

Math+Science Connection

Beginning Edition

Building Excitement and Success for Young Children

April 2018

East Quogue Elementary School
Robert J. Long, Principal

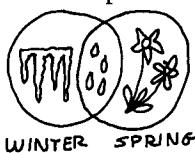
TOOLS & TIDBITS

Think before you roll

Your child will practice thinking like a mathematician with this game. Each player lists the numbers 1–12 on his paper. Take turns rolling either 1 or 2 dice, and cross out the number rolled. If he only has the number 8 left, how many dice should he roll? That's where the strategy comes in. The first person to get every number wins.

Changing seasons

How are winter and spring the same and different? Encourage your youngster to compare the seasons by drawing a Venn diagram with one circle labeled "Winter" and the other "Spring." The shared part in the center is for both. She might draw icicles in the winter circle, flowers for spring, and rain in the middle.



Web picks

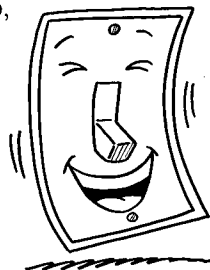
Have a soccer shootout, race cars, or play tic-tac-toe with math problems at funbrain.com/numbers.html. Adjust the game levels to match your child's growing skills.

Your youngster will learn all about animals at switchzoo.com. Activities include building a habitat and listening to animal sounds.

Just for fun

Q: When I point up, it's bright. When I point down, it's dark. What am I?

A: A light switch!

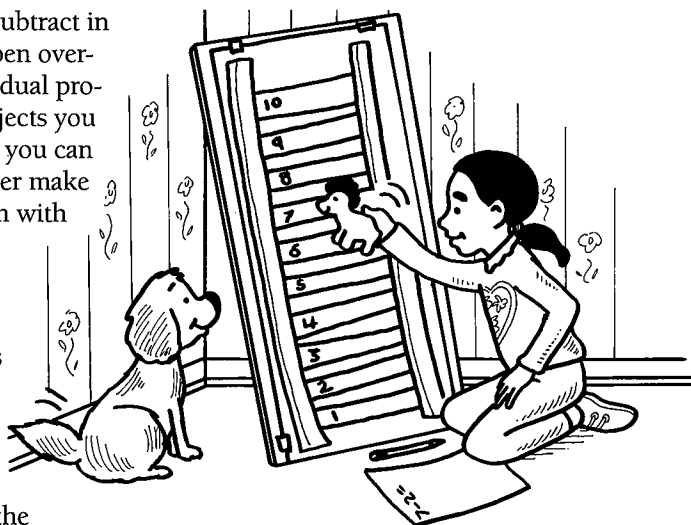


Steps to mental math

Learning to add or subtract in your head doesn't happen overnight. Instead, it's a gradual process that starts with objects you can touch and pictures you can see. Help your youngster make her way to mental math with these steps.

Step 1: Use objects.

Let your child draw a ladder with the rungs numbered 1–10 for a small toy to "climb" up and down. Then, say a problem, such as $7 - 2$. Have her put the toy on the rung labeled 7 and make it climb down 2 rungs. What number did she land on? (5) That's her answer!



Step 2: Draw a picture.

Give your youngster another problem ($4 + 5$), and encourage her to sketch or paint a picture to find the solution. For example, she might paint 4 blue butterflies and 5 yellow butterflies and say, "There are 9 butterflies in all."

Step 3: Visualize it.

To imagine and solve a problem in her head, your child could start with small numbers, perhaps $3 + 1$. Have her picture her toy climbing a ladder, starting on 3 and counting 1 more rung (answer: 4). Or she could make a "drawing" in her mind. Give each other different kinds of problems and use bigger numbers as she gets more comfortable with mental math.

Fun with sun prints

Here's a science project that's powered by the spring sunshine!

Have your child gather objects from the ground (leaves, twigs, rocks). Then, he can place one piece of black construction paper in the sun and another in the shade, and arrange a few items on each paper.

Check back in 3–4 hours. When your youngster removes the objects, he'll see the paper left in the sun is lighter in the areas that weren't covered up. That's because the items blocked the sunlight, keeping it from bleaching the paper. The paper in the shade stayed the same because there was no sunlight to bleach it.

Idea: Your child's project can be a puzzle, too! Put the objects in a bag, and have him pull out one at a time and match them up with their sun prints.

