



Mokena Elementary School



December 2011 / January 2012

Mrs. Chris Clavenna
Principal

Mrs. Judy Splayt
Assistant Principal



At this sparkling time of year,
We think of our students who are special and
dear:

We're sending this poem in hopes that
it conveys
Our best wishes for a Happy Holidays!



Mrs. Clavenna and Mrs. Splayt



School Office:
708/342-4850
Absentee Line:
708/478-4212
On the Web:
<http://mokena159.org>

PTA News

Santa's Secret Workshop
Saturday, December 4th
10 am to 1 pm
MES Commons



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Cold Weather Recess

Each day, we evaluate the weather conditions and determine if the weather allows for our children to go outside. Our general policy is to keep the students indoors for recess if the combined air temperature and wind chill is below 20 degrees. On those (borderline) days when the temperature and wind chill combine to make it cold, but not unbearable, our building aides will take children outdoors for no more than 10 minutes. This allows the students to run off excess energy and catch a breath of fresh air.

Please be assured, our first concern is the well-being of our students. Students should come to school expecting to go outdoors unless the weather conditions make it unsafe to do so. Warm coats, hats and gloves should provide plenty of protection for the days we go outdoors for recess.



School Closing Information



Families can find out if school is closed via any of the following:

- ◆ www.Mokena159.org
- ◆ Announcements will be made between 6:30 and 8:00 a.m. on WJOL (AM-1340), WBBM (AM-780) and Channel 9 television
- ◆ A Connect Ed message will be sent by District Office to all parents/guardians

Early Dismissal Day@ 11:40 am

December 7th

AM Kindergarten students attend
NO PM Kindergarten students

Substitute Nurses Needed

If you are a registered nurse who is interested in subbing for our District, please stop by the District Office and fill out an application.

Much thanks!



Terra Nova Testing—Grade 3

All third grade students at MES will be administered the Terra Nova achievement test and In View cognitive abilities test during the week of
January 23—January 27, 2012

Please ensure that your child gets a good night's sleep and eats a proper breakfast during this week of testing.
Thanks for your help!



~ FISH ~



The Mokena organization known as "FISH" will be collecting items for needy families in the community this holiday season. We are inviting MES students to spread the holiday cheer by bringing in particular items of need.

**All items should be brought to school on
Friday, December 2nd**

Students wishing to participate in the FISH drive can bring in the following items according to their grade level:

PreK, Kindergarten: Tissue (Kleenex) and Toilet Paper (in original plastic wrap/container)

First Grade: Boxed food items (cereal, macaroni and cheese, rice, prepared dinners, etc., **no canned foods please**)

Second Grade: Wrapping Paper, Ribbon, Bows & Tape

Third Grade: Paper Towels, Napkins and Disposable Diapers (in original plastic wrap/container)

Thank you for your generosity this holiday season!!

Dismissal Procedures

If you are planning to pick up your child prior to the regular dismissal time, please do so by 2:50 p.m. and sign the student out in the school office.

If you send a note to your child's teacher regarding an early pick up from school, this note is sent by the teacher to the office; with this in mind, please include in your note the child's full name, the parent's full name, and the teacher's name. This will avoid any confusion with your child's transportation needs.

If you telephone the office to pick up your child early, or to change their transportation from being a bus rider to a walker/car rider, you **MUST** come into the school and sign the child out. Proper identification may be required prior to leaving with your child.

Thanks for your cooperation in all of these matters!



Reminders from Nurse Molly/Mrs. Bohrer



DON'T FORGET TO WASH YOUR HANDS THIS SEASON AND REMIND YOUR CHILDREN TO WASH THEIR HANDS OFTEN. THIS IS ONE OF THE EASIEST AND MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO PREVENT INFECTION!

Please help prevent the spread of illness by doing the following as stated in the Parent Handbook: **If your child has vomited, had a fever, or had diarrhea within 24 hours of the start of the school day, please keep your child home. If your child has been sent home because of a rash, a persistent cough, or suspicion of 'pink eye', please have your child seen by your doctor before returning to school. (An MD note here helps us to document your child's illness.)**

The cold winter weather means the need for warm, durable outer wear for your child. Please make sure that your child has:

- A warm winter coat on before coming to school.
- Proper shoes are also a necessity as the playground surfaces can be slippery. 'Dress up' shoes and sandals will only cause injury to your child's feet and shouldn't be worn for the playground now and or at any time of the school year.

