

Welcome to the November 2006 edition of Iowa Public Television's (IPTV) Ready To Learn (RTL) eNews. The purpose of this free monthly electronic newsletter is to keep families, educators, and child care providers informed of the great resources IPTV and our partners have to offer those who care for children ages birth to 8 years of age. RTL is public television's response to a critical national education goal: All children will enter school "ready to learn."

## RTL eNews for November 2006

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### \_\_\_\_\_The Learning Triangle\_\_\_\_\_

Young children learn by doing—by interacting with people and objects around them. To learn, they need to experience things again and again. RTL uses the learning triangle to teach children skills and concepts by using PBS KIDS programs, books, and activities. Engage children in these theme-related activities in any order and at any time. Point out the connections between the segment they VIEW, the book they READ, and the activity they DO. The repetition and variety of media reinforces the skills and concepts you teach.

### \_\_\_\_\_How do you use the RTL Learning Triangle? Monthly Contest\_\_\_\_\_

IPTV's RTL service wants to hear from you! How do you use the RTL Learning Triangle? Send an email to Lisa Albers at [lisa@iptv.org](mailto:lisa@iptv.org) describing your triangle and how it worked for you and the children in your care. All emails received by the end of each month will be included in a drawing for 10 FREE children's books.

### \_\_\_\_\_ABC's Theme Learning Triangle\_\_\_\_\_

Print versions in English and Spanish of this ABC's Theme Learning Triangle can be found at the following location:

<http://www.iptv.org/kids/grownups/resources/downloads.cfm>

When you are teaching children to name letters, make it fun! You can teach letters everyday and everywhere. When you are shopping, driving, looking at books or magazines, and preparing meals, point out the letters that you see and

name them. Then, ask your child to say the letter name with you. You will need to practice naming letters with your child many times before he/she is able to look at a letter and say, on his/her own, "That is a \_\_\_\_." It is a good idea to first introduce capital letters and then lowercase or small letters.

#### READ IT

1. Farm Alphabet Book by Jane Miller—An alphabet book with color photos of the farm environment, accompanied by explanatory text, illustrating each letter. (Infant-Preschool)
2. ABC I Like Me—An alphabet book that explores self-esteem. (Ages 4-8)
3. Dr. Seuss's ABC: An Amazing Alphabet Book!— With Dr. Seuss as your guide, learning the alphabet is as easy as A, B, C. (Ages 4-8)

#### VIEW IT

##### TV

BETWEEN THE LIONS – Every episode features letters, letter families, and letter sounds.

\* Every Monday-Friday at 2:30 p.m.

SESAME STREET – Every episode features a letter of the day.

(Notice how often the letter of the day appears on the screen while you hear its spoken sound. Then if the letter is related to a word that begins with that letter sound, and the word is also presented on the screen.)

\* Every Monday-Friday at 9 a.m.

\* Sundays at 8 a.m.

Online Games (Really great and fun for kids!)

\* Between the Lions: A.B. Cow - Figure out which letter is missing from the alphabet in this online game.

<http://pbskids.org/lions/games/abcow.html>

\* Sesame Street: Letter of the Day - Feed Cookie Monster cookies that start with certain letters.

<http://pbskids.org/sesame/letter/lettergame.html>

#### DO IT

1. March Around the Alphabet – Write each letter of the alphabet on a large index card. Put the capital letter on one side and lowercase on the other. Spread the alphabet out on the floor. Have the children create a circle around the alphabet. As upbeat tempo music is played, the children "March Around the Alphabet." Instruct the children to freeze, bend down, and pick up a letter near their toes when the music stops. Have the children hold their letter cards way up high and wait to be called upon to tell what letter they have in their hands.

2. Erasing with Water – This activity is a fun way to practice the alphabet, numbers, or specific words such as the child's name. With chalk write the letters, numbers, or words for your child to practice. Have him/her dip a brush in the water and "erase" what you have written by painting over it with the water. Ask the child to say the letter or number name as he/she is erasing it. You can write the letters on a chalkboard or a sidewalk.

3. Sing the alphabet song or say the alphabet with your child. Mix it up by adding some actions such as clapping, stomping, jumping, etc.