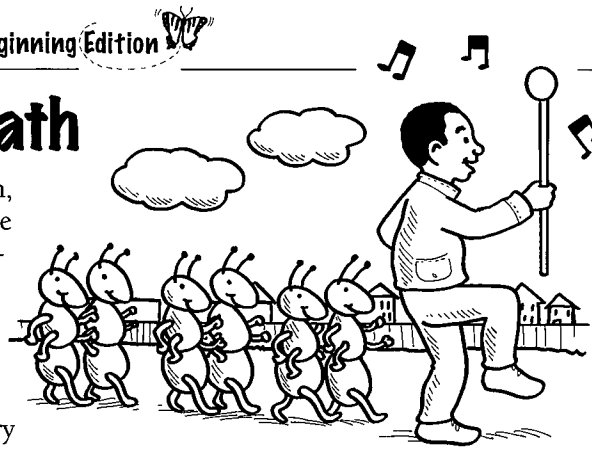


Sing a song of math

“The ants go marching 2 by 2, hurrah, hurrah...” Many children’s songs include numbers, making them ideal for practicing counting out loud. Try these musical activities with your youngster.

Sing and clap. Ask your child to choose a counting song like “The Ants Go Marching” or “Hickory Dickory Dock.” Whenever he sings a number, have him clap that many times. That means he gets to clap once after singing “The clock struck 1” and 12 times for “The clock struck 12.”

Pick new numbers. Substitute more challenging numbers for the ones in a song. Your youngster might sing “One Hundred



Little Monkeys” instead of “Ten Little Monkeys” and count backward by 10s (“10 fell off and bumped their heads... 90 little monkeys jumping on the bed”). Or name a random number to start with in a song like “This Old Man” so he can *count on* from numbers other than 1. (“This old man, he played 17...”)

Make your own. Turn regular songs into counting songs by putting numbers into the lyrics. For example, the passengers in “The Wheels on the Bus” could count (“The people on the bus count 1, 2, 3...”) or skip count (“2, 4, 6...”).

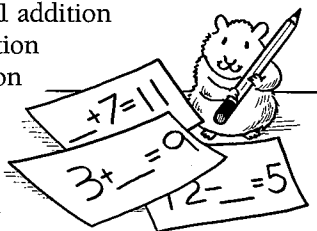


MATH CORNER

Be a math detective

Help! Some numbers are missing! Your youngster can use early algebra skills to find them.

Write 11 addition or subtraction problems on separate index cards, but leave a different number from 0 to 10 missing from each problem. Vary the locations of the missing numbers ($3 + _ = 9$, $_ + 7 = 11$, $12 - _ = 5$).



Next, ask your child to number 11 clothespins, 0–10. While she closes her eyes, hide them around the house or yard. To play, have her search for the clothespins and clip them into the correct spots in the math problems. She might use small objects, such as marbles, to help her solve them. For $8 + _ = 10$, she could count 8 marbles and then count to see how many more she’ll need to equal 10 (answer: 2).

SCIENCE LAB

The harder you push...

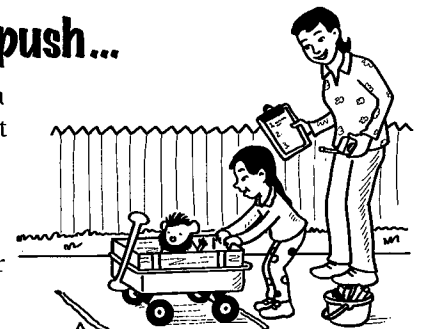
When your child pushes a wagon, it moves forward. But how far can she make it go? With this experiment, she’ll see the relationship between force and motion.

You’ll need: sidewalk chalk, wagon or another toy with wheels, measuring tape, paper, pencil

Here’s how: On a flat sidewalk, let your youngster draw a starting line with chalk and place the wagon behind it. Then, have her push the wagon gently. She can draw a line where it stops and label the line “1.” Ask her to repeat this several times, pushing the wagon harder each time. Finally, help her measure each distance and record the results on paper.

What happens? The harder your child pushes the wagon, the farther it moves.

Why? A push is a force. The energy from that force transfers to the wagon. The more force used, the more energy transferred, and the farther the object will travel.



Q & A Everyday measuring

Q: My son is learning about measurement in school, and he wants to measure things at home, too. I love his enthusiasm—any ideas?

A: It’s great that your child likes to measure. Luckily, it’s easy to make measuring a part of his daily life.

Appoint him the “measurer” when you cook. Let him use measuring cups and spoons, and encourage him to say the measurement’s name. Example: “Here is $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of flour.”

When you finish dinner, ask your youngster to put away leftovers. He’ll learn about volume (the space taken up by something) as he decides which container to use for leftover rice.

Another idea is to help your son make his own “ruler.” Trace his hand on a piece of cardboard, and cut it out. Then, he can use his “hand ruler” to measure household items. The coffee table might be 17 hands long and 8 hands wide, for example. Encourage him to measure everything from the vacuum cleaner to his little brother!



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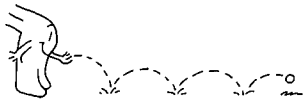
Math+Science Connection

Intermediate Edition

Building Understanding and Excitement for Children

April 2018

East Quogue Elementary School
Robert J. Long, Principal

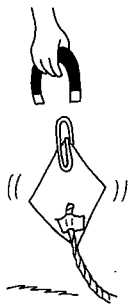


INFO BITS

World records

Here's a fun way for your youngster to compare numbers. Encourage her to look up world records (fastest animal, farthest Olympic long jump). Then, help her set her own records by timing her speed or measuring her jumps. She could subtract her records from those of the animal or Olympian to find the difference.

