

Ten Benefits of Reading To Your Child

- 1. Promote Listening Skills**
- 2. Increase the Number of Vocabulary Words Children Hear**
- 3. Develop Attention Span and Memory**
- 4. Help Children Learn Uncommon words**
- 5. Help Children Learn to Understand the Meanings of Words**
- 6. Help Children Learn Concepts about Print**
- 7. Help Children learn to Get Information from Illustrations**
- 8. Promote Bonding and Calmness for Both Child and Parent**
- 9. Stimulate the Imagination and All the Senses**
- 10. Instill the Love of Books and Learning**

Eight Things To Remember When You Read To Your Child

- 1. Children Need a Quiet Reading Environment**
- 2. Children Are Comforted by the Sound of Your Voice**
- 3. Hold and Cuddle Your Child When You Read**
- 4. When Choosing a Book, Allow Your Child to Be Your Guide**
- 5. Start Reading at Any Page**
- 6. You don't Have to Read All of the Words in the Book**
- 7. Repeated Readings are Good for Your Child's Language Development**
- 8. Talk to your Child as you Read.**

Making Books With Children

By Susan Kapuscinski Gaylord

I like to make occasional big deal books (ones that take special materials and lots of time and planning) and lots of everyday books- simple books that are made quickly. Through my teaching I have discovered an interesting difference between adults and children. When adults make books, their first impulse is to sit and stare at them. The nicer the books look, the more intimidated they are at the thought of writing in them. When kids make books, it's a different story. They can't wait to get started. I can see their fingers twitching to get at a pencil or marker as soon as they are finished with the construction. Everyday books give kids a way to express themselves at home. Books can mark milestones (first day of school, first goal in soccer, first home run, first lost tooth) and document passions (dinosaurs, wizards, music groups, favorite songs). They can be kept as memories or shared with family and friends.

Don't let the kids have all the fun. In addition to making books along with your children, plan some special books that you can make just for them. Whether your creativity (yes, you have it) is something you exercise frequently or lies buried within, it can be expressed through making books for an appreciative audience. Children love the idea of a book made just for them and if they are the star of the story, so much the better.

Ideas for Books

I've made lots of books for my kids over the years. I am inspired by their interests, their activities, and their concerns. We dealt with the coming of a new sibling in Brendan and the New Baby. For her fifth birthday, I documented my daughter's love of gymnastics in Kendra the Gymnast. I often take my inspiration from children's books. I was thinking of Jill Krementz's *A Very Young Gymnast* when I made the book for Kendra. I made a series of books for my son about a disappearing Cupcake Clown that was based on Mercer Mayer's *Frog, Where Are You?* Here are some ideas for books for you to make.

Story books: Tell the story of a typical day in the life of your child. Celebrate a special day with a story. Tell stories from your past or that of your parents and grandparents. The writing can be simple and direct. One way to start each page with the same phrase: *When I was a boy, I...*, *When Kendra was a baby, she...*, *When Grandma was a girl, she...* A good model for this is *When I was Young in the Mountains* by Cynthia Rylant. Write imaginary adventures involving your child. Meet dinosaurs or have favorite dolls come to life.

Family Themes: Tell the family's history, including family trees or how the family celebrates a particular holiday with memories and recipes. Record trips taken, houses and apartments lived in, the events of a particular year. What your family does and where it comes from is special; celebrate it.

Poetry and Song Books: Make books of favorite Mother Goose rhymes, songs, and poems as well as original compositions. A book can be a collection of favorites or one song or poem with one or two lines per page. My daughter loved a little room in The Children's Museum in Boston

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where you could hear the song "Hush little baby don't say a word; Momma's gonna buy you a mockingbird" and look at a display. I made her a book of the words to the song with cut out pictures from magazines and catalogs and we sang it together often.

Alphabet and Counting Books: Make your own alphabet and counting books. They can range from simple books for young children to more sophisticated books on particular topics for older ones. My daughter and I made Ten Red Dots which was inspired by Ten Black Dots by Donald Crews. I made an alphabet book from recycled waffle boxes with pictures of my kids cut from photos. C is for candle had a picture of my daughter blowing out a candle. F is for friends has a picture of both kids together.

Party Books: Make books for guests to sign at parties. Make an accordion book with the child's name or Happy Birthday written large across the pages and have the guests sign around it. A blank book with one page for each guest can serve as an autograph book. Save wrapping paper and cards and take some photos to make a memory book after the birthday.

Cards and Gifts: Many of the small books are great for giving, either as an extra special card or small gift.

