Puzzling thing--(puzzle books are one way to let children have fun and adventures while practicing their reading skills)

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Main content

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AS TEACHERS AND LIBRARIANS, IT may seem puzzling that some children don't like to read. Frequently challenged to transform reluctant readers into avid ones, we are constantly on the lookout for titles that will catch the eye and help children realize that books can open up many wonderful and different worlds. The following puzzle books are one way to let children have fun and adventures while practicing their reading skills. They are definitely designed to keep them turning the pages!

Can you spot the spotted dog?


Unpaged. $15.95. 0-385-32207-0.

Preschool to Grade 2.

For younger readers, this brightly colored picture book tests the powers of observation as well as memory. On the first page a Dalmatian dog is cleverly hidden in an outdoor scene and readers are asked, "Can you spot the spotted dog? If you can, turn the page..." On the next page they are asked to spot the dog and the little owl, until 12 creatures are finally discovered. The animals are carefully camouflaged and appear in different poses so it can be quite tricky to locate them. The last page holds a surprise involving a mirror and the question, "Can you spot the cheeky monkey?...


All the puzzles are self-contained, however if readers start at the beginning they can follow the adventures of five daring explorers who set out to find a long-lost treasure. Each puzzle comes with all the "documents" and information needed to solve the mystery, but clues and answers are provided at the end of the book. All puzzles involve deciphering curious codes and symbols. This title is at the advanced level in the popular Usborne series. Imaginative and challenging.


Eureka contains 12 episodes from history each representing an invention which changed the world significantly. Hidden in each scene are objects which definitely don't belong and the trick is to find out which items are out of place and...

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Many children enjoy these games so they have fun, and improve their reading skills at the same time. Use picture books with short, easy sentences, and let the children practice sounding out the words. The most important thing you can do is be patient and encouraging. Practice reading with your students wherever you go. Have them sound out the names of things you see as you go to recess or on field trips. This will keep learning fun and engaging for your students. “They should simply be reading with their kids—that’s it.” In other words, keep it light and fun. Books should make you laugh and smile, transport you to faraway lands, and transform you into dragon-slaying sleuths, making you feel all the feels along the way. Yes, audiobooks count as reading—and they can help children do it better. “Hearing someone reading a book confidently is a great way to experience fluency, which is the ability to read a text accurately, quickly, and with good expression,” says Elissa Mostransky, a grade-school reading teacher and mother of four. Her favorites: E. B. White reading Charlotte’s Web and The Magic Tree House series, which her boys listen to in the car on the way to and from soccer practice. Lateral Thinking Puzzles, unlike most puzzles, are inexact. In a sense, they are a hybrid between puzzles and storytelling. In each puzzle, some clues to a scenario are given, but the clues don’t tell the full story. The way this works is, you look at the answer (maybe you want to try the puzzle on your own first!), then read just the clues to your friends. Your friends must determine the answer by asking questions about it, which you may answer only with yes, no, or doesn’t matter. You can adjust the difficulty of the puzzle by varying the initial clues, throwing in red herrings, and so forth. The clues can all be taken at face value, although that’s not to say their implications can’t be misleading. #1. A man lives on the twelfth floor of an apartment building. How