
# Testing 1-2-3

Even if your youngster is a good reader and writer, she may still have trouble when it comes to taking tests.

Preparing for tests, taking tests, and reviewing tests go hand in hand. Follow the tips below, and your child will be on her way to test success.

## 1 Before the test

Ask if your youngster's school offers sample tests. They are a great way to practice for both standardized and regular classroom tests. Sample tests help children become familiar with directions and what the test will look like.



## 2 During the test

Your child should always read the material carefully before she begins. Directions are important. If your child doesn't understand what to do, encourage her to ask the teacher to explain further.

## 3 After the test

Review the test results with your youngster. Discuss what went right and wrong. For example, did she run out of time? Next time, she might try answering the easier ones first, such as multiple choice.

*Note:* If you're concerned about your child's test results, talk with the teacher. She may suggest additional ways to help your youngster prepare for tests. ♥

## Fun with Words The category game

Here is a fun activity that will help develop your child's vocabulary.

Think of five categories, such as sports, machines, cars, flowers, and books. Write the categories on a piece of paper. Then, draw five blank lines under each one.



Next, ask your youngster to write down five words that are related to each category. *Example:* For sports, she could list baseball, basketball, hockey, rollerblading, and football. If she struggles to come up with a word, give her hints. For flowers, you might ask her, "What's the name of the flower Grandma showed you in her yard last week?"

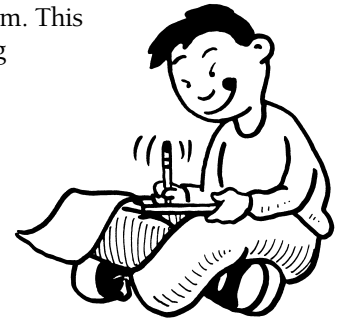
What is your youngster studying in school? The planets, types of rocks, or famous people in Jamestown? Play the game using categories like these, and your child won't realize she's studying for her next quiz! ♥

## Q&A Real writing

**Q** My son doesn't enjoy writing. He will write a few words, such as his spelling lists. But when it's time to write a paragraph or a story, he complains. Any ideas?

**A** Have your son try a few "real" writing tasks. It's often easier for kids to write about things that have meaning for them. This practice may encourage him to give those longer writing assignments a try. For example, he could:

- Write a thank-you note for a wonderful new gift.
- Pull out a favorite photograph and write a description of what is happening in the picture. Or he could write what he remembers about the day.
- Write lists of favorite songs, favorite characters in a movie, or ideas for his birthday. ♥



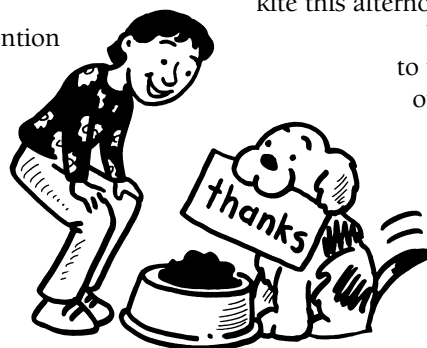
## Parent to Parent Simple reading practice

I've found a way to give my children reading practice—and improve their behavior at the same time. I write short notes to my kids and leave them around the house.

Sometimes I'll mention my youngsters' good behavior ("Thanks for helping with the dishes!") or write reminders ("Please hang me up. Signed, Your towel"). Sometimes the notes are about

not-so-good behavior. ("I was disappointed when you yelled at me. Can we talk about it?") I make sure to leave notes for treats, too ("Let's go fly your kite this afternoon!").

I look for unique places to put the notes, such as on their pillows, in front of the dog's water bowl, or pinned to the shower curtain. The kids enjoy discovering the notes and reading them aloud. ♥



### OUR PURPOSE

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

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