

# Reading Connection

Working Together for Learning Success

September 2007

W.A. Cunningham Intermediate School 234

Susan Schaeffer, Principal

## Book Picks

### ■ *The Kids' Guide to Digital Photography*

Jenni Bidner's guide to taking great pictures covers everything from getting the perfect shot to photography craft projects. Packed with examples and ideas, the book will help budding shutterbugs learn about cameras and how to make the most of their photos.



### ■ *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

Scott O'Dell's book paints a vivid picture of a young Indian girl's courage and perseverance after she and her brother are left behind during the evacuation of their island home. When her brother dies, Karana must deal with the loss and struggle to survive for 18 long years while waiting for a rescue ship to arrive. (Also available in Spanish.)

### ■ *The Lightning Thief*

Percy Jackson has just gotten kicked out of school, learned his absent father is a Greek god, and been accused of stealing Zeus's lightning bolt. Now he has 10 days to return the stolen property before war erupts on Mount Olympus. (First book of The Olympians series by Rick Riordan.)



### ■ *The Stupendous Dodgeball Fiasco*

Eleven-year-old Phillip Stanislaw hates the mean-spirited dodgeball played at his new school. So what if he now lives in the unofficial Dodgeball Capital of the World? When Phillip protests, the dispute winds up in court. A humorous tale by Janice Repka about taking a stand.



## Like parent, like child

Want to see your child reading more? Let her see that reading is a part of your everyday life. After all, children learn by watching their parents. Use these suggestions to help you raise a youngster who loves to read.

### Model the habit

When your child is doing homework or reading for pleasure, join her. You can go over reports from work, read the newspaper, flip through a magazine, or browse descriptions in a catalog. The idea is for your youngster to see you reading.

### Read everywhere

Keep books wherever you are (scattered around the house, in the car). If you always have reading material on hand, you will show your child ways to find time to read—even when her schedule is full. *Tip:* When taking a book with you, grab one for your youngster, too. Then, you'll just “happen” to have something for her to read in spare moments.

### Share the love

There are lots of ways you can put reading front and center. Give books and magazine subscriptions as gifts. Post a list of titles on the refrigerator to recommend to friends. Start a neighborhood book club, or join



one in your community or workplace. Collect bookmarks, and display them on a table.

Remember, the more ways you show that reading is important to you, the more important reading will be to your child. 📖

## Use your library

Tap into your hometown library to foster a love of reading and find free family activities. Here are ways for making library trips part of your regular routine.

**1. Make time.** Pick a day that works for your family. You might visit on the third Saturday of each month or every other Friday afternoon.

**2. Make each trip different.** In addition to books, include magazines on one trip. Explore music or videos on another. Ask your children what they would like to look for.

### 3. Make it a family affair.

Check the library bulletin board for events your kids would enjoy. Keep an eye out for club meetings, storytelling, concerts, or movies. 📖

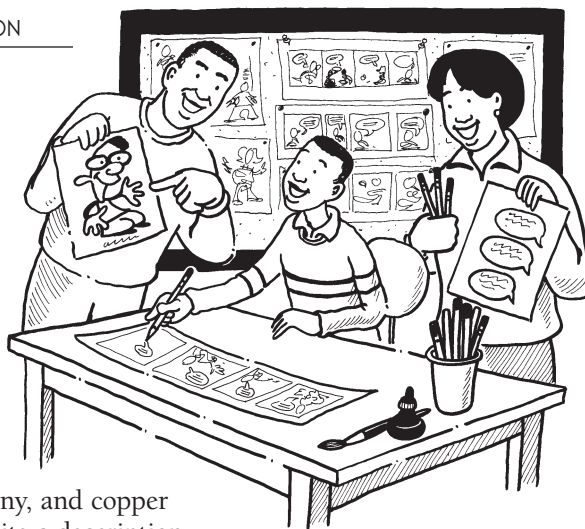


# The game of writing

Make writing as much fun as a game—by turning writing practice into a game. Try these suggestions to give words a workout in your house:

▲ Have your youngster write a sentence that describes—but doesn't name—an object. Try to guess what it is. For example, your child might write, "I am flat, round, shiny, and copper colored" (a penny). Next, it's your turn to write a description and let him guess.

▲ Together, pick a character from a favorite cartoon or storybook. Each of you write and illustrate four frames about



the character's "day in our house." Then, cut all the frames apart, mix them up, and put them face-down on a table. Turn them over, one at a time, and read your new comic strip.

▲ Let your child choose a sentence in a magazine for family members to use in writing their own stories.

The twist: one person has to make the sentence the opening, another has to make it the ending, and the others have to put it somewhere in the middle. Read your stories aloud. How are they different? 📖

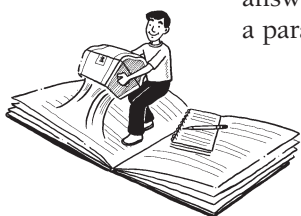
## Parent 2 Parent

### Finding facts

Taking notes was not my son's strongest suit. Josh was practically copying his entire textbook instead of jotting down the important facts.

I could relate—I did the same thing at his age. To help Josh, I showed him something my fifth-grade teacher taught me years ago. Mr. Wilson called it treasure hunting.

You start by reading a paragraph and asking, "What question does this answer?" For example, a paragraph about elephants might answer, "How long does an elephant live?"



Then, you write the answer as a simple sentence: "An elephant lives 50 years or more."

With this trick, Josh now quickly locates important facts in his textbooks. That makes studying from his notes much easier when it's test time! 📖

## Other Picks

### WEB SITES

■ **Kids Newsroom**  
Check out

the news, learn weekly words, play games, and find out what happened this week in history—all at Kids Newsroom. Be sure to visit Info Central, a place jam-packed with links to special topics for kids. [www.kidsnewsroom.org](http://www.kidsnewsroom.org)

■ **Spatulatta: Cooking 4 Kids Online**  
Young chefs can browse this site for instructions on how to make favorite dishes. Each recipe includes video instructions of kids preparing the food. Contains sections on basic cooking skills, measurement conversions, and kitchen crafts. [www.spatulatta.com](http://www.spatulatta.com)



### GAMES

■ **30-Second Mysteries for Kids**  
Lovers of riddles and brainteasers will enjoy the challenge of 30-Second Mysteries for Kids. Each card contains a mystery to be solved using critical-thinking skills. Play in teams or one-on-one to be the first to crack the case. *University Games*

■ **"Don't Quote Me"**

Five question categories and a "build your own board" feature add interesting twists to this trivia contest. Filled with questions about people, places, and entertainment, this game teaches children about a wide range of topics. *Time for Kids Games*



## Q&A

### Taming the tube

Q My child would always rather watch television than read. How can I get her away from the tube and into a book?

A Did you know that experts recommend no more than two hours a day of screen time (television and computer) for children? To tame your youngster's viewing habits, try setting limits. Make a TV schedule with the shows each person can watch. When those shows aren't on, turn the TV off!

Meanwhile, boost interest in reading by choosing hands-on books (crafts, science experiments) that the whole family can use to do activities. Or create a nightly reading time, such as a half hour before the youngest child's bedtime, when everyone reads in the family room. You'll increase reading time—and the amount of time your family spends together. 📖



## OUR PURPOSE

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

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