



RAR 116 – Reading with Babies, Connection Parenting, and Getting Books into the Hands of Every Child

Sarah: You're listening to the Read-Aloud Revival podcast. This is the podcast that helps you make meaningful and lasting connections with your kids through books.

Hello, hello, Sarah Mackenzie here and you've got episode 116 of the Read-Aloud Revival. Today I've got a guest here to talk with us about reading with babies, about connection parenting, and about a project she's got going on to get books into the hands of every child. It's a really, really fun conversation so I'm glad you've joined us. Before we get started can I ask you a favor? We would love it if you would go to the Read-Aloud Revival on iTunes and leave us a rating and/or a review—those help us so much because every time we get more ratings and reviews or people hit that subscribe button in iTunes, iTunes shows the podcast to more families and that means that more families get the tools and resources and encouragement they need to make meaningful and lasting connections with their kids through books. So appreciate all of you who took a couple of minutes to do that for us. We read every review and we're so grateful for it. Just go to iTunes and search for Read-Aloud Revival. OK, I cannot wait to introduce you to today's guest, so let's get on with the Show.

1:43 Meet Pam Leo

Pam Leo is an independent scholar in Human Development, she is a parent-educator, a certified child birth educator, a doula, a parent, a grandparent; she wears many hats and she's

been studying human behavior since her first child was born in 1972. She's explored child development psychology, sociology, and anthropology, in an effort to understand the parent-child bond and how we can best parent our kids starting from the moment we find out they're on the way. She's the author of a book called, Connection Parenting and she also teaches workshops including one called "Bonding with Your Baby." So, today I invited her to the Read-Aloud Revival to tap into her wisdom as we talk about connecting with our tiniest children through books. I want to talk about reading aloud with babies and I couldn't think of somebody better than to do it with than Pam Leo. Pam, we are so glad to have you here today, welcome to the Read-Aloud Revival.

Pam: I am so excited to do this with you, Sarah. I listen to the podcast all the time so I'm totally honored to do this with you.

Sarah: Well, we had been wanting to do an episode on reading with babies and we had been admiring your work at the Book Fairy Pantry project which (we'll talk about a little bit later), so I just knew it would be a great conversation. You have so much enthusiasm and such a heart for connection between parents and kids and between children and books, really, you're just like a perfect fit for the Read-Aloud Revival podcast. So, before we get started can you tell us just a little bit about yourself; maybe a little bit more about your family and your work?

3:19 Marrying two loves

Pam: Sure. Well, I'm supposedly retired but I've never been busier. Children's books my entire adult life have been a passion for me and there's so many of them that I had never read, so I



always buy them, so moving into the Book Fairy Project was just a natural progression from the Connection Parenting. It was a way to marry both of my loves so I get to do both because what I do a lot of today is talk with parents still about connection but about connecting through reading aloud to their children.

Sarah: Now, you homeschooled your own daughters, is that right?

Pam: That's right.

Sarah: And then, you've taught parenting programs in the prison system.

Pam: I actually worked at the main correctional center with inmate parents and the rate of illiteracy in the prisons is between sixty and seventy percent. So, when I wrote Connection Parenting I made sure that I wrote it on a fifth grade level and that was a challenge but also I recorded it as an audio book, number one because I love audio books but I also wanted it to be accessible to all parents regardless of their level of literacy. And I worked with teen parents and parents in recovery, pretty much parent in most situations in life.

Sarah: That's amazing. I had no idea the illiteracy rate was so high in the prison system.

Pam: Oh, illiteracy in prisons, it's so bad that inmates who do get help, like get their GED while they're incarcerated or get where their reading level up there, the rate recidivism drops dramatically for the people who learn to read better while they're incarcerated.

Sarah: Wow.

Pam: It's amazing.

Sarah: Wow.

Pam: So, they're not coming back at the same rate as people who still are unable to read when they're released.

5:18 Our effectiveness as parents

...

Sarah: So, I know you say that our effectiveness as parents is in direct proportion to the strength of the bond that we have with our child. Can you talk more about that? What do you mean by that?

Pam: Well, there's a quote that I love that I included in my book and it's actually from a song by Bob Dillon and it goes "When you got nothin' you got nothin' to lose," and if children are going to care about what we think, how we feel, what we want, that's going to be because they are connected to us and have a bond with us. We don't care about those things with people that we're not connected to and we don't have a bond with. And so, if we're going to expect them to follow our role model, to listen to what we care about, what we need, what matters, we need to have that bond with them, and for them, they come into the world biologically wired to have that bond with another human being. One of the things I say is "Connection is what turns human babies into human beings."