4. Fill a disposable aluminum pie pan or a deep paper plate with one-half inch of sand or salt. Call out a letter and have your child write the letter with their finger in the pan. Start out by calling out the letters in order. Once your child has mastered the letters in order, try mixing the letters up. This is a quick activity and you can also use it as your child grows to work on numbers, spelling words, simple math problems, etc.

#### \_\_\_\_\_Food Theme Learning Triangle\_\_\_\_\_

Print versions in English and Spanish of this Food Theme Learning Triangle can be found at the following location:

<http://www.iptv.org/kids/grownups/resources/downloads.cfm>

Eating different kinds of healthy foods and snacks will help children grow up healthy. Make it easy for your child to choose healthy snacks by keeping fruits and vegetables ready to eat. Other good snacks are yogurt, peanut butter and celery, milk or whole-grain crackers and cheese. If your child doesn't like a certain food don't force him/her to eat it. Ask him/her to try it. If your child still doesn't like it, try a different food the next day until you find one your child likes. Limit fast food, sugary drinks, chips and candy. Don't always keep them out of your home. Make them "once-in-a-while" foods. Try to eat together as a family. It will give you a chance to talk and have fun.

## READ IT

1. Picking Apples and Pumpkins by Amy and Richard Hutchings— Spend the day with Kristy, her family, and two best friends as they pick apples and pumpkins at Battleview Orchards in New Jersey. (This book is also available in Spanish.) (Infant-Preschool)
2. Pancakes for Breakfast by Tomie dePaola—This wordless picture book follows the trials of a little old lady who attempts to make pancakes for her breakfast. (Infant-Preschool)
3. Bread, Bread, Bread by Ann Morris—Celebrates the many different kinds of bread and how it may be enjoyed all over the world. (Ages 4-8)

## VIEW IT

ARTHUR – Binky Goes Nuts #910a

\* Wednesday, November 22, 2006 at 6:30 a.m. & 4:30 p.m.

When Binky discovers that he's allergic to peanuts, he has so many questions: Will he be forced to live without Chinese food? Will he ever again be able to eat with his friends? And most importantly, will his Mom ever calm down? Binky learns that the best way not to go nuts is to be well informed, and to understand his allergy.

BERENSTAIN BEARS – Papa's Pizza #138

\* Tuesday, November 29, 2006 at noon.

Brother and Sister are having all of their friends over for a party, and want to serve something that all of them will like to eat. When they poll their pals for everyone's dietary likes and dislikes, they're shocked to discover their friends all like and dislike different things. It's Papa to the rescue when he suggests they celebrate everyone's individuality by providing their party guests with the ingredients to make everyone a personal pizza of their own.

## DO IT

1. What is healthy food and what is junk food? Find pictures of healthy foods and junk foods in magazines, fliers, newspapers, etc. On one piece of paper, write "Healthy Food" and draw a green traffic light. On the other piece, write "Junk Food" and draw a yellow traffic light.

\* Sort healthy: Point to the green traffic light and ask: What does a green light mean? (Go ahead.) Kids should feel free to go ahead and eat lots of healthy foods. Help children choose and glue two or three pictures of healthy foods onto the paper.

\* Sort junk: Point to the yellow traffic light and ask: What does a yellow light mean? (Slow down, and get ready to stop.) Explain that we should only eat junk food once in a while. Help children choose and glue two or three pictures of junk food (e.g., candy, chips, soda) on the paper.

\* Keep sorting food pictures while you discuss healthy eating habits. Ask questions such as: What sorts of things should we eat? How can we keep our bodies strong?

2. Children like helping in the kitchen and often are more willing to eat foods they help make. Let them help plan, shop for food and make some easy meals and snacks. The age of your child will help you decide what he can/can't do. It is hard for a two-year-old to set the table but he/she might be able to stir, with help from you. Expect a few spills! This is also a great time to talk with your child about what you are doing, what kind of food he/she likes, etc.

3. Take your child to the grocery store and talk about the different food you are buying. "This is bread. I am putting it in our basket." "These are carrots. Do you want to smell them?"

