

**Reader**<sup>TM</sup>

**Helping Your Child  
Learn to Read**

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**A PARENT  
GUIDE**

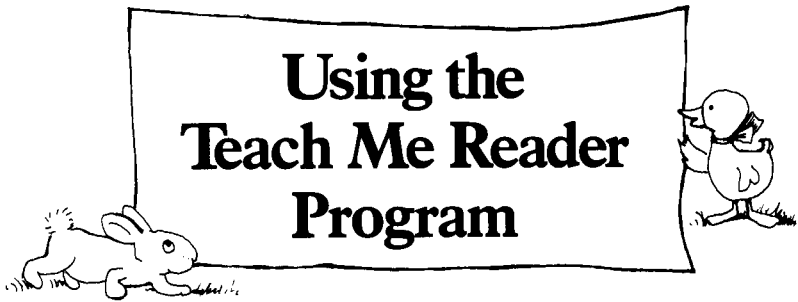
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**by Dr. Priscilla Lynch**

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**from**

**PLAYSKOOL**



Researchers working with beginning readers have found that the most reliable predictor of success is the amount of reading aloud done at home. Those children who have heard many stories at home, who have handled and enjoyed books, are the children who succeed most easily in learning to read independently.

The Teach Me Reader Program gives your child the opportunity to hear stories *at any time*, without waiting for an adult to stop and read aloud. Your child experiences a sense of power and direction because he/she controls what is to be read, the pace of the reading, and the number of repeated readings. The more your child reads, the more he/she associates the printed word with the sound of that word. This association is vital to reading success.

Hearing stories over and over is another key factor in beginning reading. It assures that your youngster will focus on the word as it's being said and will eventually recognize that word in another setting.

Go over the first book *briefly* with your child. When a word or picture is pressed, the name of that word or picture is heard. Once your youngster understands this principle, let him/her explore the book and discover what it's about without your help. Children need time on their own to "figure out" how things work and what things can do. Then they

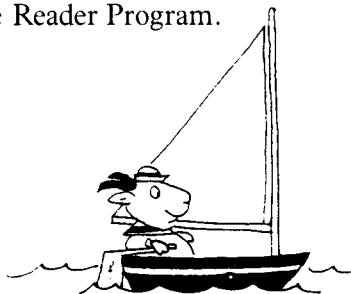
can show you what they've discovered and receive your praise for their achievements.

In order to encourage repeated readings, be sure to leave each book in the storage drawer of the Teach Me Reader where your child can get it easily. Once your child is familiar with the books, encourage him/her to share the stories with you. You may wish to read some of them aloud, away from the machine. Your child can participate in the retelling and join in with you when he/she knows the words. His/her growing sense of accomplishment and independence as the Teach-Me-Reader Program proceeds is a powerful motivator for further learning.

Give your child as many different experiences as possible in your daily activities to enrich his/her vocabulary. Point out colors, groups of things to count, shapes and positions of items on shelves or in windows. Repeat rhyming words. Make a word scrapbook. When you're doing something together, point out what must be done first, next, and last, to reinforce sequencing. Ask questions (particularly "Why" questions such as, "Why do you think that person is doing that?") and give your child time to think of an answer. Encourage your child to initiate activities or to decide among two or three options. This decision-making reinforces the decisions he/she has been making while using the Teach Me Reader Program, and promotes the growth of self-esteem.

In this guide, you'll find suggested questions and activities to explore with your child. These have been carefully chosen to provide additional fun and to extend the learning experiences in the Teach Me Reader Program.

Cordially,  
Priscilla Lynch, Ed. D.



