

Math+Science Connection

Beginning Edition

Building Excitement and Success for Young Children

May 2018



TOOLS & TIDBITS

Coin rubbings

Your youngster can practice coin recognition with this activity. Put a penny, nickel, dime, and quarter on a table. Have her cover them with white paper and use an unwrapped crayon to lightly rub over each one. Help her label each rubbing with the coin's name and how many cents it's worth. Then, she could match each coin with its rubbing.



Layers of soil

"Go ahead and play in the dirt!" Let your child dig up enough soil to fill a clear jar halfway and add water. He should leave a few inches of space at the top, screw on the lid, and shake. Leave it overnight, and it will settle into layers. He'll see that soil has different "ingredients" — heavier particles like rocks sink toward the bottom while lighter ones, such as bits of leaves, stay near the top.

Book picks

■ Is sneaky Triangle going to outsmart his friend Square? Your youngster will laugh at the mischievous shapes in *Triangle* (Mac Barnett).

■ Learn how 3-D printing saved a wounded wild bald eagle in the delightful story *Beauty and the Beak* (Deborah Lee Rose).

Just for fun



Q: What turns everything around but doesn't move?

A: A mirror.

Keep a summer math log

Whether your child is taking a trip in the car, watching sports, or running and playing outdoors, he can do math this summer! Have him turn a notebook into a log for recording math activities like these.

Find numbers and shapes

Help your youngster draw a bingo card in his log with number-related objects to find while riding in the car (1 bank, 3 fire hydrants, 35-mph speed limit sign). Can he cross out all the boxes before you reach your destination?

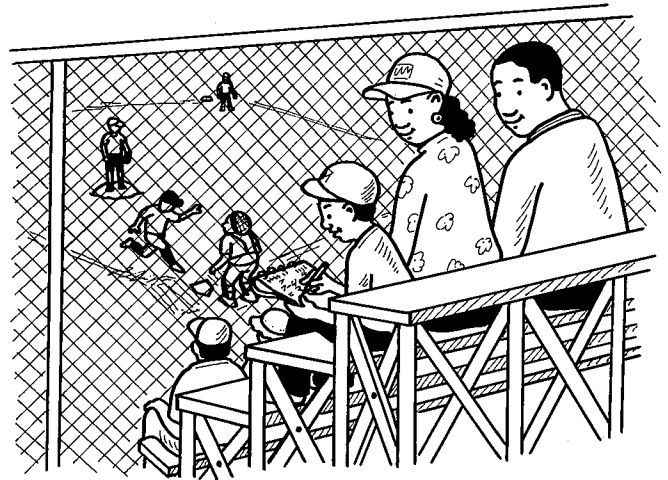
Count and subtract

At a baseball or basketball game, suggest that your child keep score by making a tally mark for each run or point. When the game ends, he should count the tally marks and write the final score. Have him announce who won and by how much. ("The Robins scored 7 runs

and the Tigers got 4. The Robins won by 3, because $7 - 4 = 3$.)

Estimate and measure

Have your youngster estimate how many jumps it would take to get from the front door to the mailbox. He can check his estimate by counting his jumps. Help him estimate time, too. How long will it take him to run once around the house? Time him, then he could write his estimates and the actual numbers in his math log. 🦋

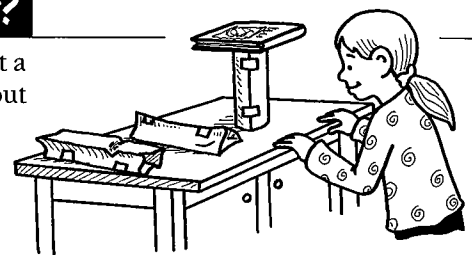


Which column is strongest?

How can one piece of paper support a heavy book? Let your youngster find out with this engineering challenge.

Have her fold one sheet of construction paper lengthwise into thirds and tape the ends together to make a triangular prism. She should fold a second piece into fourths to create a rectangular prism and roll the last sheet to form a cylinder. Now ask your child to predict which column is strongest.

She can test her prediction by standing up each column and placing a book on top. The triangular and rectangular prisms will buckle. While they're strong at their corners (vertices), their edges are weak. The cylinder is equally sturdy all the way around, so it supports the book's weight evenly. What kind of column does your child think engineers prefer for buildings? 🦋



Graph animal friends

"I saw 3 butterflies, 5 squirrels, and 3 birds at the park!" Your child can keep track of animals she spots by making this picture graph.

1. Let your youngster bring pencil and paper to the park. Have her draw lines to divide her paper into three columns.
2. Help her label the columns with the names of three animals she spots. Then, each time she sees one of those animals, she draws a picture



to represent it in the correct column. So if she sees 5 squirrels, she would draw 5 of them in the squirrel column.

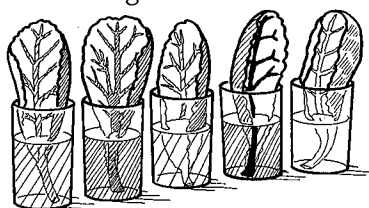
3. Take turns asking each other questions that can be answered using her graph. *Examples:* "Which animal did you see the most of? The least?" "How many more squirrels than butterflies did you see?"