Ideas for Illustrations

Cut or Torn Paper: This is my favorite technique. Cut or tear paper into shapes. Try not to draw first. Follow the artist Matisse's words: "I draw with my scissors." Use scrap paper and cover the entire back of the pieces with glue. Keep a collage box of interesting papers so you'll always have a handy source.

Simple Printmaking: Make potato prints by cutting a potato in half and carving a shape into it. Cut away the rest and the shape will print. Cut other vegetables and fruits and use their natural shapes to create images. Try leaves and other found materials. Use poster paint, block printing ink, food coloring, or acrylic paint.

Stamps: Rubber stamps can be expensive but they are easy to use and lots of fun. I like to look for ones that work well in borders and as ornament. You can also carve your own stamps from plastic erasers with an exacto knife. Use stamp pads or color the stamps with marker. Try thumbprints. Use paint or a stamp pad and print your thumb. Use marker or colored pencil to turn thumbprints into people and animals.

Stencils: Make stencils from poster board or cardboard. Draw your own designs or trace and transfer them to the poster board. It's easiest to do the cutting with an exacto knife. Cover with clear contact paper for longevity. You can also purchase stencils.

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Photographs: Photographs are wonderful, personal sources of imagery. Use whole photos or cut them up. I prefer to attach them with double-sided tape since their slick surface can make glue difficult to use. If the book will be handled by young children, I cover the pages with clear contact paper for protection. Try copying photos on a copier. You can get an interesting look by coloring a black and white copy of a photo with colored pencil.

Cut-outs: Magazines are great sources for imagery. For example, for a farm scene, cut a barn from one page and animals from another. Or cut or tear pieces of an image and create your own image from the different colors. Other sources of images are greeting cards and wrapping paper.

Tools

You want the bookmaking supplies organized in a way that's easy for kids to access the materials and put them away after. I'd suggest a shoe box for the tools which would include

* **Scissors:** It's important to have decent scissors. I really have a thing against rounded kid scissors especially crummy metal ones that barely cut. You obviously don't want your kids poking their eyes out but it's good to have quality tools especially if you are making books together with your children. Teaching them to be careful of and how to care for tools is important. The Fiskars brand kids scissors work well. I have the pointed ones, which are still not too pointy. I also have a lot of big scissors that I bought when I thought I would be mostly teaching teachers and parents. I've had students as young as kindergarten use them without a problem, and with the additional thrill of using grown-up scissors.

* **Hole Punch**

* **Glue Sticks:** For me, glue sticks are the only way to go. They are neater than Elmer's and because there is no moisture in the glue, the paper will dry flat. I prefer colored glue sticks. They go on a color so you can see where the glue is but dry clear. My favorite is UHU brand. Some people feel that they dry too quickly. I like them because you can reposition the pieces if you need to

* **Scrap Paper:** for gluing. I use old catalog pages or used 8 1/2" x 11" paper.

Materials

I have been using recycled, or more accurately repurposed, materials in my workshops and at home for the past year. I use brown paper grocery bags, cereal boxes, and used paper that has writing on only one side. I made the change to be more respectful of the environment and reduce consumption but the benefits go way beyond that.

We live in an instant culture filled with manufactured objects. It is not the children's fault that

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they expect their paper perfect and think nothing of asking for a new piece when theirs has a wrinkle. Using grocery bags, cereal boxes, or paper that they have used makes them aware of the paper they consume.

And there are other positive effects as well. When they start by cutting a paper bag, the paper is already uneven so it takes all the burden of precision away. I find it lightens the spirit of the whole process. In addition to consuming less paper, they learn to look creatively at the things they discard.

Making books with repurposed materials has a different aesthetic. Because we don't start with plain paper, there are often traces of its former life showing. I feel this brings life and vitality to the finished book.

*Paper: Ask for paper at the grocery store and save cereal, cracker, and waffle boxes. The grocery bags are cut down to make paper for the books. The cereal boxes are used for covers and for any project that requires stiff paper or cover stock. They can be flattened for storage.

I also use copy paper with writing on one side only from the recycle bin. In the Hot Dog Booklet, all the writing is on one side of the paper so this works well for them. For accordions, I fold the paper in half the long way with the writing on the inside and use the folded paper to make the pages of the book.

* Yarn: best for books that use knots to hold them together. Ribbon tends to be too slippery to hold. There are a lot of interesting variegated yarns available. I save scraps of yarn and string.

* Ribbon: I use it for ties on accordion books. I buy it at craft stores as well as save ribbon from packages.

