

Amari's Bike Adventure

By Rollins Center for Language & Literacy at the Atlanta Speech School

Illustrated by Maurice W. Jackson, Jr.

Author's Note

In *Amari's Bike Adventure*, Amari, the problem solver, confronts the challenge of riding a bicycle. With the same determination Amari had on her adventure to Zoo Atlanta, she tackles this challenge and takes control of her own experience. The Rollins Center for Language & Literacy at the Atlanta Speech School dedicates this book to all Atlanta's children, who we hope will become determined problem solvers like Amari.

At the Rollins Center, we want all children to discover the power of their voices for a lifetime. And, we recognize the impact parents have in making this possible. That's why we created the READ strategy, a research-based approach parents can use to read books with their children. By using this strategy, parents can engage children in conversation, nurture critical thinking, build language and vocabulary, and help children become powerful, determined learners and problem solvers.

The READ strategy is simple and fun. Follow the steps below to stimulate your child's imagination and expand her or his understanding of the world.

The READ Strategy:

R: Repeat the Book – Read the book several times with your child. The first couple of times you read, push-in, or teach, vocabulary, key events, and characters' thoughts and feelings. The next couple of times you read, pull-out, or have your child talk about, the same information by asking children questions and encouraging them to talk about the story.

E: Engage and Enjoy – Have fun while reading and encourage children to have fun as well. Use different voices for the characters and act out parts of the story. Another way to engage and enjoy is to use the PAT strategy for teaching vocabulary:

PAT the Vocabulary (adapted from Lea McGee)

P: point to the picture of the word

A: act out the word and encourage your child to act it out too

T: tell a child-friendly definition of the word

Throughout this book, we've noted vocabulary you can teach using the PAT strategy.

A: Ask Questions – By asking a variety of questions, especially why questions, parents can encourage children to think about what's happening in the story, while also encouraging critical thinking and problem solving.

D: Do More with the Book – Help your child make connections between the book and other activities. We provide a list of ideas at the end of the book that you can use to make this book come alive for your child.

As you read this book, look for places where we have identified vocabulary and information you can teach to your child. Also, provide opportunities for your child to show that she or he understands the story and vocabulary. The more discussion you have with your child about the book, the easier it will be for her or him to begin to incorporate the lessons and vocabulary of the story in her or his own conversations. Children love learning new words and new things. They also like to show you what they have learned, so encourage them to use vocabulary from the story during other parts of the day. We hope that you enjoy the story and will use the READ strategy with other books you and your child share together. Have fun!



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“Mama, where’s Will?” asked Amari as she came into the kitchen.

Point: Mama and Amari

“Your dad and Will are in the garage. Why don’t you go see what they’re doing?” Mama answered.

Curious, Amari opened the door and entered the garage.

Tell: Curious- want to know Act Out: Open door





“Hey guys. What are you up to?” she asked.

“We just decorated my bike with lights for the Lantern Parade,” replied Will.

Tell: Decorate- to make something look nice Point: Will, lights

Amari stepped closer to Will and his bike and asked, “Lantern Parade? What’s that?”

“It’s the kickoff parade to celebrate art on the Atlanta Beltline. People make homemade lanterns to carry during the parade,” Dad said as he attached the final light to the spokes of Will’s bike.

Tell: Attached - to fasten or join Point: Dad, spokes

After you read this page, say:

I'm thinking Amari is very excited about the Lantern Parade. She was very eager to start practicing riding her bike without training wheels; she wanted to go to the park and practice right away.

Amari squealed with excitement, "I want to ride my bike in the parade!"

Act Out: Squealed with excitement *Tell:* Parade - lots of people marching or walking together

