

Parent Guide to SeeSaw

Grades K-1 Your resource for advice, ideas, and more for your beginning reader September

2007

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Editors' Picks of the Month

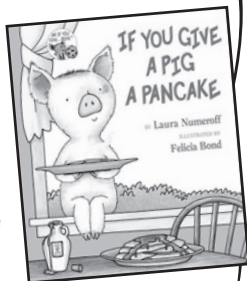
Look for these titles in your SeeSaw
September Book Club flyer.

If You Give a Pig a Pancake By Laura Numeroff

Who it's for: Kids in the mood for a laugh

Why we chose it: The fun, detailed illustrations

Parents say: "I love the learning that lies beneath the humor."



A Kiss Goodbye By Audrey Penn

Who it's for: Kindergartners adjusting to something new.

Why we chose it: The can't-resist characters

Parents say: "A lifesaver when we moved to our new house."

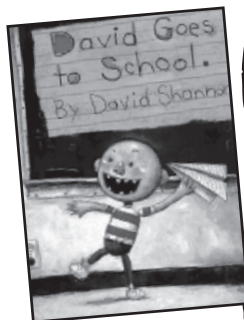


David Goes to School By David Shannon

Who it's for: Classroom first-timers

Why we chose it: Shows a kid's POV with perfect pitch

Parents say: "Teaches good behavior in a very funny way."



Book Time Is Together Time

Give your beginning reader a boost with lots of shared reading. To make the most of your time:

Ham it up! Read slowly enough for your child to build mental pictures of what she hears. Raise or lower your voice to build drama and suspense.

Vary your subject matter as well as the kinds of things you read. Wordless picture books give kids the chance to tell their own stories as they "read," jump-starting the creative process. Let your child's imagination soar, and show her how excited you are by her ideas.

Hunt for books that match your child's interests. When you make a point of finding books on subjects dear to your child's heart, you not only stimulate her interest in literature but let her know that you value what she thinks and does.

Look for books that interest you too. Enthusiasm is contagious. If you're excited by an author or a storyline, your child will be too.

Help your child notice new information as you read. By sharing your feelings about a story, you motivate your child to do the same. Talk about the characters and their behavior.

Let her read to you. Once your child starts to read, vary your ritual by taking turns reading to each other, and don't be too quick to correct a beginner.

Get her a library card. Most public libraries issue cards when a child is 5 or can write her name. Celebrate the event and check out library reading hours and family reading times as well as book clubs and other motivating programs.



Parent to Parent

To get us reading instead of watching TV, we started a family book challenge. If my husband and I and our 1st and 4th graders read a certain number of books, we'll go to Florida next winter!
—Cira I., Massachusetts

Ask an Expert

How do learners of a second language benefit when they read aloud in class?

All children can learn from reading aloud in carefully planned situations. Used judiciously, reading aloud can help students become more fluent and competent readers. However, new-language learners need plenty of time to experience receptive language (listening) while they are becoming more confident with expressive language (speaking and reading aloud). It is important not to put new readers on the spot. Make sure everyone has to participate by using a book that is easy enough for readers of all levels to practice reading aloud in class.

Meet Our Expert: Francie Alexander, a former teacher, is vice president and chief academic officer at Scholastic.

8 Steps to Successful, Happy Read-Alouds

It's a thrill to hear your little one begin to sound out words and read stories — but it can be difficult to listen to his halting pronunciation, missed words, and other mistakes. How can you help him learn without stifling his confidence or turning reading time into a chore?

- 1. Bite your tongue — most of the time.** If your child is making it through most words, but doing it at a snail's pace, be patient and let her carry on.
- 2. Speak up for sense.** An exception to the stay-mum rule: Gently correct your child if he alters the meaning of a sentence by skipping or substituting an important word.
- 3. Help with stumpers.** If your child encounters a new, difficult word that is key to understanding the sentence or passage he's reading, or that recurs frequently, step in to pronounce and define it for him.
- 4. Answer appeals.** When she asks for help, give it. Encourage her to figure words out on her own, but if she's genuinely stuck, come to her aid so she doesn't get frustrated.
- 5. Use pictures as helpers.** Reviewing the pictures in a storybook before reading it can give your child an idea of what the text will be about.
- 6. Encore!** When he finishes a passage or a story, ask him to read it again. The extra practice with familiar text will boost both his skills and his self-esteem.
- 7. Be a drama queen.** When you're the one doing the reading, use lots of expression. This will encourage your child to do the same when she reads.
- 8. Notice patterns.** If your child repeats the same kinds of errors frequently, mention this to the teacher.

Reading Is Giving

ClassroomsCare is a terrific way for kids to share their love of reading — and make a difference. Students in classrooms around the country are encouraged to read 100 books to give 100 books to kids in need (up to one million books)! Together, Scholastic Book Clubs and caring classrooms nationwide have donated more than five million books to under-resourced schools since the program launched in 2002. That's something young readers can be proud of! And this year, we're launching a brand new online community (www.scholastic.com/classroomscare) where classrooms can connect with each other and share their love of reading.

Beyond Books

Reinforce reading skills as you bake cookies together. Have your child help read recipes and measure ingredients. It will build math skills as well as vocabulary.

Library Time

September is Library Card Sign-Up Month! Visit your neighborhood branch to get your child his very own card. Make sure you have one for yourself, too!

Motivate Your Child

Knowing what excites kids is the key to helping them master new skills and be successful in school. Here's how to tap into your child's passions in a fun, meaningful way.

Kindergartners Love:

Block-building. Whether your child is constructing a wobbly tower or an elaborate city, blocks foster creativity, confidence, and problem-solving skills, while teaching him about math and science. When a child lines up blocks on the floor, he's mastering one-to-one correspondence. As he searches for the right-sized triangle to make a roof for his house, he's learning how to sort and categorize. And every time he mulls which block to place next, he's thinking analytically and learning about cause and effect.

1st Graders Love:

Dramatic play. Making up and acting out stories builds literacy and social skills. Research shows that children who are able to tell and act out stories are better readers. Whenever your child creates scenarios or reenacts a beloved tale, she's practicing story sequencing — a necessary reading and writing skill. Through pretend play, your child learns that a story has a beginning (where the characters and setting are established); a middle (where most the action happens); and an ending (where a problem gets solved). Role-playing also requires your child to see the world through the eyes of another — an essential social skill that builds empathy and tolerance.

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.

About Your Parent Guide to SeeSaw
Your Parent Guide to SeeSaw is produced by the editorial staff at Scholastic.com/parents. For information on how to foster reading at home, age-appropriate booklists, and more, visit www.scholastic.com/read.