# Books in the Program

Group I Easiest-To-Read: RED STARS ON COVER	1. Look Up, Look Down 2. Hello, Little Dog 3. Follow That Truck 4. Happy Birthday, Bulldog Ben
Group II More Difficult: YELLOW STARS ON COVER	5. Runaway Pancake 6. Mistake Town 7. Bessie Bulldog Goes Shopping 8. What's Missing, Top Hat Turtle?
Group III Most Difficult: BLUE STARS ON COVER	9. Top Hat Turtle Helps Out 10. Rainy Day Walk 11. Four Silly Stories 12. The Game-Time Book

The words in these books have been carefully selected from established word lists for beginning readers. However, reading is an activity that requires not only an understanding of words, but an understanding of ideas as well. Therefore, books have been grouped in order of concept difficulty as well as word difficulty.

Books in the RED STAR group offer rhymes, language fun, and simple experiences well within the grasp of the youngest children. Books with YELLOW STARS use what the child has learned to introduce story patterns and develop such beginning reading skills as sequencing, observation, and logical thinking. Books with BLUE STARS offer further opportunities for child-participation, decision making, and language growth in many ways —playing games, creating sentences, and so on.

Please bear in mind that *all the books* fall into the easy-to-read category and that your child should be permitted to choose freely from among all twelve books.



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### Look Up, Look Down

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This book helps your child with position words and with the concept of Yes/No answering. Each page has some rhymes too, for your child to hear and find in the picture. Before your child reads this book, find out how much he/she *already knows*. Does he/she know “up,” “down,” “right,” “left,” “in,” “out,” “on,” or “under”? Ask your child to tell you if something in the room is under or on something else. Ask your child to show you his/her left and right hands. Ask if something is up on a shelf or down on the floor.

As your child reads the story with the machine, join in on the rhyming words to emphasize them. When the story is completed, repeat the rhyming words in isolation. When rhymes occur in conversation or on signs, point them out to your youngster and say them together.

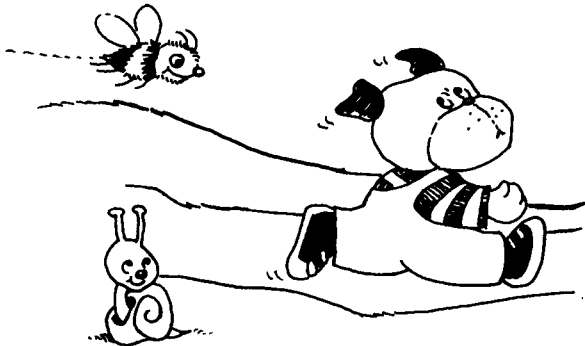
Play a rhyming game with your child. Pick an easy one-syllable word for each vowel sound, and ask your child to say a word that rhymes with it. Examples: cat-fat; ape-cape; bee-tree; pig-big; pie-tie; frog-log; goat-boat; blue-true; up-cup.

When you ask your child to get something for you, use the position words needed to locate it so that he/she will get some further practice.

## Hello, Little Dog

Sometimes it must appear to children that the world is a forest of legs. You may even have had an unknown youngster take your hand in a crowded place. Children feel very small and are afraid of getting lost. In this story, Baby gets lost and tries to figure out a way to get home. The story offers a reason to talk about the getting-lost procedures you'd like your child to follow in case of an emergency.

1. How did Baby get lost?
2. What would you do if you saw a bee nearby? (You can talk about the sensible thing to do.)
3. What did the duck tell Baby to do to find his way home? Is it a good idea to "look here and there"? (Your child might remember that you are not far away if he/she loses sight of you and looking around can help locate you.)
4. How do you think Baby felt when he knew he was lost? (Encourage your child to use such words as lonely, frightened, worried, sad, teary, etc.)
5. How do you think Bessie felt when she saw Baby come home? (Again, encourage a variety of "feeling words" such as happy, relieved, glad, joyful, pleased, etc.)
6. Should Bessie scold Baby for running out that way? What might she say to him? (Children sometimes do impulsive things and are sorry about them afterward, so perhaps Bessie would not scold Baby.)
7. What would you do if you got lost? (You might want to reinforce whatever procedures you've established for what to do when you and your child are separated.)