\_\_\_\_\_IPTV Kids Schedule for Fall 2006\_\_\_\_\_

A print version of the IPTV Kids Schedule for Summer 2006 in English and Spanish can be found at the following location: <http://www.iptv.org/kids/grownups/resources/documents/Fall06KidsSchedule.pdf>

IPTV broadcasts 11 hours of non-violent, non-commercial, educational children's television programming each Monday through Friday. However, IPTV does NOT recommend that children spend all of their free time in front of the television. In fact, we encourage adults to place strict limits on the amount of time the children in their lives spend with the television or other screen media, such as computers and video games. This schedule is provided to assist children and adults as they plan their television viewing.

### **Monday—Friday**

6:30 a.m. Arthur

7:00 a.m.	Curious George
7:30 a.m.	Clifford the Big Red Dog
8:00 a.m.	Dragon Tales
8:30 a.m.	It's a Big Big World
9:00 a.m.	Sesame Street
10:00 a.m.	Caillou
10:30 a.m.	Barney & Friends
11:00 a.m.	Thomas & Friends
11:30 a.m.	Curious George
Noon	The Berenstain Bears
12:30 p.m.	The Big Comfy Couch
1:00 p.m.	Bob the Builder
1:30 p.m.	Cyberchase
2:00 p.m.	Reading Rainbow
2:30 p.m.	Between the Lions
3:00 p.m.	Postcards from Buster (Monday-Thursday) / Fetch! with Ruff Ruffman (Friday)
3:30 p.m.	Dragon Tales
4:00 p.m.	Clifford the Big Red Dog
4:30 p.m.	Arthur
5:00 p.m.	Curious George
<b>Saturday</b>	
6:30 a.m.	The Zula Patrol
7:00 a.m.	It's a Big Big World
7:30 a.m.	Clifford the Big Red Dog
<b>Sunday</b>	
8:00 a.m.	Sesame Street
9:00 a.m.	Angelina Ballerina
9:30 a.m.	Bob the Builder
10:00 a.m.	Thomas & Friends

\_\_\_\_\_Program Schedule, Episode Descriptions, and Record Rights for PBS Kids Programs\_\_\_\_\_

Finding Program Schedule and Episode Descriptions:

- \* Go to Web site: [iptv.org](http://iptv.org)
- \* Click on "TV Schedule" button at the top left side of the page.
- \* Click on the program to find a description for today's episode of the program.
- \* To find future episode descriptions, click on a date in the left column to find the description of the episode that will be shown on that specific date. Reading them will help you identify episodes that correspond to your curricular themes. The listed dates are the next 28 air dates of the program you've selected. Upcoming TV schedules on [www.iptv.org](http://www.iptv.org) are updated by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month for the following month.

"Record only, one year tape and erase. No duplication allowed."

What does that mean?

Educators may record a program from the broadcast. The recording may then be used in an educational setting and retained as long as that program airs on IPTV. No copies may be made from the original recording. If available, educators may also borrow a recording from a lending library, such as the media centers in Iowa's Area Education Agencies.

\_\_\_\_\_November Focus on Media Literacy\_\_\_\_\_

Children and Holiday Advertising (Part 1) from PBS Parents Guide to Children and Media:

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/childrenandmedia/>

If the holidays are a time for cheer and peace on earth, why can they feel like a crash course in need, greed and speed? Many factors can make the holidays hectic, like the pressures of family and our own expectations. But one unavoidable factor is advertising. This is the season to be jolly and companies want us — and our children — to believe the sure-fire way to feel merry is to buy.

#### How to Buy Less and Get More this Season

Help your child get a handle on why advertising is so powerful.

Whether we're a seven-year-old angling for a new scooter or a 37-year-old eying a 36-inch flat-screen TV, we long for material things. Sometimes, though, we don't realize our desire for a particular item began with a slick commercial that made it look good, or better still, made us feel good. The holidays offer a perfect opportunity to get your child thinking about advertising and the money and techniques companies use to influence how we think about ourselves and the products they are selling.

Show your child how to be a savvy consumer.

Thirty-second TV and radio commercials aren't the only ads we encounter during the holidays. Stores are filled with promotions, too. Before you go shopping, have a plan about what you want to accomplish and share it with your child. Try to set expectations beforehand by saying, "We're going just to look" or "Everyone gets one indulgence this trip." Similarly, help your child get in the habit of thinking about the purchases he or she makes. Make your child aware of Web sites where you can comparison shop, learn about products, read reviews and check out other buyers' opinions. These resources can demonstrate to your child that some purchases require more consideration and less impulse.

