

Parent Guide to

ARROW

Grades 4–6 Your resource for advice, ideas, and more for your preteen

December
2008

Get your
Parent Guide to Arrow
Every Month
at www.scholastic.com/read.

Editors' Picks of the Month

Look for these titles in your
December Book Club flyer.

A Boy at War: A Novel of Pearl Harbor by Harry Mazer

Who it's for:

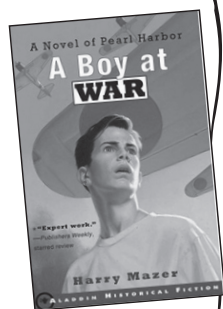
Kids into historical fiction
and adventure

Why we chose it:

This complex tale is both
strong and sensitive.

Parents say:

"I enjoyed it as much as
my son did."



Inkdeath by Cornelia Funke

Who it's for:

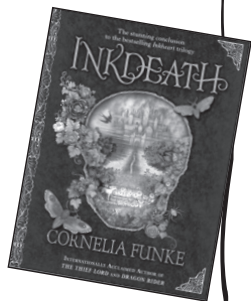
Fans of the Inkheart trilogy

Why we chose it:

To find out what happens
in this final volume.

Parents say:

"This book is long — but
my daughter devoured it!"



The Dog Who Thought He Was Santa by Bill Wallace

Who it's for:

Families who want to share
an all-ages Christmas story.

Why we chose it:

It's a new holiday read
from the author of *Pick
of the Litter*.

Parents say:

"We loved hearing the story
from both the boy's point of
view and the dog's."



What Did You Read Today?

Practicing reading skills every day is the best way for your child to become a lifelong learner. To help her continue to build vocabulary and improve comprehension, look for ways to get her reading in her free time. Here are some inspirational ideas:



- **Set aside time for quiet pleasure reading as a family.** Turn off the TV, radio, computer, and video games, and let everyone read what interests them. Keep a variety of books, magazines, and alternatives (newspapers, old letters, crossword puzzles) on hand so you and your child always have something enjoyable to read.
- **Put books in every room.** Fill baskets with books, and spread them throughout the house and even outdoors. Besides helping you beat clutter, this reinforces the idea that any time is a good time to read. See how to turn your home into Reading Central at www.scholastic.com/familymatters/read/all/housetour.
- **Talk about what you've been reading.** Share facts from a newspaper article, read funny parts from a book aloud, or talk about something you browsed for work. Be a role model by showing that you enjoy reading and rely on it in real life.
- **Keep reading together.** Pick exciting books that she is not yet ready to read on her own and read them together, one chapter at a time.

Parent to Parent

"To beat winter blues, we set up a small tent in the living room, light a fire in the fireplace, and camp out with our favorite summer stories and s'mores."
—Nola W., Michigan

Ask an Expert

Can flashcards help my child learn new words?

Creating vocabulary and spelling games with flash cards can help improve skills. On one side, write one of his study words. On the other side, write its definition or the correct spelling along with two misspellings (depending on which skill you're working on). Make the flash cards with your child so he'll understand how the game works and can get to know the words. You can practice with him each day for about 15–20 minutes as long as your child doesn't feel pressured. Remember, keep it fun!

Meet Our Expert: *Francie Alexander is a vice president at Scholastic, where her focus is on creating materials that help kids learn to read and help teachers teach reading.*

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

Make a Memory on Winter Break

Help your child put a twist on the traditional genealogy tree with a family map!

- Pick a theme for your map. Instead of a tree, choose a symbol that has a special meaning for your family. Any V-shape or pyramid-like image will work: an Irish shamrock, a Native American wigwam, even a bowl with chopsticks!
- Draw the symbol on a large piece of poster board.
- Your child's name goes at the skinny end of the image with relatives branching out above or beneath him.
- Where you can, add nicknames, dates of birth, favorite colors, or other facts next to a relative's name.
- Your child can call and email aunts, uncles, or grandparents to find out more about other relatives.
- Decorate the area around the family map with photos and artwork.
- Be sure to leave room for new family members and facts the two of you might discover in years to come!

The Lowdown on Leveled Reading

Leveled reading uses various assessment tools to determine how well your child reads, and then matches her to books that are challenging enough for her to make progress, but not so hard that she will become frustrated. Books are categorized into levels of difficulty, which is how a perfect match, based on ability, can be made. There are a number of leveled reading systems utilized in schools across the country, typically beginning in kindergarten; it is up to school districts or individual schools to determine which, if any, are in place. The primary difference between the systems lies in how children are evaluated, and each program has its own way of labeling books. The three most common are Guided Reading Level (GRL), Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), and Lexile Level. To see a chart comparing these three systems, visit <http://www.scholastic.com/familymatters/read/pdf/readinglevels2.pdf>.

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 Goosebumps to Harry Potter 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

Encourage your child to exchange letters, cards, and holiday themed artwork with an aunt or grandparent. If she can't think of anything to say, challenge her to start a holiday story and ask her relative to come up with the next section.



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.

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 the Magic Tree House to Geronimo Stilton 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.

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 Arrow

Your Parent Guide to Arrow 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.