

Read to Your Bunny

(SCHOLASTIC, 1998)

This simple, rhyming story shares a message that helped set in motion a national literacy campaign urging families to dedicate 20 minutes a day to reading with children.

Before Reading

When sharing *Read to Your Bunny* or any read-aloud book, try to make the classroom setting more special. Gather students around you. Use desk lamps instead of overhead lighting. Give children ample time to observe and take pleasure in each illustration.

Show students the cover illustration, an adult bunny reading to a child bunny. Invite children to share experiences with reading—who reads them stories, where they read, and the kinds of books they enjoy. While you read the book aloud, invite students to notice all the places the bunnies listen to stories.

After Reading

Invite volunteers to identify all the places where the bunnies enjoyed listening to a story. In a list format, record student responses on chart paper. Review the list with students, and then ask them to think of even more places where it would be fun to read a book. Perhaps they think it would be fun to sit and read in a tree house, a quiet corner, or a cuddly armchair. Add new ideas to the list. Then use these discussion starters to continue to explore what makes reading special:

- ☉ What are a few of your favorite books? Why are these books special to you?
- ☉ What do people read besides books? Where else do people find and read printed words?

Messages and Themes

- ◆ Reading is important.
- ◆ It's enjoyable to have a special place and time in which to read every day.

Tip

You may want to invite a couple of volunteers to role-play how the system works. Have each volunteer pretend to borrow and then return a class book, dramatizing each step of the process. Encourage students to borrow class books and share them with family members. A lending library of class books is a fun way to strengthen the home-school connection and a helpful way of keeping track of who is borrowing what book.

Tip

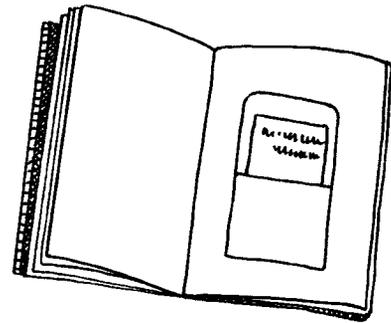
A Library Look-See

Visit your school or town library to help children learn about the various services available (such as lending books, computer access, classes, author visits, and read alouds). In advance of the trip, make arrangements for a librarian to take students on a tour of the facility. Ask the librarian to introduce children to such things as how books are organized and how libraries keep track of borrowed books. After the field trip, have students write and sign a class thank-you note on chart paper.

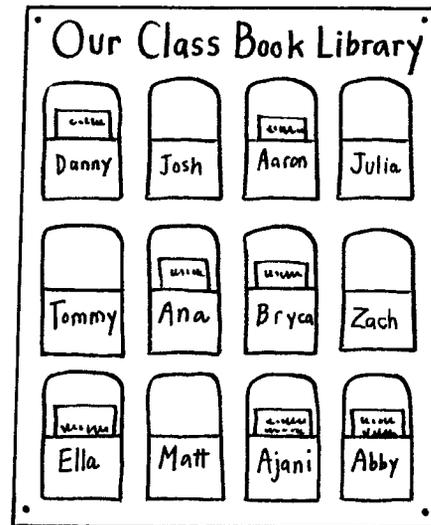
Lending Class Books (Language Arts)

Promote reading by creating a lending-library system for the collaborative class books that children make over the course of the school year. You'll need book pockets (one for each book and one for each student), glue sticks, 3- by 5-inch index cards (one for each book), and a large sheet of posterboard. Follow these steps to set up the library:

1. Glue a book pocket to the inside back cover of each book. Write the book's title on an index card and tuck the card inside the pocket.



2. Label the top of the posterboard with a title such as "Our Class Book Library." Have students write their name on a book pocket. Arrange and glue the pockets on the posterboard. (You may organize the pockets into two or three columns.) Place the chart near the classroom library or the area where you keep your class books.

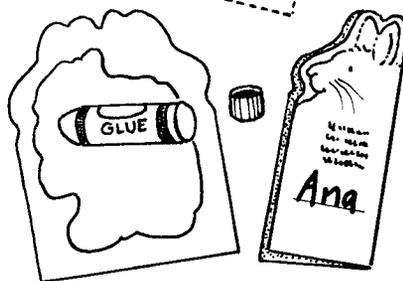
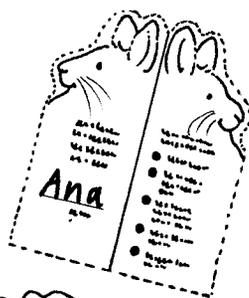
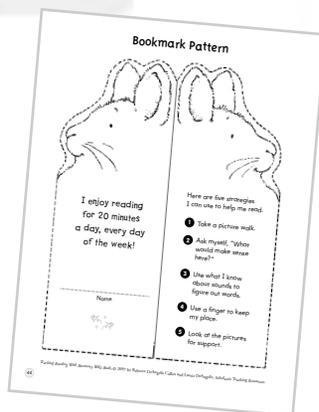


3. Show children how the system works. As a group, look at one of the class books as an example. Point out the inside back cover—how the pocket is attached and how the index card with the title is stored inside the pocket. Explain that each time a child wants to borrow a book, he or she takes the card out of the book's pocket and places it in his or her pocket on the posterboard.
4. To return books, students place the index card back in the book and return it to the class library area.

Bunny Bookmarks (Language Arts)

Make bookmarks that help students remember strategies for reading success, and encourage them to read for 20 minutes every day.

1. In advance of making the bookmarks, discuss some techniques students find useful when reading alone or with a family member.
2. Give each child a copy of the bookmark pattern (page 44). Invite children to color the rabbit pictures, sign the back, and then cut out the bookmark pattern along the dotted lines.
3. Have children fold the bookmark along the fold line, turn it facedown on a flat surface, apply glue to each half, and then press the halves together.
4. When the bookmarks are complete, read aloud the five tips with students. Invite volunteers to explain how using each strategy can help them. Definitions from volunteers may be along these lines:
 - Taking a picture walk means a reader explores the book page by page, examining the illustrations for clues to the story.
 - You can ask yourself, “What would make sense here?” if you get stuck on a word or phrase. Answering the question helps you problem solve and understand what you’re reading.
 - Pay attention to what you already know about letter sounds, and use that to make sense of words.
 - Using a finger to keep your place in the text is giving yourself a pointer, a way of holding your spot while you read.
 - Looking at the pictures for support is examining the illustrations for clues. Pictures can help make understanding the text easier.



Tip

Find out more about Rosemary Wells's national literacy campaign, in which the author advocates families reading together for at least 20 minutes a day. For a further challenge, join Rosemary Wells's efforts and kick off your own version of the reading campaign in your classroom. Begin by sending each student home with his or her bunny bookmark and a note about the importance of spending 20 minutes a day reading. Let families know that they can learn more about the campaign by listening to the author herself at <http://teachingbooks.com/slide-shows/wells/ReadtoBunny.html>.

Book Links



Bedtime for Frances

by Russell Hoban
(Harper, 1960)

A young badger, anxious about noises in the night, puts off her bedtime as long as possible.

A Bedtime Story

by Mem Fox
(Mondo, 1996)

Polly and Bed Rabbit are ready to hear a bedtime story, but are Polly's parents ready?

Bookmark Pattern