Talk to your child very directly about what the holidays mean to your family.

In the rush of the holiday season it's easy to take for granted the deeper value we place on the holidays themselves. Convey what the holidays mean to you through conversation with your children. Also, talk to children about making purchases that are consistent with your family's values. For example, when it comes to buying high-tech gifts, you may be drawn to a digital camera, video recorder or audio recording attachment for an iPod because they foster creativity, or you may like a certain software program because it lets you reduce the number of ads streaming into your home. Likewise, if charitable giving or volunteering is a part of your family's holiday routine, find a way to involve your child, perhaps by visiting the charity's Web site before contributing or including your child in volunteer work.

Look for Part 2 of Children and Holiday Advertising in the December 2006 edition of IPTV's RTL eNews.

#### \_\_\_\_\_Series Spotlight\_\_\_\_\_

IT'S A BIG BIG WORLD airs weekdays at 8:30 a.m. and Saturdays at 7 a.m. on IPTV.

IT'S A BIG BIG WORLD is an innovative preschool program where kids discover science through a new world of diverse animal characters, exciting stories, and world music.

#### The Characters

Venture deep into the rainforest, high atop the world, to the tallest tree—the World Tree. This tree is home to Snook, an energetic giant tree sloth, your host and guide to this new world. His friends include: Smooch and Winslow, two rambunctious marmoset siblings; Wartz, an eager-to-please singing tree frog; Madge, an ancient she-turtle with the map of the world on her back; Burdette, a bird who thinks she knows it all; Bob the Anteater, who has a complicated relationship with the ants; Ick, a braggart fish; Oko, an old monkey trickster; and more.

#### The Series

In each episode, viewers accompany the characters as they encounter natural mysteries that are fascinating to kids, pique their interest, and encourage them to ask more questions about fun science topics like why a monkey can't live in a bird's home and how an ant sees the world..

#### The Music

The World Tree is also full of music. With dance rhythms from around the world set to the beat of indigenous percussion, the songs are hugely distinctive, while remaining the kind of catchy, familiar, and warm music that will make you want to sing and dance.

### The Goals

IT'S A BIG BIG WORLD uses all of these elements to captivate children with life science and geography content. The show's guiding educational principle is that science isn't a bunch of facts, it's a process of discovery. Kids see characters who are excited about science, look for answers to scientific puzzles they encounter, and follow the steps and methods of scientific investigation. The series also introduces children to basic concepts of geography.

### Tune In

Watch IT'S A BIG BIG WORLD with children. Help them follow the steps of the character's investigation or discovery. Ask them questions. Do they think they know the answer? Reinforce any new words or expressions that the series introduces. Encourage the children to get up and sing and dance along with the music.

### Talk About It

After the program has ended, talk with the children about the topic or theme of the episode. Ask them what steps the characters took to find information. What resources did they use? What new ideas did they have at the end of the episode? Did the episode raise any additional questions for them? If so, help them research the answers.

### Visit the Web Site

Go to [www.pbskids.org/bigbigworld](http://www.pbskids.org/bigbigworld) and experience the World Tree online. This immersive, state-of-the-art Web site provides another way for children to explore the animals' worlds. There children will find character tree houses and fun games that extend the impact of the series. Be sure to visit the "Parents and Teachers" area for additional activities you can do with children.

### Explore Your World

Help children apply the ideas of the series into your world. Visit parks, gardens, zoos, and nature centers. Go to the library and look for books about different parts of the world, exotic animals, and unusual plants. Look for ways to be more environmentally conscious by recycling at home, bringing cloth bags to the grocery, or picking up litter.

### \_\_\_\_\_New at IPTV\_\_\_\_\_

Iowa Public Television is thrilled to introduce Ann Fouch as the newest member of IPTV's Ready To Learn team.

Ann Fouch comes from Columbia, Missouri. She has a M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education with 8 years of teaching experience. Ann has taught Kindergarten, First, and Second grades. She has also been a Parent Educator with the Parents As Teachers program. Ann's interest in children's literacy and her desire to have a positive impact in the lives of young children brought her to IPTV's Ready to Learn service.

