

Reading Connection

INTERMEDIATE EDITION

Working Together for Learning Success

April 2019

Veterans Memorial Elementary School
"Home of the Patriots"



Book Picks

■ *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball* (Kadir Nelson)

In 1920, Negro League Baseball formed when African American players were not allowed on major league teams. Narrated by a fictional baseball player, this true story shows readers what life was like for players who faced discrimination daily but showed up to do the thing they loved: play baseball.



■ *Annie's Life in Lists* (Kristin Mahoney)

Annie makes lists of everything in her life, from what she sees in the mirror to why she gets quiet or feels nervous. When her family moves, she must overcome her shyness to make friends. Follow along in this story written entirely in lists, and see how Annie adjusts to living in her new town.



■ *The Word Snoop* (Ursula Dubosarsky)

Why is the *k* in knight silent? How did American English develop? Turn your child into a word lover with this entertaining look at language. Chapters cover punctuation, word origins, acronyms, word plays, and more. Solve a puzzle or code at the end of each section to spell out a secret message.



■ *The Bad Guys* (Aaron Blabey)

A shark, a piranha, a snake, and a wolf go on a high-stakes adventure to prove they're "good guys." This first book in the hilarious graphic novel series tells how the group tries to do good deeds, like freeing dogs from a pound, to save their reputations. (Also available in Spanish.)

Write to communicate

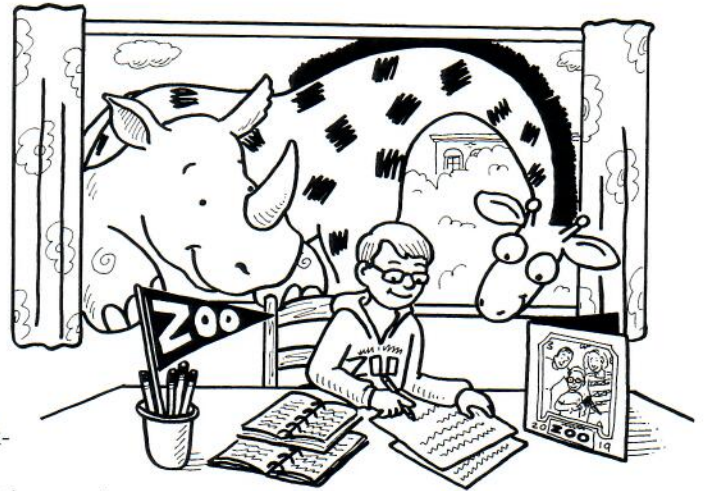
What do emails, newsletters, and thank-you notes have in common? They all give your child everyday reasons to write. Show him how writing can be easy, fun—and useful.

A click away

Become email buddies with your youngster. You might write reminders ("Mom is picking you up Tuesday after school for your orthodontist appointment"), discuss plans ("What should we do on Saturday?"), or ask about school ("What words were on the vocabulary quiz?"). Your child will get practical writing experience as he responds.

Extra, extra!

Put your youngster in charge of writing a family newsletter, and he'll practice taking notes and writing nonfiction accounts. Give him a notebook to track things that happen (a trip to the zoo, birthday parties, books read). At the end of the month, he



could use his notes to write a newsletter to send to relatives.

Thanks again

Make thank-you notes a part of daily life. Keep a stack of index cards handy so your child can write quick messages to family members. ("Thanks for helping me clean my room. The job went a lot faster.") Let him use cards to write longer notes when he gets gifts. He'll work on writing—and also learn to show appreciation to others. ■

Be an inventor

Does your youngster have an idea for an invention? Maybe she wants to walk dogs in the rain without anyone getting wet, or she wants to keep her markers from drying out. Encourage her to read about inventions and then write about her own:

- Together, look for nonfiction books on inventors (try *The Kids' Invention Book* by Arlene Erlbach or *Brainstorm!* by Tom Tucker). She'll read about clever ideas like an edible pet-food spoon invented by a six-year-old girl.