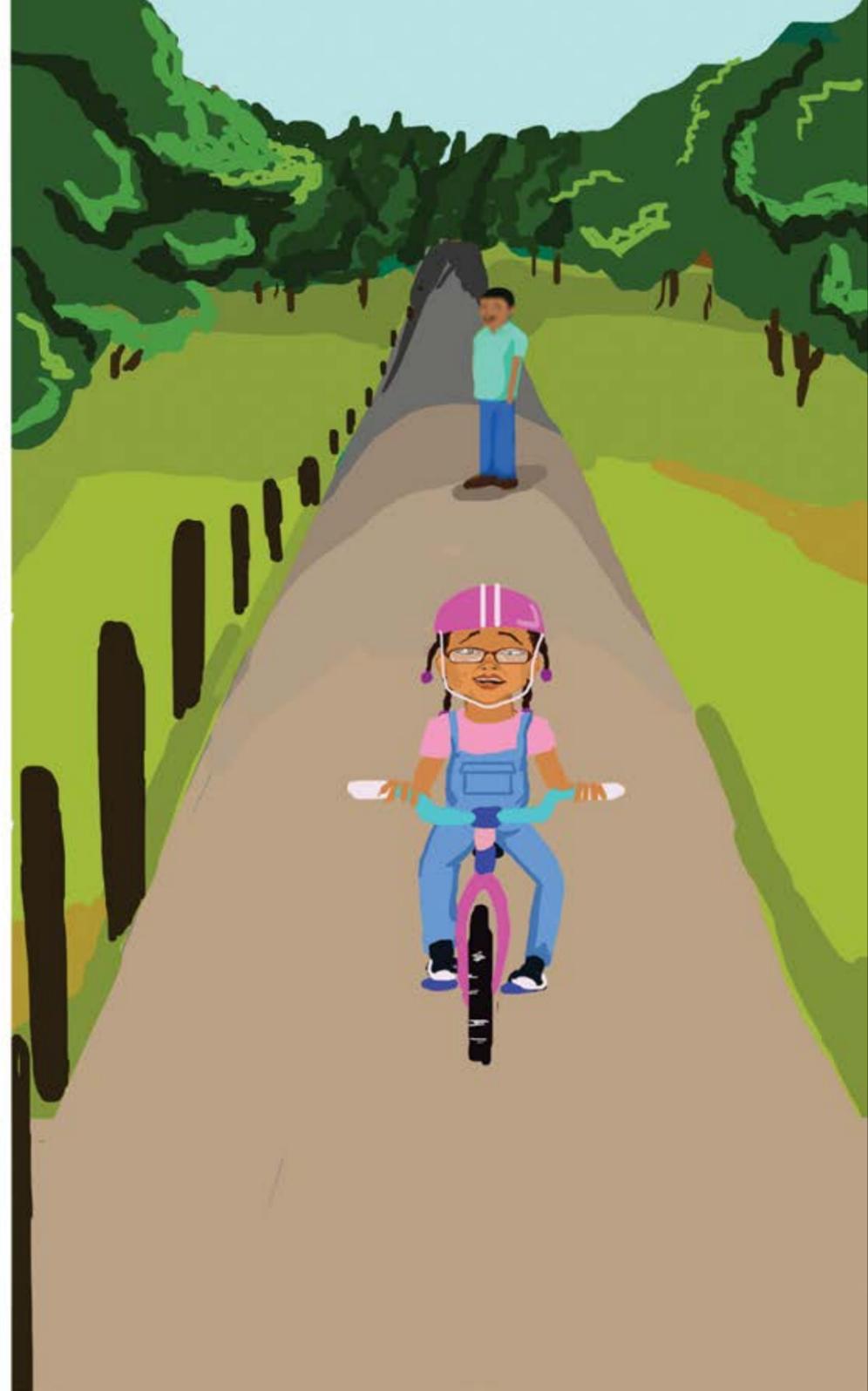
"Of course! But if you want to participate, you'll need more practice now that your training wheels are off," said Dad.

Tell: Participate - take part

"Can we practice today?" Amari asked. She could see herself riding a beautifully decorated bike in the Lantern Parade.

Dad responded, "Sure, we can go to Washington Park."





Amari and Dad arrived at the park. Amari climbed nervously on her bike as Dad held it to keep her steady.

Tell: Arrived - to get somewhere *Tell:* Steady - to keep still or balanced *Point:* bike

“Alright, Amari. You can do this,” Dad said. Amari tried to pedal on her own but quickly lost her balance and fell. Dad noticed Amari’s disappointment and said, “That’s okay. Let’s try again.” Amari slowly got back on her bike and pedaled a few feet before taking a hard tumble to the ground.

