

AROUND THE WORLD

AND HOME AGAIN: A LITERACY JOURNEY THROUGH THE NEWS

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When it comes to learning about what's happening around the world and in our own back yards, there's no better resource than the newspaper. Right at your family's fingertips is a wealth of information about places, events and people – and opportunities to expand your child's knowledge and improve his reading skills.

The journey can begin simply with a conversation about something you see or read together in the world news section. Asking questions is a good way to start the conversation, create a focus for reading and help build comprehension.

Incorporate your child's interests in the conversation. What does she think the national sport of that country is? What kind of music do people there listen to? What are the major industries? Who are the famous people from that country? If the article doesn't answer these questions, look for more information on the Internet or at the library.

Datelines in newspapers (usually found at the beginning of an article) identify where the article originated. With your child, take a trip using the datelines you find in the world news section. Pick one to begin with and then, using three or four others, plan a trip together. Consider the best way to get to the next location – train, airplane, car, boat? Talk about how the weather might change from location to location, plus food you might find, places to see, things to do and the different geographic features of each country.



Mark your trip on a map and keep track of the miles you travel. Use each new location as an opportunity to "file a news story" about the country to someone "at home." Make sure to answer the "W" questions – who, what, where, when and why – in the report. And of course, include the dateline.

Places aren't the only feature of interest in world news stories. These articles also tie the names of people from all over the world to particular events and countries. Talk with your child about some of the people you read about in the newspaper. Who are they? What jobs do they hold in their own countries? What is an equivalent job in our country: president, army general, member of Congress?

How does the writer feel about the person, and why? Why is this person in the newspaper – what events are also reported in the article? Is there a recent U.S. event your child knows about that is similar or connected? Helping children connect world events to their own experiences increases their understanding and deepens their knowledge about what they are reading.

After your tour of the world, you're probably ready to come home and find out what's happening in your own neighborhood. The local or metro news section of the newspaper provides lots of opportunities to show your child how learning and reading are relevant to daily life.