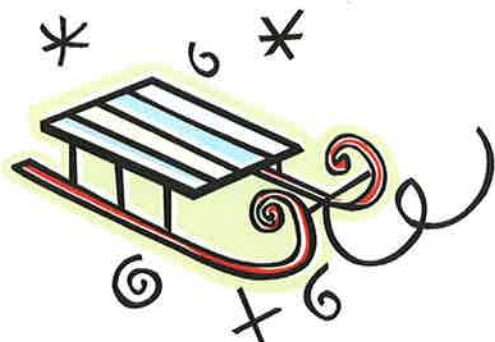
All Medications (both prescription or over the counter), must have a MD note and need to be administered through the Health Office at all of our schools. All medications, regardless of their use, pose a potential hazard to other school children, so please bring in the medications to the health office in their original containers per District policy.

If your child has asthma, please make sure we have an inhaler here at school for him or her. The inhaler is a "rescue" for your child and along with the asthma preventive medications that your child is also taking, the inhaler here at school is a must. Call or talk to your MD with all questions on how to keep your asthmatic child safe at school. For Asthma information please go to www.cdc.gov/asthma/faqs.htm.

If you are requesting that your child stay inside for recess due to injury or recovering from an illness, we will also restrict your child from PE as well. This requires a note from you which can hold your child out for a total of 3 days. Anything more than 3 days would require a MD note which needs to specify when your child can resume activities as well.

If there is anything you need to inform me about regarding the health and well being of your child, my hours are 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, (with voice mail after 4:00 pm) at 708-342-4853. (Just a reminder, we have only one nurse covering both MES and MIS)

*Thanks for your time and patience,
Nurse Molly*



F.Y.I.

You can find the Mokena Elementary School Annual School Report Card on the Mokena School District website:

www.mokena159.org

December 2011

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|
|  | | | | 1 | 2 <i>Green & Gold Day</i> | 3 <i>Santa's Secret Shop @MES</i> 10:00am-1:00pm  |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 Early Dismissal AM K attends | 8 <i>Board of Ed. Meeting, 7:00 pm at MES</i> | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 <i>Market Day Pickup at MJHS, 4:30-5:30 pm</i> | 15 <i>1st Grade KISS Gingerbread House Activity</i> | 16 Holiday/Green and Red Day  | 17 |
| 18 | 19 PTA Meeting MES 4:00 pm | 20 | 21 <i>Holiday Parties at 1:00 pm</i> Early Dismissal at 2:15 | 22 <i>Winter Break Begins</i> | 23  | 24  |
| 25 <i>Merry Christmas</i> | 26  | 27  | 28  | 29  | 30  | 31  |

January 2012

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|---------------------|--|--|--|---|
| 1  | 2 | 3 Classes Resume | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 Board of Education Meeting, 7:00 pm at MES | 13 End of 2nd Quarter Green & Gold Day | 14 |
| 15 | 16 Martin Luther King Day No School | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 General Report Card Day Dippin Dots | 21 |
| 22 | 23 PTA Meeting MES 4:00 pm | 24 | 25 Market Day Pick Up 4:30-5:30 @ MJH | 26 | 27 Tie Day  | 28 |
| ***** Terra Nova Testing—Grade 3 ***** | | | | | | |
| 29  | 30 PTA Chuck E. Cheese Night | 31 | | | |  |

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

December 2011

Mokena Elementary School
Christine Clavenna, Principal

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *Skip Through the Seasons*

This nonfiction book by Stella Blackstone shows children enjoying the outdoors in each season. They ice-skate in winter, play in spring rain, build sand castles in summer, and rake autumn leaves. The final pages are filled with facts about the calendar and seasonal changes. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *Dixie*

Emma and her dog Dixie are cast as Dorothy and Toto in the school play, *The Wizard of Oz*. At first, Dixie is excited. But then, he can't understand why Emma is too busy rehearsing to play with him. The first book in the Dixie series by Grace Gilman.

■ *LMNO Peas*

Peas are the stars of this ABC book. On each page, peas take on a different role—one for each letter of the alphabet. They are astronauts, quarterbacks, volunteers, and (of course) peas! A fun look at letters and sounds by Keith Baker.