Tell: Disappointment - to become upset or sad *Act Out:* tumble

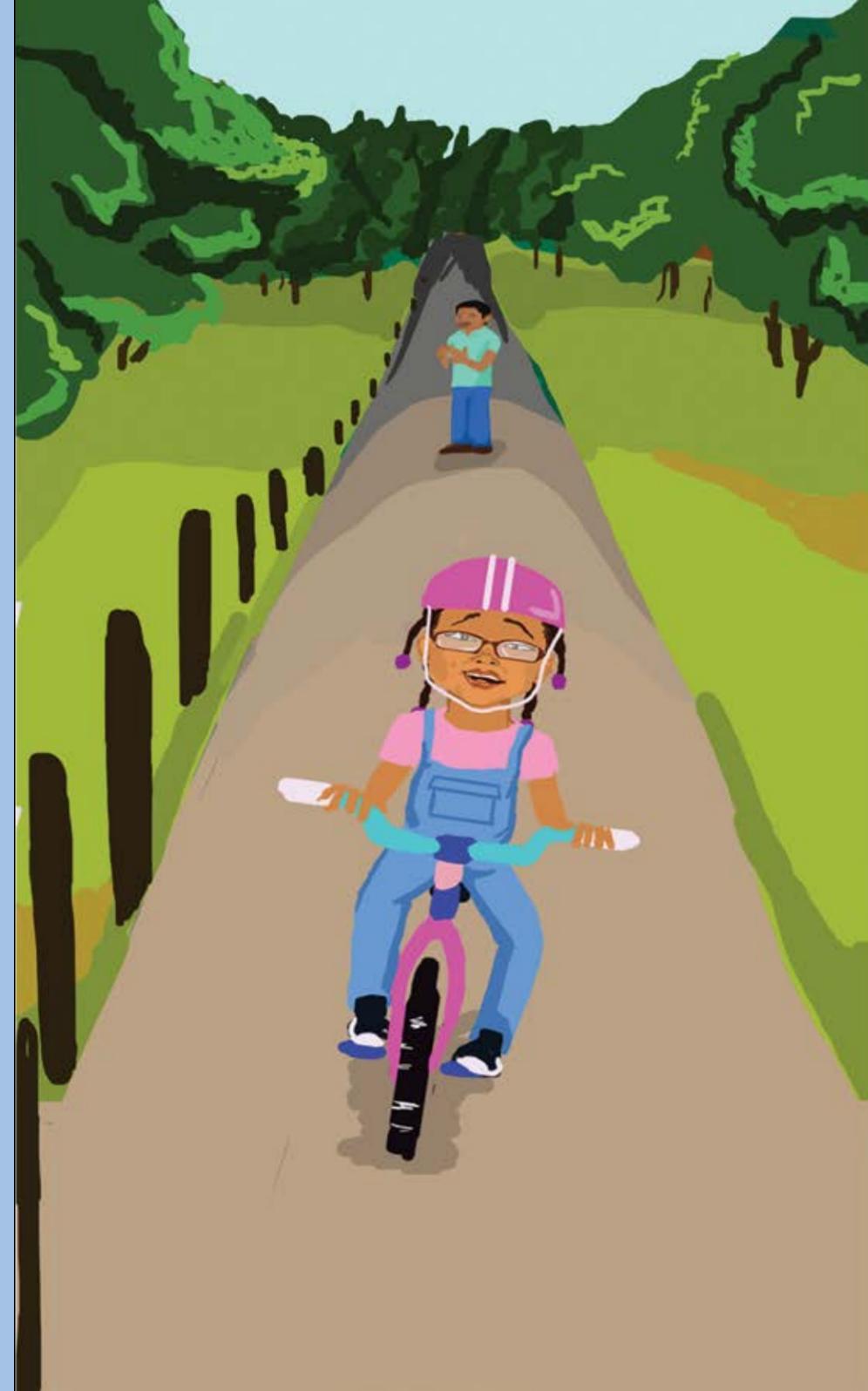
After you read this page, say:

Amari tried several times to ride her bike without training wheels but was not successful. I'm noticing she is very upset and disappointed. She is probably thinking that if she can't learn how to ride her bike then she will not be able to participate in the Lantern Parade.

Frustrated, Amari sat on the ground next to her bike.

Dad ran to her and asked, "Are you okay? Do you want to try riding again?" Amari took a deep breath and, after a few seconds, found the **courage** to continue. This time, she was able to finish a lap on the trail. As she began her second lap, she ran over a rock on the ground and crashed, this time scraping her knee. Amari cried, "I can't do this, Dad! I want to go home."

Tell: Frustrated - to feel angry or annoyed *Tell:* Courage - to do something that might scare you





“I know you’re frustrated, Amari, but it takes time to learn how to ride a bike once the training wheels are taken off,” Dad said, trying to encourage her. “You just have to keep practicing. Let’s get a bandage on your knee and then wash up for dinner. Mama and Will are waiting for us.”

Tell: Frustrated - to feel angry or annoyed *Tell:* Encourage - to give support

Without saying a word to Mama or Will, Amari raced upstairs, crying.

Act Out: Crying

“What happened? Is Amari okay?” asked Mama.

Dad replied, “She fell off her bike several times at the park and got discouraged. I don’t know if she’ll try again.”

Tell: Discouraged - to lose confidence that you can do something

Mama and Dad spent time thinking really hard of a way to help Amari. Finally Mama asked, “Will, don’t a lot of your friends ride their bikes near the skate park in Old Fourth Ward? Maybe you can take Amari there to see others practice.”

