

# MABEL RUSH READERS

A Reading Newsletter for Our Families

A SPECIAL HOLIDAY EDITION

**12**

## Aim for 12 Hugs!

Connecting with each other...

Aim for 12 hugs (or physical connections) every day.

Hug your child first thing in the morning, when you say goodbye, when you're re-united, at bedtime, and often in between. If your tween or teen rebuffs your advances when she first walks in the door, realize that with older kids you have to ease into the connection. Get her settled with a cool drink, and have a chat. (Seem like going above and beyond? It's a foolproof way to hear what happened in her life today. You'll find yourself glad, many times, if you have that high on your priority list.)

[www.ahaparenting.com](http://www.ahaparenting.com)

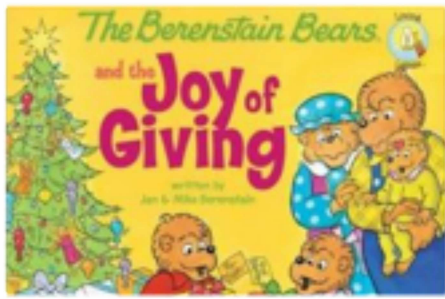


## SMART (Start Making A Reader Today) Reading Tips for the Holidays

[www.getsmartreading.org](http://www.getsmartreading.org)

Winter break is right around the corner, and holidays can get pretty hectic! Routines can fly out the window with celebrations, travel and out-of-town guests. As your family prepares for the holidays, use these tips for keeping kids engaged in learning and reading over winter break. (continued on page 2)





## A Few Children's Books for the Season!

from [www.parenting.com](http://www.parenting.com)

### The Berenstain Bears and the Joy of Giving

Does your kid have a case of the holiday gimmes? Brother and Sister Bear do too, until they learn what Christmas is really all about. This holiday-themed book in the series begun in 1962 ends with everyone learning a very important lesson, just like always.

### Fancy Nancy: Splendiferous Christmas

Nancy's psyched about the holidays until her ultra-fancy tree topper breaks. Can the ultimate girly-girl learn to love plain old DIY tree decorations? As always, the detailed, sparkly illustrations make this a fave among the princess set.

### Olive, the Other Reindeer

When Olive the dog hears the phrase from the popular Christmas tune "all of the other reindeer," she concludes she is "Olive, the other reindeer" and heads to the North Pole to join Santa's team. Doggie hijinks ensue.

1 Read for fun! Whether your child is in the mood for holiday stories or the newest installment from a favorite series, winter break provides the perfect opportunity to set aside school books and read for fun. Make time for bedtime stories to create the routine and enjoy books on a daily basis.

2 Stock up on books at the local library. Help your child pick out books they're interested in reading over the winter break. Libraries may also have fun, free holiday activities throughout the break.

3 Make the most of travel time. Turn travel time to or from a holiday get-together into an opportunity to practice reading. You can look for license plates from different states, try to find the alphabet on the license plates, or count the number of red (or white or green) cars you see. Read street signs and billboards you see along the way.

4 Create a new tradition. A little predictability is comforting for kids. Starting a special Winter Break Story Time can be a new tradition that links reading with happy memories. Hot cocoa and your favorite stories will have the whole family feeling comfy and cozy, while creating memories that will last a lifetime.

Remember, you don't have to be an expert to help your child with reading. By simply interacting with children around books, you can show them that books are important and worthy of our attention.



# The Importance of Sight Words

In classrooms across America, the development of sight word recognition continues to be a top priority when instructing emerging and beginning readers. The purpose of reading is to construct meaning from text. This “meaning” is dependent on the rapid, automatic, and effortless recognition of words. According to Patricia Cunningham in *Phonics They Use*, “In order to read and write fluently with comprehension and meaning, children must be able to automatically read and spell the most frequent words. As the store of words they can automatically read and spell increases, so will their speed and comprehension.” (Cunningham, 2000). This need to build accuracy and speed is critical for at-risk students with reading and learning disabilities.

**Sight word recognition improves reading fluency and automaticity, allowing the student to focus their efforts on the more mentally demanding task of reading comprehension.**

Students become efficient and confident readers and their attention can now center on decoding words that carry meaning to the text. This allows students to focus their efforts on “reading to learn” rather than “learning to read.” As a result, their ability to verbally recall and organize information from text drastically improves. These students not only begin to develop reading comprehension skills, but also become more accurate, detailed, and organized when verbally recalling the information.

## Examples of sight words in children’s text:

“The sun did not shine. It was too wet to play. So we sat in the house all that cold, cold, wet day.”

*The Cat in the Hat*, by Dr. Seuss

[www.teachstix.com](http://www.teachstix.com)