

Use what you know

Reading new words

Your child probably can't read a word like "supercalifragilisticexpialidocious." But he can use words he already knows to read new words. Here's how:

■ Start with your youngster's name. Troy, for example, might have an easier time learning "tr" words such as "train." You can use the "tr" consonant blend at the beginning of his name to teach



him other blends as well, such as "cr," "pl," and "st."

■ Point out patterns in sight words your child recognizes. *Example:* If your youngster knows "they," he can learn "then," "this," and "that." "Could," "would," and "should" are three common sight words that also share a pattern.

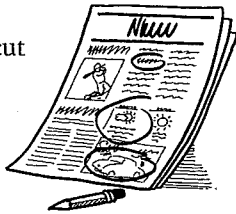
■ Break down syllables in a longer word, such as "yesterday." Cover the entire word with a small slip of paper. Then, slowly slide the paper to the right to show each syllable one at a time (yes-ter-day). This works especially well for words with several syllables, such as "supercalifragilisticexpialidocious"!♥

Fun with Words Newspaper learning

With thousands of words in every issue, newspapers are a great way to build your youngster's skills. Grab a paper, and try these activities.

Matching game

Have your child cut out several photographs and their captions separately. Mix them up. Matching the captions and the photos will improve her reading comprehension.



Scavenger hunt

List items in the newspaper (car ad, crossword puzzle, weather forecast), and ask your youngster to find and circle each one. She'll build research skills as she looks through the pages.

ABC order

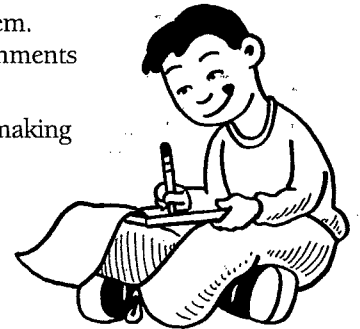
Together, find the names of 5–10 countries, states, and cities in headlines or stories. Let your child copy each one onto an index card and arrange the cards in alphabetical order. This will help her practice spelling and learn about geography.♥

Q&A Real writing

Q My son doesn't enjoy writing. He will write a few words, such as his spelling lists. But when it's time to write a paragraph or a story, he complains. Any ideas?

A Have your son try a few "real" writing tasks. It's often easier for kids to write about things that have meaning for them. Encourage your child to give those longer writing assignments a try with ideas like these:

- ✎ Have him write what he remembers about the day (making a new friend, playing kickball, having pizza for lunch).
- ✎ Let him choose a cherished toy or animal and write a few sentences describing it. *Example:* "The bunny is soft. He hops fast."
- ✎ Ask him to write lists of favorite songs, favorite characters in a movie, or ideas for his birthday.♥



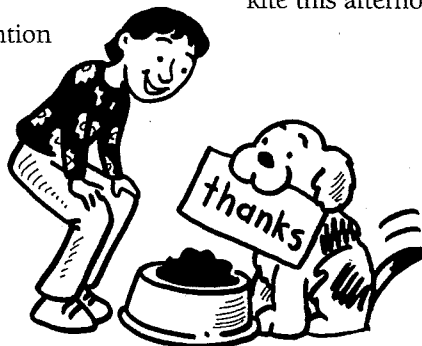
Parent to Parent Simple reading practice

I've found a way to give my children reading practice—and improve their behavior at the same time. I write short notes to my kids and leave them around the house.

Sometimes I'll mention my youngsters' good behavior ("Thanks for helping with the dishes!") or write reminders ("Please hang me up. Signed, Your towel"). Sometimes the notes are about

not-so-good behavior. ("I was disappointed when you yelled at me. Can we talk about it?") I make sure to leave notes for treats, too ("Let's go fly your kite this afternoon!").

I look for unique places to put the notes, such as on their pillows, in front of the dog's water bowl, or pinned to the shower curtain. The kids enjoy discovering the notes and reading them aloud.♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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