SCIENCE LAB

Thirsty leaves

Plants need water to live. Let your youngster see for himself how plants "drink" their water.

You'll need: 5 green cabbage leaves, 5 glasses, measuring cup, water, 4 colors of food coloring



Here's how: Have your child pour 1 cup water into each glass and add food coloring to four glasses (a different color for each). He should leave the fifth glass of water clear. Now let him put a cabbage leaf, stem down, in each jar. Every day, he can observe the leaves and sketch what he sees.

What happens? After a few days, the leaves in the colored water will turn the color of the water. So if your youngster added red food coloring, the leaf will be red. The leaf in plain water won't change.

Why? In plants, water moves up through the roots, stem, and leaves—this is called *capillary action*. Food coloring shows your child this process.



Idea: If you travel this summer, your youngster could repeat this activity in another area. Or she might wait and try again in fall and winter. Does she observe different types and numbers of animals?

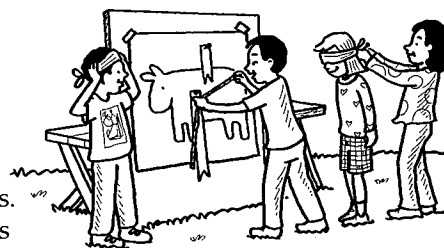
MATH CORNER

Throw a math party

Celebrate math this summer by letting your youngster host a party for family or friends. From snacks to games, this bash is all about math.

Eat shapes and patterns

Set out cookie cutters or plastic knives. Encourage guests to cut their sandwiches into shapes like circles, squares, and triangles. Or have partygoers thread fruit and cheese onto toothpicks in a pattern (melon ball, cheese cube, strawberry, melon ball, cheese cube, strawberry).



Use math for games

Put math twists on traditional party games. For Pin the Tail on the Donkey, each player could use string to measure how close he came to the target and cut his piece to that length. After everyone has had a turn, line up the strings on the floor. The player with the shortest string wins.

PARENT TO PARENT

My mathematics lab

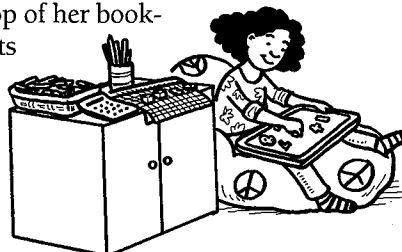
My daughter Aisha loves to read in a cozy corner of her room on her beanbag chair. I thought adding math tools to her special spot might encourage her to practice math, too.

We cleared off the top of her bookcase and stocked baskets with pencils, crayons, paper, a calculator, and a ruler. Aisha added dice, pretend money from old board games, and

a deck of cards. At the dollar store, we bought a magnetic white board and a set of number magnets to put in her corner.

Now my daughter calls the spot "Aisha's Math Lab." She often does activities she enjoys in

school like making up math problems on her white board and sorting playing cards. She's having fun with math—and she has a great place to do homework, too.



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Math+Science Connection

Intermediate Edition

Building Understanding and Excitement for Children

May 2018

East Quogue Elementary School
Robert J. Long, Principal

INFO BITS

Telephone numbers

Let your child use the phone for something other than talking. Give him math challenges, such as adding or multiplying each row of numbers on the keypad (horizontal, vertical, diagonal) to find the largest sum or product. Or ask him to add all the numbers to find the total.



Get your heart pumping

How does exercise affect your youngster's heart rate? Show her how to take her pulse by placing two fingers on the inside of her wrist, setting a timer for 1 minute, and counting the beats. Now let her do jumping jacks for 1 minute and check her pulse again. Her heart beats faster when she exercises—that's because it's pumping more oxygen-rich blood to her muscles.

Book picks

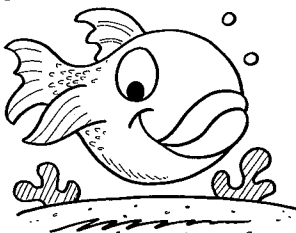
Hotel Infinity is fully booked, but there's always room for more. Read *The Cat in Numberland* (Ivar Ekeland) for a clever introduction to the concept of infinity.

Poetry combines with geology in *Earth Verse: Haiku from the Ground Up* (Sally M. Walker). Your child can learn about magma, volcanoes, minerals, and more.