* Elastics (I save them from vegetables and the newspaper delivery)

*binder rings

*foam stickers (to put on pages so children can turn them easily)

*laminating machine & laminating sheets (not necessary, but nice to preserve heavily used books)

For Illustrations

* Collage Papers: I cut up any interesting colored paper that comes my way- wrapping paper from a package, paper bags, interesting envelopes, origami paper, art papers, etc.--into squares of

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about 3" and keep them in a box. I find that the smaller size wastes less paper and seems to stimulate creativity in a way that large pieces of paper don't.

* Rubber Stamps: Rubber stamps are fun sources of imagery. They can be used for pictures or for pattern in borders. They provide an alternative for those lacking in artistic confidence. They are expensive, but I think worth the investment. However, kids can make a mess of them quickly as the ink from the stamp pads gets on their fingers and then onto everything else. I cover the top of my stamps with clear contact paper before I let anyone use them. I sort my stamps by theme- Flowers and Leaves, Animals, In the Sky, Dinosaurs, Patterns, etc. - and keep them on plastic plates. On each plate, I put a label with the Theme and cover it with clear contact paper. I store the plates in resealable plastic bags. It's helpful to wipe the stamps on a piece of scrap paper after each use, but I don't do any additional cleaning.

*Stamp Pads: I use micropore stamp pads from office supply places. The pigment stamp pads that are sold at stamp stores have better colors, but they are kind of gooey and can really make a mess. They require more vigilant cleaning.

* Stencils: I have made stencils by tracing cookie cutters onto poster board, cutting the image with an exacto knife, and protecting them with clear contact paper. I also made a series of sea life stencils by tracing pictures from books and transferring them to poster board.

* Markers: I like markers for writing and for the vibrancy of color in drawing. However, they can bleed through so I test the marker first on an extra piece of paper if I am going to be writing on both sides of the paper. For the writing, it may be helpful to write the text lightly in pencil, proofread it, and then go over it in marker. Whiteout should be used cautiously; it can make a mess. Test it first with the marker on scrap paper.

* Colored pencils: Colored pencils are a good choice. While they won't bleed through, some care should be taken to not press too hard when writing on both sides of the paper. Drawings can be made in colored pencil or with a dark marker and colored in. I also like to color in rubber stamp images with colored pencils.

www.makingbooks.com



I like accordion books because you can stand them up and view all the pages at once. Accordion books have a rich history around the world. They are made in many parts of Asia, including China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, India, and Burma. They were also the book form of the Aztecs and Maya in Mexico and Central America. Book artists frequently experiment with the form.

You Need:

- ① 1 long, narrow piece of paper (I use the front panel of a grocery bag cut in half the long way or a piece of used paper with writing on one side folded in half so that the writing is on the inside.)
- ② front or back panel of a cereal box or cracker box or card stock or posterboard
- ③ Glue stick and scrap paper

1. Fold the paper in half.



2. Take the top layer of paper, flip the edge back to meet the fold, and crease.



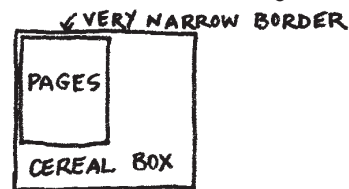
3. Turn the paper over, flip the edge of the paper back to meet the fold, and crease.



4. Lift the first page, insert scrap paper, and cover the entire surface with a thin coat of glue by starting in the middle and making stripes up and then down.

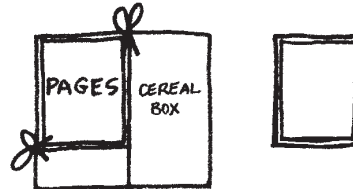


5. Place the folded pages, glue side down, on one corner of the cereal box. Leave a very narrow border on the outside edges.



6. Remove the scrap paper and fold it in half with the glue on the inside.

7. Complete the cover by trimming the cereal box so that there is an even narrow border all around.



8. Using the cover you have already made as a guide, cut a second cover.

9. Using scrap paper, put glue on the other side of the pages and place the cover on top.

10. Open the book and smooth the first and last pages with the palm of your hand to help the glue adhere.

Susan's Multicultural Books To Make And Share, which contains sixteen bookmaking projects from around the world including several projects using the accordion book form, is available from the Bookstore at makingbooks.com.

