

Welcome to our newest issue of *Ready, Set ... LEARN*. We are proud to offer the participants of WETA Ready To Learn workshops information about WETA Television's literacy projects along with learning tools for you to use with your child.

This issue will examine ways to help children learn about science concepts, using fun activities. Plus there are book suggestions and tips on how to choose and share great children's books. We hope that *Ready, Set ... LEARN* will provide you with ideas for ways you can actively engage your kids in fun, educational activities.

As always, if you are interested in more information about WETA Ready To Learn and other WETA Television educational activities, please visit www.weta.org or contact us at 703-998-2827 or eod@weta.com.

Raising a Budding Scientist!

Teaching children basic science concepts can be easy and fun. While you can certainly visit museums and other places, that is not necessary. You and your child can always explore science through things that happen in everyday life.

Look outside. Talking about the weather is a great start to a conversation about science.

Collect trash. What do you see? Talk about recycling and the different materials that are found in your garbage. How was that bottle made? Will it ever biodegrade? Where does it go after you throw it in your trash can? In what ways can we use it again to reduce and reuse waste?

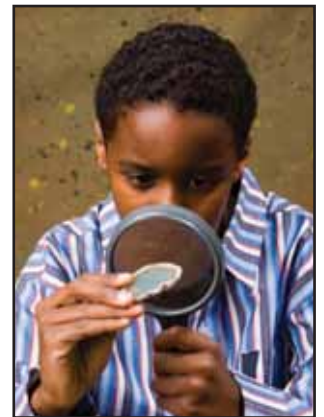


Use your five senses. Find ways to use sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch – together and individually. Taste different foods while holding your nose and see if they taste the way that you expect. Put on a blindfold and see how well you can get around by using your senses other than sight. Do sounds and smells get stronger or more faint when you cannot see?

Play with water. What happens if you put a container of water in the freezer? How about if you leave water in an open cup for a few days? Look at your reflection in water. Put things in water. Which objects float? Which ones sink? Why do you think different objects do different things in the water?

Learn how things grow.

Sprout sweet potatoes or carrottops in a cup of water. Collect seeds from the fruits and vegetables that you eat at home and plant them in dirt to see how they grow. Create our own garden inside or outdoors when the weather is warm. By caring for your own plants, you can explore how they grow.



Think about other ways that you use science concepts in everyday life. Using a magnifying glass or going on a nature walk are just two more activities you can use to teach children basic science concepts. Have a good time teaching, and your child will have fun learning.

For more ideas, please go to www.pbskids.org/sid/parentsteachers/activities.html.



24-Hour Children's Programming on WETA Kids

WETA Kids presents children's television programming 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The channel provides safe viewing choices created especially for children, featuring public television's renowned educational series. In addition to around-the-clock programming on WETA Kids, children's programs can be found on WETA TV 26.

WEEKDAYS ON THE WETA KIDS CHANNEL

6:00 a.m. Clifford The Big Red Dog
 6:30 a.m. Super Why!
 7:00 a.m. Arthur
 7:30 a.m. Martha Speaks
 8:00 a.m. Curious George
 8:30 a.m. Sid the Science Kid
 9:00 a.m. WordWorld
 9:30 a.m. Dragon Tales
 10:00 a.m. Sesame Street
 11:00 a.m. Barney & Friends
 11:30 a.m. Big Comfy Couch
 12:00 p.m. Between the Lions
 12:30 p.m. A Place of Our Own
 1:00 p.m. Mister Rogers' Neighborhood
 1:30 p.m. Miffy and Friends
 2:00 p.m. Raggs
 2:30 p.m. Reading Rainbow
 3:00 p.m. Sid the Science Kid
 3:30 p.m. Super Why!
 4:00 p.m. Arthur
 4:30 p.m. WordGirl
 5:00 p.m. Fetch! w/Ruff Ruffman (F: Electric Company)
 5:30 p.m. Cyberchase
 6:00 p.m. Maya & Miguel (F: Animalia)
 6:30 p.m. Postcards from Buster (F: Mama Mirabelle)
 7:00 p.m. Curious George
 7:30 p.m. Zula Patrol
 8:00 p.m. Electric Company
 8:30 p.m. Wishbone
 9:00 p.m. Bizz Kids
 9:30 p.m. Zoboomafoo
 10:00 p.m. Sesame Street (1 hour)
 11:00 p.m. Bob the Builder
 11:30 p.m. Thomas and Friends
 12:00 a.m. Berenstain Bears
 12:30 a.m. Jay Jay the Jet Plane
 1:00 a.m. Sagwa
 1:30 a.m. WordWorld
 2:00 a.m. WordGirl
 2:30 a.m. Martha Speaks
 3:00 a.m. Fetch! with Ruff Ruffman
 3:30 a.m. Cyberchase
 4:00 a.m. Barney & Friends
 4:30 a.m. Big Comfy Couch
 5:00 a.m. Dittydoodle Works
 5:30 a.m. Miffy and Friends