Just for fun

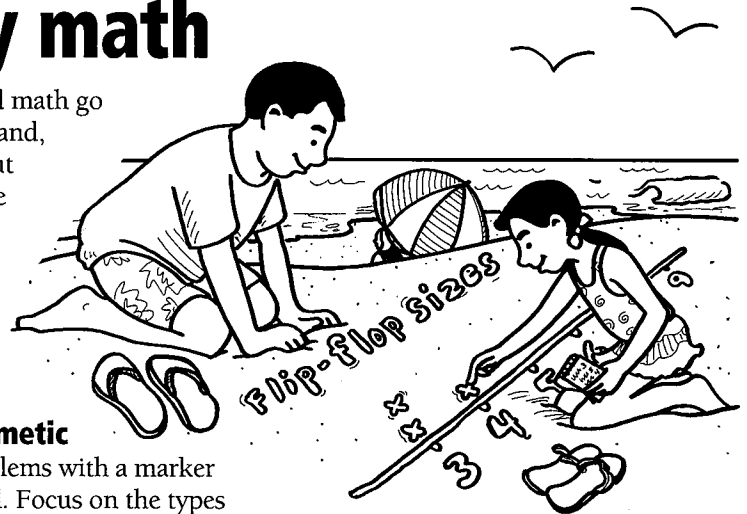
Q: Why do fish swim in salt water?

A: Because pepper makes them sneeze!



Beachy math

Summer fun and math go together like sun, sand, and water! Head out to the backyard, the beach, or the playground, and use these activities to help your child keep up her math skills.



Beach ball arithmetic

Write math problems with a marker all over a beach ball. Focus on the types of problems your youngster worked on in school this year, such as adding three numbers ($8 + 9 + 6$) or subtracting decimals ($3.96 - 1.47$). Then, toss the ball back and forth. When you catch it, solve the problem closest to your right forefinger.

Outdoor concert

Invite your child to perform a summer concert. First, have her line up 8 same-size glasses. She should measure $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of water into the first glass, and an additional $\frac{1}{8}$ cup water into each glass that follows ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup, $\frac{3}{8}$ cup, and so on). What does she hear when she taps each

glass with a spoon? The amount of water determines the *pitch*—how high or low the sound is. The more water, the lower the pitch.

Line plot in the sand

What size flip-flop is most common among your youngster's friends and family? Have her take a survey and show her data with a line plot. Let her make a line in a sandbox or on the beach and add tick marks labeled with the shoe sizes reported. Above each mark, she should draw an X for each person who wears that size (say, 2 Xs above 3 if 2 people wear size 3 flip-flops).

Science field trips

Your town is full of scientific outings for your family to enjoy. Here are some to consider.

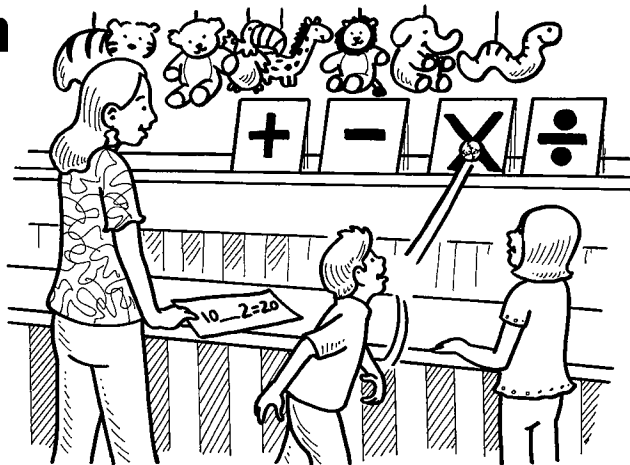
- **Zoo.** Have your youngster read signs to learn facts about where each animal came from, its diet, and how it defends itself from predators.
- **Recycling center.** Call your local facility to ask when they give tours. Your child could see machines that sort and clean recyclables and hear how reducing waste helps the earth.
- **Botanical garden.** Your youngster can identify plants and discover which ones are native to your area. He might also find out about plant life cycles, how plants are pollinated, and which ones butterflies prefer.



The right operation for the job

Multiply, divide, add, or subtract—what should your youngster do to solve the problem? Use these ideas to help him pick the correct operation.

Which sign? On separate sticky notes, have your child write these math symbols: +, −, ×, and ÷. Now take turns giving each other problems on a sheet of paper, leaving blanks for the operators. Example: $10 _ 2 = 20$. Your youngster could think, “What should I do with 10 and 2 to get 20?” (Answer: He would multiply, so he should put the “x” sticky note in the blank.)



Which numbers? Secretly choose two single-digit numbers (say, 7 and 9), and add, subtract, and multiply them. Tell your child the three answers: “The sum is 16, the difference is 2, and the product is 63.” Can he figure out your two numbers? He’ll need to try adding, subtracting, and multiplying different numbers to determine which ones equal the answers given. Next, he can pick two numbers for you. 🎲



PARENT TO PARENT

Let's time ourselves

The other day my daughters were arguing—again—over whose turn it was to use the computer. I mentioned this while chatting with my neighbor, and she had a solution.

Since she's a middle school math teacher, she's always looking for ways children can work on math skills. She said figuring out a fair way to take turns could help my girls practice addition and “time sense.”

My kids and I discussed how long they could use the computer each day, how long each turn should be, and what time they would start. To bump up the math practice, my neighbor suggested using times and numbers that are “offbeat,” like starting at 4:19 and having 16-minute turns. The turn-taking is going pretty well so far, and they're definitely getting to know the clock better! 🕒



MATH CORNER

How big is a watermelon?

A sweet, juicy watermelon makes a delicious summer treat—as well as a great math tool.