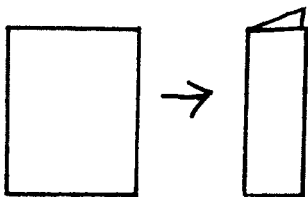


This is a fun book because it is so simple and so clever. The directions start by folding paper in half the long way. By doing this you can reuse paper as long as it has writing on only one side. You can also use single sheets of paper. If you use new paper, you can skip the first step and make a larger book. Your book can have more pages but it will be harder to punch through all the layers at once. Although the book is simple, punching the holes and manipulating the elastic can be awkward. I don't make it with groups but it's perfect with a few children.

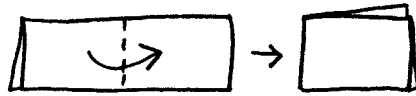
You Need:

- ① 2 sheets paper (it can have writing on one side)
- ① 1 elastic band (I use ones from vegetables and newspaper delivery)
- ① 1 stick about the height of the paper after step 1
- ① Hole punch

1. Fold each paper in half the long way so that is long and skinny like a hot dog. If it has writing on it, the writing should be on the inside.



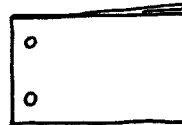
2. Fold each paper in half the other way.



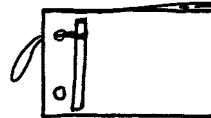
3. Tuck one folded piece inside the other.



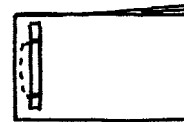
4. Punch two holes through all the layers about 1/4" in from the folded edge of the papers.



5. Wrap the elastic around the top of the stick and put the end into and through the top hole.

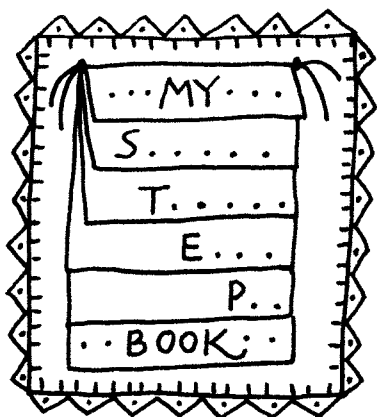


6. Turn the book over. At the back of the book, pull the end of the elastic down and put it through the bottom hole. Insert the other end of the stick into the loop.



More bookmaking ideas are available at Susan's website, makingbooks.com, which has more projects and information about making books with children. Ebooks are available for purchase at the Bookstore including *Multicultural Books To Make And Share* which contains sixteen bookmaking projects from around the world.



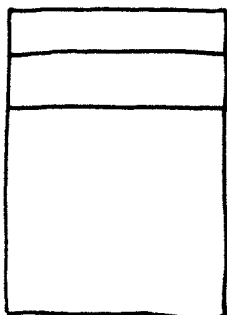


The step book can be held vertically or horizontally. Each step page flips up to reveal a section underneath which gets larger as you move down the pages. It's especially good for counting books. The directions are written for three pieces of paper which will give you six steps. You can use any number from two on.

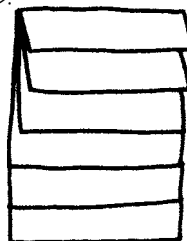
You Need:

- ① 3 (or more) pieces of paper. Letter size or A3 works well or pieces cut from a brown grocery bag
- ② 2 pieces of yarn, 12"/30.5 cm long
- ③ Hole punch
- ④ Beads are optional

1. Take the three pieces of paper and hold them so that each piece of paper is about 1 1/2 inches lower than the one before. You have made the first three of six steps.



2. Holding the papers together, turn them over so that the steps are towards you and on the bottom. Fold the bottom over so that you now have six steps. Check to see if the steps are even. If not, adjust them and then crease.

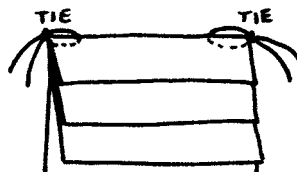


3. Holding the papers together, open them part way along the fold. Push the hole punch in as far as it will go along the fold from one side, and punch a hole. Do the same thing on the other side.

PUNCH HOLES



4. On each side, thread a piece of yarn through the hole, pull it to make the ends even, and tie a double knot against the edge of the paper. Tie beads on the ends of the yarn if you wish.

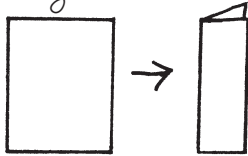


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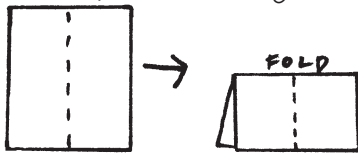


The Hot Dog Booklet has a front and back cover and six pages inside. You can use any size paper. For a book from recycled materials, use the front panel of a grocery bag or any piece of paper with writing on only one side. The writing should be on the inside when you make the first fold. To make multiple copies of a book, make a blank book with plain copy paper (no writing on either side). Write and illustrate your book with black marker or pen. Open the sheet and lay it face down on a copier. Make as many copies as you want. Fold and cut each one.