Up, up, and away



It's magnetism, not wind, that keeps this "kite" in the air. Ask your child to cut a kite out of paper. He should put a metal paper clip on one corner and tape a string to the opposite corner. If he holds a magnet close to the paper clip,

the magnet attracts the clip, and the kite "flies."

Web picks

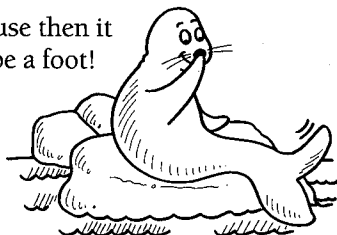
☞ Break a math code, solve a math riddle, and try many more challenges at rich.maths.org/primary-upper.

☞ At sciencebuddies.org/science-activities, your child can find instructions for making marshmallows, using crickets to tell the temperature, and other science projects.

Just for fun

Q: Why isn't your nose 12 inches long?

A: Because then it would be a foot!



Use math to manage money

It's never too early for your child to learn about money management. In the process, he will count money, solve equations, and work with decimals. Try these ideas for building math skills and financial literacy.

Play pizzeria

Hold a pizza night, and let family members use board game money to "pay" your youngster for their slices. If 1 slice costs 64 cents and he's handed a \$5 bill, how would he figure out the change? He might think that 0.64 to 0.70 is 6 cents, 0.70 to \$1.00 is 30 cents, and \$1.00 to \$5.00 is 4 dollars. So he'd give back \$4.36.

Calculate grocery deals

Have your child discover how comparison shopping can mean spending less. Ask what the better deal is: 5 lbs. of loose apples at \$1.29 a pound, or a 5-lb. bag for \$4.79. First, he'll need to find the price of 5 lbs. of loose apples. He might round \$1.29 to \$1.30 and think



"\$1.00 x 5 = \$5.00 and \$0.30 x 5 = \$1.50. \$5.00 + \$1.50 = \$6.50." When he compares his estimate to the price of the bag, he'll see that the bag is a better buy.

Make a budget

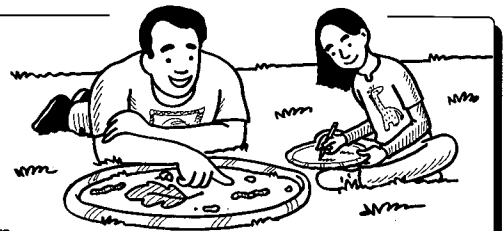
Encourage your youngster to create a personal budget. Have him add up how much money he might get in a year from an allowance, odd jobs, or birthday money. Then, he could divide by 12 for his monthly "income." Now, he can draw up a budget, setting aside a portion for spending, saving, and donating. 📦

A hula-hoop ecosystem

It might seem quiet in your backyard, but there's actually a lot going on. Your youngster just needs to look down to discover a mini-ecosystem of living and nonliving things interacting with each other.

First, have her put down a hula hoop (or a circle of rope) to mark off her ecosystem. Then, on a round paper plate, she can draw and label what she observes. Perhaps she'll spot an earthworm poking out of the soil, a leaf with an edge nibbled off, or an interesting rock.

Your child should visit her ecosystem each day and draw her observations on a new plate. Look at the plates together, and ask her to describe how the ecosystem changes. 📦



Creative arrays

Arrays make multiplication and division easy to see. Let your youngster arrange objects or pictures in even rows and columns and solve the problems they represent. Share these activities.

Draw and multiply. Write multiplication problems on index cards, such as $6 \times 5 = \underline{\quad}$. Your child can draw an array to show each problem—perhaps 6 columns of hearts with 5 hearts in each row.

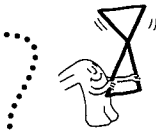


She can solve by multiplying the number of columns by the number of rows ($6 \times 5 = 30$). Encourage her to draw the array another way (5 columns and 6 rows). She'll see that the answer is the same ($5 \times 6 = 30$). This shows the *commutative property* of multiplication—the order of the numbers doesn't matter.

Sculpt and divide. Give each other division problems, and make play-dough arrays to solve. If you say, " $28 \div 4$," your youngster would roll the dough into 28 balls and arrange them in 4 rows.

To find the answer, she should count the number of columns and answer, " $28 \div 4 = 7$." How would she rearrange the array to show $28 \div 7 = 4$?

MATH CORNER



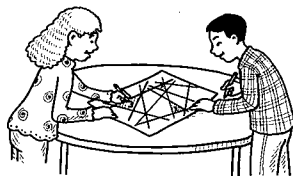
Collect the triangles

Not all triangles are the same. Your youngster can practice identifying different types of triangles with this game.