Sarah: Oh, that's beautiful. Well, you're speaking my language here because you're talking about connection which is, of course, what we're all about at Read-Aloud Revival, I love it so much, and I'm glad that you mentioned the effects of the connection on babies because that's what I want to talk about. I want to talk about reading with babies. I think, sometimes, parents question if it makes sense to read to babies especially if they're rolling around, you can't tell if they're listening, or they don't seem to be paying



attention because they're chewing on their toes, what does your research say? What do you know about reading with babies?

6:38 Reading with babies

Pam: Everything that I, well, I'll do both—my personal experience and all of my research—but all of my research says that to start, there are people who read while they're in utero, and they've actually done research that shows this one study that they did they read the same story over and over, it was Dr. Suess actually, and when the baby was born they read the story and the baby showed signs of recognition because babies hear after the fifth neo month so they come out, if you've been reading to them in utero they out, they recognize that, but even if you don't do that, if you can start just as soon as possible, the first day, the first week, and they love our voice the best of any voice, it doesn't even matter if we're reading them a children's book, we might be cramming for an exam and reading aloud. Mem Fox and her book *Reading Magic* talks about having had the student who read a baby at the time she was still in school and that that's what she did, she read the papers she had to read aloud to her baby so she could be both close with her baby and get her school work done. It doesn't really matter what we're reading. It's the closeness and listening to the rhythm of the written word that babies are just entranced by it, and they begin to associate books with being held, with being loved, with having attention, and so, right from the very beginning they love books because it is love to them.

Sarah: Yeah, it is they associate words and language and reading with that warmth and love and connection which is ...

Pam: Absolutely.

Sarah: ... so beautiful. I love the book *Reading Magic*. We'll put a link to that in the Show Notes, that's Mem Fox's book that Pam just mentioned for you listeners who caught that, we'll put a link to it in the Show Notes—it's really wonderful. I'd love to get Mem Fox on the podcast at some point to chat about it. One of the things about that story, about the mom who was cramming for a test and who was reading, I remember when my oldest, Audrey, who's now 16 as we're recording this, when she was brand new I wanted to read but she was a very high maintenance baby, shall we say. She didn't like to be put down, she didn't like my attention directed elsewhere, but I found I could read my own books as long as I read them out loud. I could read them because she would be quiet, and it didn't matter that she didn't understand because I wasn't reading it for her to get the book, I just wanted her to stop crying so I could read the book. I forgot that until you just said that.

Pam: That's right. And she got to be held and she got to read, that's a win-win.

Sarah: Exactly. Exactly. So, what kind of expectations... one of the things I've noticed talking to parents about reading to toddlers or preschoolers is that we do tend to have that sort of anxiety about what was appropriate for our child to do in their reading but what you're saying, if I'm hearing you right, is that it doesn't really matter. It doesn't matter if your baby's are asleep or if they're awake, it doesn't matter ...

Pam: Right.

Sarah: Right? OK.



9:31 'Reading Voice'

Pam: It really doesn't. The reading voice is so different than the speaking voice, it has a different rhythm, and it's very comforting, so when they're little babies they really will just be in your arms but once they can crawl away and that sort of thing if we had started reading really early they're attracted by it. Do you know what I used to do with my youngest daughter who is now grown with children of her own? But, I said, "OK, it's time to go upstairs, we're going to read, it's time for bed." She wouldn't want to come upstairs and so I would go to the top of the stairs and sit on the top step and start reading the book LOUD.

Sarah: You are brilliant. You just solved my bedtime issue because we've got two 5 year olds and a 6 year old who should come upstairs when I tell them it's bedtime, but they don't, and now I know if I sit on the top step and start reading their story that will totally work. I don't know why I've never thought of that before.

Pam: They don't want to miss a word of it.

Sarah: And let's talk favorites because I know you've got to have some good book recommendations for babies. Do you have any favorites that you love to recommend to parents who are looking for something fun to read with their babies? Because, of course ...

