



Let's Read!

AN ACTIVITY BOOKLET FOR FAMILIES



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Dear Parents,

Chuck E. Cheese's® has been a proud sponsor of ARTHUR, the award-winning PBS series, since 2002. We believe that ARTHUR is a dynamic tool for encouraging children to improve their reading and writing skills. Chuck E. Cheese's hopes that these materials will be a valuable resource to help your children foster a love of reading and books.

Happy Reading!



Dear Parents,

This family activity guide offers ideas and tips on how to help your child love books and reading. Supporting your child's literacy is one of the most important things you can do. Even after your child is reading independently, you can continue to share books, reading, and writing activities. Dannon® Danimals® is proud to support ARTHUR!



Watch
ARTHUR® on
PBS KIDS GO!





The Mysterious Author

Adapted from the ARTHUR PBS Series

Read
this story to
younger children
or have older
children read it
with you!



Fern and Francine are at the library. Fern can't wait until the next book in the Horrendously Horrible series comes out. "How long will it be?" she wonders. She has read all thirteen books in the series so far.

"Six more weeks," Paige Turner, the librarian, tells her. "Those books sure are popular."

"I wish I could write a book series someday," Fern says wistfully.

"Why don't you write a letter to the author of the series, Persimmony Glitchet, and tell him how much his writing has inspired you?" Paige suggests.

Francine doesn't think Mr. Glitchet will write back. "He's way too busy," she tells Fern.

"But there's an address on the back of the book!" Fern says, excitedly. "It must mean that he wants kids to write to him."





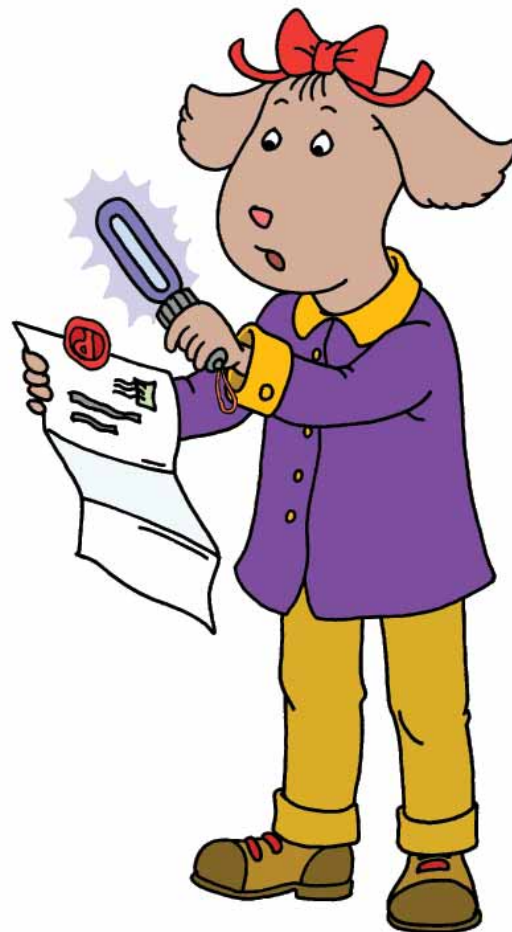
Persimmony Glitchet, the mysterious author of the Horrendously Horrible books, is indeed a very busy man. He is often away doing dangerous research for his books.

Fern decides she will write to Mr. Glitchet anyway to ask him about becoming a writer. She waits and waits for a reply.

Then a strange letter arrives. It's from Persimmony Glitchet all right, but it's completely blank! Could it have been written in invisible ink?

Using her special Detecto-Spy lamp, Fern is able to read the letter. Mr. Glitchet tells her that there are three important things to remember about being a writer. You have to:

1. Read
2. Write (and rewrite!)
3. Publish





Fern decides to take Mr. Glitchet's advice. She already loves to read. Now she just has to write and publish a story. Instead of using her real name as the author, she makes up a pen name—Agatha Shelley.

Fern can't wait until her friends read her story, "Happy Happenings," in the school magazine.

When it's published, her friends don't know that Agatha Shelley is really Fern. They're not shy about telling Fern what they think. Arthur says that the story is boring and Brain thinks it's too simple. "Nothing really happens in this story," Francine complains.

Fern is disappointed. Should she give up? She writes to Mr. Glitchet again for advice.

"Remember what I said to do?" he tells her in his next letter. "You always have to rewrite!"

