south dakota
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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READING tips

Welcome to the seventh addition of the Reading and Behavior Tips Newsletter created for families and caregivers of elementary students.

Each month you will find activities, tools, and strategies gathered from educators and leaders in their fields that you can do at home with your child. Enjoy and have fun!

Reading:

Summarizing and retelling a story after listening to or reading it is another way to help your child better understand the story. Your child will need to decide what is important in the text and then retell it in his/her own words. Your child will need to identify the main ideas, weed out what isn't necessary, and remember what was just read.

Retellings should include:

- the major character(s)
- defining characteristics of the characters
- problem presented in the story
- how the problem is solved or how the story ends
- events presented in the correct order
- Ability to include only those events important to the story and leave out things that aren't important.

Choose a book and preview it with your child. Talk about the title. What might this be about? What are the pictures showing us? Then read the story to your child or have your child read it to you. Ask your child to retell it to you. Reread the same story or text to see if there is more they would like to add. Rereading the same story multiple times increases their understanding and allows them to become more familiar with new vocabulary words and use them in the retelling.

Here are additional ways to practice together at home:

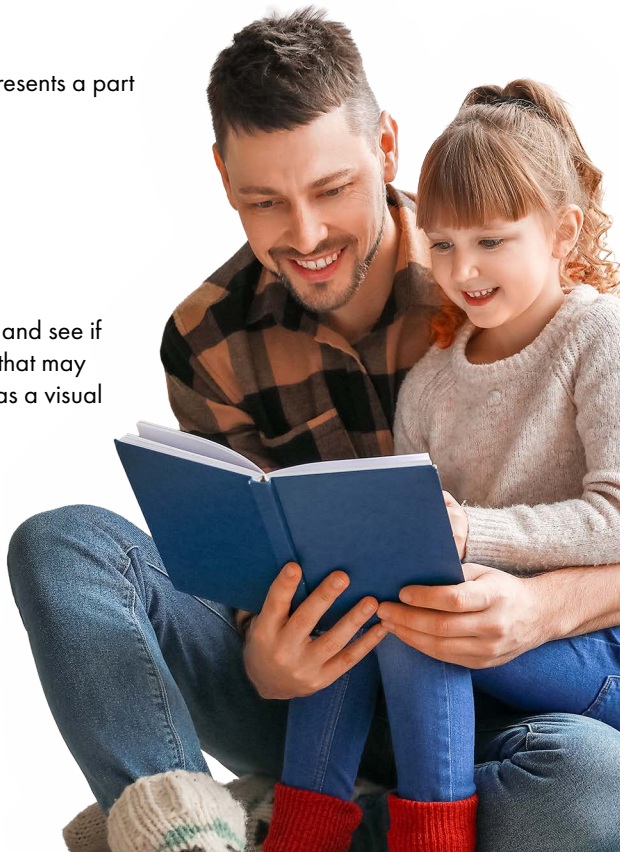
Five-finger retelling: Have your child hold up one hand. Explain that each finger represents a part of the retelling:

- who (characters or key figures)
- what (conflict or key events)
- where (does it happen at)
- when (does it take place)
- why (motives or resolution).

After you read the story to your child or your child reads to you, point to each finger and see if your child remembers the different parts of the story. Reread it to capture any pieces that may have been missed. You can even trace a hand and label each finger and the thumb as a visual cue.

Sequence Retell: Talk about first, then, next, and last. After the story, encourage your child to retell it by putting events in the correct order. You can provide a visual cue for this too listing the words, up and down, in order on a piece of paper.

All three activities lend themselves nicely to encouraging writing. Your child can capture what was important in the story and write out the key points.



Behavior:

We started in the fall talking about establishing rules and expectations for your child to follow at home. Beyond using positive language to acknowledge and reinforce your child when you see a rule being followed, you can also let your child earn privileges and activities. This is especially helpful when you are trying to change a behavior.

For example, does your child always complain at bedtime? Place a sticker on a chart, drop a marble in a jar, or make a checkmark on a calendar when your child complies after one request without complaining. After 10 stickers, marbles, or checks, your child can earn a reinforcer. How about cleaning up their toys? Leaving a friend's house without complaining? Brushing their teeth without being asked? Practicing the piano? Starting on homework? Use the same system.

Here are some guidelines to follow:

- Recognize or reinforce the wanted behavior immediately and often
- Use words to tell your child exactly why they earned a sticker, marble, or checkmark
  - o "You were so responsible when you picked up your toys and put them away."
  - o Just saying "Nice job" will not tell them what you want to see; be more specific.
- Continue to reinforce the behavior until it becomes a habit. Then, instead of stopping the reinforcement completely, start to reinforce it at random times.
- Once a sticker, marble, checkmark is earned, it cannot be taken away.
- Establish a list of what your child can earn together. You don't need to spend money!

  Examples:
  - A special drink at mealtime
  - Choose the main course for dinner
  - Pick a dessert to have after the meal
  - Bake cookies together
  - A back rub, scratch, or tickle
  - Pick the music to listen to when you are in the car together
  - Family game night
  - Extra computer or TV time
  - An extra book read aloud at bedtime
  - Stay up a few extra minutes before going to bed
  - A trip to the library or park
  - Help wash the car
  - Run through a sprinkler
  - Spray colored water on snow



These were just some examples of behaviors you may want to reinforce and reinforcers you can use. Have fun finding your own!

We appreciate your feedback

Please fill out this quick survey to help us meet your needs.

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