

Your SeeSaw Reader Now

Grades K-1

January 2004

Reading Together Makes Skills Blast Off

Even if your child practices reading at school every day, sharing books with her at home is important. Reading together daily helps you both relax while boosting essential skills.

Reading together has the power to:

- **Promote good speaking skills.** Children listen on a higher level than they read. Your first grader, for instance, can likely understand a story written for a third grader if it's read aloud. Hearing complex sentences and new vocabulary in context builds communication skills, helping your child become more articulate and confident about using new words.
- **Encourage imagination and creativity.** As your early reader matures, alternate reading her favorite picture books with more advanced chapter books. Try books with few or no pictures and ask your child to imagine and describe what the characters look like. You can each draw pictures of her favorite scenes and have fun comparing your illustrations.
- **Develop writing skills.** Frequent exposure to written words and sentences helps your child to use correct spelling and punctuation. Listening to the rhythm and structure of written language will help her with early writing assignments such as fill-in-the-blanks, and provides a good foundation for future story writing.
- **Show reading is a joy.** Young children naturally love stories and the magic of books. By continually making reading an exciting part of your child's daily life, you can keep this passion alive as she enters upper elementary and middle school, the time when interest sometimes starts to wane.



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at www.scholastic.com/read

Help Your Child Get the Best Resources at School

Every time you purchase books from the SeeSaw Book Club, your child's classroom earns Bonus Points. Teachers can use the points for FREE books and learning materials from Scholastic!



Daily Reading Fun

Pick up a book, newspaper, or magazine yourself every day. When your child sees you reading, it will inspire him and help him think of reading as something fun that everyone does.

Did You Know?

January 2 is National Science Fiction Day! Share dazzling sci-fi picture riddles with *Can You See What I See? Dream Machine*.

Ask an Expert

How can my child get more out of our daily reading time?

One of the simplest but most effective techniques you can use is to "think aloud" and create a conversation around the book. Say things you're wondering, or ask questions as you get deeper into the story ("How much has that caterpillar eaten? I wonder what's next."). This fosters critical thinking (prediction skills) and keeps your child involved. Try reading the story through once just for enjoyment, and the next time talk about the characters, take a close look at the illustrations, or make connections between the story and his own life.

Meet Our Expert: Susan E. Canizares is the author of numerous nonfiction books for children and articles for parents and teachers. She received her MA in special education (early childhood) from New York University and earned her Ph.D. in language and literacy development at Fordham University.

Have a question about reading? Find advice at www.scholastic.com/read.

Beyond Books

Act out a story! Use old socks, paper bags, and colorful art supplies to create characters from a favorite book. Turn a tabletop into a stage (with a sheet covering the puppeteers below). Then help your child perform the storybook adventure for the rest of the family.



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Check Up on Skills

Your child's reading skills have been growing since the start of the school year. Now is a good time to note his progress and look for upcoming milestones.

1 — I'm Ready to Start Reading

- Knows all the ABCs and the sounds for all or most letters
- Understands letters can be combined to make words
- Recognizes his own name and some easy, common words
- Understands that words are read from left to right
- Is familiar with the different parts of a book

2 — I'm a Reader

- Sounds out words she doesn't know
- Reads simple books with little or no help
- Recognizes similar spelling/sound patterns (i.e. fat, cat, sat)
- Can predict what might happen next in a story
- Uses context and pictures to figure out unfamiliar words

3 — I'm a Fluent Reader

- Corrects herself when she makes a reading mistake
- Understands some common prefixes and suffixes ("un-" and "-est")
- Begins to recognize multi-letter syllables (i.e., tiger has two syllables ti - ger)
- Reads aloud with expression and appropriate pauses
- Describes what she learned from a book she's read

Build a Book Together!

Teachers use mini-books to teach vocabulary words in context. These introduce simple, illustrated words connected by a common theme. Here's how to make your own mini-book of wintry words.

What You Need:

- 3 sheets of white 8½" x 11" paper
- makers, colored pencils, crayons
- silver glitter

What to Do:

- 1) Fold each sheet in half so you have 8½" x 5½" rectangles.
- 2) Assemble the folded sheets into a book (with 12 pages).
- 3) Starting on page 2, write one of the following sentences along the bottom of each page:

Today it **snowed**.

I put on my **boots** and **mittens**.

Dad and I went outside to build a **snowman**.

First we made a big **snowball**.

Then we stacked two more on top.

We added two button eyes.

We added one carrot nose.

I added two tree branches for his arms.

We dressed him in a **hat** and **scarf**.

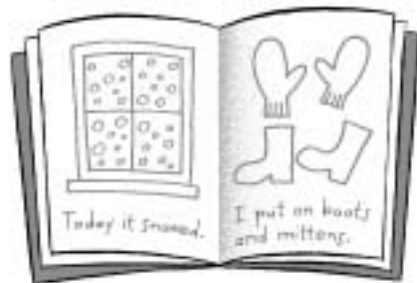
Then we went inside and drank **hot cocoa**.

4) On the cover, write "My Winter Story."

5) Below the title, have your child add drawings of the bolded words above.

6) On each page, ask him to draw a picture that illustrates the sentence.

7) Talk about other "winter" words. How many more can he think of? Write them on the back page.



Editors' Pick of the Month

Available in your *SeeSaw February Book Club* flyer.

The Three Pigs by David Wiesner

Blow kids away with clever creatures!



Who it is for: Kids who are learning to love books

Why we chose it: This Caldecott winner is a fairytale retelling that turns storybook conventions on their ear!

Parents say: "It's so clever — the illustrations are gorgeous and the message about searching for a better story encourages my daughter to dream big."

Kids say: "It's my favorite Three Pigs book!"

More titles that are too clever for words...

- *Click Clack Moo: Cows that Type* by Doreen Cronin
- *Good Night, Princess Pruney Toes* by Lisa McCourt
- *The Magic Hat* by Mem Fox
- *Olivia Saves the Circus* by Ian Falconer

About Your SeeSaw Reader Now

Your SeeSaw Reader Now is produced by the Family Channel editorial staff at Scholastic.com. For information on how to foster reading at home, age-appropriate booklists, and more, visit All About Reading. Go to: www.scholastic.com/read.



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