## Follow That Truck

1. What do you see in the first picture? (Leave time for the child to list all the things that catch his/her eye.)
2. What happened first in the story? (Re-telling a story is very important in helping youngsters pick out the most important concepts and getting them in order.) What happened next? What happened in the end?
3. Suppose they *didn't* happen to see the truck and Daisy. What could they have done to get Daisy back?
4. What do you think the ice cream man would have done if he found Daisy in his truck?

The next time you go outside, ask your child to listen for the sounds of the street. See if he/she can identify some of the sounds that were in the story.

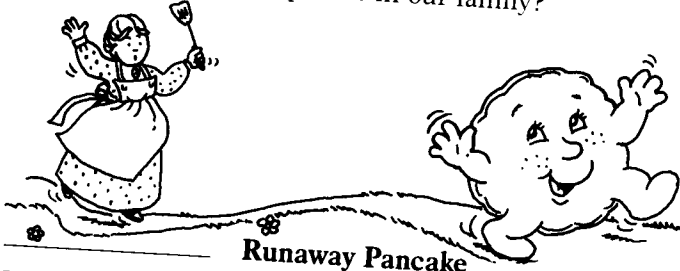


## Happy Birthday, Bulldog Ben

Link up your child's own birthday experience with Bulldog Ben's. Ask what he/she remembers and share some of your own memories of other birthdays.

1. What did Bessie, Grandpa, and Baby buy for the party? (cake, balloons, ice cream, and toy horns) What else *could* they have bought? What things would *you* like to have for *your* birthday party?

2. Do you remember any games we played at birthday parties? (If your child doesn't remember, remind him/her.)
3. What presents did Bulldog Ben get? Do you think he liked the presents? How can you tell? (Your child can go back and press Ben's words.) What present would you like for your next birthday?
4. How many people are in Bulldog Ben's family? Let's count. How many people are in our family?



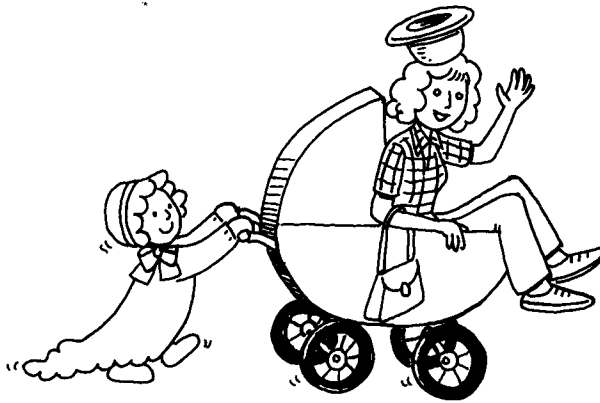
### Runaway Pancake

This old folktale offers an opportunity for your youngster to anticipate or predict the refrain, "Run, run, as fast as you can. You cannot catch the pancake man!" It also offers an opportunity for remembering the sequence of people and animals who tried to catch the pancake man. When your child has read through the story several times, ask him/her to read it aloud to you. You're demonstrating the pleasure of sharing a book with someone and also demonstrating your delight in your child's reading ability.

Then at a later time, ask your child to *tell* you the story of the pancake man, not looking at the book. Your youngster won't remember every incident but will be able to tell the broad outlines of the story. Then go back and hear the story again, with your child controlling the pace as always.

When you and your child have enjoyed the story several times, ask your child what happened to the pancake man. If he/she understands that the fox ate him up, ask your child *how* the fox caught the pancake man. He/she may have caught on to the fact that the fox pretended to be deaf so the pancake man would come close enough to be eaten.