■ *Music from the Sky*

A little girl loves the sound a flute makes—it reminds her of a beautiful blue sky. So her loving grandfather finds the perfect branch and carves a flute from it for her to play. Denise Gillard's story includes instructions for making your own flute.



Storytelling time

Everyone's a storyteller! When you tell your youngster about the day she was born, she learns what an interesting story sounds like. When she retells a book from memory, she practices putting story events in order. And no matter who's telling the tale, she gets to enjoy spending time with you. Here are steps to help you and your child learn to tell stories together.

- 1. Start with a book.** Ask your youngster to choose a favorite book. Read it aloud, close it, and work together to tell it in your own words. Encourage her to add gestures and facial expressions. For example, she might smile and wave her hands during exciting parts or widen her eyes when things get scary. *Idea:* Have each family member choose a different story to read silently and then tell to everyone else.
- 2. Make it your own.** Try telling a story that's based on a book, but change some details. After reading *The Biggest Pumpkin Ever* (Steven Kroll), for instance, you might make up a story about a huge tomato your family grew. Or your youngster might



make up a tale about the tallest block tower ever.

- 3. Use a memory.** Family memories make wonderful tales. Your youngster will probably love hearing about your childhood (first day of school, biggest snowstorm) or the day she was born. Or she can tell a story about a shared memory, like the time a cow blocked the road on a family trip.
- 4. Explain nature.** Why do elephants have trunks? What causes a full moon? Some traditional stories (legends, folktales) offer clever explanations for things in nature. You and your child can try this, too. Ask her to choose something she has always wondered, such as why giraffes have long necks, and make up a story to explain it. ♥

My book collection

It's exciting for your child to have his very own books at home. In fact, being surrounded by books can increase your entire family's interest in reading. Consider these free or low-cost suggestions for building a collection:

- Ask for hand-me-downs from relatives and friends who have older children. And when your youngster outgrows books, help him find younger children to give them to.
- Shop at library sales, which offer gently used books at low prices. Keep an eye out for announcements on the library bulletin board or website.
- Go to garage sales. Check newspaper listings for sales that include children's books.
- Visit stores that sell used books. You might find a local one that offers store credit in exchange for your books. Also, many online bookstores allow you to buy and sell used books. ♥

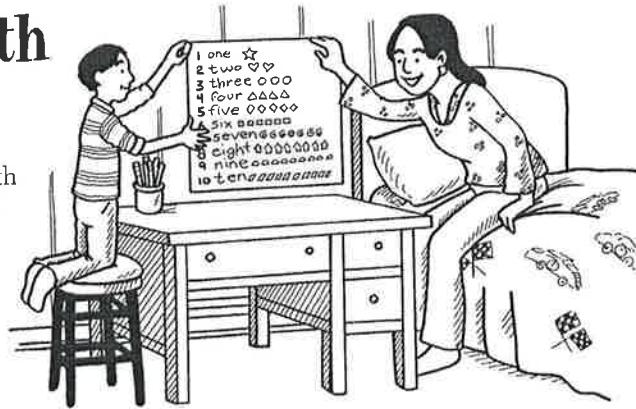


Reading + math = success!

What do the ABCs have to do with 1-2-3s? Plenty! These ideas can help your child do well in math and reading.

Number words

Suggest that your youngster make a poster showing the numbers 1-10. Next to each number, help him write out the word (*one, two*) and add an illustration (one star, two hearts). Let him hang the poster over his desk or on the refrigerator to practice recognizing the words.



Math books

You can find picture books about almost any math topic, from addition and subtraction to patterns and money. Read one to your child and try some of the math. For example, read *Pattern Fish* (Trudy Harris) and then look for patterns around the house together. Or try *Once Upon a Dime: A Math Adventure* (Nancy Kelly Allen), and let him sort coins.

Story problems

Your youngster needs good comprehension when he reads problems such as “Mary has 4 cookies. Tom has 3 cookies. How many cookies do they have altogether?” He should go back and underline words that tell how to solve it. For example, “How many altogether?” means to add, while “How many are left?” means to subtract.♥



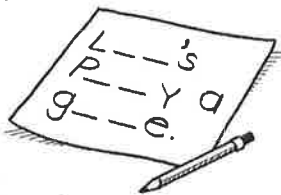
Secret messages

th_s? Figuring out mystery sentences in this hangman-style game can call your youngster’s attention to the first and last sounds in words—an important early reading skill.

