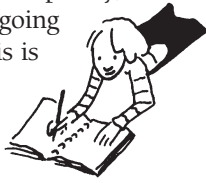


North Middle School  
Dianne Tilson, Principal

## Book Picks

### ■ Anastasia Krupnik

Things aren't going well for Anastasia. The boy she likes won't notice her, her teacher doesn't appreciate her poetry, and her mother is going to have a baby. This is the first book of Lois Lowry's delightful series.



### ■ Oops!: The Manners Guide for Girls

How do you politely eat finger food? What's the proper way to write a thank-you card? This humorous American Girl Library book by Nancy Holyoke lets preteen readers in on how to behave in sometimes confusing situations.



### ■ Al Capone Does My Shirts

Moose's family moves to Alcatraz Island when his father gets a job as an electrician at the prison. In this story by Jennifer Choldenko, Moose faces big changes on his new island home, filled with notorious prisoners.

### ■ Shiloh

When Marty finds a shy beagle pup, he wants to keep the frightened dog. But Shiloh belongs to mean Judd Travers—and he wants his dog back! A Newbery medal winner by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. (Also available in Spanish.)



## Discovering diversity

Tap into your child's natural curiosity about how other people live by introducing him to stories set in cultures around the world. They'll spark your youngster's motivation to read, and they're great tools for teaching tolerance. Here are several types of stories to explore.

### Novels and nonfiction

Fictional stories and real-life adventures can show your youngster that people are more alike than different. Consider books that relate struggles and triumphs through the eyes of children from other lands. Examples: *Maggie's Door* by Patricia Reilly Giff (Ireland), *Kira-Kira* by Cynthia Kadohata (Japan), *Red Scarf Girl* by Ji Li Jiana (China), *No Pretty Pictures: A Child of War* by Anita Lobel (Poland).

### Folktales and fables

Reading folktales can give your child a taste of customs and beliefs held in different countries. Try *Can You Guess My Name?* *Traditional Tales Around the World*, collected by Judy Sierra. Fables reflect values that are common to people everywhere—from friendship and love to honesty and responsibility. Look for *Aesop: The Complete Fables*, translated by Olivia and Robert Temple.

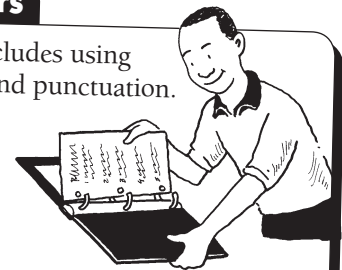
**Tip:** Librarians and book-sellers can help you locate books to fit your child's interests and needs. For an online source that groups titles by age, language, and gender, try the Database of Award-Winning Children's



Literature at [www.dawd.com](http://www.dawd.com). Or check out the Internet Public Library KidSpace Reading Zone ([www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/browse/rzn0000](http://www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/browse/rzn0000)) for links to many online sites. 📖

## Rule reminders

Writing well includes using correct grammar and punctuation. Help your child learn the rules by pointing him toward these resources.



### Checking Your Grammar (Scholastic Guides)

This reference book by Marvin Terban is a valuable guide for editing. Covers irregular verbs, confusing words, punctuation, and more.

### Grammar and Punctuation FlashCharts

These handy laminated charts snap right inside a three-ring binder and are an easily accessible reminder of the rules. Look in bookstores or office supply stores, or visit [www.flashkidsbooks.com](http://www.flashkidsbooks.com).

### Grammar Blast and Daily Grammar

These Web sites provide grammar practice through quizzes and lessons. Check out [www.eduplace.com/kids/hme/6\\_8/quizzes](http://www.eduplace.com/kids/hme/6_8/quizzes) and [www.dailygrammar.com/archive.shtml](http://www.dailygrammar.com/archive.shtml). 📖

# Help with standardized tests

Does your child suffer from pretest jitters? Build his confidence by sharing these tips for taking standardized tests:

- Suggest he begin by looking over the entire test to check the number of questions. Encourage him to spend approximately the same amount of time on each one.
- On multiple-choice questions, remind your youngster to take the time to read the whole question and all the answers before making a selection. His first choice may not always be the best answer.
- Encourage your child to answer easy questions first and skip questions he's not sure about. When he has answered all that he can, he can go back and work on the harder ones.
- Finally, tell your child not to worry if other students finish first. He can do his very best by using all the time he has been given.



Reminder: Have your youngster start test days with a good night's sleep and a brain-boosting breakfast. 📖

## Parent <sup>2</sup> Parent Expressive read-alouds

My daughter doesn't use very much expression when she reads aloud. Her teacher suggested that I could help Melissa improve by playing this game together.

I put a simple drawing of a happy face on an index card and wrote the word "happy" below it. Next, I made four more cards showing other emotions. I chose "sad," "mad," "excited," and "annoyed." Then, I asked Melissa to read the sentence "He finally won a race" using each of the five cards as a guide. My daughter soon realized how reading the sentence with different emotions changed its meaning.



Once Melissa had practiced reading several sentences, we took turns reading a book aloud. Next, we're going to try reading a short play together. I found some online at [www.aaronshep.com/rt/RTE.html](http://www.aaronshep.com/rt/RTE.html). 📖

### OUR PURPOSE

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

Resources for Educators,  
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## Other Picks

### SOFTWARE

#### ■ Brain Play (4th–6th Grade)

This four-CD computer package lets kids have fun while working on basic skills in math, Spanish, science, art, and creativity. A workbook is included for additional practice.  
*Scholastic Inc.*

#### ■ The Oregon Trail, Fifth Edition

Are you tough enough to survive a trip across the continent in a covered wagon? Players must use problem-solving and critical-thinking skills to get through hazards like raging rivers. Teaches geography and history too!  
*The Learning Company*



### WEB SITES

#### ■ Yucky

Find out more about the grosser side of science by asking the yuckiest questions. Worms, cockroaches, and body functions are explored, as well as creepy crafts, revolting recipes, and icky experiments.  
<http://yucky.kids.discovery.com>



#### ■ Quiz Hub

This Web site is filled with word puzzles and thinking games like Simon Says and Mastermind. Kids will find quizzes for state capitals, multiplication facts, vocabulary, and more.  
<http://quizhub.com/quiz/quizhub.cfm>

## Q&A

### Inspiring exciting writing

Q How can I help my son make his writing more interesting and exciting?

A Adding interest to writing can be as easy as including an adjective or two. These words describe nouns (people, places, and things) and assist readers in imagining the scene they're reading about.

Help your child add adjectives by looking for

the nouns in his sentences and asking him some questions. For the sentence "The elephant lives on the plains," the nouns are "elephant" and "plains." You might ask, "How big is the elephant?" or, "What are the plains of Africa like?" Then, show him how to revise the sentence to include his answers:

"The enormous African elephant lives on the hot, dry plains."

Encourage him to find places in his writing where he can add adjectives on his own. 📖