New Kids' Programs to Watch



Photo: Anthony Causi

The Electric Company (featured) returns with a re-energized version of the 1970s series. Keith, Jessica, Lisa and Hector, the show's semi-superheroes, fit in positive everyday life lessons such as eating healthy foods and learning new vocabulary, all while battling the show's villains, The Pranksters. Each episode actively engages viewers and emphasizes vocabulary from five different subject areas: animals, the body, weather, ecosystems and the solar system. *The Electric Company* helps children explore the joys of learning.

Martha Speaks is an animated program starring a talking dog and her best friend, Helen. Created to increase vocabulary in kids ages 4 to 7, each episode teaches the meaning of more than 20 different words. And what better way to do it than with a talking dog who loves alphabet soup? *Martha Speaks* helps children try out new words and become better readers.



Sid the Science Kid is series designed to help preschoolers about the world of science. In each episode, Sid and his three friends go on learning adventures to find answers to questions such as Why are the leaves falling off

the trees?, Why are my shoes too small?, and What is hair for? Sid and his buddies help make young children comfortable with science concepts so that they are more ready for the classroom.



WETA Kids

26.3 over the air via antenna
 Comcast 201 · Cox 801 · FIOS 472

Visit weta.org/kids for the complete schedule of children's programs.

Creating a Home Library

Starting a home library for your child shows her how important books are. Having books of her own boosts the chance that your child will want to read. Here are some ideas for creating your own home library.

Finding books

- Become a treasure hunter! Browse bookstore, library and garage sales; flea markets; and used-book stores. Don't forget quality nonfiction and children's magazines.
- Organize a book swap with friends, community groups or your school.
- Encourage family and friends to give books as gifts for celebrations.

Building your library

- A cardboard box or crate that you decorate together can make a good bookcase. Or, clear one of the family bookshelves.
- Pick a special place for your child's books so that he knows where to look for them – perhaps in a cozy corner of his bedroom or close to where the rest of the family gathers and reads.
- Help your child arrange books in some order – her favorite books, books about

animals or holiday books. Use whatever method will help her most easily find the book she's looking for.

- "This book belongs to..." Bookplates give a sense of ownership and can add "newness" to a used book. Make your own or download and print one of many colorful designs by children's book illustrators at www.myhomelibrary.org/bookplates.html.
- If you and your child make your own books together, you can add those to your home library.
- Borrow books from your local library. Go to the children's section and select books together to take home. You might even have a box or space just for library books, so that they don't get mixed up with your family's books.

Article adapted from "Helping Your Child Become a Reader:" U.S. Department of Education. 2005.

Keeping Precious Brains Safe

Kids have a great sense of adventure when learning to explore their world. There are beds to jump on, trees to climb and other activities that can be dangerous. Each year about 1.4 million people sustain a brain injury, and many of those affected are children.

WETA's website, www.BrainLine.org, was created to share information about traumatic brain injury (TBI) and to provide a community of support for people affected by TBI. The site has video webcasts, recent research, personal stories and articles about preventing, treating and living with TBI.

Awareness and education are key when it comes to brain injury and how to treat it. Learn more at www.BrainLine.org. You can send your questions to info@BrainLine.org.

For information on selecting children's books and reading with your child, visit www.ReadingRockets.org/books/aboutkids or www.ColorinColorado.org.

Ready to Learn? Science All Around!