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### Mistake Town

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1. After your child has explored this book and is ready to read it to you, ask, “What do you see in this picture?” and talk with your youngster about the things in each picture, identifying them by *name*, *color*, and *position* in the picture. For instance, ask your child to count the number of items on a shelf, or in a window. Ask him/her what something in the picture would feel like (squishy, hard, soft, bumpy) and add your own descriptive words to extend vocabulary.
2. Ask your child to find the biggest and smallest things in the pictures, to reinforce comparative-size words. Then ask what he/she would like to have in that picture and why.
3. Go over the mistakes in the pictures as your child identifies them. (Sometimes your child will be able to tell you *why* the mistake should be taken out of the picture, but most of the time he/she will only know that the item *is* a mistake, not why.) Ask your child to tell you where some of those mistakes belong. For instance, clothes don’t belong in a florist shop. They belong in a clothing store.
4. Some of the absurdities can be the basis for stories made up by your youngster. For instance, ask him/her how a pig might have come to *be* in that schoolyard. (You might want to write down part of his/her original story to share with the rest of the family.)



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### Bessie Bulldog Goes Shopping

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Encourage your child to explore and enjoy the story with the help of the machine first. Then ask to hear the story. Your youngster will read the story aloud with the machine. Talk about the shapes, colors, and numbers of objects in each story; then you might ask some of the following questions. If your child does not respond easily, re-phrase it or drop it.

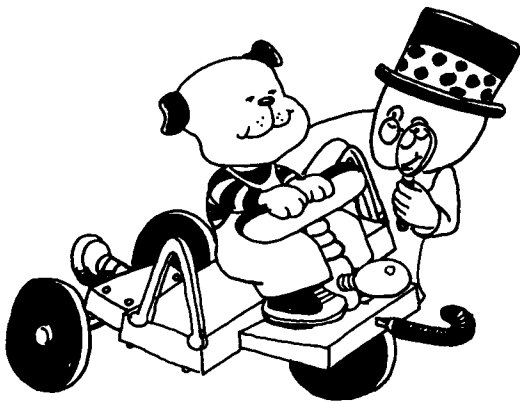
1. What did Bessie do that *we* do when we go to the store? (make a list, get a basket, choose items, sometimes meet friends)
2. What would you choose for dinner? (Ask about favorite fruits on the fruit page, meats, vegetables, desserts.)
3. Whom did Bessie meet in the supermarket? What funny things happened when Bessie reached the end of the aisle and turned the corner?
4. What did Bessie and her friends and family have for dinner? (Child repeats items from the picture.)

The next time you and your child go shopping, remind him/her about the funny collision and about the unusual dinner at Bessie's house.

### What's Missing, Top Hat Turtle?

This story requires your child to look at the whole to find the missing part. He/she is looking for what *logically* belongs with the objects in the picture. The objects he/she chooses are chosen because they belong with other objects. They are part of the whole. Ask the following:

1. Why did you pick the doorknob? Would a wheel help them get the door open? Why not?
2. Look around the picture. Do you see anything missing right now before we look at the next page? (This gives your youngster a chance to predict and check his/her prediction right away.)
3. Where are all the missing things? (Ask your child to point out each one on Baby's car.) What *did* happen, do you think?



### Top Hat Turtle Helps Out

This book focuses your child's attention on shapes and colors. A character from another story appears again: Top Hat Turtle. Ask your child if he/she remembers the character and how he/she recognized him. As your child reads the book, encourage him/her to go back to page 3, showing the tie Rabbit lost, to compare with the other ties that appear in the book.

1. What did Rabbit's tie look like? (Your child probably won't get all three colors and shapes right the first time, so go back to page 3 for confirmation.)
2. How did Baby use a tie? What did Bulldog use a tie for? What did Mr. Pig use a tie for? What would you use a tie for?
3. Have you ever lost anything? Where did you find it?
4. Can we find a circle in this room? A square? A triangle? What color is the circle? The square? The triangle? (Take one shape at a time, accepting rectangles for squares, and look for that shape inside and out of the house.)
5. Are Top Hat Turtle and Rabbit good friends? How do you know?



