

# Reading Connection

Working Together for Learning Success

May 2018

Central Middle School  
Rex Crosnoe, Principal



## Book Picks

### ■ *The Great Treehouse War* (Lisa Graff)

Winnie has an unusual living arrangement after her parents' divorce. She's supposed to spend three days a week with her mom, three days with her dad, and one day in a treehouse near both homes. Frustrated by her parents' efforts to outdo each other, Winnie decides to stay in the treehouse—but the situation gets out of hand when 10 of her friends move in!

### ■ *I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives*

(Caitlin Alifirenka and Martin Ganda with Liz Welch)

This inspiring true story describes the friendship between two unlikely pen pals: Caitlin, a 12-year-old from suburban Pennsylvania, and Martin, a 14-year-old from a poor village in Zimbabwe. The friends tell their tale through alternating points of view.



### ■ *Peak* (Roland Smith)

Climbing is in Peak Marcello's genes. But when he is arrested for scaling a skyscraper, he realizes he has taken his passion too far. He's sent to live with his long-lost father, who runs an adventure company. Is he really up to the challenge of being the youngest boy to climb Mount Everest?



### ■ *Girls Think of Everything* (Catherine Thimmesh)

This biography collection describes the inventions of a dozen women and girls. Through hard work and creativity, they developed items ranging from chocolate chip cookies to solar-heated houses. Includes a time line of important inventions by females.



## Read around your community

Now starring: Reading!  
Keep books front and center this summer with community outings that will motivate your child to read.

### At the library

Kick off the season with a trip to the library, where your youngster can sign up for the summer reading program. Ask a librarian if there's a kids' book club—or encourage your child to start her own. Discussing books with others is fun, and it boosts comprehension.



### In the bookstore

Explore local book shops, and browse the shelves for used books or low-cost paperbacks. Also, plan to attend events they sponsor like author visits, poetry readings, or puppet shows. If you're going to meet a children's writer, your youngster may want to read one of his books ahead of time and write down questions to ask him. *Idea:* Traveling this summer? Tour bookstores in other towns.

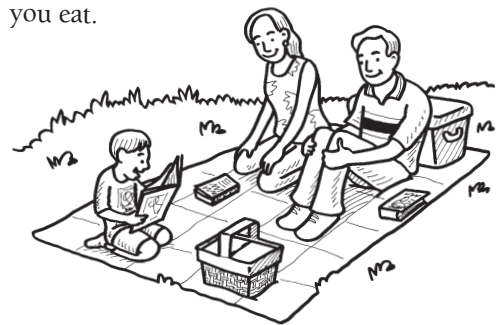
### Onstage

Help your child read the newspaper or look online to find concerts or plays. Pick one to see, and get in the spirit by reading a related book. Before a bluegrass concert, your child could read about the history of that style of music. Or for a community theater production of *Alice in Wonderland*, you might read the Lewis Carroll classic together. ■

## Celebrate books

Create your own family fun by inviting books to your summer activities. Consider these tips:

- Pack a picnic basket with lunch *and* books. Head to a nearby park, and enjoy reading outside. Your youngster might read aloud a chapter from a novel before lunch. Then, let each person relax with his own book after you eat.



- Add reading to a family gathering like an Independence Day celebration or a birthday party. Take turns reading from books of jokes, trivia, or world records. *Idea:* Encourage your child to read to younger siblings and cousins. ■

## Write creative nonfiction

Whether your child is swimming with friends, stargazing at camp, or visiting grandparents, special memories make great nonfiction writing material. Share this advice to help him write a true story.

**Find an exciting angle.** Encourage your youngster to pick out something fun or unusual about an event and build his story around it. Maybe his friend brought a cool raft for everyone to float on, or perhaps your child saw a shooting star.



**Create images.** Your youngster can help readers “see” the story by setting the scene. Rather than “I caught a fish,” he might write, “Grandpa and I sat on the wooden dock overlooking the clear blue lake when, suddenly, I caught a big fish!”

**Share the emotion.** Suggest that your child describe how people in

his story felt. His characters will seem more real if he writes a sentence like “The campers gasped in awe as the starlight soared across the night sky” or “Grandpa’s face shone with pride when he saw my catch.”



## Road trip games

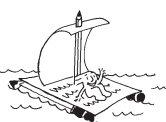
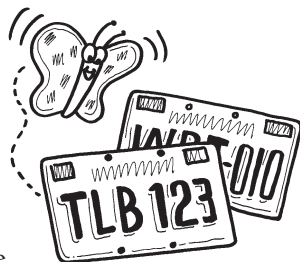
Word games are a tried-and-true way to strengthen vocabulary and pass time in the car. Here are two to try.

### Buzzwords

Let your child choose an interesting word on a sign, such as *delicatessen* or *boulevard*. You say a word that her word brings to mind (*pastrami*). Your youngster adds a word that’s related to yours, and so on. Continue until no one can think of a word. The player who said the last one picks a new word. Then, play again.

### License plate words

Ask your youngster to read the letters on a license plate. Take turns saying a word that includes all the letters in the order they appear. For TLB, you might pick *tollbooth*, *toolbox*, *tailbone*, and *trailblazer*. If you say a word that doesn’t contain those letters in that order, or you can’t think of a word, you’re out. The last player remaining is the winner.



## A household writing center

Families can share ideas and stories with this interactive writing center. Have your youngster set aside a spot that includes paper, pencils, pens, and envelopes. Together, enjoy these suggestions.

● **Fill an “idea envelope.”** Jot ideas on slips of paper, and put them in an envelope. (“We should go tubing!”) Visitors to the writing center can build on the ideas. (“The Outdoor Adventure Center offers discounts on tubing on Sunday afternoons.”)

● **Provide inspiration.** Place a seashell, a photo of a cute baby animal, or another item in the station. Each person writes a story about the object and seals it in an envelope. When everyone is finished, read your tales aloud to each other. You will see all the different stories the same item can inspire!



## Q&A Should my child try e-books?

**Q** I’ve recently started reading e-books. I enjoy them, so I thought I might suggest that my fourth-grade son try some. But are print books better for kids?

**A** For many people, there’s something special about holding a book and turning the pages. This is especially important for beginning readers. But since your son is older, he might experiment with both print and e-books.

One advantage of e-readers is that they hold a large number of books. If you travel, your child can “pack” as many titles

as he likes. Also, by downloading books from the public library for free, he’ll have a huge selection available at the touch of a button.

On the other hand, youngsters can easily be distracted by apps while they’re reading e-books. So have your son either

turn off internet access or use a device that’s just for reading.

Regardless of which book format your child likes, he’ll be reading—and that’s what’s most important.



### OUR PURPOSE

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

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