

Parent Guide to



Preschool

Your resource for advice, ideas, and more for your pre-reader

September
2008

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Parent Guide to Firefly
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Editors' Picks of the Month

Look for these titles in your Firefly
September Book Club flyer.

Corduroy by Don Freeman

Who it's for:
Young children who
have their
own "Corduroy."

Why we chose it:
Every child should read
this sweet, timeless book.

Kids weigh in:
"I was so happy when the
little girl took Corduroy home!"



The New Bear at School by Carrie Weston

Who it's for:
Anyone who's afraid to
meet new people

Why we chose it:
This charming story will
resonate with
new preschoolers.

Parents say:
"I think we've all had
'new bear' moments.
My daughter loved this book."



Go Away, Big Green Monster! by Ed Emberley

Who it's for:
Habitual closet and under-
the-bed checkers

Why we chose it:
Emberley's big, bold
illustrations make
fears funny.

Parents say:
"I read this to my son every
night before he goes to bed.
It really helps him sleep!"



What to Expect at Preschool

Whether your child is at school for a few hours or all day, she'll settle into a familiar rhythm filled with lots of learning opportunities. Daily classroom routines typically include:

Circle or group time: Children sit together and the teacher initiates a conversation about topics such as the weather, the calendar, the seasons, a field trip, or an upcoming holiday.

Free choice: Children choose from a variety of different activities available in the classroom: block building, puzzles, dress-up, water or sand play, drawing, or painting.

Group activity: During this time, children may learn a song or dance or participate in making up a story, preparing a meal, planning a village, or working on a science or art project.

Snack: As they eat, preschoolers learn social and practical skills: how to set the table, to pass the juice and crackers, to carry on a conversation.

Outdoor play: Climbing, running, jumping, bouncing balls, and crawling through tunnels helps children develop large muscle control, motor coordination, and balance.

Clean-up: As they clear the table or put away the blocks, children learn how to plan, organize, and work with others.

Story time: Children gather together in a comfortable corner of the room to listen as the teacher tells a story or reads from a book. She encourages them to think about the characters and plot and to use new vocabulary from the story.

Special events: There will be occasional variations in the daily routine for class trips related to special interests; visits from special visitors like police officers, firefighters, or doctors; or visits from parents to share a special skill or cultural tradition.



Parent to Parent

"We listen to audio books during long car rides to keep the love of language alive."
—Tim, Idaho

Ask an Expert

What are the benefits of playing with blocks?

Block play is an effortless way to get children to practice language skills simply because there is so much to talk about! Many children like to describe what they're building or narrate a story about what's happening in the world they're constructing. Some young builders talk to themselves as they try new things. This makes the block area a prime place for your child to experiment with open-ended questions such as "What might happen if..." and "How many ways can you..." Just by presenting a question, idea, or new prop, you can inspire hours of constructive play.

Meet Our Expert: Ellen Booth Church, a former teacher, is a columnist and consultant for Scholastic's *Early Childhood Today* and *Parent & Child* magazines.

Find more expert advice for your reader at www.scholastic.com/read.

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7 Things to Expect This Year

You'll see some big transformations in your preschooler's language and storytelling skills, including:

1. Telling her own stories and making up verses to songs
2. Drawing pictures that illustrate a story rather than just painting or coloring objects
3. Using her imagination more and engaging in make-believe play
4. Identifying letters and some numbers
5. Recognizing and repeating patterns
6. Predicting what will happen in a storybook using illustrations as a guide
7. Printing some letters such as the ones in her own name

Build a Reading Station!

Help your preschooler create a space where you can explore great books together.

- Find a spot where you won't be bothered by the TV or too much noise.
- Collect boxes that are large enough to hold piles of your books. Cover the boxes with paper, and decorate them. Use different artwork to make boxes for different types of books, such as:
 - Stars and spaceships for stories about outer space;
 - Roads and vehicles for books about things that go;
 - Cats, horses, or wild beasts for books about animals.
- Add a comfy seat — old pillows or a folded sleeping bag will make it extra cozy!
- If you have a tape player/recorder, keep it close by. Use it to listen to books on tape or record stories that you read or imagine, and play them back.
- Make a writer's box filled with paper, pencils, and art supplies that you can use to make your own books.
- Invite a parent or friends to your Reading Station, and read together!



Find More Titles in Kids' Favorite Series

Now, you and your child can find more titles in your favorite book series online — at the Scholastic Book Clubs Series Headquarters. From Clifford to the Magic School Bus and beyond, the Series Headquarters puts all kids' best-loved characters all in one place — and all at low Scholastic Book Clubs pricing. And books are delivered right to the classroom, just like always! Visit www.scholastic.com/serieshq.

Beyond Books

Help your child set up a wall calendar for the school year. Practice tracing letters for days of the week and months, and then provide stickers to indicate birthdays and holidays!

Daily Reading Fun

Spread books all around the house — even outdoors! Put nature titles on the front porch. Leave a book featuring a favorite character on top of the TV.

Kids Read for Kids in Need

Scholastic Book Clubs' ClassroomsCare is a philanthropic literacy campaign designed to teach children the joys and importance of reading and giving. Students in classrooms across America are encouraged to read 100 books in order to trigger a 1MILLION BOOK donation by ClassroomsCare! Since 2001, ClassroomsCare has donated 7 MILLION books through Literacy Partners such as Save the Children, Reach Out and Read, and First Book, among others.

This year, for the first time, participating teachers and students will be able to choose where the books they "earn" go. They will have dozens of charities serving many different populations to choose from. This shift in the donation process is aimed at strengthening the connection between the kids who are reading and the kids who are receiving the books.

You can visit www.scholastic.com/classroomscare to see how a child you know could make a difference by reading. You can also access resources and curriculum aimed at the ClassroomsCare message -- kids have the power to make a difference and there is nothing more worthwhile than helping others, especially when you are offering the gift of reading.

Did You Know?

When you order, your child's class gets FREE books and resources!

Find out more about leveled reading at www.scholastic.com/yourreader.

About Your Parent Guide to Firefly

Your Parent Guide to Firefly is produced by the editorial staff at Scholastic.com/parents. For information on how to foster reading at home, age-appropriate booklists, and more, visit www.scholastic.com/read.