Give your child a message that includes only the first and last letter of each word. You might write “I l_e y_u” for “I love you” or “L_’s p_y a g_e” for “Let’s play a game.” If she’s stumped, have her go through the alphabet and try different letters that could work.

Remind her that the message has to make sense. This will help her rule out possibilities. For example, if she figures out “Let’s play a...” she can think about what you might play that begins with “g” and ends with “e.”

When she solves the mystery, let her write a secret message for you.♥



Let’s have a conversation

Striking up a conversation and keeping it going are two important speaking skills. They also make life more interesting! Here are two ways your child can practice.

Get started. Calling relatives on the phone can help your youngster get used to starting conversations. Before he dials, help him think of topics. *Idea:* Suggest that he start a conversation by asking about something that the other person is interested in (his grandfather’s fishing trip, his cousin’s dog).

Keep going. It takes two (or more) people to keep a conversation alive. When your youngster plays with stuffed animals or action figures, join in. You might have your animal say to his, “What do you eat in the rain forest?” or, “I like bananas, too!” Then, encourage him to follow up with a question or comment of his own.♥



Q&A Backward writing?

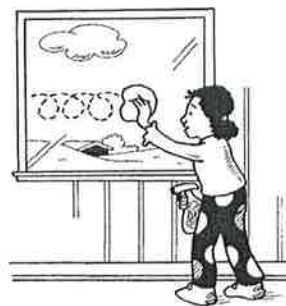
Q My daughter often writes letters, and sometimes even whole words, backward. Could she have a learning disability?

A It’s not unusual for young children to write backward occasionally, even after they have learned to write correctly.

Ask her teacher whether she does this frequently in class and whether you should be concerned. Most likely, she will not be worried if she feels your child is making steady progress

in reading and writing, writes backward infrequently, and has no other signs of a learning disability. But if the teacher suspects a problem, she may ask the reading specialist to do some tests.

In the meantime, your daughter can work on left to right at home. For example, you might have her sponge down tables or wash windows from left to right. Or put a sticker on the left side of a whiteboard or chalkboard and encourage her to use it as a starting point when she writes.♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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www.rfeonline.com
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Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

DECEMBER 2011

Refrigerator Poster

Just hang your *Recipes* poster on the refrigerator and sneak in an activity when you have a few minutes. These fun activities will help develop school success and positive behavior. Check off each box as you complete the "recipe."

READING

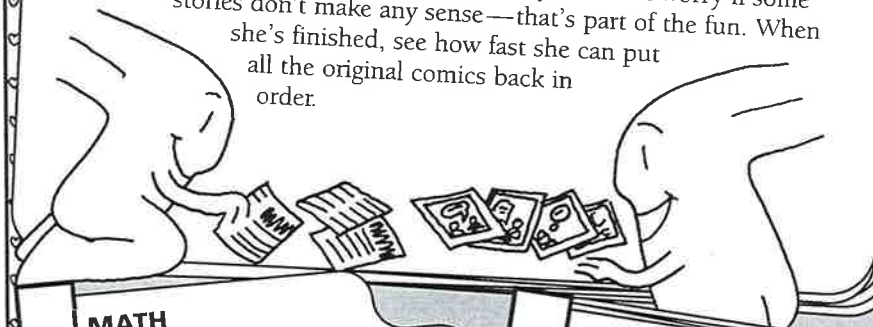
Comic Strip Stories

Create funny "funnies" with this reading activity.

Ingredients: comic strips, scissors

Save several old newspapers. Help your child clip several comic strips from the papers. Next, have her cut the frames apart, turn them facedown, and mix them up.

Ask your youngster to choose four or five frames. Have her turn them over, line them up, and read the mixed-up story to you. Don't worry if some stories don't make any sense—that's part of the fun. When she's finished, see how fast she can put all the original comics back in order.



WRITING

Super Survey

How well does your child know his family? He can take a survey to find out!

Ingredients: paper, pencil

Together, make a list of questions. *Examples:* "What is your favorite food?" "What do you think is the perfect pet?" "Which season do you like best?"