Sharpening her pencil, Fern rewrites her story. This time she calls it "A Terrible Twist." It's a big hit! Fern wishes she could meet Mr. Glitchet and tell him.





A few weeks later, there's a big crowd waiting at the bookstore to buy the next Horrendously Horrible book. Fern hopes to meet Mr. Glitchet, but only his assistant, Max Wheeler is there to sign books. "I wish Persimmony Glitchet could have signed my book," she tells Max. "His advice helped me become a writer!"

"Really?" Max asks. "How did he do that?"

"Well, the first thing he told me to do was to read. Since I love books, that was easy," Fern explains.

"What was the second thing?" asks Max.

"He told me to write—and rewrite. I did that, too. And he told me to try to publish my story. Look, here it is in my school magazine."

"Let me see that," says Max. He shows it to the man behind him. Then the man scribbles something in Fern's new Horrendously Horrible book.

Thanks for sharing your story,” Max says with a smile. “Keep reading and writing—and good luck!”

Keep reading
and writing!
—P.G., a
fellow writer

On the way home, Fern can’t wait to start reading her new book. She notices something handwritten on the title page.

“Guess what?” she tells Arthur and Francine when she shows them the book. “Persimmony Glitchet *was* at the bookstore after all. He must have been in disguise.

“Wow,” says Arthur, “you’re really lucky that you got his autograph. What does he mean, ‘a fellow writer’?”

“It’s a secret,” Fern replies. “But let’s just say that some day you may be standing in line to buy a book by someone named Agatha Shelley!”



Talk about It

- What did you think of the story?
- Who is your favorite author or illustrator?
- If you could meet him or her, what would you say?



WATCH ARTHUR!

Fern and Persimmony Glitchet

Fern seeks advice from Persimmony Glitchet, the mysterious and elusive author of the Horrendously Horrible Happenings books. With Mr. Glitchet’s help, Fern learns that creativity, imagination, and hard work—not sugar and spice—are the real ingredients for a good tale.

Lots of ARTHUR episodes encourage a love of reading, writing, and books.

See page 14 for more shows to watch.



Raising a Reader

Not only can these activities help your child do well in school, but reading, writing, and storytelling at home are also great ways to spend quality time with your kids.



Babies and Toddlers (ages infant-age 2)

- Let your child handle board or cloth books. They can pretend to read to themselves.
- Read books by turning the pages and pointing out things you see.
- Use a favorite book to soothe a fussy baby or a cranky toddler.
- Bring books along when you know you'll have to wait or sit (on the bus, at the doctor's office, and so on).
- Talk to your baby about everything! This helps children learn about language.
- Sing simple songs and play games like Pat-a-Cake.

Preschoolers (ages 3-5)

- Make reading a pleasure by snuggling up with a good book at night, after naptime, or anytime.
- Choose books with lively pictures and colors.
- Talk about what happened in the story, make up a new ending, or tell your own story with the same characters.
- Sound out some of the words together.
- Entertain your child with family stories, jokes, or a rhyming game.
- Sign up for a story hour at the library!
- Discover the interactive games, songs, and other fun stuff on the ARTHUR Web site at pbskids.org/arthur.

Use the Story Picture Cards and Story Starter Cards in this guide to help the whole family play a fun literacy game.



Keep on Reading

Beginning Readers (ages 6–8)

- Kids become readers at their own pace. Support your child's efforts by reading together—not just books but cereal boxes, street signs, directions, and recipes.
- Try an easy chapter book such as *Arthur and the Race to Read*. Your child will be thrilled to recognize familiar words and learn new ones. Reading aloud even after kids are independent readers helps them stay excited about books.
- Browse through a magazine or newspaper together. Choose an article to read or cut out pictures for a scrapbook.
- Help your child write a thank you note or a letter to a friend or relative.
- Play an online computer game like Story Scramble at pbskids.org/arthur/games/storyscramble/scramble.html.
- Bring your child to the library to get her or his FREE library card!



Tweens (ages 9–11)

- Show kids that books are not just for homework. Explore the library or bookstore for new and different kinds of books—mysteries, fantasy, myths, poetry, biographies, and lots more.
- Challenge kids to read the book that the latest movie is based on, or introduce them to a new author or series.
- Encourage kids to express themselves in a vacation journal, daily diary, a short story or a poem.
- Organize a parent-kid book club (see page 10).
- Introduce your child to more advanced ideas and vocabulary by reading longer chapter books aloud. You can also take turns reading paragraphs, pages, or chapters.
- Encourage older children to read to younger children.

