

Dr. Blanton's Reading Tips



These activities are good for building skills in oral language, as well as phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary/background knowledge, fluency, and comprehension. Have fun with your children on their Journey Towards Reading!

N°	Tips (can be done all year long)	☒
1	Picture reading (all children can benefit from this fun activity) Discuss what's on the pages as you turn them. You may use an old calendar or random pictures. The objective is to get your scholar talking and expressing herself with words. Picture reading also builds vocabulary and oral language no matter the age. 	☐
2	Read nursery rhymes to build listening skills (5 and under) Point out rhyming words, let your scholar tap, clap, or snap when he gets to rhyming words, create additional rhyming words, and make up new rhyming words (they don't have to be real words).	☐

	 The illustration shows Humpty Dumpty, a large white egg with a face, sitting on a brown, bumpy ground. He is wearing a blue shirt and purple shoes. To his left is a brown horse. Behind him are two men in red and blue uniforms with hats. In the background is a yellow castle with red roofs and a blue sky.	
3	Read aloud (0-8 years old) • Model reading by reading aloud • Discuss the characteristics: • Front, back, spine, title page, author, illustrator, publisher, etc. • Ask, “What do you think this book is about?” • As you read, point out letters and words, talk about how words are separated by spaces and they combine to make sentences, sentences are separated by paragraphs. • Discuss punctuation marks and what they mean (question, exclamation, quotation marks, period). • Add your child’s name to the story or a family member’s name. • After reading, talk about what happened in the book, favorite parts, characters, scenes, costumes, themes, etc.....similar to what you would do after watching a movie. • Change your voice for each of the characters.....use props when possible. • When you get to a repeated phrase, let your child read it. • Change the ending of the story, what would you do, how would you feel. • Echo read with your scholar – you read a sentence then have your scholar read the same sentence exactly how you read it. • Partner read – you read a few sentences or a paragraph, followed by your scholar.	☐
4	Read the same story by different authors (0-8 years old) • Discuss the similarities and differences of the stories. • Read different versions of a story like the <i>Three Little Pigs</i> and <i>The True Story of the Three Little Pigs</i>. Discuss which version your scholar thinks may be true and why. Be sure your scholar provides examples from the story or from life experiences to support all thinking.	☐

	Engage in an author study with a group of friends – use the library, church, or someone’s home as a meeting place.	
5	Read stories that can be re-enacted (3-8 years old) - Use puppets – save old boxes and turn them into a puppet theater, search your home to find props, costumes, and decorations for the scenes. - Perform the stories at the library with a group of friends or at home in the backyard in front of family. At the end of the show, allow the audience to ask questions. 	☐
6	Theme Reading (3 and up) - Read a book and engage in an activity afterwards - For example, read the <i>Carrot Seed</i> then engage in a planting activity or read <i>The Hungry Caterpillar</i> and make a snack or read about animals that live in the water and take a trip to an aquarium.	☐
7	Day Trip Experiences (all ages) Expose scholars to new experiences, words, and opportunities to build background knowledge and vocabulary. Take a trip to the zoo, aquarium, arboretum, park, or museum. Read about insects, bodies of water, vehicles, or animals, and discuss what you read. If your child can, draw/write about the experience as well.	☐
8	Vacation Research (all ages) Before going on vacation research the destination, read all about where you’re going and let your scholar report the findings.	☐

	• While on vacation, journal the experience in real time. If your scholar can't write yet, take dictation or let her draw her experiences. • If you can't go on vacation, research virtual vacation places on YouTube.	
9	Read and re-read books that your child is interested in (all ages) • This activity builds reading stamina and the love of reading (i.e., science, mysteries, music, sports, animals, places, history, etc.).	☐
10	Read poetry (all ages) • Read various poems and short stories to help your scholar become familiar with poetry. • Allow your scholar to create her own poetry and share with others. • Use the library, church, or a home for a Spoken Word type of event for older scholars.	☐
11	Listen to podcasts (6 years old and up) • This activity builds listening skills (hearing the podcast), writing skills (taking notes), and oral language skills (discussion). • Find out what your scholar is interested in then find the corresponding podcast (see the sample list below). • Watch an episode and discuss it afterwards. Encourage your scholar to ask questions and conduct research to find the answers. 	☐
12	Listen to music (7 years old and up) • Discuss the lyrics. • What point do you think the artist was trying to make? • Why do you think the artist selected those words?	☐

	• How does the song make you feel? What part makes you feel that way? • What do you think is going on in the artists' mind? • If you could, what part of the song would you change and why?	
13	Discuss current events (5 and up depending on the topics) • Select a current event. • Research aspects of the topic. • Let your scholar weigh in giving his/her point of view and why. Encourage your scholar to use information from the research to support her thoughts.	☐
14	Read together as a family (all ages) • Select a day and time for the whole family to Stop, Drop and Read. • Let your scholar see you reading and that you have prioritized reading in the home.	☐
15	Tell Stories (all ages) • Our ancestors passed on historical events from generation to generation orally. They told amazing stories that are shared in some families to this day. • Begin with births, significant family events, vacations, grandparents, or special family moments. • Create round robin stories where one person begins a story, the next person adds on until everyone adds to the story. Record it and listen to it as a family. Write it out and create a family book. 	☐
16	Make your own book (all ages)	

	Search book templates online and create a fun e-book (Canva is good for book making) or simply make your own hard copy with paper and something to hold the papers together.	
17	Read decodable books/texts (5-8 years old) - see an explanation of decodable books below - These books support phonics and word decoding and are used after phonics skills are taught. Check your local library for decodable books or any online retailer. - Re-read the books over and over again until mastery but read only the ones associated with your child's previous or current grade level to avoid frustration and stress. Try not to go ahead of the phonics skills being taught.	
	<u>Educational Podcast for Young Learners</u> Brains On! Science Podcast Story Pirates Little Stories for Tiny People: Anytime and bedtime stories for kids The Alien Adventures of Finn Caspian Noodle Loaf – Music Education Podcast for Kids The Sesame Street Podcast Smash Boom Best: A funny, smart debate show for kids and family Quentine and Alfie's ABC Adventures Jamming on the Job (K-2) Time Traveling Tonya (K-2) Circle Round (P-5) But Why: A Podcast for Curious Kids Wow in the World (K-5)	
	<u>Books that can be read aloud or easily reenacted</u> Going on a Bear Hunt Hair Love	

	Last Stop on Market Street The Proudest Blue: A Story of Hijab and Family Fry Bread Mr. Grumpy's Outing Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? There was an Old Lady Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You See? The Gingerbread Man The Doorbell Rang Cookie's Week Goldilocks and The Three Bears The Little Red Hen Chicka Chicka Boom Boom Swimmy The Very Hungry Caterpillar The Three Little Pigs The Three Billy Goats Gruff The Fat Cat Peanut Butter and Jelly Little Red Riding Hood	
	<u>Decodable Books/Texts</u> Decodable texts/books are designed to be used in conjunction with phonics lessons and provide students with practical application of the skills being taught. The primary purpose is to provide early readers with opportunities to practice and reinforce their developing phonics skills in a meaningful context. These texts are carefully structured to include words that align with specific letter-sound correspondences that students are learning, allowing them to apply their decoding skills. By focusing on	

	words that can be sounded out, decodable texts help build confidence and automaticity in reading.	
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