1. Weight. Have your child estimate how many pounds the watermelon weighs. Then, let him weigh himself on a bathroom scale, with and then without the watermelon. The difference is the watermelon's weight. If he weighs 96 pounds with the fruit and 80 pounds without, he would subtract $96 - 80 = 16$, so the watermelon weighs 16 pounds.



2. Circumference. Next, your youngster could estimate the circumference, or distance around, the widest part of the watermelon. He can use a measuring tape to find the actual circumference and compare it to his estimate. 📏

SCIENCE LAB

Don't pop the balloon!

Your child can amaze friends and family with this balloon experiment.

You'll need: two balloons, straight pin, clear tape

Here's how: Help your youngster blow up both balloons and knot them. Then, she should find the darkened circle on the top of one balloon and stick the pin into it. Now, have her place a square of tape in the same spot on the second balloon—and stick the pin through the tape and into the balloon.

What happens? The first balloon pops, but the second one doesn't. *Note:* If your child removes the pin from the second balloon, it will slowly deflate.

Why? A rubber balloon is made of stretchy molecules called *polymers* that contain many tiny links. The pin in the first balloon breaks the links, and all the air suddenly rushes out. But the tape on the second balloon reinforces the links so they can't stretch enough to break. When the pin is removed, the air leaks out of the tiny hole it made. 🎈



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Nutrition Nuggets

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

May 2018



East Quogue Elementary School
Robert J Long, Principal

BEST BITES

"E" is for eggplant

These healthy fritters may tempt your child to try eggplant. Slice 1 eggplant into disks, and soak for 20 minutes in 1 cup milk combined with 1 tsp. salt. Drain, and roll in 1 cup whole-wheat breadcrumbs. Bake in a single layer for 15 minutes at 425°, flipping halfway. Top each round with 1 tbsp. pizza sauce and 1 tsp. shredded mozzarella cheese, and cook 3–5 minutes more, until the cheese melts.



Happy active birthday!

To help your youngster get more exercise, consider a gift of physical activity for his next birthday. You could give him new sneakers or sports equipment like a soccer ball or a scooter. Or consider lessons in an activity, such as karate or indoor rock climbing.

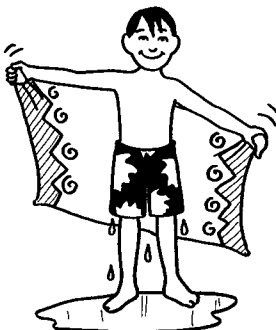
DID YOU KNOW?

Many youngsters tend to gain weight over the summer. One reason is that they may reach for sugary beverages like sweet tea, lemonade, or soda to quench thirst on hot days. Encourage your child to choose refreshing ice water—perhaps she'll try it with a slice of lemon or lime—to stay hydrated.

Just for fun

Q: What only gets wetter the more it dries?

A: A towel.



Have a healthy summer

Your child doesn't need to take a vacation from healthy habits over the summer—not when there are so many great things to eat and do! Try these ideas to make sure he stays active and eats right while school is out.

Community events

Together, read the newspaper or look online for outings that involve healthy foods and fitness. Aim to do at least one each week. Walk, bend, and stretch to pick blueberries or peaches, then make fresh and fruity pancakes or muffins. Or attend a health or fitness fair where your youngster might sample nutritious snacks from vendors or take part in a hula-hoop contest.

Family visits

Visiting relatives this summer? Offer to take turns cooking meals. When it's your turn, plan a nutritious menu like a chicken and vegetable flatbread, corn on the cob, and a green salad. To get exercise, explore



your destination by walking around a historic district or running along the beach. If you host visitors, introduce them to your favorite local park and play tennis or go paddleboarding.

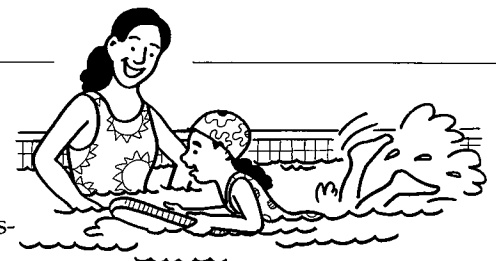
New traditions

It's always nice to create summer traditions! Consider making homemade ice cream, and use fresh fruit like raspberries or apricots to add nutrients. Another idea is to play outdoor games after dark. Perhaps your family will enjoy flashlight tag or play hide-and-seek on a night when there's a full moon. 🌕

Fun at the pool

Swimming is a great way to stay fit. Use these tips to keep your youngster healthy and safe in the pool this summer:

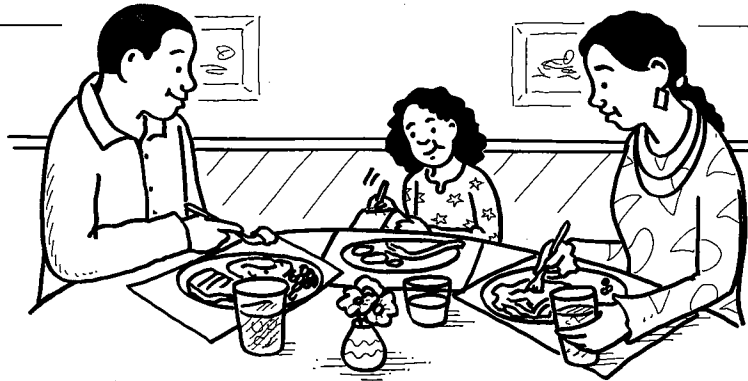
- Sign your child up for swimming lessons at your community pool, YMCA, or recreation center. She'll learn a life-saving skill *and* a new way to get exercise.
- Read the pool rules together, and make sure your youngster follows them. For example, show her where she's allowed to dive, and remind her to avoid horseplay.
- Watch your youngster at all times rather than relying solely on lifeguards to keep her safe. Better yet, get in the pool to swim or play with her—you'll both get a dose of physical activity. 🏊



Be a food critic

Playing food critic can inspire your child to be mindful of what she's eating, making her less likely to overeat. It will help her motivate others to try yummy foods—and boost her writing skills, too! Here's how.

Take notes. Suggest that your youngster jot down her thoughts during a meal at home or in a restaurant. Encourage her to be specific about how the food looks, smells, feels, and tastes. Instead of saying quinoa is “good,” she might write that it “looks fluffy” and “tastes kind of nutty.”



Write and share. Your child can write up her review and draw—or snap—a picture to go along with it. She could even keep her reviews in a notebook to share with friends and relatives who visit.

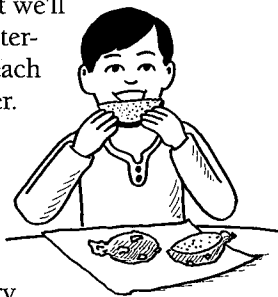
Idea: Let your youngster invent a scale, such as a five-star (or perhaps a “five-apple”) system, to rank foods. Have her give healthy but low-rated foods another chance. Does sauteing broccoli instead of steaming it change its rating? 🍷

PARENT TO PARENT

Quirky fruit challenge

I'm happy that my son Brandon reaches for apples and bananas when he's hungry. But those are the *only* fruits he will eat. I wanted him to branch out a little, so I came up with the “Quirky Fruit Challenge.”

We agreed that we'll try at least one interesting new fruit each week this summer. Since Brandon loves dragons, I wasn't surprised when he picked dragon fruit at the grocery store the first week.



I cut it into cubes, and Brandon added it to a fruit salad that also included (of course) apple and banana slices. He loved the sweet flavor of the dragon fruit. Next week he wants to make fruit salad with star fruit. I'm hoping that if he's willing to taste unusual fruits, it won't be too hard to get him to eat more common ones, too, like watermelon and oranges! 🍷

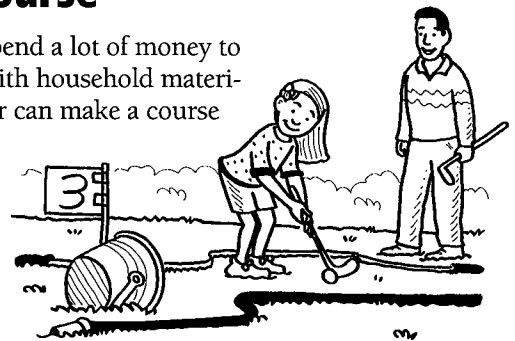
ACTIVITY CORNER

Par for the course

You don't need to spend a lot of money to play miniature golf. With household materials and a little creativity, your youngster can make a course that will get everyone moving. Head to the backyard, an open space in your neighborhood, or a park, and follow these steps to get started.

- 1. Lay out the course.** Have your child arrange pool noodles, jump ropes, large rocks, or even the garden hose on the ground to create the borders for 9 holes.
- 2. Add obstacles.** Your youngster might remove the tops and bottoms from cereal boxes to make “tunnels.” She could prop up a baking sheet on bricks to serve as a ramp. Or she can place blocks or other toys to shoot around.
- 3. Make “holes.”** Let your child lay a beach pail or an empty can on its side at each hole. She should cut flags from construction paper and number them 1–9. Help her tape each flag to a twig and stick it in the ground by a hole.

Look for a set of plastic clubs and balls at a dollar store or discount retailer. Then, your youngster can keep score as your family plays golf. 🍷



IN THE KITCHEN

Fiesta foods

Put a healthy spin on chips and salsa for a treat to enjoy on Cinco de Mayo (May 5)—and the rest of the year.

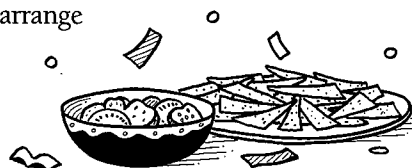
Churro chips

Brush both sides of 4 12-inch whole-wheat tortillas with 1 tbsp. olive oil or melted coconut oil. Cut each tortilla into 8 triangles, and arrange the wedges in a single layer on a baking sheet. In a separate bowl, mix 1 tsp. sugar with 2 tsp. cinnamon.