Act Out: Thinking Point: Skate park on map

Excitedly, Will agreed, “There are a lot of places she can practice riding her bike.”





As Amari arrived at the park with Will and Dad, she noticed the skateboarders and bikers who were riding around with ease.

Tell: Arrived - to get somewhere Point: Skateboarders, bikers

A police officer rode up on his bike and asked, "Why aren't you riding your bike?"

Point: police officer

Amari lowered her head and said softly, "I'm scared. I'm afraid I'll fall and hurt my knee again."

Act Out: Lowered, softly

The police officer replied, "You know, when I was your age, I fell off my bike several times before I could ride really well."

Amari lifted her face and asked, "Really? You did?"

Act Out: Lifted

"Yes, but I really wanted to learn, so I kept trying. You have to be determined and not give up," the police officer responded.

Tell: Determined-to not give up



After talking with the police officer, Amari decided to try again. As she got on her bike, a unicyclist rode by.

Point: Unicyclist *Tell:* Unicyclist - a person who rides a bike with one wheel

“Wow! Look at her!” Amari exclaimed.

Tell: Exclaimed - cried out with excitement

Dad explained, “She’s a unicyclist.”

After you read this page, say:

I’m thinking Amari is feeling encouraged after talking with the police officer and unicyclist. She realizes that in order to learn how to ride her bike she has to practice every day and be determined. She can’t give up.

Amari said, “I bet she had to practice a lot to be able to ride a bike with one wheel.”

The unicyclist overheard Amari and said, “Yes, I practice every single day. You get better with practice.”



After you read this page, say:
I'm noticing that even after Amari fell off her bike and hurt herself, she is not giving up. She is being brave and still trying. Amari is determined to learn how to ride her bike. She is not going to let anything get in her way.

After seeing all the riders at the park, Amari was filled with determination to learn to ride.

Tell: Determination - to not give up, to keep working at something until you get what you want

For weeks, she practiced and continued to get better and better.

The day of the parade finally arrived.

Tell: Arrived - the day has come

As Amari was waking up from her nap Mama said, "Come downstairs, Amari. Dad and Will have a surprise for you."





When Amari opened the garage door, Dad and Will shouted, “Surprise!”

Act Out: Shouted



Amari gasped, “Oh, wow! This is amazing. I can’t believe you decorated my bike.”

Act Out: Gasped *Tell:* Gasped - to take a deep breath with your mouth open *Point:* Bike

Dad pulled Amari aside and said, “You’ve been working really hard and we believe you’re ready to ride in the parade. There are going to be lots of people there. If you want to, you can get off your bike and walk with the other participants.”

After you read this page, say:

I bet Amari is feeling very special after her family surprised her by decorating her bike. They really believe that she is ready to ride in the Lantern Parade.



Amari was excited to see so many people at the parade. There were bikers, skateboarders, and strollers everywhere. People were holding beautiful and bright lanterns.

Point: Bikers, skateboarders, strollers, lanterns

As the parade began, Amari became overwhelmed by the people passing by, but she was still determined to try.

Tell: Overwhelmed - Feeling nervous or stressed.
Tell: Determined - to not give up, to keep working at something until you get what you want

Amari got on her bike and tried to balance. She was shaky at first, but saw the people who had encouraged her along the way.

Tell: Balance - to keep steady and not fall
Tell: Encouraged- to give support
Act Out: Shaky *Point:* people, police officer, unicyclist



Amari thought, "I can do this!"

Act Out: Thought

She slowly started pedaling and picked up speed. Soon she joined the crowd, singing and cheering as she rode.

Point: Crowd

After you read this page, say:

Look at Amari. She's riding along with all of the other people in the Lantern Parade. I bet she feels proud. She feels good about herself.



After you read this page, say:

Amari was successful! She worked so hard to learn how to ride her bike and never gave up. Her determination paid off.

After the parade, the family gathered in Piedmont Park.

Point: Family Tell: Gathered - to come together

Will shouted, “Way to go, Amari!”

Mama said, “We’re so proud of you.”

“Amari, you did it!” Dad said excitedly.

Amari exclaimed, “Yes, I did it! I knew I could. You do get better with practice.”

Tell: Exclaimed - cried out with excitement

The READ Strategy



Thanks for reading *Amari's Bike Adventure* with your child. Now it's time for your child to be the storyteller. After reading the book a few times and pushing in the information on each page, let your child retell the story. As you go through the book again, encourage your child to reconstruct the meaning of the story by asking questions on each page. For example, "What is happening here?" or "How does Amari feel about what just happened?"

