

Reading Connection

Working Together for Learning Success

April 2014

Waller Independent School District

4th Grade, 5th Grade, 6th Grade, 7th Grade, 8th Grade

Book Picks

■ Who Was Martin Luther King, Jr.?

Your child may not know that King's first name wasn't always Martin, or that he skipped two grades in school. This illustrated biography by Bonnie Bader uncovers these and other interesting facts about the man who dreamed of equality and grew up to lead the civil rights movement. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ The Fabled Fourth Graders of Aesop Elementary School

A quirky teacher takes over an unruly class in Candace Fleming's modern twist on Aesop's fables. Mr. Jupiter's students soon learn that slow and steady wins the race, that honesty is the best policy, and other fabled lessons.

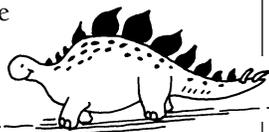
■ Tracking Trash: Flotsam, Jetsam, and the Science of Ocean Motion

What do sneakers and rubber ducks have in common? Scientists observe them floating in the ocean to see how garbage affects marine animals and habitats. Loree Griffin Burns's nonfiction book also explains what happens to the trash caught in ocean currents.



■ Fortunately, the Milk

Dad goes to the store to get milk and comes home with an outrageous story to explain what took him so long. He tells his son and daughter about traveling through time and meeting aliens, pirates, and a stegosaurus—all while hanging on to the milk for his family. A tall tale by Neil Gaiman.



Writing as a team

When your youngster works on an assignment with others—in school or in a future job—he will need *collaboration* skills. Try these fun writing ideas to help him practice building on others' ideas, dividing up work, and giving feedback.



Write a shared story

No one knows what's happening in this story until it's finished! Have your child write the beginning of a story on a piece of notebook paper. Then, he should fold the paper so his friend can see only the last line. The friend has to add to the tale and fold the paper so that, again, only the final line shows. Whoever gets the bottom line writes the ending—and then it's time to unfold and read.

then split up the work. One person could cover the history of the sport, and another might explain how to play. Encourage them to use the website's features to give each other feedback and edit their work.

Create a wiki

Your youngster and his friends can teach others about a favorite activity by writing an online encyclopedia article at wikispaces.com. They'll need to decide what to write about (say, lacrosse) and

Make a family album

Select photos from a family event, such as a trip or a holiday celebration. Arrange them in an album, and let each person pick a few and write captions. Help one another out—your child might ask you where a photo was taken or think of a detail that his sister could add. ■

Let's hang out at the library!

Your child knows the library is a good place to find books—but does she also know that she can spend time there enjoying activities with other kids? Consider these tips.



● **Join a book club.** Have your youngster ask a librarian if there's a club for kids and, if so, what they're reading. No book club? Your child and her friends could start one and meet at the library.

● **Enjoy a hobby.** Whether your youngster is into cooking, exploring nature, or building with Legos, the library may have a club or workshop she'll enjoy.

● **Attend a special event.** Let your child look over the library calendar and pick an event to try, like a book fair, a comic book festival, or an author visit. ■

A reading checklist

Good readers use many different strategies to help them understand books. Share this checklist with your child. She can check her comprehension—and get back on track if things don't make sense.

- Before I begin reading, I ask myself what I already know about the topic. I use this knowledge to help me learn new information in the text.
- When I read difficult material, I stop and think after each paragraph or section to make sure I understand it. I might summarize it in my head or on paper.



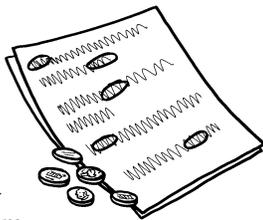
- I reread parts that are confusing. If I'm still stuck, I ask a teacher or parent for help.
- I look up unfamiliar words in the glossary or dictionary.
- I read between the lines to figure out events or information that the author didn't come right out and explain.
- I jot down questions when I read nonfiction. I check to see whether my questions are answered later in the text.
- I sometimes predict what's going to happen next in a novel. Then, I read on to see whether my prediction was accurate.



Fun with Words Edit me

Your youngster will enjoy catching your mistakes in this editing game. As he plays, he'll work on grammar and proofreading skills.

Materials:
books, pencils,
paper, pennies



Each player starts with five pennies and copies a sentence from a book without letting others see it. On a separate piece of paper, he writes the same sentence but adds a few grammatical mistakes. For instance, your child might change "There are three reasons you should always follow directions" to "Their is three reasons you should always follow directions."

Trade the papers with the mistakes, and rewrite the sentences correctly. Then, check the corrections against the original sentences. If someone misses a mistake or changes it to be wrong, he has to give the writer a penny. The player with the most pennies after five rounds wins.

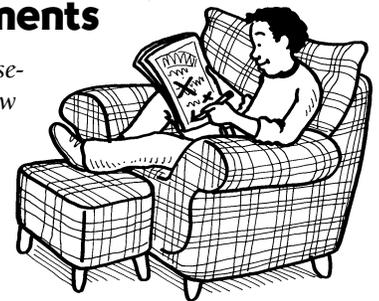
Q&A How to read advertisements

Q My son is easily persuaded by advertisements and tends to believe their claims. How can I help him read ads more carefully?

A Advertisers use many different techniques to persuade people to buy their products. And learning how to interpret their claims can make your son a more critical reader as well as a better consumer.

First, suggest that he make a list of questions that the ad *doesn't* answer. If a cereal says, "Preferred by more kids," he might write, "Which kids?" and "Which cereal are they comparing theirs to?"

Also, encourage him to look for opinions (statements that aren't true for everyone). For instance, a game ad might say, "A blast to play!" He could cross out all of the opinions in an ad—then the product being advertised might not sound as appealing.



Parent 2 Parent "Found" poetry

My daughter Gabby has never been interested in writing poetry, so I was surprised at her excitement over a "found" poem assignment.

She explained that writing a found poem is like going on a treasure hunt. You read a story or a newspaper or magazine article and circle words and phrases to use in a poem. Gabby read me part of a verse she wrote using a

gardening article: "Lilacs are lovely / Pick a good spot / Pull up weeds / Like it or not."

I thought writing found poetry sounded like fun, so she and I tried it together.

Now Gabby seems to find poetry everywhere she goes! We even collected words from highway billboards during a trip and used them to make up a poem in the car.



OUR PURPOSE

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

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