Book Club

A parent-child book club is a wonderful way to share your love of reading together. Not only is it fun, it can help keep the lines of communication open as kids get older and more independent. Here are some simple steps to get started.

1. Decide on how many people will be in the club and contact them. Usually 3 or 4 parent-child pairs are enough.
2. Choose how often you will meet. Once a month will probably give you enough time to read a book and get together.
3. Pick a regular time to meet. It might be after school or a weekend afternoon.
4. You can host the club at your home, take turns meeting at members' homes, or meet at the library or community center.
5. At the first meeting, go over the basics—meeting times, books to read, etc. It might be fun to name your book club (for example, the Sugar Shack Book Club).



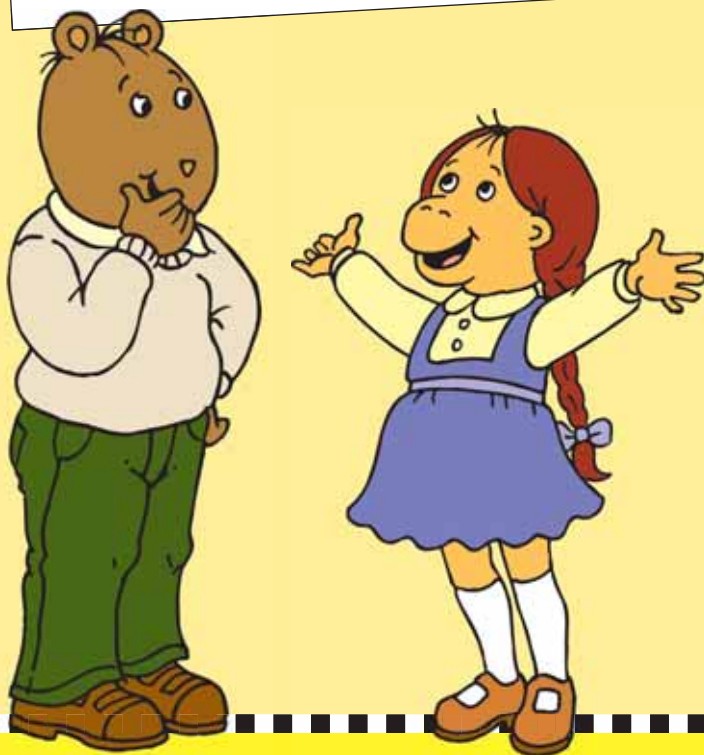
6. Your reading list can be made up of books suggested by kids, parents, librarians, or book reviews. You may want to mix genres or focus on one type (classics, new fiction, biography, mystery, etc.).
7. You can choose your books ahead of time or decide at each meeting what to read next. See page 15 for resources to help you find good books.
8. It's usually best to have a leader for each meeting. Try to make sure that everyone has a chance to speak. Encourage the kids to lead the conversation. Be careful that the adults don't take over!
9. Before you meet, have the parent-child hosts come up with a few questions or thoughts about the book to start things off.
10. Serve refreshments. You may want to serve snacks that go along with the setting or theme of the book you've read.



Talk about It

Here are some questions to help get the conversation going!

- *Did you like the book? Why or why not? If yes, what did you like best?*
- *What surprised you most about the book?*
- *If you were the author, what would you have done differently?*
- *If this book were made into a movie, which character would you like to play? Why?*
- *Which character would you like as a friend? Why?*
- *If you could meet the author, what would you want to ask him or her?*
- *If the author were to write a sequel, what would you most want to know about?*

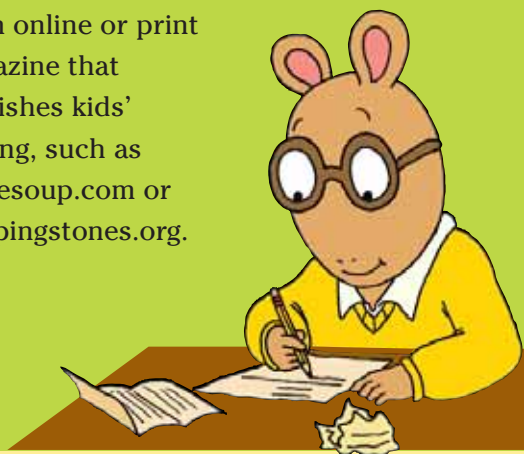


Write about It

Try some of these games and projects.