1. Have your child and a friend use rulers and pencils to draw criss-crossing diagonal lines of various lengths all over a sheet of paper. This will create different kinds of triangles—right, acute, and obtuse.

2. Using a different color crayon, they can take turns shading one triangle at a time. Each player should write a point value inside: 1 point for an obtuse triangle, 2 for an acute triangle, and 3 for a right triangle.

3. When the last triangle is shaded in, they'll have a colorful mosaic! The player with the most points wins.



Kinds of triangles

Right: One angle is 90° .

Acute: All three angles are less than 90° .

Obtuse: One angle is greater than 90° .

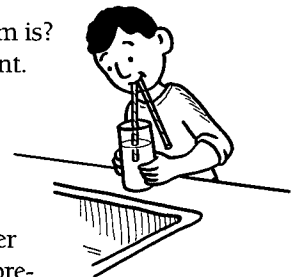
SCIENCE LAB

Vacuum power

Does your child know what a vacuum is? He'll find out with this clever experiment.

You'll need: cup, water, 2 drinking straws

Here's how: Have your youngster fill the cup with water and take a sip with one straw. Then, he should hold the second straw outside the cup and sip through both straws at the same time. Finally, he can put both straws in the water and sip from them together. *Tip:* At each stage, ask him to predict the outcome before he sips.



What happens? When your child sips with one or both straws in the water, the water comes up as expected. But when one straw is in the water and the other is out, he can't sip the water at all!

Why? Sucking on a straw in liquid creates a vacuum—or an empty space—which the water rushes in to fill. When he sucks on both straws (one in the water and the other out of the water), the air coming through the straw outside the drink prevents a vacuum from forming—so the straw in the water won't work.

Q & A My "function robot"

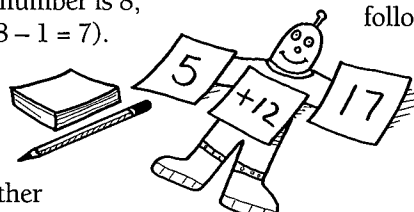
Q: My son is learning about functions in math. I don't remember doing those in school! How can I help him?

A: Think of a function as a "rule" that tells you how to get from one number to another. For instance, if your rule is " -1 " and your starting number is 8, then your answer is 7 ($8 - 1 = 7$).

Have your child draw a "function robot" with a body and two hands. Label one hand "Input" and the other

"Output." On separate sticky notes, write "rules" like " -7 " or " $\times 2, +5$." Then, let your child number 20 more sticky notes, 1–20.

Take turns sticking a rule (say, " $+12$ ") on the robot's body. Then, input a number (say, 5) by sticking it on the "Input" hand. The other person makes the robot follow the rule ($5 + 12$), writes the answer (17) on a blank sticky note, and places it on the robot's "Output" hand.



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Nutrition Nuggets

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

April 2018

East Quogue Elementary School
Robert J Long, Principal



BEST BITES

Better sports snacks

Whether it's your turn to provide team snacks or your child is picking out his own post-practice snack, help him choose something nutritious. Browse the produce aisle for fresh fruit like oranges or grapes. Or look for a winning combination of protein and complex carbohydrates, such as string cheese with whole-wheat crackers.

Dance away

Hip-hop, tap, ballet... dancing strengthens muscles, improves flexibility, and gives your youngster's heart and lungs a workout. Put on music, and invite her to dance with you or with friends. Is there a style she especially enjoys? Consider signing her up for low-cost classes through your parks and recreation department.



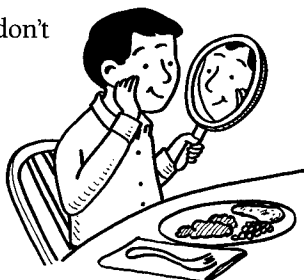
DID YOU KNOW?

Asparagus is in season, which means it's at its height of flavor and low point in price. To cook, break off the tough ends, and toss with olive oil, salt, and pepper. Roast on a baking sheet at 400° for 10 minutes, top with Parmesan cheese, and cook 5 minutes more.

Just for fun

Mom: Eat your spinach. It'll put color in your cheeks.

Jack: But I don't want green cheeks!



Earth Day food and fun

Every April 22, we celebrate Earth Day—a time to focus on the planet's health. Get your youngster involved, and encourage her to focus on her own health, too, with these eco-friendly activities.

Enjoy a waste-free meal

Can your family eat an entire meal without wasting any food? One idea is to cut food into smaller pieces before family members serve themselves. For example, set out platters of grilled chicken strips, baked potato halves, and apple slices. Encourage everyone to take only what they think they will eat.

Throw a leftovers "party"

With your youngster, look through your refrigerator, and make a list of leftovers or other items that need to be eaten soon. Then, she could use her list to create a menu for a meal of leftovers. For instance, she might suggest a casserole with leftover rice and veggies or banana



pudding made with overripe bananas for dessert.