Help him set up a "survey booth" at the kitchen table. Invite each family member to the booth to quietly answer the questions. He can write the responses under each question. After each person has replied, let him read the survey aloud to see if everyone can guess who said what.



CREATIVE THINKING

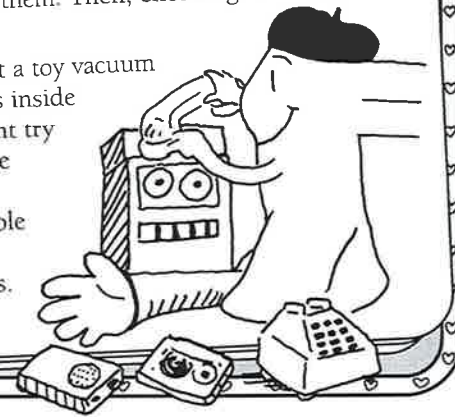
Tinkering

Old household objects aren't useless—they can stretch your youngster's creative thinking.

Ingredients: broken toys, electronics, or other items; screwdriver

Fill a box with items for your child to explore. Be sure to make them safe by removing old batteries and unplugging them. Then, encourage her to put on her thinking cap and get started!

Help her use a screwdriver to take apart a toy vacuum cleaner or transistor radio to see what's inside and guess how it worked. Or she might try to repair something. For instance, rope could replace the broken handle of a bucket, and duct tape could plug a hole in a torn beach ball. She might even create a sculpture out of unused parts.



MATH

Build your youngster's math skills by having him help you calculate sale prices when you shop. For instance, if an item costs \$15.95 and the sign says, "Buy one, get another one half price," suggest that he round the price to the nearest dollar (\$16). Then, he can divide it by 2 (\$8) and add \$16 + \$8 to get the total price (\$24), or \$12 each.

$$1 + \frac{1}{2}$$



FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

Give your youngster the opportunity to tell you what to do. Ask her to explain, step-by-step, how to do a simple task. *Examples:* putting on a coat, preparing an ice cream cone. Follow her instructions *exactly*. She'll learn how important it is to be precise!



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Character Corner

a gift for you

SYMMETRY

Indoor Snowflakes

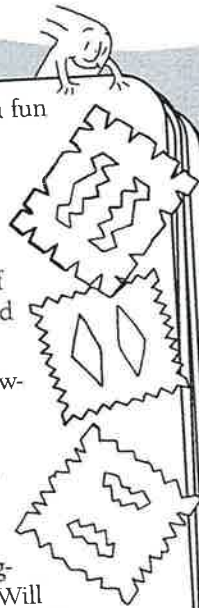
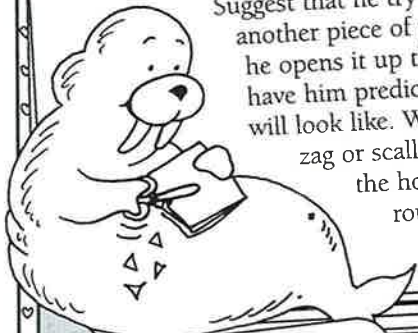
Decorating your home with paper snowflakes is a fun way for your child to learn about symmetry.

Ingredients: square white paper (or coffee filter), scissors

Have your youngster fold the paper or filter in half and in half again. Then, he can make cuts of different shapes (triangles, circles, squares) around all four sides of the square.

When he opens it, he'll have a symmetrical snowflake—each half is a mirror image of the other.

Suggest that he try this with another piece of paper. Before he opens it up this time, have him predict what it will look like. Will it have zig-zag or scalloped edges? Will the holes in the middle be round or diamond shaped?



SCIENCE

Suggest that your child pretend she is a magnet. Ask her to walk around the house and think of five things she would stick to (soup can, refrigerator) and five that she wouldn't (couch, book). Then, let her use a refrigerator magnet to check her guesses.



FITNESS

Play a game of "river." Lay two jump ropes parallel to each other, about one foot apart. Have each player jump over the river and then widen it. Keep moving the ropes apart until neither player can make it across without stepping on a rope. The winner is the player who jumps the widest river.