Sprinkle half the cinnamon mixture on the wedges, and bake 6 minutes in a 350° oven. Flip, sprinkle with remaining cinnamon mixture, and bake 6 minutes more.

Strawberry-kiwi salsa

Chop 2 cups fresh strawberries, and peel and dice 2 kiwis. Put the fruit in a bowl, and squeeze ½ lime on top. Stir to combine. Serve with the churro chips. 🍷



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Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

May 2018

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Mr. Robert J. Long, Jr. - Principal

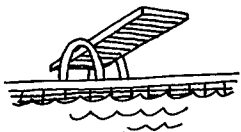
Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ **Jabari Jumps** (Gaia Cornwall)

Jabari loves swim lessons. But now it's time for the final test—jumping off the diving board. Suddenly, Jabari can think of a dozen things he needs to be doing instead of diving into the pool. With a little help from his dad, Jabari finds a way to overcome his fear.



■ **Judy Moody & Stink: The Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad Treasure Hunt** (Megan McDonald)

A trip to Ocracoke Island, North Carolina, turns into a pirate adventure for Judy Moody and her brother. Readers join the fun of following a map and discovering clues in a search for buried treasure. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ **Me...Jane** (Patrick McDonnell)

As a little girl, Jane Goodall dreamed of growing up and living in Africa where she would help all the animals in the jungle. This picture-book biography tells the story of how Jane studied animals and nature and grew up to be a scientist famous for her work with chimpanzees.

■ **Money Madness** (David A. Adler)
Rocks, feathers, animals, and food have all been used as money throughout history. A cartoon Uncle Sam character leads this lively tour of currency geared toward young readers. The author uses humor to explain how money has changed over the years and the role it plays in our economy.



Adventures in reading

Reading during summer break can help your child maintain—and even strengthen—her skills for the coming school year. Make books a part of summer with these activities.

Go “on location”

Take family field trips inspired by book settings. Maybe you'll stop by a construction site or go out for ice cream. Have your youngster make real-life connections by pointing out things that remind her of the book (workers wearing hard hats, a display of sundae toppings).

Aim for variety

Encourage your child to explore different topics and types of books with this idea. Put magnetic letters in a bag. Take turns drawing a letter and listing a topic that starts with it (*dancer* for D, *elephant* for E). When you visit the library, your youngster can use the list



to choose books like a biography of a dancer or a story about elephants.

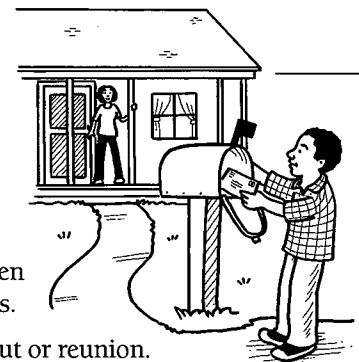
Achieve a goal

Join another family to meet a shared reading goal. Together, choose a target, such as 50 books or 1,000 pages, and throw a celebration when you reach it. You could hold a game night or a taco party, for instance. Let your child keep track of your progress and check in with the other family regularly.♥

Reach out and write

Staying in touch with friends and relatives gives your youngster practical reasons to write. Suggest these projects:

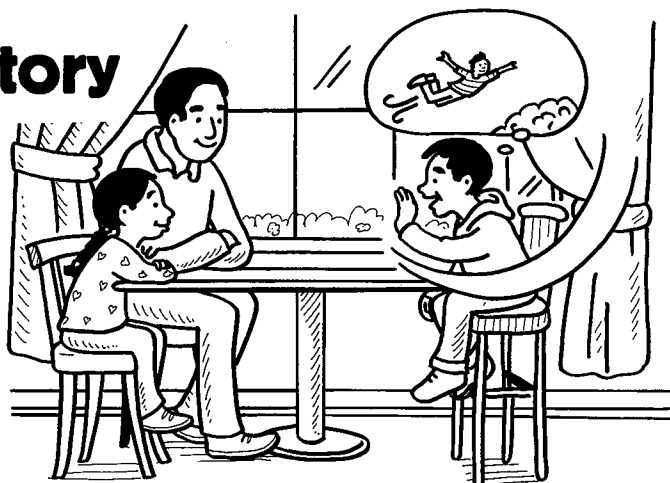
- Exchange weekly letters or emails with a classmate or cousin. Your child will work on asking and answering questions as he and his pen pal learn about each other's summer experiences.
- Use a computer to write invitations to a cookout or reunion. Help your youngster mail or email them to guests. Typing the date and time of the event and the addresses lets him practice writing numbers.
- Design greeting cards for birthdays or other celebrations. Your child can write a cute poem on the front, then add a personal message on the inside.♥



Once upon a story

Telling stories improves your youngster's creativity and communication. Use these ideas to inspire him.

Patchwork stories. Take turns being the storyteller and letting your listener choose the setting, character, and problem. Perhaps your child will pick the ocean, a dog, and a lost toy. You could begin, "Once upon a time, a polka-dotted puppy went to sea in a submarine. At the



bottom of the ocean, he found his red ball that had been missing." Now trade roles, and it's your youngster's turn to weave a setting, character, and problem into a story.