Join a cleanup

Participate in a neighborhood or park cleanup, and enjoy a picnic afterward. Get trash bags and gloves for picking up litter. Let your child help you pack nutritious foods, such as turkey wraps and fruit salad, in reusable containers. After you've worked up a sweat cleaning up the trash, wash your hands, and eat together. ♥

Easy-on-your-wallet protein

Protein is the building block of your child's bones and muscles. By choosing meatless protein more often, you'll save money and keep the choices healthy. Consider these ideas.

● **Eggs, cheese, and milk.** Combine these three protein-rich ingredients for a simple meatless dinner. You could make scrambled egg burritos, omelets, or even a quiche in a store-bought crust. *Note:* Try to use nonfat milk and low-fat cheese.

● **Beans and legumes.** Plant proteins like these are low in fat and cholesterol. Stretch your protein budget by mixing 1 can black beans (drained, rinsed) with 1 lb. lean ground beef or turkey for burgers or meatloaf. Or toss whole-grain noodles with peas or white beans instead of sausage. ♥



Join the (fit) club!

Starting a neighborhood fitness club can motivate your youngster to stay active with friends. Here's how.

Organize. Let your child invite friends over for a planning meeting. Encourage them to start by coming up with a fun name for their club like "Kids on the Move" or "The Fit Crew."

Brainstorm. They could think up fun activities, such as playing softball or kickball in their backyards, hosting activity "classes" in their homes, or meeting at the neighborhood pool.



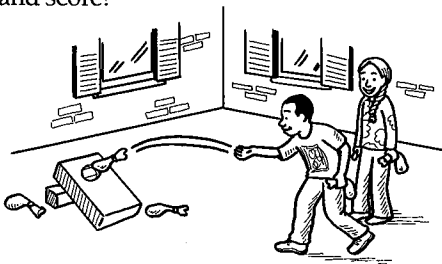
Plan. Suggest that they write a schedule that includes the time and place for each meeting, as well as who will lead the event. For instance, a member who has a badminton net might host a game. Or one who knows tai chi may teach a class in the basement.

Tip: Point out that they'll need parents' approval to host a meeting at home or for an activity that requires adult supervision, such as riding bikes or going to a playground. ♣

ACTIVITY CORNER

Beanbag toss

Here's a backyard game that's almost as much fun to make as it is to play. Together, follow these simple steps to create your own beanbag-toss set, then aim, throw, and score!



Make it. Turn a large, shallow cardboard box upside down. Give your child a small round paper plate, and have him trace a circle about six inches from one edge of the box. Cut out the circle. Then, prop up the target end of the box on a phone book or a block of wood. Make six beanbags by filling old socks with dry beans and closing them securely with rubber bands.

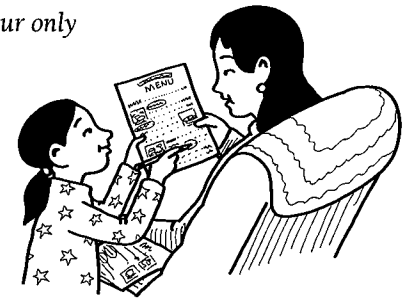
Play it. Give each person three beanbags. Take turns tossing one beanbag at the board. A player earns three points if his bag goes through the hole and one point if it lands (and stays) on the board. The first to reach 21 points wins. ♣



Q&A Making takeout more nutritious

Q: On busy days, buying takeout often seems like our only choice for dinner. How can I make it healthier?

A: Together, collect or print out menus from places that offer nutritious items. Then, help your child circle or highlight the healthiest choices. On a pizza menu, she might circle *thin crust* and toppings like *spinach* and *pineapple*. For a sub shop, she could highlight *whole-wheat bread*, *lean turkey*, and *lettuce*. That way, she'll see at a glance what to order when you're in a rush.



Better yet, plan ahead when possible so you won't need takeout. Have easy-to-cook items on hand like frozen vegetables, instant brown rice, or turkey meatballs. Or make a double batch of soup or a casserole on the weekend, and freeze half to defrost on a busy weeknight. ♣

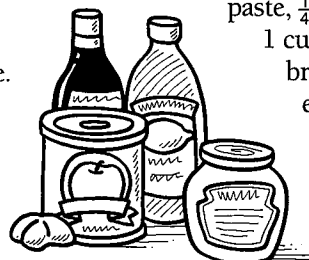
IN THE KITCHEN

Healthy homemade condiments

Store-bought condiments often come loaded with sugar and sodium. Try making these healthier versions with your child. (*Note:* Refrigerate each condiment in a jar for at least 2 hours before serving, and keep for up to 2 weeks.)

Duck sauce

Combine $\frac{3}{4}$ cup each no-sugar-added preserves (apricot or peach) and applesauce. Stir in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup rice vinegar, 2 minced garlic cloves, 1 tsp. low-sodium soy sauce, 2 tsp. minced ginger, and 1 tsp. chili powder. Serve with chicken or fish.