GENEROSITY

Encourage your child to make homemade gift cards. Have him cut small rectangles from construction paper and decorate them with crayons. He can use them for presents such as playing a game with a younger sibling or helping a parent with housework.



TEAMWORK

Show your youngster that teamwork can be fun by playing "Beat the Clock." Pick a task you can work on together, such as putting the groceries away. Set a timer for five minutes and try to finish the job before the timer goes off.

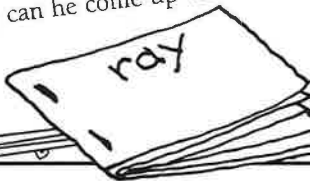
EMPATHY

Can your child tell how a person is feeling by looking at her face? Take turns drawing faces with different expressions. See if you can guess the emotions of the people in each other's pictures (happy, sad, excited, scared). Encourage her to try reading expressions in real life so that she can be sensitive to others' feelings.



RHYMING

Help your youngster staple six half-sheets of paper together to make a rhyming book. Then, he can write one of these words at the top of each page: ray, me, you, pie, ball, hot. Have him brainstorm words that rhyme with the word on each page. How many can he come up with?



Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)

GEOGRAPHY

Your children can learn the names of places on a globe or world map with this contest. Together, list 10 things to find (a sea, a country that is a boy's name, the word "north"). Then, number separate sheets of paper, and see who can check off the most places found.



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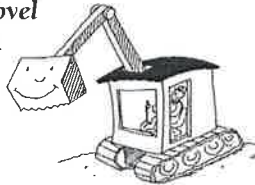
Mokena Elementary School
Christine Clavenna, Principal

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel*

Mary Anne is a hardworking red steam shovel. Her driver, Mike, is upset because all of the jobs are being given to shiny new trucks that run on gas or electricity. What will happen to Mike and Mary Anne? A classic tale by Virginia Lee Burton. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *I Lost My Tooth in Africa*

Your child might be surprised to discover that the African tooth fairy leaves chickens in exchange for lost baby teeth. Based on a true story, Penda Diakité's book tells of her little sister's exciting experience during the family's visit with relatives in Mali.



■ *A Day with No Crayons*

The world is full of art supplies! That's what little Liza discovers after she colors on the walls and her mother takes away her crayons. In this story by Elizabeth Rusch, Liza finds other ways to express her creativity—using mud, flower petals, and even toothpaste.

■ *Andy Shane, Hero at Last*

Andy isn't sure he can win a bike-decorating contest against his friend Dolores. But as the children ride their bikes in the town parade, Andy has a chance to be a hero. The latest book in the Andy Shane series by Jennifer Richard Jacobson.



Fun at the library

Where can your child go to hear a good story, find the latest books and magazines, and surround himself with information about almost any topic? The public library! Here are a few ideas for making the most of your next trip.

Listen to a story. Ask a librarian for information about story hour. Some libraries even have special read-alouds that include crafts, puppets, or snacks. You can also have your own story time. Let your youngster choose a few books. Then, find a quiet corner and read to him. Or let him pretend to be a librarian—he can read to you or to a younger sibling.

Find out what's new. Look for a "new arrivals" display. Your child can read the latest book from his favorite author or discover a brand-new writer whose stories he might enjoy. (Tip: Put his name on the waiting list for new or upcoming releases you think he'd like to check out.) Also, browse the children's magazines. He can



read the most recent issues of *Fun for Kidz*, *Ladybug*, *Click*, *Humpty Dumpty*, and others.

Read around a theme. Together, choose a theme for your library visit. You might pick something your youngster is studying in school or another topic that interests him. Then, encourage him to explore different sections of the library as he gathers books that go with his choice. A winter animal theme, for instance, could include a story about a polar bear, a non-fiction book on penguins, and the biography of an Antarctic explorer.♥

Reading helpers

As children learn to read, they can benefit from the support of as many adults as possible. Here's how you can help with the reading program at your youngster's school:

- Offer to read aloud to the class, small groups, or individual students. You could also listen while students read to you.
- Tell the teacher if you know another language. She might pair you up with a child who speaks that language and is learning English.
- Make books. When students write stories, volunteers may be needed to staple or bind the pages together.
- Help children use computers and encyclopedias to look up information.
- Assist with after-school events such as book fairs or literacy nights.
- Volunteer during your youngster's library time to help students find books they'd like to check out.♥



Writing: Step-by-step

A writing plan can help your youngster make sure that her story turns out just the way she wants it. Share these steps with your budding author.