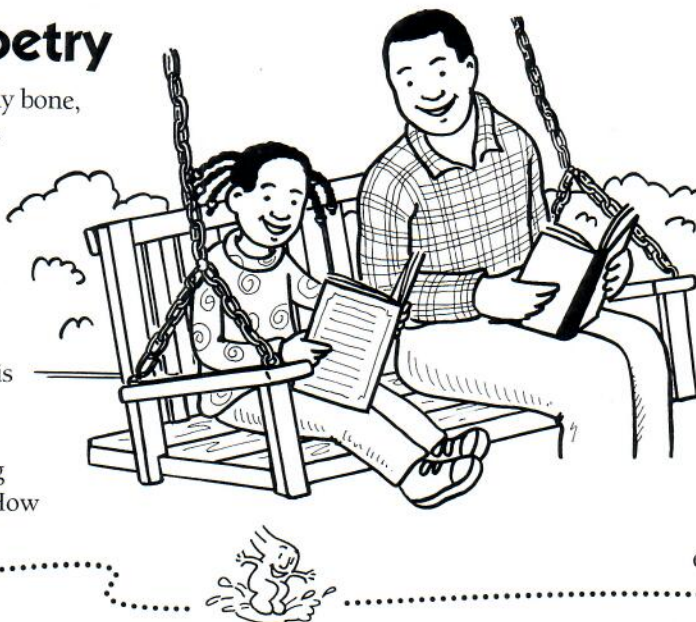
- Suggest that your child write about a product she'd like to invent. She can start with a problem (dogs and dog walkers getting wet in the rain). Then, she could draw and describe a gadget to help (mini doggy umbrellas and a hands-free umbrella for the dog walker). ■



Learning with poetry

Poems can tickle your child's funny bone, stretch her imagination, and improve her reading comprehension. Find poems online or check out poetry books from the library, and enjoy these activities together.

1. Take turns reading verses of a rhyming poem that tells a story, such as "The Swing" by Robert Louis Stevenson. Poems that rhyme will help your youngster read smoothly and with expression. *Tip:* Try having her clap the rhythm as she reads ("How do you like to go up in a swing...").

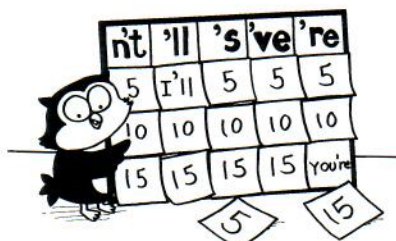


2. Poems often contain imagery, or words and phrases that paint pictures for readers. Suggest that your child read a poem carefully and then illustrate it. For instance, after reading "Where the Sidewalk Ends" by Shel Silverstein, she might draw a bright red sun, swirls of wind striped like peppermint, and flowers growing from the pavement. Drawing what is happening will help her understand and enjoy poems. ▣

Fun with Words

And the answer is...

This Jeopardy-like game helps your child learn contractions.



Have him make a Jeopardy game board with five columns and four rows. In the top row, he should write *n't*, *ll*, *s*, *ve*, and *re*. In the rows under each heading, he can write three contractions using that ending. For *n't*, he could write *didn't*, *can't*, and *won't*. Then, ask him to label sticky notes with point values (5, 10, 15) and put one over each contraction.

Players take turns selecting a category and a box. *Example:* Lift up the "5" note under *ve* and find *we've*. Answer with a question. ("What is 'we have?") If you're correct, score 5 points and continue. If not, the next person picks a new box.

Play until all the clues have been used, and tally the scores. ▣

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

Online fact checking

Q My son believes everything he reads online. How can I help him figure out what's really true?

A Recognizing inaccurate information online can be a challenge for anyone. Encourage your son to ask himself a few questions.

How current is the information? Remind him to look for the date an article was posted or updated. (It's often at the bottom of the main page.) In today's fast-paced world, the date should be pretty recent. If it "feels old," it probably is.

Who published it? Anyone can post online. Encourage your child to look for reliable sources, such as universities or government agencies on websites that end in *.gov* or *.edu*. Your child can search online for the writer's or the organization's name to find out more. If no author is listed, suggest that he look elsewhere.

What do other sites say? If three or more reputable sites contain the same fact, it's more likely to be true. ▣



Parent 2 Parent

My own résumé

When my husband was recently looking for a new job, our daughter Mary became curious about his résumé. We explained to her that a résumé is a summary of a person's job history and skills. Then, we challenged her to write her own.

Mary listed clubs, sports, and classroom projects she had been involved in as well as "jobs" she has held. She included the skills and new knowledge she had

gained from each one. For instance, taking care of our neighbor's goldfish taught her responsibility for living things and keeping a schedule. As secretary of her school's student government, she learned to take minutes at meetings and give presentations.

When Mary finished her résumé, she was pleased with all her accomplishments. Plus, she had gotten some great writing practice! ▣

