

Reading Connection

Working Together for Learning Success

October 2009

Henry Clay Middle School
Title I

Book Picks

■ *Moxy Maxwell Does Not Love Stuart Little*

If Moxy Maxwell doesn't finish her summer reading assignment, she can't be in the water ballet. But Moxy would rather do anything than read *Stuart Little*. Will she finish the book in time? A funny tale about procrastination by Peggy Gifford.

■ *Fish*

Bright pages are packed with facts and pictures in this non-fiction book by Steve Parker. Readers can dive in to learn about many varieties of fish, how they breathe, which ones are poisonous, and much more. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *The 100-Year-Old Secret*



Xena and Xander aren't happy about moving to London.

Then, they learn they're related to Sherlock Holmes and have inherited his unsolved cases. In this first book of Tracy Barrett's Sherlock Files series, the siblings search for a painting that's been missing for a century.

■ *Leaping Beauty and Other Animal Fairy Tales*

Readers familiar with *Sleeping Beauty* will enjoy Gregory Maguire's version of the story: she's not a princess, but a frog. Humans are replaced with animals in these eight twists on traditional tales, including "Cinder-Elephant," "Rumplesnakeskin," and "Goldiefox and the Three Chickens."



A love of reading

Reading is one of the best habits your youngster can develop. Children who read for pleasure tend to have higher test scores, bigger vocabularies, and better reading comprehension.

Steer your child toward a lifetime of reading with these ideas.

Choose books wisely. Teach your youngster to find books that will hold his interest. Have him read the back cover and the first few pages to see if the book "grabs" him. It often helps if he has something in common with a story's main character. For instance, a football lover might relate to Troy in *Football Genius* (Tim Green), and a child fascinated by machines may enjoy EGR3 the robot in *Eager* (Helen Fox).

Make time for reading. Between homework, friends, and activities, it's not always easy to fit in reading. You can help by setting aside a time when the entire family reads (after dinner, before bed). Also, encourage your child to put books in the car so he can read during



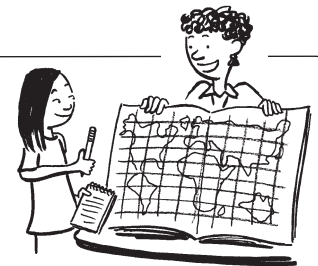
errands or while waiting in a dentist's office. And have him keep books in the family room and by his bed for reading anytime.

Meet other readers. Reading is contagious! If your youngster finds friends who like to read, they'll share books and enjoy discussing them. Perhaps he'll notice kids who read after they finish a class assignment, or he could pay attention to which books his classmates choose in the library. He can strike up a conversation later: "Hey, I like Matt Christopher, too. Have you read his latest book?"

Reference sources

Does your child know where to find different kinds of information? She can look for books like these in the library:

- Suggest that your youngster use an **atlas** (a book of maps) to look up the setting of a story or a place she's studying in history.
- When she is doing a report for school, an **encyclopedia** is a good place to start. She'll find an overview of her topic with reliable, specific information.
- An **almanac** is full of facts that can help with homework. Your child can look up population statistics, phases of the moon, and U.S. presidents.



Memory skills

See it, hear it, discuss it... remember it. Share these tricks with your youngster to help her boost her memory—and her grades!

- Have her draw pictures or think of images that will help her remember facts. For example, if she needs to know that moths stay in cocoons for about two weeks, she could draw or imagine a cocoon with the number 2 on it.



the material, whether they're learning vocabulary words or memorizing math formulas. Then, they should quiz each other aloud. ■

- Turn facts into a song. Your child can invent a tune or change the words to one she already knows. To remember that Kentucky was the 15th state to join the union, she could sing "Kentucky was the 15th state, 15th state, 15th state" to the tune of "London Bridge."

- Study for tests with a friend. Your youngster and a classmate can take turns teaching one another



Fun with Words

3, 2, 1 vowels

This three-minute game will stretch your child's vocabulary and improve his spelling.

Get a timer, or use a watch with a second hand, to time each one-minute round. In round one, each player makes a list of all the words he can think of that contain three different vowels (the same vowel can occur more than once).



Examples: *reaching, capitol, information.* For round two, write words that use two different vowels (*classmate, separate, textbook*). In the final round, list words with only one different vowel (*September, Alabama, tiring*). Note: Each word must have at least two syllables.

When time runs out, compare lists and cross off duplicate and misspelled words. Score one point for each word left on your list. The player with the most points wins. ■

OUR PURPOSE

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

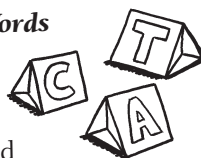
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Other Picks

GAMES

■ Tri-Words

Players race the clock and each other as they combine three-sided letter tiles to form words. A special "tri-die" tells how many words to make and which color tiles score bonus points. Great for building strategic thinking and word skills. *Educational Insights*



■ Go to Press!

This board game will bring out the newspaper editor in every player. Visit each news department (sports, weather, entertainment), and correct spelling, word usage, punctuation, and capitalization in headlines. The first player to send his paper to press wins. *Learning Resources*

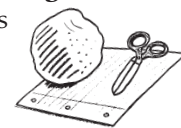
SOFTWARE

■ Cluefinders: The Incredible Toy Store Adventure

In this role-playing mystery, the Cluefinders have been shrunk and are trapped in a San Francisco toy store. Players complete drills in language arts, math, science, and geography to build an anti-shrinking device and save the city from a villain. *The Learning Company*

■ Smart Games Challenge 3

This software includes 20 puzzles that will stretch your youngster's mind. He can use logic to win "Rock Paper Scissors," navigate a musical maze in "Stepping Tones," test his word knowledge with "Crossword Slide," and more. www.smartgames.com



Parent 2 Parent

Editing out loud

My daughter Laney used to rush through writing assignments and make a lot of careless mistakes. When I asked her teacher what to do, he suggested that we have Laney edit her work by reading it aloud. He said hearing her words out loud would help her hear her mistakes.

We started by having Laney read her writing to me. I complimented her for what she did well,

like giving details that described a character. Then, we talked about problems I caught, such as a sentence that didn't make sense, repeating the same word over and over, and grammatical errors. We brainstormed ways to fix the problems, and she edited her paper.

Now Laney reads her papers aloud to herself. She seems to be catching her own mistakes—and she's getting better grades on her written assignments. ■