Sketch

Suggest that your child divide her paper into three columns: "Beginning," "Middle," and "End." Then, have her fill each section with sketches that show what might happen in that part of the story.



Draft

Your youngster can use her plan to write a rough draft. Ask her to say each sentence aloud ("I have a cat named Peanut Butter"), and then help her put the words on paper. This will keep each idea in mind as she writes.

Check

When your child's draft is finished, ask her to read it aloud and to stop if she wants to add a detail or if something doesn't make sense. Help her add capital letters where they belong.

Share

Finally, let your youngster type her story on a computer or print it neatly on a fresh sheet of paper. Encourage her to illustrate it and read it aloud to your family.♥



Fun with Words Crafty spelling

Turn spelling time into craft time! Your youngster can learn how to spell common words, and stretch her creativity, with these projects.

Alphabet soup

Ask your child to color the center of a paper plate lightly with a crayon to look like a bowl of soup. Then, have her flip through a book and look for *sight words*, or words that are used frequently. Examples: "the," "and," "like," "went," "you." She can use a dark-colored marker to print them in the "soup."



Q&A From choppy to smooth

Q When my son reads aloud, it sounds choppy. How can I help him read more smoothly?

A Reading sounds slow and uneven when a child focuses on one word at a time rather than stringing words together fluently. This can happen if a book is too hard or if he doesn't have a lot of experience reading out loud.

If your son is stumbling over a lot of words (say, 1 out of every 10 or so), offer him an easier book. But if he knows all the words and still isn't reading smoothly, he just might need more read-aloud practice.

Encourage him to read the way he talks. Try reading a passage aloud together so he can match your pace. He might also like to record himself reading into a tape recorder or cell phone. When he plays it back, he'll hear how he sounds. Then, he can practice a few times, make another recording, and compare the two to see how much he has improved.♥



Cute as a button

Help your youngster gather a variety of craft supplies (buttons, dry noodles or beans, sequins, beads, pom-poms). Have her write words that she is learning in glue on a sheet of construction paper. Then, let her press the objects onto the glue. When it dries, she can run her fingers over the letters—touching them will help her remember how to spell the words.♥

Parent to Parent Solving mysteries

In school, my daughter Ella recently discovered mysteries. Her teacher reads them to the students, and they pretend to be detectives, listening for clues that will help them crack the case.

Ella asked if we could do this at home, so we checked out some from the library: the Young Cam Jansen series by David Adler and A to Z Mysteries by Ron Roy. I gave her a small notepad and told her it was a detective's notebook.

I suggested that she use it to jot down the clues as I read. For example, she drew a van that appeared to belong to no one and a character who sneaked out of a party without an explanation.

After reading a couple of mysteries, she solved a case before the detective in the story. She was excited, and I think this has been good for her, because it helps her really understand and pay attention to what's happening in a book.♥



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Resources for Educators,
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Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

JANUARY 2012

Refrigerator Poster

Just hang your *Recipes* poster on the refrigerator and sneak in an activity when you have a few minutes. These fun activities will help develop school success and positive behavior. Check off each box as you complete the "recipe."

MATH Shape Up!

Here's a fun way for your youngster to learn about geometric shapes.

Ingredients: pencil, paper

Take turns asking each other math questions based on shapes. Examples: "How many sides do a rectangle and triangle have altogether?" (4 sides + 3 sides = 7 sides) "How many sides do five pentagons have?" (5 x 5 sides = 25 sides) Tip: Suggest that your child sketch out the problem first (draw each shape and count the sides).

For an added challenge, pick a number and ask him to invent a math problem with that number as an answer. For instance, if you choose 48, he might say, "Octagon times hexagon." (An octagon has eight sides, and a hexagon has six sides. 8 sides x 6 sides = 48 sides.)

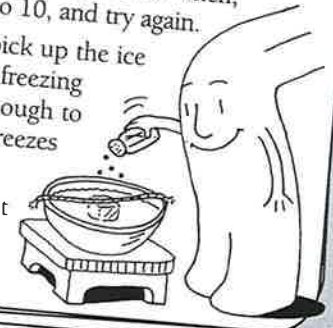
SCIENCE "Sticky" Ice

This experiment will show your youngster why we sprinkle salt on icy sidewalks in the winter.