They're fun to do and help build your child's writing skills.

- Write to or e-mail a favorite illustrator or author, just like Fern did. Find the address online (see Resources) or ask a librarian.
- Together, keep a family reading log. Write the name and author of the book you've read and then write a quick review or rating.
- At dinner, start a once-upon-a-time story and then go around the table to finish it! You and your child can then write the story down and draw illustrations.
- Listen to music together and then draw pictures of how the music made you feel. Label the pictures.
- Have your child keep a journal to record his or her feeling and thoughts.
- Encourage your child to express his or her opinions in a letter to the editor of the local school or community newspaper.
- Invite your child to submit a story or poem to an online or print magazine that publishes kids' writing, such as stonesoup.com or skippingstones.org.



In the Kitchen

Cooking is not only a delicious way to spend time together, it also offers you a chance to practice reading with your child. Younger kids can read recipes and food labels, and learn new vocabulary as they help measure, stir, and blend. Older kids can help plan a week's menu and browse through a cookbook for their own favorite dish.

Fruit Soup

Looking at pictures to find out the meaning of words is an important step in learning to read. Read the recipe together.

You will need:

- orange juice
- yogurt (plain, vanilla, or fruit-flavored)
- honey
- lemon juice
- bananas
- fresh or frozen berries



Put 1/2 cup of yogurt in a big bowl.



Add 1 tablespoon of honey.



Add 2 teaspoons of lemon juice.



Pour in 2 cups of orange juice, a little at a time.



Stir until it's all one color.



Put berries and banana slices in four small bowls.



Spoon the soup into the bowls.



Enjoy!

Remember to help kids wash their hands before cooking.

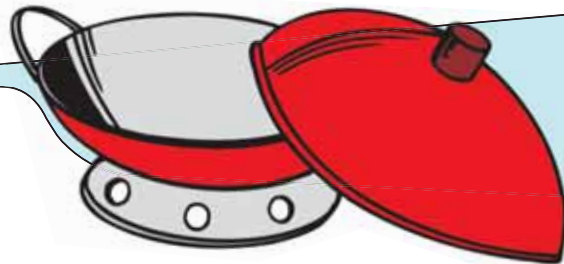


Chicken Fried Rice Lettuce Wraps

In the ARTHUR episode *What's Cooking?*, the famous chef Ming Tsai makes this quick and nutritious meal. Kids enjoy rolling the lettuce leaves, and you can put anything you like in them—including leftovers. Serves 4.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger, finely chopped
- 1 onion, cut into small pieces
- 3 carrots, grated
- 3 ribs celery, cut into small pieces
- 2 medium tomatoes, cut into small pieces
- 5 cups cold cooked rice, preferably day-old so it's nice and dry (Or you can place cooked rice on a sheet tray and put in freezer to cool and dry.)
- 1/2 cup sliced scallions for garnish
- 12 crispy leaves of iceberg lettuce, about the size of a large hand
- Vegetable oil for cooking (preferably canola)
- Salt (kosher if possible) and freshly ground black pepper



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Coat a non-stick frying pan with oil. Season the chicken with salt and pepper and stir-fry for 3 minutes until just cooked through.
2. Transfer to a paper plate lined with a paper towel and set aside.
3. In the same pan, add garlic, ginger, and a touch of oil. Stir-fry until soft, about 30 seconds.
4. Add onions, carrots, and celery, and stir-fry about 3 minutes until al dente (tender crisp).
5. Add the tomatoes and cooked chicken and stir-fry until hot, about 3 minutes.
6. Add rice and toss thoroughly until heated through.
7. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer to a platter.
8. Lay out one leaf of lettuce. Spoon 3 to 4 tablespoons of the fried rice onto the bottom third of lettuce leaf, and sprinkle with sliced scallions.
9. Starting at fried rice end, roll lettuce leaf tightly, tucking in ends so filling doesn't fall out. Repeat with remaining fried rice and lettuce leaves.

10. Peace and Good Eating!

Ming Tsai

Resources

FOR PARENTS & KIDS

Great Books to Talk About

For younger kids

All-of-a-Kind Family by Sidney Taylor. Yearling, 1980.

Catwings by Ursula Le Guin. Scholastic, 2003.

Chicken Sunday by Patricia Polacco. Putnam, 1998.

The Empty Pot by Demi. Holt, 1996.

The King's Equal by Katherine Paterson. HarperTrophy, 1990.

