

Your *Firefly* Reader Now

Preschool

May 2007

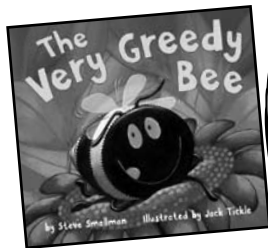
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Editors' Picks of the Month

Look for these titles in your Firefly
May Book Club flyer.

The Very Greedy Bee by Steve Smallman

Who it's for: Pre-readers learning how to interact with peers
Why we chose it: The bright illustrations are perfect for spring!
Parents say: "Such a great story about sharing."



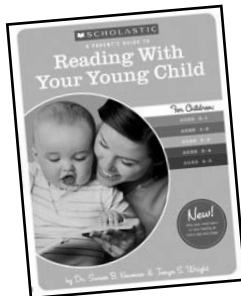
Wag a Tail by Lois Ehlert

Who it's for: Almost-graduates of preschool
Why we chose it: The story of Bow-Wow School is hard to resist.
Parents say: "Loved the colorful pictures."



A Parent's Guide to Reading with Your Young Child by Dr. Susan Neuman and Tanya S. Wright

Who it's for: Parents of children up to 5 years old
Why we chose it: Super advice for nurturing little ones to love books
Parents say: "The read-aloud tips are indispensable."



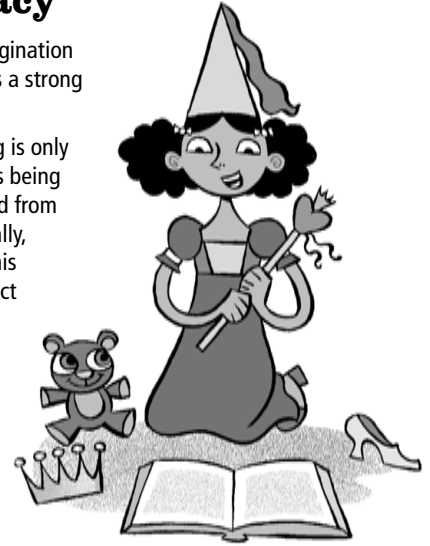
Get Creative with Literacy

Artistic activities do more than stretch your child's imagination — they give her a chance to flex skills she will need as a strong reader. Try these creative literacy boosts together:

- **Introduce visual arts.** We often think that reading is only about printed words, but a key to understanding text is being able to visualize it. Have your child draw, paint, or mold from clay scenes from a story you've read with her. Specifically, ask her to create a scene not illustrated in the book. This will help her develop visualization skills. Does she depict the character/setting as the author describes? Can she explain the scene she's depicted as well as what happens before and after? Encourage her to imagine details (wardrobe, weather, etc.) that the author doesn't describe.

- **Get dramatic.** Give your budding thespian simple costumes and props and let him act out a fairy tale or nursery rhyme. He may only be able to remember a few lines by heart, so instead of using a script, invite him to make up lines as he goes along. This helps him learn the conventions of conversation and expands vocabulary. Acting out a story also teaches story sequence, which is an important foundation for reading comprehension.

- **Put it to music.** Like poetry, songs let your child test the boundaries of language and self-expression. Build her sense of rhythm and boost vocabulary by putting new lyrics to a familiar song, such as "Row, Row, Row Your Boat." Read books about music or musicians, such as *Charlie Parker Played Be Bop*, and let her use homemade instruments to imitate the music described in the story.



Parent to Parent

Before we start planting our spring garden, I let my daughter pick out a few books about plants, flowers, and veggies we can grow. We read them, and then get to work! —Angelica J.

Ask an Expert

How should I draw my child's attention to details when I read to her?

One of the simplest but most critical techniques you can use is to "think aloud" in a conversational way. You can express the things you are noticing or wondering about as you get deeper and deeper into the story. For example, in a story where a caterpillar eats different foods every day for a week, you could wonder aloud what he might eat next, inviting your child to turn the page to find out. This fosters critical thinking and keeps your child involved in the flow of the story.

Children also benefit enormously by hearing stories read aloud more than once. The first time you read should be simply for enjoyment. It is not critical that your child processes every page in detail. On subsequent readings, you can take the time to explore parts of the book more deeply — examining the illustrations in terms of the words on the pages or inviting your child to chime in and "read" parts of the story that he remembers.

Meet Our Expert: Susan Canizares holds a Ph.D. in language and literacy development from Fordham University.

Find more expert advice for your reader at www.scholastic.com/read.

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Creativity Checklist

Have you shared these experiences with your child? Try them as a way to expose him to the language of self-expression.

Visit an art museum

Discuss the painting, sculpture, or displays and take turns describing a few pieces your child likes best. What "story" does the artwork tell? What does he imagine the artist was doing when creating the piece?

Play different types of music

Expand her repertoire by introducing classical, jazz, country, folk, and rock and roll songs. Use ones that set a mood or have fun lyrics with rhyming elements.

Catch a play

By watching a play, your child learns how people interact. The scene changes help him see that a story has a beginning, middle, and end. Look for performances based on books you've read, which can help him "picture" an interpretation of the story.



Circle Your Calendar

May 16 is Biographer's Day! Have your child choose a favorite author, and then find a book from the library about that writer and read it together.

Beyond Books

As May flowers begin to bloom, take your child on a nature walk. Bring along art supplies so she can paint or draw the trees, bugs, birds, and spring blossoms you encounter. Then, using an illustrated nature encyclopedia, help your artist identify the flora and fauna.

Roll & Read Story Box

Write a story and make a moving picture book to display it.

What you need:

- four paper-towel tubes
- one narrow cardboard box
- roll of brown paper
- washable paint, markers, glue, and masking tape
- adult-size scissors and utility knife
- child safety scissors
- ruler
- old magazines

What to do:

1. Create the "case" for his moving picture book. Make holes on each side of the cardboard box about 4 inches from the top and large enough for paper-towel tubes to fit through. Fit one tube through each hole. (If the box is wider than the tube is long, attach two tubes together with masking tape.) Leave about 1 1/2 inches of the tube protruding from either side of the box.
2. Remove the bottom tube and help your child measure the brown paper so it fits the width of the tube. Cut a long strip of paper and fold it like an accordion. Make each fold large enough to be a story frame.
3. Encourage your child to illustrate a story using art materials or magazine cutouts. He can write captions at the bottom of each frame or dictate his words to you.
4. Open up the accordion and tape the end of the story to the bottom paper tube. Ask your child to carefully turn the end of the tube and roll up the story. Tape the top of the story to the top tube. Now your child is ready to roll and read!

Bringing the Best Books to You

From the tons of titles published each year, Scholastic Book Club editors choose the best ones to fill your monthly flyer — a mix of award winners, bestsellers, new picks, and favorites you loved as a kid. Choose from fiction, nonfiction, humor, fantasy, and reference books to find the perfect fit for your child.

Did You Know?

When you order, your child's class gets FREE books and resources!

Find out more about leveled reading at www.scholastic.com/yourreader.

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