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### Rainy Day Walk

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This story has a lot of silly alternatives in it. To help your child enjoy it even more, ask *why* Bear doesn't need a banana for a rainy day walk. Ask who *does* say, "Moo, moo," if the duck doesn't say that. Ask *why* it's silly to think that the rabbit might be running to the sea. These are all "because" questions that require your youngster to think about cause and effect, a difficult abstraction that needs lots of practice for success.

Ask your youngster to make predictions as often as possible, about the pages coming up next, in *all* the books. He/she will get the idea that it's all right to predict and be wrong or right. Prediction is an important part of learning

to read because your child learns that reading is a mix of print and what is in his/her own head.

Remind your child of the last time you walked in the rain together. Ask what he/she remembers about that walk—sights, sounds, smells, feelings. This is a good time to use lots of descriptive words: soggy, squishy, splat, splash, hurry, fresh, shiny, chilly, and others.

Has your child ever seen a rainbow? Remind him/her about it. Look at the rainbow in the book. Ask your child to name some of the colors.



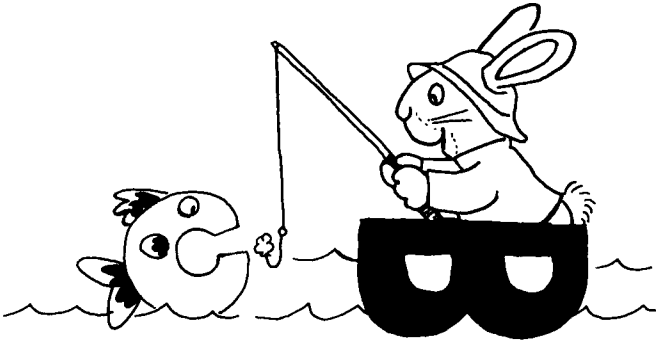
#### Four Silly Stories For You To Tell

When your child has had an opportunity to create some silly stories independently, ask him/her to read one to you. Take down his/her dictation of a few sentences, letting your youngster see how you write down his/her words. You can make a little book out of that story, with staples and a cover, to be shared with the rest of the family later on. In doing this, you are demonstrating the function of writing for your child. You are saving his/her story so that it may be enjoyed again with others. (You might make up a story yourself, using the alternatives, and save yours, too.) When you come to share the story with others, *you* read it aloud first. Your child will not remember all the words he/she wrote, but hearing it read by you will be a reminder and your child might possibly be able to “read” it after you have read it first. If there is any question in your mind that he/she might fail, don’t ask to have it read by your child. It is enough that he/she has created a story and is receiving praise for it.

## **The Game-Time Book**

The fun-filled games in this little book reinforce the skills and concepts children have explored throughout the Teach Me Reader Program. Directions for how to play are provided by the Teach Me Reader when the child presses the green dot. The machine also guides the child to the correct answer if he or she makes a mistake. Children will get additional practice in left-to-right reading patterns, following directions, word and color matching, vocabulary, rhyming, and observation skills.

Children are sure to want to play these delightful learning games over and over again.



# Reader

## THE WAY TO READING SUCCESS

**Dear Parents:**

Children learn at varying rates of speed and have varying rates of attention. But no matter how they learn, the Teach Me Reader provides the kind of flexibility and success that makes learning fun.

With the Teach Me Reader program children learn to read at their own pace and in their own time. And because your child controls the speed of The Teach Me Reader books, and decides what books are to be re-heard and re-read, there is no possibility of failure.

Developed with leading educators and reading consultants, the stories and games in the Teach Me Reader program have been written to provide the beginning reading and vocabulary skills that will launch your child on the road to independent reading. Inside this unique Teaching Guide are many additional fun-filled activities for you and your child to share that will help extend the learning in the Teach Me Reader Program. We hope Teach Me Reader brings you and your family many hours of enjoyment and helps your child learn about language with pleasure.