

# Parent Guide to

# ARROW

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

May  
2009

Get your  
**Parent Guide to Arrow**  
Every Month  
at [www.scholastic.com/read](http://www.scholastic.com/read).

## Editors' Picks of the Month

Look for these titles in your  
May Book Club flyer.

### Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson

#### Who It's For:

Katherine Patterson fans; kids who have close friends.

#### Why We Chose It:

This Newbery Medal-winning classic about a unique friendship has been changing readers' lives since it was first published.

#### What Parents Say:

"This was one of *my* favorite books. I love sharing it with my kid."

### Summer Ball by Mike Lupica

#### Who It's For:

Fans of *Travel Team* and *Heat*; reluctant readers; sports fans.

#### Why We Chose It:

The sequel to *Travel Team*, this book is every bit as exciting.

#### What Parents Say:

"This is the only book my b-ball-loving kid has read more than once!"

### Pet Trouble: Loudest Beagle on the Block by T.T. Sutherland

#### Who It's For:

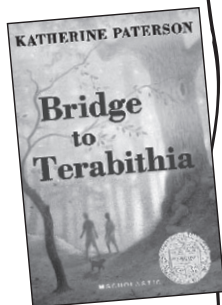
Fans of *Marley and Me*; dog lovers who like to laugh.

#### Why We Chose It:

This hilarious new series is sure to please animal lovers.

#### What Parents Say:

"It's great to have a funny book about dogs—a lot of dog books are sad!"



## Get Creative With Literacy

Artistic activities do more than stretch your child's imagination — they give her a chance to flex skills she needs as a strong reader. Try these creative literacy boosts together:

**Introduce visual arts.** We often think that reading is only about printed words, but a key to understanding text is being able to visualize it. Have your child draw, paint, or mold from clay scenes from a story you've read with her. Specifically, ask her to create a scene not illustrated in the book. This will help her develop visualization skills. Does she depict the character/setting as the author describes? Can she explain the scene she's depicted as well as what happens before and after? Encourage her to imagine details (wardrobe, weather, etc.) that the author doesn't describe.

**Get dramatic.** Following a character's role in a drama teaches elements that are important to reading fluency as well as comprehension — story sequencing, climax, plot, characterization, and reading with expression. Have your child pick a favorite book where the action revolves around three or four characters, then help him turn the story into a play. Together, you can form a Readers Theater where you and your child read the parts with dramatic emphasis. Or help him organize a cast of friends to stage the play (complete with props and costumes).

**Put it to music.** Like poetry, songs let your child test the boundaries of language and self-expression. If your grade schooler isn't interested in writing poetry, but is enthusiastic about music, encourage her to write song lyrics. Putting original words to a well-known tune is a great start. Thinking about the "story" behind the music is also a great way to introduce concepts such as mood. For instance, have her imagine producing a movie based on the book she's reading. Which songs would she put on a soundtrack, based on lyrics and melody? Fast-paced rock? Love songs?



### Daily Reading Fun

May 16 is Biographer's Day. Help your child research, script, and film a short documentary about a family member's life.

## Ask an Expert

In reading, like everything else, you are still an important role model. Try these activities to get your child reading and be sure to let him see you read:

**Join the club.** Tweens are very social. Mother-daughter or father-son book clubs are a great way to get kids to read and to talk about books.

**Read together.** Get your own copy of novels your child is reading for school or even for pleasure.

**Read anytime, anywhere.** He doesn't have to sit with a book to read for pleasure. Kids this age are interested in activities like cooking, so find interesting cookbooks and

**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](http://www.scholastic.com/read).

## How can I keep my tween interested in reading?

recipes, then read and cook together. And of course there's the Internet! Your child can find lots to read (especially material for research) online. Sites for museums and arts institutions are usually good, safe places for kids to visit.

**Offer magazines and more.** Weekly news magazines, the sports page, and other periodicals provide great content and context for reading for pleasure and information.

**Encourage freedom.** Teens and tweens like to make their own selections. As feasible, let your child choose her own books from the library and for purchase.

## Help your child stay creative as she grows.

- Have a place where your child can create — a place that may get messy at times.
- Give him plenty of raw material: old fabrics; paint supplies, including chalkboard paint or spray paint that makes textures; magazines and secondhand books to tear up; food to cook. Have him walk around his environment and "shop" for still-life items and elements for compositions.
- Teach your child how to really look at things. Shooting pictures through the car window with a disposable or digital camera is fun. Tell your child to shoot with no preconceived notions, and see what she comes up with.
- Allow your child to figure things out for himself: what to order at the bakery counter, how to work out an argument with a friend, what to wear on Halloween, where to go and what to see on a family trip. Show him that his decisions and opinions are important. Creative thinking is a great survival skill.
- Play music in your home. Borrow CDs from the library to broaden your scope, choosing unusual genres just for fun.
- When it's gift-giving time, encourage your child to make something: cook a meal; bake cupcakes; perform a comedy sketch, poem, or song; plant daffodils in Nana's yard.
- Give your child a Dream Diary to keep by her bedside. Writing down dreams can be the basis of a future story or painting, or just a record of what's on her mind.

## The Great Debate

### Which side is right?

#### What you need:

- paper
- pen or pencil
- poster board (optional)
- markers (optional)

#### What to do:

1. In advance, decide on a debate topic with your child. This could be about music, clothes, movies, sports, hairstyles — anything on which you have varying opinions.
2. Refine the topic to come up with a specific question or issue. For instance, you could debate whether skiing or snowboarding is a better sport, or whether Miley Cyrus is or is not talented. Select a judge and set a date for the debate.
3. Both you and your child should prepare your arguments before the debate. You might want to set guidelines such as presenting three points in support of your argument.
4. In the debate itself, each participant presents his arguments in front of a judge (perhaps your spouse or an older child). You might want to write your main points on poster board. Next, take ten minutes to think of rebuttal arguments. (Keep paper and pen handy for this.) Finally, each of you has two minutes to rebut the other's arguments.

## Daily Reading Fun

As May flowers start to bloom, take your child on a nature walk. Bring along art supplies so she can make a painting or drawing of the bugs, trees, birds, and spring flowers you encounter. Then, using a kid-friendly field guide, help her identify the flora and fauna she spotted.

## 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](http://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.



## Beyond Books

Abracadabra! Help your magnificent magician learn to juggle, make coins disappear, and perform amazing sleights of hand. All he needs is a top hat, wand, and a book of magic tricks. He can practice reading skills and following directions as he perfects his magic.

## 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/youreader](http://www.scholastic.com/youreader).

### About Your Parent Guide to Arrow

Your Parent Guide to Arrow is produced by the editorial staff at [Scholastic.com/parents](http://Scholastic.com/parents). For information on how to foster reading at home, age-appropriate booklists, and more, visit [www.scholastic.com/read](http://www.scholastic.com/read).