Honey mustard

In a small bowl, whisk together $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Dijon mustard, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup honey, and 1 tsp. lemon juice. Your youngster can dip in whole-wheat pretzel sticks or spread on a ham sandwich.

Ketchup

In a blender, combine 8 oz. tomato paste, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup apple cider vinegar, 1 cup water, and 2 tbsp. brown sugar. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. each garlic powder, onion powder, salt, and allspice. Blend on high 2–3 minutes. Use on turkey burgers or with sweet potato fries. ♣

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Nutrition Nuggets™ is reviewed by a registered dietitian. Consult a physician before beginning any major change in diet or exercise.

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Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

April 2018

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Mr. Robert J. Long, Jr. - Principal

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *We Dig Worms!*

(Kevin McCloskey)

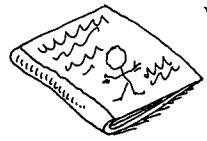
Little wiggly worms have big important jobs. This comic-style nonfiction book blends humor and facts to teach your youngster about earthworms. She'll learn where they live, how they help the soil, why they come out when it rains, and more.



■ *Daisy Dreamer and the Totally True Imaginary Friend*

(Holly Anna)

Daisy is a daydreamer and doodler who spends most of her time pretending. When she receives a magic journal, Daisy's doodle of her imaginary friend Posey comes to life. Now she's off on a trip to the World of Make-Believe! The first book in the Daisy Dreamer series.



■ *Life in Numbers: Write Haiku*

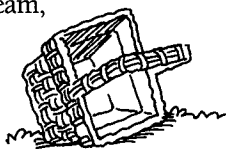
(Lisa Holewa)

Haiku are short poems that follow a pattern. This guide explains the history of haiku and gives your child advice for writing them. He'll find tips for finding topics, choosing words, and playing with structure to create powerful poetry. (Also available in Spanish.)

■ *The Lost Picnic*

(B. B. Cronin)

Two children and their grandfather set off on a picnic, but along the way, their lunch falls out of the basket. Your youngster will enjoy using clues from the story to spot the missing watermelon, ice cream, and other foods in the busy illustrations.



Writing: Inspired by nature

Spring is the perfect time to head outside and encourage your youngster to use nature as inspiration for writing. Here are ideas for enjoying different types of writing in the great outdoors.



Rainbow list

Let your child decorate the sidewalk with a colorful list of nature words. Help him use green chalk to write the names of green things he spots (*grass, leaves, caterpillar*) and yellow chalk to list yellow things (*daffodil, butterfly, sun*). Can he find and list something for every color in his box of chalk?

and black feather. I think it came from a blue jay.")

Animal tales

What is that cute little chipmunk thinking about as he scurries around? What is the grasshopper doing? Your child can work on creative writing skills by writing a story from an animal's point of view. Maybe the chipmunk is training for a marathon. Or the grasshopper is having a jumping contest with his friends. Let your youngster illustrate his story and read it to you. ♥

Nature guide

Give your youngster a basket for collecting items like pebbles, feathers, and twigs. Then, suggest that he use the collection to write a nature guide. He could sketch each object in a notebook and add a description. ("This is a blue

Read how-to books

Crafts, science experiments, drawing...there's a how-to book for just about every young reader. Try these tips for introducing them to your child:

- Encourage your youngster to choose books based on her interests. If she loves magic, she may like a book on performing tricks. If she's into science, she might pick a book of experiments.
- Help your child see how words and illustrations work together to explain things. For example, she could read the text and then follow a diagram to make a tricky fold for a paper airplane.

Idea: Suggest that your youngster write and illustrate her own how-to book about something she enjoys—perhaps building marble runs or making jewelry. ♥

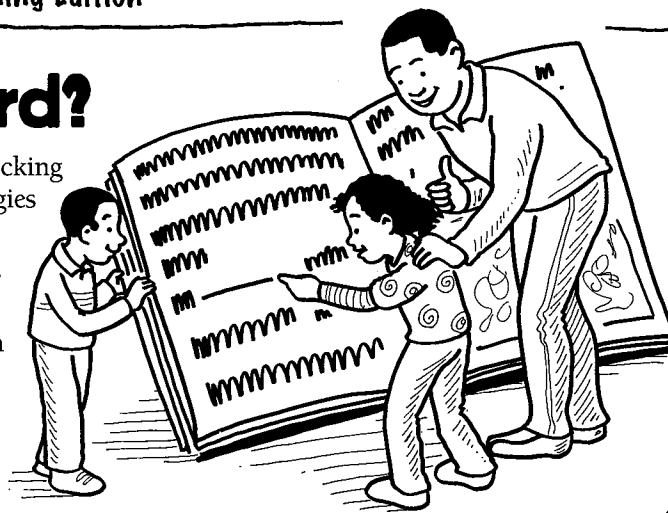


What's that word?