Tall tales. Stretch a real-life event into a tall tale, or a story that includes exaggeration. You might say, "One day, I went down the slide, floated off the

end, and started to fly." Your child picks up where you left off and adds his own exaggeration. "I flew up to the top of a tree and played tag with a squirrel." Keep going wherever the tale leads until someone can wrap it up with "The end."♥

Fun with Words

My picture thesaurus

Draw, doodle, and sketch are all slightly different words for illustrate. Your youngster will practice writing and discover more synonyms, or words with similar meanings, as she creates her own picture thesaurus.

Materials: paper, stapler, crayons

Staple together several sheets of paper to make a book.



On each page, help your child write three words that have similar meanings. *Examples: cold, frosty, frozen.* (You could use a real thesaurus for ideas.)

Next, have her illustrate each word. She might draw a glass of lemonade for *cold*, a milkshake for *frosty*, and an ice cube for *frozen*.

Let her read her thesaurus to you. As she comes across new words, she can add them and their synonyms. *Idea:* Encourage her to use her thesaurus when she writes stories—she'll have a variety of words to choose from, which will make her writing more interesting.♥



Parent to Parent

Read...and reread

When my son Tyler read aloud, he would say one word at a time, so his sentences sounded choppy. I told his teacher that he was so focused on figuring out the words, he'd lose track of what the story was about.

She said she was working with Tyler to help him recognize more words automatically, which will improve his fluency. She explained that repeated reading could make him more fluent, too, and she suggested this strategy.

First, Tyler reads a sentence from a book the way he normally does. Then, I pretend to "change the channel" by clicking on an imaginary remote control three times. After each click, I name a character, such as a mouse or a lion, and Tyler rereads the sentence in that voice.

Using silly voices makes it fun for Tyler to practice repeated reading. Now each time he rereads a passage, he reads a little more smoothly and with better expression.♥



Q&A

Ready for kindergarten

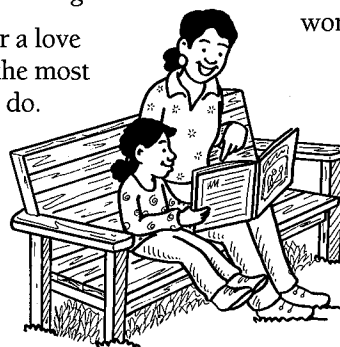
Q My daughter starts kindergarten in the fall. What should I be doing to get her ready for reading?

A Giving your daughter a love of books and reading is the most important thing you can do. The best way to accomplish that is to read with her every day.

When you read together, point to the words as you say them. Your child will learn

that we read books from top to bottom and from left to right. She'll also pick up the idea that letters on the page make words that tell the story.

Talk about stories and ask questions, too. Simply inviting your daughter to describe her favorite parts or predict what might happen next gives her a stronger connection to books and will deepen her love of reading.♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

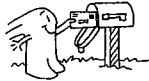
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Reading Connection

Working Together for Learning Success

May 2018

East Quogue Elementary School
Mr. Robert J. Long, Jr. - Principal



Book Picks

■ *The Great Treehouse War* (Lisa Graff)

Winnie has an unusual living arrangement after her parents' divorce. She's supposed to spend three days a week with her mom, three days with her dad, and one day in a treehouse near both homes. Frustrated by her parents' efforts to outdo each other, Winnie decides to stay in the treehouse—but the situation gets out of hand when 10 of her friends move in!

■ *I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives*

(Caitlin Alifirenka and Martin Ganda with Liz Welch)

This inspiring true story describes the friendship between two unlikely pen pals: Caitlin, a 12-year-old from suburban Pennsylvania, and Martin, a 14-year-old from a poor village in Zimbabwe. The friends tell their tale through alternating points of view.



■ *Peak* (Roland Smith)

Climbing is in Peak Marcello's genes. But when he is arrested for scaling a skyscraper, he realizes he has taken his passion too far. He's sent to live with his long-lost father, who runs an adventure company. Is he really up to the challenge of being the youngest boy to climb Mount Everest?



■ *Girls Think of Everything*

(Catherine Thimmesh)

This biography collection describes the inventions of a dozen women and girls. Through hard work and creativity, they developed items ranging from chocolate chip cookies to solar-heated houses. Includes a time line of important inventions by females.



Read around your community

Now starring: Reading! Keep books front and center this summer with community outings that will motivate your child to read.

At the library

Kick off the season with a trip to the library, where your youngster can sign up for the summer reading program. Ask a librarian if there's a kids' book club—or encourage your child to start her own. Discussing books with others is fun, and it boosts comprehension.



In the bookstore

Explore local book shops, and browse the shelves for used books or low-cost paperbacks. Also, plan to attend events they sponsor like author visits, poetry readings, or puppet shows. If you're going to meet a children's writer, your youngster may want to read one of his books ahead of time and write down questions to ask him. *Idea:* Traveling this summer? Tour bookstores in other towns.