Ingredients: bowl, water, ice cube, piece of string, salt

Have your child fill a bowl with water and drop in an ice cube. (It will float.) Ask her to lay the string across the ice and try to use it to pick up the ice. Then, have her sprinkle a little salt on the ice cube, count to 10, and try again. What happens? After adding salt, she'll be able to pick up the ice cube with the string. That's because salt lowers the freezing point of water. In this case, salt melts the ice just enough to allow the string to stick to it, and then the water refreezes around the string.

Next time it's icy outside, let your youngster help put salt down. She'll see the ice melt into slush that is safer to walk on.



VOCABULARY Word Bank

Stretch your child's vocabulary by encouraging her to create a word bank.

Ingredients: index cards, pencil, small box

Have your youngster write her vocabulary words on separate index cards. Underneath each one, she can write synonyms, or words that mean the same thing. The *immense* card, for example, could contain *gigantic*, *enormous*, and *vast*. For *peculiar*, she might list *odd*, *strange*, and *unusual*. She can brainstorm words with you, or she can use a thesaurus to find more synonyms.

Suggest that she put the cards in a small box in ABC order. When she writes in her journal or has a writing assignment, she'll have a bank of words to choose from to make her writing more interesting.



READING

Give your child the job of being navigator in the car. Tell her which signs to watch for while you're driving. Examples: "We need the Maple Lane exit." "Look for Rosie's Bakery—that's where we turn left onto Miller Street." She can point out the signs as she sees them.



ART

Have your youngster make a collage based on a theme. Help him choose a theme (example: what he wants to be when he grows up). Then, he can paste drawings or magazine pictures onto a piece of construction paper. If he wants to be a chef, his collage could contain pictures of different foods and cooking utensils. *Idea:* Hang the collage on the refrigerator.



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Character Corner

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READING AAA (Absolutely Appealing Acronyms)

With this activity, your children will learn about acronyms—and create some of their own.

Ingredients: newspaper, paper, pencils, timer

Give each player a section of the newspaper. At the count of three, have them search their sections and list as many acronyms as they can find in three minutes. Explain that an acronym is an abbreviation formed from the initials of several words. For example, NASA is the acronym for National Aeronautics and Space Admistration.

Have players trade papers and try to guess what each acronym stands for. **Tip:** You can find the definitions for many acronyms in a dictionary or an encyclopedia. Then, have fun inventing acronyms of your own. For example, Mom's Unbeatable Meatloaf would be "MUM."

WRITING

Boost your youngster's writing and keyboarding skills with this idea. Take turns emailing notes to each other. For example, your child might say, "Let's go to the movies this weekend." You could respond by asking, "Which movie do you want to see?"



VOCABULARY

Open a box of crayons and ask your youngster to make up his own names for the colors. Encourage him to think about what objects or feelings the colors bring to mind. **Examples:** sunshine yellow, meadow green, stop sign red.



FRIENDSHIP

Suggest that your youngster and a friend get out a calendar and mark one evening each month as "Special Friend Night." They can take turns choosing an activity to do together. They might read stories, play board games, or have an indoor picnic.



CONTROLLING ANGER

Does your child lose control when he gets angry? Help him come up with ways he can calm himself down instead. He might take a deep breath, count to 10, or go to his room for a few minutes of quiet time.



RESPECT FOR THE EARTH

With your youngster, think of ways to recycle different kinds of paper. Can she name five ways to reuse it? She could use the blank side of computer paper for a shopping or to-do list or the envelope from junk mail to hold photos or stickers.



SOCIAL STUDIES

Pioneers traded things they owned for things they needed in a system called bartering. Have your youngster list things or skills she could trade. **Example:** She might ask her sister to show her how to make jewelry. In return, she can help her practice multiplication tables.



Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)

PERCENTAGES

Jigsaw puzzles are a great way to introduce your child to percentages. As she puts a puzzle together, help her figure out what percentage of it is completed. For example, if she puts together 32 of the 100 pieces one day, she would divide 32 by 100 to equal .32, or 32%. Then, she can subtract 100% - 32% to find out how much is left (68%).