Ann lives with her husband Jody and dog Bentley in Ankeny. She enjoys reading, gardening, cooking, and spending time with friends and family.

### \_\_\_\_\_November Feature\_\_\_\_\_

Reading Aloud to Build Comprehension (An Ed Extra from Reading Rockets:

<http://www.readingrockets.org/newsletters/extras>)

Children learn when they make connections between what they read and what they know. One method parents can use to help make these connections during shared reading time is called a think aloud. In other words, you talk through your thoughts as you read to them.

Here are three ways to use think alouds, with examples from some of our favorite kids' books:

1. Connect the book to your child's own life experience.

Example: A River Dream by Allen Say

"This book reminds me of the time my father took me fishing. Do you remember the time we went fishing?"

2. Connect the book to other books your child has read.

Example: Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters by John Steptoe

"This story reminds me of Cinderella. Both stories are about sisters. Do you know any other stories about sisters? Let's keep reading to find out other ways the stories are similar."

3. Connect the book to big ideas/lessons.

Example: Stellanluna by Janell Cannon

"This story helps me understand that we are all the same in many ways, but it's our differences that make us special."

In these examples, you are "thinking aloud" many of the connections that good readers make naturally as they read. Modeling these types of connections will help young readers know how to do it when they read alone.

Adapted from Reading Aloud to Build Comprehension by Judith Gold and Akimi Gibson (2001).

### \_\_\_\_\_Resources for November\_\_\_\_\_

Reading Rockets Current Newsletter—This monthly newsletter provides information for families and educators about teaching kids to read and helping those who struggle.

[www.readingrockets.org/subscribe/](http://www.readingrockets.org/subscribe/)

#### MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS:

- \* Reading Progress
- \* Watch and Learn on Google Video
- \* New! Webcast 2002: Make Reading Count
- \* Ed Extras! Ed Extras! Read All About It
- \* Books of the Month: That's So Gross!
- \* LD OnLine's Inspiration Award Winners

#### RESEARCH AND NEWS

- \* Reading First Final Inspection Report Released
- \* New Early Intervention Resource
- \* Children's Poet Laureate Announced
- \* Keeping an Eye on State Standards
- \* IDEAS FOR PARENTS
- \* Target the Problem
- \* Homework Help from Ranger Rick
- \* Questions and Answers: Assessment and Evaluation
- \* Click for Literacy!
- \* What Parents Can Do To Support the Reading Growth of Their Children

#### IDEAS FOR EDUCATORS

- \* Screening, Diagnosing, and Progress Monitoring
- \* Internet Search Engine Just for Kids
- \* American Folklore Resource
- \* Online Acrostic Poem Tool

#### PBS Parents Electronic Newsletter

Each week this electronic newsletter targets providers, caregivers, and parents bringing activities from favorite children's programs, events in your local community, and headlines from the PBS Parents Web site. To receive this FREE electronic newsletter, subscribe at the following Web site:

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/> (The link is towards the bottom of the page.)

Mister Rogers' Neighborhood *Mad Feelings* Newsletter—A monthly newsletter dealing with anger management and challenging behaviors in young children, including articles, activities, and tips.

<http://www.fci.org/madfeelings/default.asp>

### \_\_\_\_\_Child Development Tip of the Month\_\_\_\_\_

Talking With Kids: Preschoolers (Ages 2-5) from PBS Parents Guide to Talking with Kids:  
<http://www.pbs.org/parents/talkingwithkids/index.html>

### How They Communicate

Between ages two and three, many preschoolers begin to use more complicated sentences. However, this does not mean that they understand all of an adult's words or abstract concepts. In fact, preschoolers are often very literal thinkers and interpret ideas concretely. Many are only beginning to think logically and understand sequences of events.

Preschoolers learn that they can use specific words to say what they mean. They have long known their parents' words have power over their lives and they are beginning to realize that their own words can make a difference as well. They create more powerful meanings using their growing vocabulary.