Recommended books to use with children from preschool through primary grades

For Preschool

The Apple Pie Tree

by Zoe Hall,
illustrated by Sharon Halpern
Join two girls as they follow the changes they see in their backyard. Their apple tree goes from bare to blossoms and finally to fruit — just right for an apple pie!

Charlie Needs a Cloak

by Tomie dePaola
From shearing the sheep to sewing his new coat, Charlie, a shepherd, makes his new coat from start to finish in this humorous, entertaining and informative book.

Color Zoo

by Lois Ehlert
Colors and shapes are all around. When they come together in unexpected ways, they can create

animals. This nearly wordless book uses basic cut-out shapes to reveal a new animal with each page turn.

Farm Alphabet Book

by Jane Miller
From A to Z, full color photographs of farm animals and objects introduce a farm, its residents and its activities.

The Very Quiet Cricket

by Eric Carle
A host of insects greet a newly arrived cricket, but he can't respond out loud to them — that is, until he meets another quiet cricket. With or without the surprise ending (an electronic device to make a real chirp), this book is a delight.

Oscar and the Bat:

A Book About Sound

by Geoff Waring
Are the sounds Oscar hears low or high, loud or soft? Oscar, a curious kitten, discovers a lot about sound, hearing and listening while in a meadow on a summer evening.

For Primary

Actual Size

by Steve Jenkins
Compare your hand to a gorilla's or view the smallest animal and more. This handsome book not only introduces land and sea animals, it shows how big or small they actually are!

My Visit to the Aquarium

by Aliki
From coral reefs to anchovies, aquariums bring together lots of sea

creatures. Visit the lush aquarium in the pages of this book, or make it part of a trip to an actual aquarium.

Red-Eyed Tree Frog

by Joy Cowley,
photographs by Nic Bishop
Stunning, full-color photographs of a small tree frog highlight the beauty and drama of life in a tropical rainforest in Central America. Though the text is simple, the photos make this book appealing to readers of all ages.

What Do You Do With a Tail Like This?

by Robin Page,
illustrated by Steve Jenkins
Animals often use their tails or eyes or ears (or other things) in unexpected ways. Find out how in this informative book.

Use the Ready To Learn Learning Triangle

VIEW

Sid the Science Kid

Monday, March 2 on WETA Kids at 3:00 p.m., or on Tuesday, March 3 on WETA TV 26 or WETA Kids at 8:30 a.m.

The Sticker Chart

If Sid doesn't fill up his chore chart with stickers, he'll never get a new Turbo-Mega-Rocketship. Sid wonders, "Who needs charts anyway?" After a day of investigating, Sid learns that charts are great science tools that help you compare and contrast all kinds of cool things like snacks, pets and even chores.

DO

MAKE A STICKER CHART

Materials

- A large piece of paper or posterboard
- Crayons, colored pencils or markers
- People willing to talk about their favorite fruit or vegetable
- Photo or drawing of each person (optional)

Procedure

1. Draw a line down the middle of the paper, from top to bottom.
2. Draw a picture or paste a photo of each person in the first column. You can also write names if those are meaningful to your child. Use both names and pictures if your child doesn't read yet.
3. Ask each person to name their favorite fruit or vegetable. Feel free to limit people's choices to those that are easy to draw.
4. Across from each person's picture or name, draw a picture of their chosen fruit.
5. Think of a title or name for your chart. "Our Favorite Fruits" is one possibility.
6. Go over the data with your child. Ask questions about different people and their favorites so your child can practice reading the chart.

Additional Things to Know or Do

- The above is a very simple example of a chart, but the thinking required is useful when kids start encountering more complicated graphs.

- You can also bring math into your discussion. For example, you can talk about how many people on your chart like bananas or whether more people like grapes or apples.

READ

Tally O'Malley by Stuart Murphy

Lemonade for Sale by Stuart Murphy

For more activities, visit www.pbskids.org, www.pbparents.org or www.pbsteachers.org.

Special thanks to Maria Salvadore for her contribution to this newsletter.

WETA Ready To Learn is made possible through the generous support of The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, John Edward Fowler Memorial Foundation, The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation and the Claude Moore Charitable Foundation.

If you would like more information about WETA Ready To Learn, please go to www.weta.org or contact us at 703-998-2827 or eod@weta.com.



2775 South Quincy Street
Arlington, VA 22206