1. Fold the paper in half the long way, like a hot dog.



2. Open the paper and fold it in half the short way, like a hamburger.



3. Take one layer of paper, flip the edge back to meet the fold, and crease.



4. Turn the paper over, flip the edge of the paper back to meet the fold, and crease.

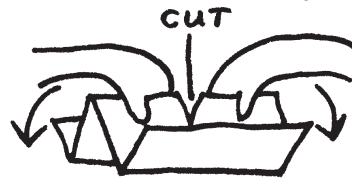


5. Place the paper on the table so that you see a W when you look at the end.

6. Cut the center of the W along the center fold. You'll be cutting through two layers of paper and stopping at the cross fold.



7. With your wrists above your fingers, hold the two halves of the hot dog from the top.



8. Turn your wrists to the sides. You will have an open book with four sections.

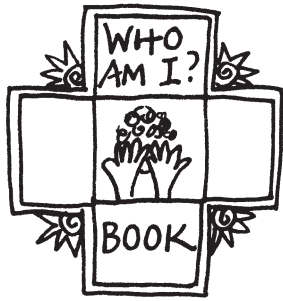


9. Bring three of the sections together. Fold the last section on top of the other three so that you have a flat book.



Susan's Multicultural Books To Make And Share, which contains two projects using the Hot Dog Booklet, a Comic Book and a Newsbook based on the forerunners of newspapers in Europe, is available from the Bookstore at makingbooks.com.



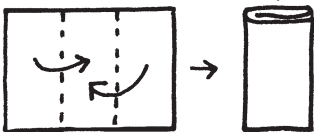


I use this fun form a lot, especially with second and third grades. Each of the four folded pages has one or two facts. When they are all opened, the center page reveals the identity. I've used them for biographies in history, countries in geography, animals in science, and numbers in math- I am half of 8, I am $2 + 2$, etc. You can use velcro instead of the tie.

You Need:

- ① 1 piece of paper (I use the back panel of a brown grocery bag)
- ① front or back panel of cereal or cracker box
- ① 1 piece 24" yarn
- ① Scissors
- ① Glue stick and scrap paper
- ① Hole punch

1. Place the paper in front of you so that it is a sideways rectangle and fold it into thirds. I find the best way is to roll it into a three part tube and then flatten it. This fold can be a little tricky but don't worry: if it's not exact, that's okay.

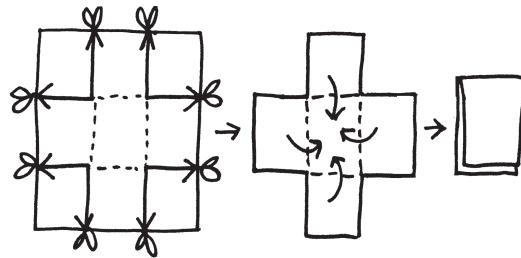


2. Keep the paper folded and fold it into thirds the other way. Because the paper is smaller, it will be easier this time.

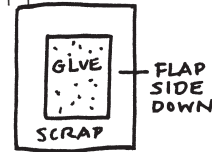


3. Open the paper and cut out the four corner pieces to make a large plus sign.

4. Fold the pages in. The order doesn't matter.

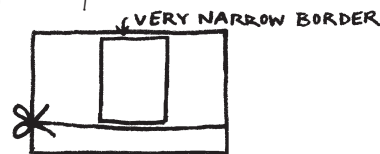


5. Place the folded pages flap side down on a piece of scrap paper. Cover the top surface with glue.

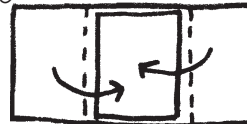


6. Place the glued and folded pages in the center of the cardboard with a very narrow border at the top.

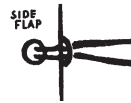
7. Trim off the bottom of the cereal box leaving a very narrow border.



8. Fold each side of the cereal box over the pages being careful not to fold the pages.



9. Punch a hole in the center of one of the side flaps. Fold the yarn in half. Put the loop through the hole. Pull the loop from the back of the hole and open it up. Put the ends of the yarn through the loop and pull to tighten. Wrap the yarn around the book and tuck it under to keep the book closed.



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