"No" and "Why" become common words for young preschoolers. Saying "No" is a way a preschooler claims her space. Saying "Why" is a wish to understand the world around her. "Why" is also a word preschoolers use to question authority. Underneath the question, they are saying "Why do you have power over me when I want to feel autonomous?"

Preschoolers like to participate in decisions. This gives them a feeling of control and independence. A preschooler might think, "I can take a different position from my mother — and I like it." Or, "By saying what I want, I am a big kid."

Preschoolers love to imitate other people's words. They often mimic comments, phrases and sophisticated statements. At times they misuse or exaggerate phrases, particularly during pretend play. A preschooler might say to a doll, "You are so bad you are going to jail for 100 years!"

Preschoolers like to hear about and describe the same event over and over. By telling and listening to stories, preschoolers begin to form opinions about the world and how they fit into it. They say "tell me again," because hearing a story many times makes them feel safe and secure. When the story is repeated, it also allows them to imagine new scenarios.

Preschoolers like to make up their own explanations. This helps them make sense of things they are only beginning to understand. For example, a preschooler might explain her sadness about winter being over by saying, "When the snow melts, the winter is crying." Preschoolers may also embellish stories with wishful thinking.

Between three and five, preschoolers refine their understanding of cause and effect. Older preschoolers can understand simple explanations of cause and effect such as "The medicine will help you get well" and "If you eat healthy food, you will grow big and strong."

Preschoolers also talk through their bodies, their play and their art. In fact, verbal communication still may not be the dominant way many preschoolers either understand the world or express themselves.

### How You Communicate

Give your preschooler your full attention. Even a quick but focused connection may fill your child's need for communication. If she says "Play with me," and you are not available, you might explain why or say, "I had a hard day at work today. I need three minutes to change. Then I can play with you." Preschoolers can understand your feelings — to a point — and will appreciate your honesty.

Be aware of your tone. Because preschoolers are new to sentence-making themselves, they may have a heightened awareness of your tone and body language.

Reflect your child's unspoken emotions. This helps put your child's feelings into words. If she didn't get a turn at the playground, you might say, "You wanted to play with the ball next, didn't you?" or "Boy are you mad!"

Enlist your preschooler's help in figuring out a problem. For example, you might say, "Did something in that movie scare you?" If your child doesn't answer, you might follow up by saying, "Could it have been the look on that character's face?"

Help your preschooler develop emotional awareness. Even if there is misbehavior — you can talk about it together. Most preschoolers can understand a sentence like "Sometimes, I get mad too. It helps me to go into another room and take some deep breaths."

Offer limited choices. Preschoolers gain a sense of control by making their own decisions. You might say, "Do you want to get dressed before or after breakfast today?"

Don't end your sentence with "OK?" unless you are ready for your child to say "No." Asking your child if an activity is OK can lead to a lengthy discussion and even a power struggle.

Grant a preschooler's wish in fantasy. If your child expresses sadness that a toy has to be shared, you might say, "Would you like it if you had the toy all to yourself? What would you do with it?" By expressing a wish and talking it through, even if it can't be granted, a child begins to calm down.

Create safe opportunities for preschoolers to express their BIG feelings. For example, if your child is extremely angry, instead of saying, "Stop yelling," you might say, "Go in the bathroom and scream as loud as you can for one minute."

Don't over-explain. Simple explanations may be more effective than long discussions. If your preschooler is having a tantrum, holding her close — or just staying nearby — may mean more than any words you can say.

#### \_\_\_\_\_Family Involvement Tip of the Month\_\_\_\_\_

Questions to Ask Your Kids After "How was your day?" (Ages 3 to 5) from [www.IowaParents.org](http://www.IowaParents.org).

What:

Questions to Ask Your Kids After, "How was your day?" (Booklet, Ages 3 to 5):

[http://www.iowaparents.org/files/questions\\_3to5.pdf](http://www.iowaparents.org/files/questions_3to5.pdf)

Language development is one the most important life-long skills. Talking with young children about their day promotes language development as well as social-emotional development.

So What:

The booklet contains questions that are intended to start conversations that will strengthen family connections and support school success.

Now What:

Parents and Early Childhood Educators can use the booklet as a resource for developmentally appropriate open ended questions for young children. One or two effective questions may be enough to draw your child into an engaging conversation.

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