R – Repeat the Book

First Read (events): Look at the cover, read the title and say, "Amari wants to ride her bike in the Lantern Parade that is happening on the Atlanta Beltline. First she has to learn how to ride her bike without training wheels. I wonder if she will be able to do it. Let's read and find out." As you read, explain any words your child may not understand like *participate, steady, disappointment, encourage, and determined*. Have fun acting out words like *squealed, crashed, thinking, shouted, and gasped*. Point out things in the illustrations also to help support the vocabulary. During the first read, focus on what is happening in the story—the events. After finishing the first read, ask the why question suggested in the **A (Ask Questions)** section of this guide.

Second Read (emotions): Before reading say, "Remember Amari was determined to learn how to ride her bike without training wheels so she could participate in the Lantern Parade. It was not easy for her and she had to practice a lot. I wonder how Amari felt while learning how to ride her bike. Let's read and find out." Follow the same procedure as the first read with the vocabulary, but focus on emotions or feelings of the characters during this read. Say things like, "I'm thinking Amari was feeling very upset and disappointed when she fell off her bike." Or at the end of the story, "I bet Amari feels so pleased and proud of herself. She worked so hard to learn how to ride her

bike and never gave up." After finishing the read, ask the why question for the second read given in the **A (Ask Questions)** section of this guide.

Third Read (child tells the story): Before reading, look at the cover again. Say: "Now that you know this story so well, you can help me read it. Remember Amari wanted to learn how to ride her bike so she could participate in the Lantern Parade. I wonder how we know that it was so important for Amari to learn how to ride her bike. Let's read it again and find out." As you go through the book, instead of reading all the words, encourage your child to tell you what is happening on each page and how the characters feel about what is happening. Use vocabulary from the book to restate what your child says if he/she does not use the vocabulary (for instance if your child says, "Amari didn't give up," you could say, "Yes, Amari was determined to learn how to ride her bike, she did not give up." Ask the why question for the third read after you finish.

E – Engage and Enjoy

In addition to acting out words as described in the first read, use different voices for the different characters when you read. Encourage your child to act out things in the story with you. Examples: "Show me how you look when you're frustrated." "Can you gasp like Amari?" "Show me how you look when you are proud."

A – Ask Questions

Remember that the talk surrounding the book is the most important thing. Encourage thinking and conversations by asking these questions at the end of each read:

After read 1: Why did Amari not give up when she was learning how to ride her bike?

After read 2: How was Amari feeling while learning how to ride her bike?

After read 3: How do we know that it was important to Amari to learn how to ride her bike?

D – Do More with the Book

Continue the fun of the story by choosing some of these activities to complete with your child.

Talk with your child and ask him/her if there is something he/she would like to try for the first time. While learning the new skill, remind him/her of Amari and how she was determined and worked really hard.

With your child, locate on a map the places mentioned in the book: The Atlanta Beltline, Washington Park, Old 4th Ward skate park, and Piedmont Park. Look at and talk about where these places are located compared to where you live. Take a trip to these places and talk about the different people and things you see there.

Amari showed courage and determination when she learned how to ride her bike. Ask your child if he/she can remember a time when it took courage or determination to do something he/she was afraid to do at first. Encourage your child to draw a picture and write about it: "I showed courage/determination when_____."

If your child is interested, go to the library and find more books about unicyclists, skateboarders, or bike riders to learn more about them.

Read *Amari's Adventure* by the Rollins Center for Language & Literacy with your child. Ask your child if it reminds him/her of *Amari's Bike Adventure*. Talk about ways the two stories are alike and the ways they are different.

Take a field trip to a park. Walk around and discuss the different things you see...people, trees, animals, etc. Try different foods that might be offered and talk about the taste, textures, temperature, etc.

Make homemade lanterns and plan to participate in the annual Lantern Parade on the Atlanta Beltline. Invite your family and friends to make lanterns and join you at the parade.

Surprise a friend by decorating something special for him/her. Amari loved the way Will and her dad decorated her bike for the parade. It was a great surprise that really made Amari feel special.

Founding Partners – Mayor's Reading Club 2014

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*As of April 18, 2014

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Information



www.atlantaspeechschool.org



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Amari really wants to ride her bicycle in the Lantern Parade on the Atlanta Beltline. But will she learn how to ride her bike without training wheels in time for the parade?



Amari's strong will and determination will inspire all readers to never give up. Amari's Bike Adventure includes ideas for adults to use while reading, to build their children's language and vocabulary skills, and to prepare them to be on a path to read to learn by 3rd grade.

US \$7.99



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