Reading new words is kind of like cracking a code. Share these code-breaking strategies with your youngster.

Break it up. Help your child split a longer word into separate syllables. Ask her to cover up the word with her hand. She can slide her fingers to reveal each syllable, reading them in slow motion as she goes. (“Un-der-cov-er. Undercover!”)

Switch vowel sounds. Long and short vowel sounds sometimes make words tricky. For instance, your youngster might misread *robot* as



fff.”) Then, have her think of a word that starts with that letter and makes sense in the sentence (*fence*). She can try reading the sentence with the word to decide whether it's right. ♥

rowboat if she thinks both Os are long. If a word doesn't sound right, she could substitute a different vowel sound to see if that works better.

Leave a blank. When your child comes across a word she can't easily sound out, suggest that she read the entire sentence, saying only the first sound of the unknown word. (“The dog jumped over the

Characters with character

Storybooks are full of good role models for your child. This activity will get him thinking about positive character traits he has in common with his favorite fictional friends.

Identify traits

First, read a book together. Ask your youngster to pick a character to draw a picture of. Then, help him think of good traits the character showed. For instance, maybe an owl demonstrates perseverance and a positive attitude about learning to fly. Help your child write the character traits in the margins around the drawing.



Fun with Words

Musical chairs

Put on a little music, and let your youngster and his friends practice spelling words they're learning in school with this version of musical chairs.

Set chairs (one per player) in a circle, and pick one player to be the leader. That person will be in charge of starting and stopping the music and calling out spelling words from a list.

To play, the leader turns on music. The children walk around the chairs and freeze in place when he stops the music. Then, the leader gives each person a different word to spell. If the speller gets it right, he sits down in the nearest chair. If not, he's out and removes a chair from the circle.

Once everyone has had a chance to spell, the leader restarts the music. Play until one person is left—he wins and becomes the new leader. *Note:* If you use up all the words on the list, play regular musical chairs with the remaining players to find the winner! ♥



Look at me!

Next, have him draw a “character sketch” of himself showing the same traits, say, while learning to roller-skate. As he discovers examples of good character in other books, he can draw more sketches. ♥

Parent to Parent

Our family tree

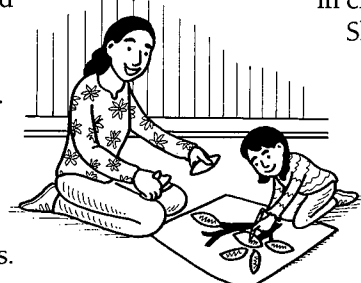
My daughter Tara recently had an interesting homework project—to make a family tree.

She had drawn a tree trunk and bare branches on paper, and she brought home a stack of green construction paper leaves. Her assignment was to write each family member's name on a separate leaf and put them in the right spots.

I helped Tara spell the names of her grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Then, she glued the leaves on the branches.

After Tara shared her finished tree in class, she got to bring it home.

She likes to practice reading the names, and she takes pride in showing off the tree when relatives visit. Recently, she was excited to find out she'll soon need to add a new leaf—for her baby brother or sister! ♥



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

April 2018

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

Book Picks

■ **Cosmic**
(Frank Cottrell Boyce)

Twelve-year-old Liam is tall for his age, and he and his friend Florida think it's funny to pretend they're father and son. They go so far as to use this joke to win a trip to outer space. When their rocket veers off course, everyone expects "Dad" to save the day—not knowing he's just a kid. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ **Dara Palmer's Major Drama** (Emma Shevah)

Dara wants to star in her school's production of *The Sound of Music*. When she's not cast, she thinks it's because she's adopted from Cambodia and doesn't look the part. In this coming-of-age story, Dara learns to take pride in her heritage.

■ **A Child Through Time: The Book of Children's History** (Phil Wilkinson)

How did children live in the past? This book takes young readers on an exciting journey from the Ice Age to modern times. Profiles of 30 children deliver kid-friendly information on the games, food, and clothes from different historical eras.



■ **The Mayor of Central Park** (Avi)

Oscar isn't your typical mayor. He's a squirrel, and he's also the manager of Central Park's baseball team. When rats invade his park, Oscar must stop them before they drive out the other animal residents. Fans of animals and baseball will enjoy this tale.



Synthesizing from start to finish

Your youngster's understanding and opinion of a book he has just started reading may be very different from the way he thinks and feels when he's finished. That's because readers *synthesize*, or adjust their thinking, as they digest a story or topic. Try these activities to help your child notice how his thinking changes as he reads.

STORY NEWS



Make a jigsaw puzzle

Synthesizing is like putting together a puzzle—you don't see the big picture until you're done. Have your youngster draw lines to divide a poster board into 8–10 puzzle pieces, number each piece, and cut them apart.

Then, he could write about his growing comprehension of a story on separate puzzle pieces. The first piece might say, "This book seems to be about two kids who have nothing in common and don't like each other." And the final piece may read, "Now I know that the story was actually about accepting differences." Each time he fills out a piece, he adds it to the puzzle. When he finishes the book, he can read his puzzle in order.