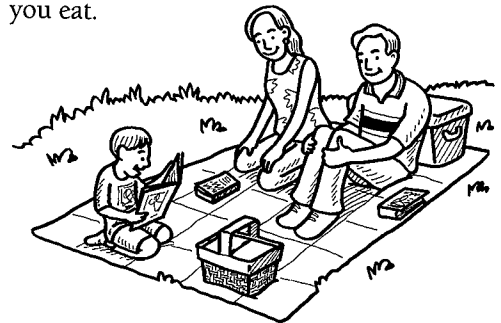
Onstage

Help your child read the newspaper or look online to find concerts or plays. Pick one to see, and get in the spirit by reading a related book. Before a bluegrass concert, your child could read about the history of that style of music. Or for a community theater production of *Alice in Wonderland*, you might read the Lewis Carroll classic together. ■

Celebrate books

Create your own family fun by inviting books to your summer activities. Consider these tips:

- Pack a picnic basket with lunch *and* books. Head to a nearby park, and enjoy reading outside. Your youngster might read aloud a chapter from a novel before lunch. Then, let each person relax with his own book after you eat.



- Add reading to a family gathering like an Independence Day celebration or a birthday party. Take turns reading from books of jokes, trivia, or world records. *Idea:* Encourage your child to read to younger siblings and cousins. ■

Write creative nonfiction

Whether your child is swimming with friends, stargazing at camp, or visiting grandparents, special memories make great nonfiction writing material. Share this advice to help him write a true story.

Find an exciting angle. Encourage your youngster to pick out something fun or unusual about an event and build his story around it. Maybe his friend brought a cool raft for everyone to float on, or perhaps your child saw a shooting star.



Create images. Your youngster can help readers “see” the story by setting the scene. Rather than “I caught a fish,” he might write, “Grandpa and I sat on the wooden dock overlooking the clear blue lake when, suddenly, I caught a big fish!”

Share the emotion. Suggest that your child describe how people in

his story felt. His characters will seem more real if he writes a sentence like “The campers gasped in awe as the starlight soared across the night sky” or “Grandpa’s face shone with pride when he saw my catch.”

Fun with Words

Road trip games

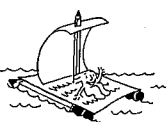
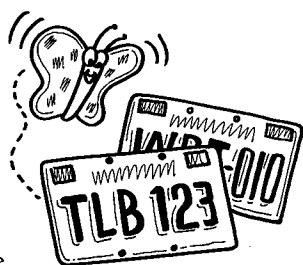
Word games are a tried-and-true way to strengthen vocabulary and pass time in the car. Here are two to try.

Buzzwords

Let your child choose an interesting word on a sign, such as *delicatessen* or *boulevard*. You say a word that her word brings to mind (*pastrami*). Your youngster adds a word that’s related to yours, and so on. Continue until no one can think of a word. The player who said the last one picks a new word. Then, play again.

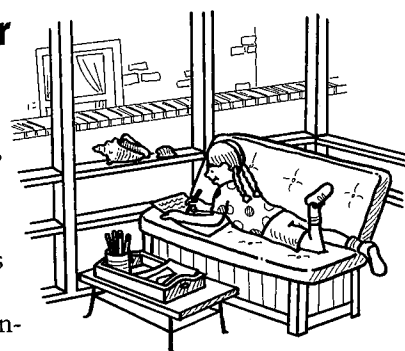
License plate words

Ask your youngster to read the letters on a license plate. Take turns saying a word that includes all the letters in the order they appear. For TLB, you might pick *tollbooth*, *toolbox*, *tailbone*, and *trailblazer*. If you say a word that doesn’t contain those letters in that order, or you can’t think of a word, you’re out. The last player remaining is the winner.



A household writing center

Families can share ideas and stories with this interactive writing center. Have your youngster set aside a spot that includes paper, pencils, pens, and envelopes. Together, enjoy these suggestions.



● **Fill an “idea envelope.”** Jot ideas on slips of paper, and put them in an envelope. (“We should go tubing!”) Visitors to the writing center can build on the ideas. (“The Outdoor Adventure Center offers discounts on tubing on Sunday afternoons.”)

● **Provide inspiration.** Place a seashell, a photo of a cute baby animal, or another item in the station. Each person writes a story about the object and seals it in an envelope. When everyone is finished, read your tales aloud to each other. You will see all the different stories the same item can inspire!

Q&A

Should my child try e-books?

Q I’ve recently started reading e-books. I enjoy them, so I thought I might suggest that my fourth-grade son try some. But are print books better for kids?

A For many people, there’s something special about holding a book and turning the pages. This is especially important for beginning readers. But since your son is older, he might experiment with both print and e-books.

One advantage of e-readers is that they hold a large number of books. If you travel, your child can “pack” as many titles

as he likes. Also, by downloading books from the public library for free, he’ll have a huge selection available at the touch of a button.

On the other hand, youngsters can easily be distracted by apps while they’re reading e-books. So have your son either turn off internet access or use a device that’s just for reading.

Regardless of which book format your child likes, he’ll be reading—and that’s what’s most important.



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