

# Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

December 2016

Elmwood Park CUSD 401  
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## Book Picks

### Read-aloud favorites

■ **Lou Caribou: Weekdays with Mom, Weekends with Dad** (Marie-Sabine Roger and Nathalie Choux)  
Lou is a young caribou who has two homes, and both are filled with love. This cute rhyming story shows Lou having fun with his mom during the week, then packing his suitcase each weekend for more fun with his dad. A nice read-aloud for children whose parents live apart.

■ **The Squiggle** (Carole Lexa Schaefer)  
During a walk to the park, a little girl sees a red "squiggle" on the sidewalk. She picks it up and begins to imagine all the things it could be—a trail of fireworks, ripples in water, or even part of a storm cloud. Your child will enjoy imagining what else a squiggle might be.

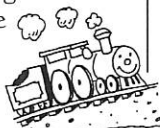
■ **Ice Cream: The Full Scoop**  
(Gail Gibbons)



Does your youngster know that the first ice cream recipe included snow? Combining history and science, this nonfiction book explains how the dessert has changed through the years. Readers will discover interesting ice cream trivia and learn about different ways the treat is served.

■ **The Little Engine That Could**  
(Watty Piper)

"I think I can. I think I can!" This classic story of perseverance tells of a little blue engine who believed in herself. When the big red engine breaks down, it's up to the little engine to deliver toys and food to the children on the other side of the mountain. (Also available in Spanish.)



## Read between the lines

If your child reads "The snowman looked smaller than it did yesterday," can she figure out the snowman is melting? Making *inferences*, or understanding what's happening when the author doesn't come right out and say it, is an important comprehension skill. Try these strategies.

### Make up riddles

Take turns thinking of a person, place, or thing and giving each other clues to guess it. *Example:* "Sometimes I am round, and sometimes I'm a crescent shape. You see me at night. What am I?" (The moon.) Then, pose "riddles" from stories you read together: "In the story, the girl frowned and stomped off. How do you think she feels?" Your youngster may answer, "I think she is angry."

### Solve mysteries

Read a mystery, and let your child pretend to be a detective. She might get a small notepad and a pencil to jot down or dictate clues. ("Jack was not at work



the day the vase was stolen.") Her mission is to use the clues to solve the mystery before the book characters do.

### Infer in real life

Get your youngster in the habit of making everyday inferences. If you put a skillet, a loaf of bread, and cheese slices on the kitchen counter, invite her to infer what you're cooking (grilled cheese). Or if you place the cat carrier by the front door, ask her what inference the cat could make—he's probably going to the vet!♥

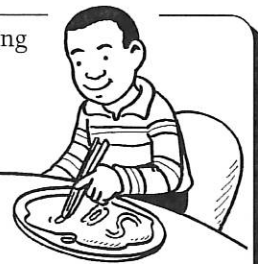
## Playful printing activities

These hands-on ideas make it enjoyable to practice forming letters.

● **Disappearing letters.** Write letters or words on a whiteboard or chalkboard. Your child can trace over each letter with his finger or a cotton swab to make it vanish.

● **Toothpicks and clay.** Have your youngster roll clay into a large ball and flatten it. Then he could use a toothpick to "write" letters in the clay.

● **Snack-time writing.** Cover a plate with a thin layer of hummus. Let your child drag celery stalks or pretzel rods through it to write his name—and eat the dipped treats when he's finished!♥



# Winter writing

Winter brings plenty of opportunities to write. Whether your youngster is just starting to write words or can write complete paragraphs, keep his skills sharp with these suggestions.

**Weather calendar.** Draw or print out a blank calendar page. Before bed each night, your child could record the day's weather with a symbol (snowflake, raindrop, sun) and write the weather word.



**Resolution list.** Let your youngster interview family members about their New Year's resolutions. Help him list them on a sheet of paper. Then on New Year's Eve, invite him to read them to everyone.

**Winter break journal.** Help your child staple together paper—one sheet for each day of winter vacation. Encourage him to write about what he does every day. When he goes back to school, he could share his journal with his teacher.♥

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## Q&A Catch the mistake

**Q** My daughter doesn't always notice if she makes a mistake while she's reading aloud. She'll just keep going even if a sentence doesn't make sense. What should I do?

**A** Strong readers learn to "self monitor," or catch their mistakes and try to correct them.

When your child makes an error that affects a story's meaning, wait, and give her a chance to correct herself.



If she doesn't, encourage her to think about whether the word she said looks like the printed word or makes sense in the sentence. If she says *soft* instead of *sofa*, point out that the word looks like *soft*, but that a puppy wouldn't sleep on a *soft*.

**Note:** If your youngster often makes mistakes and doesn't seem to understand what she's reading, talk to her teacher.♥

### OUR PURPOSE

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

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## Fun with Words

### Syllable shout-out

Who can spot something with two syllables? How about three?

With this game, your child will practice listening to separate syllables—a skill that will help her sound out words.

**Materials:** pencil, paper, picture book or magazine

Let your youngster write each player's name across the top of a piece of paper. Then, she flips to a random page in the book or magazine and says either "one," "two," or "three." Everyone looks at the open page for an item with that number of syllables. The first person to find one points to the object and says its name slowly, pronouncing each syllable separately. (For three, someone might spot a *car-ou-sel*.)

Help your child write the word and the number of syllables under the player's name. That person goes next and turns to a new page. After 10 rounds, add the scores, and the player with the highest total wins.♥



### It's poetry night!

For a cozy family evening filled with reading and fun, try holding a poetry night. Check out children's poetry books from the library, and enjoy these activities.

#### "Musical" verses

Line up a row of chairs, one for each player and a few extras. Each person chooses two short poems, writes them on pieces of paper, and places each sheet under a chair. Then, play music while everyone walks around the chairs. When the music stops,



sit on the closest chair, and read the poem underneath—no one is out. Keep going until everyone gets a chance to read every poem.

#### Poem-in-a-bag

Before poetry night, every family member picks a poem, puts related "props" into a brown bag, and writes the title on the bag. For a poem about lemonade, for example, your youngster might include a lemon, a sugar packet, and a cup. Pull out your props as you read your poem to everyone.♥