Meet Danitra Brown by Nikki Grimes. HarperTrophy, 1997.

Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear by Lensey Namioka. Yearling, 1994.

For older kids

Catherine, Called Birdy by Karen Cushman. HarperTrophy, 1995.

The Boggart by Susan Cooper. Aladdin, 2004.

Ella Enchanted by Gail Carson Levine. HarperTrophy, 1998.

Every Living Thing by Cynthia Rylant. Aladdin, 1998.

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred Taylor. Puffin, 1991.

Shiloh by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. Aladdin, 2000.

The Watsons Go to Birmingham by Christopher Paul Curtis. Yearling, 1997.

Cookbooks

Blue Moon Soup: A Family Cookbook by Gary Goss. Little, Brown, 1999.

The Children's Quick and Easy Cookbook by Angela Wilkes. DK, 1987.

I'm the Chef! series (see Chinese, Mexican, French, Italian versions) by Crabtree Publishing.

The Kids' Multicultural Cookbook by Deanna Cook. Williamson, 1995.

Pretend Soup and Other Real Recipes by Mollie Katzen. Tricycle Press, 1994. (See also her other cookbooks for kids.)



WATCH ARTHUR!

These episodes feature reading and writing.

Arthur Writes a Story

Arthur's Lost Library Book

The Boy with His Head in the Clouds

Buster Hits the Books

The Contest

D.W. Tale Spins

D.W.'s Library Card

Fernkenstein's Monster

I'd Rather Read It Myself

I'm a Poet

Locked in the Library!

Prunella's Special Edition

Rhyme for Your Life

The Scare-Your-Pants-Off Club

Unfinished

For a complete list of episodes, click on www.pbskids.org/Arthur/parentsteachers/schedule/epdesc.



FOR PARENTS

Books about Reading & Writing

Codell, Esmé Raji. *How to Get Your Child to Love Reading*. Workman, 2003.

Dodson, Shireen. *The Mother-Daughter Bookclub*. Harper, 1997.

Dodson, Shireen. *100 Books for Girls to Grow On*. Harper, 1998.

Lewis, Valerie and Walter Mayes. *Valerie & Walter's Best Books for Children*, 2nd edition. Collins, 2004.

Odean, Kathleen. *Great Books for Boys*. Ballantine, 2002. (See also *Great Books for Babies and Toddlers*, *Great Books for Girls*, and *Great Books about Things Kids Love* by the same author.)

Prelutsky, Jack. *The Random House Book of Poetry*. Random House, 2000.

Rhatigan, Joe. *In Print! 40 Cool Publishing Projects for Kids*. Lark Books, 2003.

Silvey, Anita. *100 Best Books for Children*. Houghton, 2004.

Trelease, Jim. *The Read-Aloud Handbook*, 5th edition. Penguin, 2001.

Web Sites*

American Library Association

www.ala.org/ala/alsc/alscresources/resources.htm
Recommended books, summer reading programs, and more.

About Children's Books

www.childrensbooks.about.com
Links to authors' Web sites and book reviews.

Guys Read

www.guysread.com
A selection of books that are especially appealing for boys, hosted by author Jon Scieszka.

The Horn Book

www.hbook.com
Articles, information, and reviews about children's books.

How to Grow a Children's Book Group

www.hclib.org/pub/books/BookClubsKid.cfm
A step-by-step guide to organizing a children's book group.

* Note: Web site addresses and content may frequently change.

ARTHUR Web Site

pbskidsgo.org/arthur

This site offers families lots of fun and exciting things to do together, as well as tips on reading to children.

Kidsreads.com

www.kidsreads.com

A comprehensive resource for kids and parents, with a special feature on book clubs, reviews, and author profiles.

Peggy Sharp's New Book Lists

www.nwccl.org/lists/PeggySharp.cfm
Recommended books for various age groups by a noted educator, plus reading aloud tips.

Reading Is Fundamental

www.rif.org/parents/
Parents' section provides tips, activities, articles, and booklists. Also sponsors reading contests at <http://www.rif.org/readingplanet/>.

Reading Rockets

www.readingrockets.org/books
Interviews with authors, and recommended booklists.

Stone Soup

www.stonesoup.com
Children up to age 13 can submit their stories and artwork for publication in this magazine.





Check out
the ARTHUR Web site
at pbskidsgo.org/arthur for
booklists, reading aloud
tips, and interactive
games.

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