Be a newscaster

Invite your child to pretend he's reporting on a "developing story." He can give you updates that reflect his latest understanding as he reads several nonfiction books on the same topic.

Say he's researching the Titanic. His original "broadcast" could be: "A ship sank, and there weren't enough lifeboats to save everyone." As he reads on and discovers that there's more to the story, perhaps he'll report: "Many more passengers would've been saved if the lifeboats had been filled to capacity." 📺

Experiment with point of view

One fun part of being an author is that you get to decide which character will tell the story. Help your child see how interesting a change in perspective can be!

- Encourage your youngster to rewrite a familiar story. For example, she might have Babe the Blue Ox tell the tale of Paul Bunyan. The original version makes the lumberjack's feats sound pretty amazing—is Babe in awe of his owner, or tired of his antics?



- If a visitor from the distant future came to your town, what would he think of it? Suggest that your youngster draw one comic strip showing a day from her point of view ("We rode the school bus"), and another showing the time traveler's ("We traveled in a rickety yellow capsule and stayed on the ground the whole time"). 📺

Poetry writing made easy!

Poems are a great way for children to express themselves and practice writing. Use these ideas to spark your youngster's interest in poetry.

Acrostic "selfie." Have your child write her name vertically down the left side of a sheet of paper. Now she could begin each line of a poem about herself with a letter of her name:

*Each day brings new adventures
Middle child and only girl
In dance class I love to twirl
Living in a little town
You know I love to be a clown!*



Shape poem. This idea encourages your youngster to choose words that will fit specific line lengths. Suggest that she draw the outline of an object, perhaps a ladybug or a flower. Then, she can write a poem that fills the space inside. For instance, the first and last lines of a poem about ladybugs would be shorter than the middle lines:

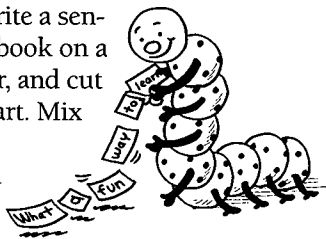
Bright speck of red
on a green leaf;
cute little ladybug
with polka-dots.
Fly away home!



Fun with Words Sentence scramble

Encourage your child to think about sentence structure and grammar with this cooperative game.

1. Secretly write a sentence from a book on a sheet of paper, and cut the words apart. Mix them up, and place them in a bowl on the ground.



- Have two or more players line up 15 feet from the bowl.
- On "Go," the first player runs to the bowl, grabs a word, and returns to the line.
- He tags the next player, who runs to pick up a word, and so on.
- Once the players collect all the words, they rebuild the sentence together. *Tip:* Suggest that they find the subject, add the verb, and then look for ways the remaining words could fit into the sentence.
- Play again using a new sentence from the book. 📖

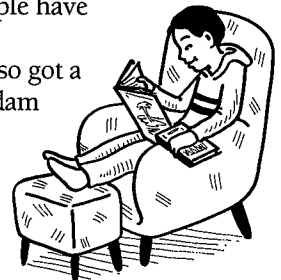
Parent & Parent The perfect pair: Fiction and nonfiction

My son Adam loves adventure novels. Reading these stories has made him curious about things like exotic locations and extreme sports. When he asked questions I couldn't answer, it reminded me of how his teacher wants kids to read more nonfiction.

So when he wondered how many people have climbed Mt. Everest, I suggested that he look for a nonfiction book about the mountain. Adam borrowed a school library book and learned that more than 4,000 people have reached the summit.

Then, when he checked out a story set in Antarctica, he also got a nonfiction book about scientists living and working there. Adam said that knowing which events and details in the story were based on facts made the book even better for him!

Now Adam often reads fiction and nonfiction that are related. He's picking up a lot of new facts—and reading more books, too. 📖



Q&A Building your child's book collection

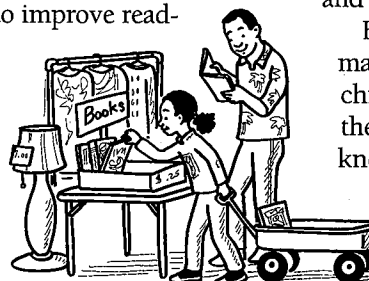
Q I've heard it's good for kids to have books of their own, but we're on a budget. Any tips on building a home library for my daughter?

A You're right. Having books at home is one of the best ways to improve reading achievement. And kids love seeing old favorites on their shelves to read whenever they like.

Now that spring is here, consider going to yard sales or flea

markets with your child to pick out books. The school book fair is another place to stock up on low-cost books. And don't forget year-round opportunities like used bookstores, thrift shops, and discount online bookstores.

Finally, friends and relatives may have chapter books or children's nonfiction books they're finished with. Let them know your daughter would love to inherit them—you could even offer to pick them up. 📖



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