10:37 Favorite books for babes

Pam: Oh, I do, and oh gosh. One of the things I did want to finish saying, too, so if we maybe haven't read to them as early, if we didn't get that start and they're a little older when we start reading to them, I find that for toddlers, especially, interactive books really hold their

attention. So, if there are flaps to lift and things to touch—not so much ones that have batteries and can talk and those sorts of things, but just lift the flap kind of things, and tactile kind of things, those really draw them in. But it really doesn't matter and if we keep it short, like have a story before breakfast or before you get out of bed, all through the day, little spots where you can read a little short story, but anything with rhythm and rhyme and repetition, they love that. And what I especially love is songs. There are so many songs like Raffi songs that have been turned into books, so if we start singing those songs to them really early, then when they're in our laps and we have the song that's been turned into a book they know what's coming next because we've been reading it to them...

Sarah: Yes!

Pam: ... and so then when they move a little further and they actually are reading words they also know what's coming and one of the things that I figured out, there's a woman in my building and I didn't know this when I first knew her but she had a motorcycle accident and she had a traumatic brain injury and she could no longer read as an adult, and I had been giving her books for her granddaughter without knowing this, and when I found out I said, "I have some books that I think will work really well for you," and it was the Rosemary Wells books that are like Twinkle Twinkle and Itsy Bitsy Spider ...

Sarah: Yes.

Pam: ... she remembered the songs so when she would turn the pages the words made sense to her and it made me cry, I was just so thrilled, and she was just so thrilled. She said, "I read this to my granddaughter because I remembered the song." And so that really sent me in a whole other



direction too, I now have a little song book that's called Singing Is the Key to Literacy which it so is. There's so much you can do with toddlers with songs and there's the book You are My Sunshine, there's all kinds of the Raffi songs are books, so those are some of my absolute favorites.

Sarah: Those Raffi books, Baby Beluga and Down By the Bay. I remember we had those board books when mine were babies and they loved them.

Pam: They do, they absolutely love them.

Sarah: You said tactile and that's ...

Pam: Even if you don't have the book with you, you can sing it ...

Sarah: Exactly.

Pam: ... if you're somewhere.

Sarah: The tactile thing, too, because often all of my babies loved those books that had puppies where you'd rub the ear that was soft, the sandpaper tongue, they loved those.

Pam: Something hiding behind the flap, like who's in there?

Sarah: They love it. They love that, especially when you've read it twenty thousand times and they know. You watch them wiggle with anticipation. They just know what's behind that door. So good.

13:57 Sign language books & wordless books

Pam: They do. They know what's coming. There's two other favorites that I have. One is sign language books because I am a major fan of babies learning, even if it's four or five signs, it totally changes the whole connection between

the parent and child. If they can put their little fingers together and go "more" and we know what they mean, that's connection. It's connection. And there's loads of them. I did an article on it once called Signs of Connection and the other one is wordless books. I love wordless books because then a 4 year old sibling can read a wordless book to their 2 year old sibling because they can just ... imagination reader ... that's a term I just coined. A Facebook post came across this adorable little girl reading to her cat and it was clearly a chapter book and she was clearly not even school age and she was just inventing it. She was imagining this story that she was reading to her cat who was loving every word of it, and I used to call it "baby reading" because I've seen babies pick up books and if they've been read to enough they will do the whole thing, turn the pages, say the words, turn another page, so I always called it "baby reading" but when I saw this post I was like, well, she's not a baby but she's clearly not at reading age yet either, so I thought she's using her imagination to be a reader so I just called it "imagination reading" ...

Sarah: That's a perfect term. It's such a good term, it's such an apt term for exactly what that is. One of my favorite wordless books is Pancakes for Breakfast by Tomie dePaola.

Pam: Me too, me too. You want to know what I did with that?

Sarah: What?

Pam: I always take my mom to IHOP on Wednesday, it's just her thing. The Read Aloud Fifteen Minutes they feature different projects and this one project that got featured was called restaurant readers and they took books and they laminated them and then hole-punched them and



zip tied them so that you could turn the pages and brought them to restaurants and because they were laminated they could be wiped off between everyone who used them, so I made one, Pancakes for Breakfast to take to them at IHOP and they loved it...

Sarah: I bet they did. It's so perfect.

Pam: It was so perfect. It was really great.

Sarah: I also love, I'm sure you like this one, too — Good Night, Gorilla by Peggy Rathmann.

Pam: I have such a sweet story to tell you about Good Night, Gorilla.

Sarah: Oh good.

Pam: I would go into the county jail and I work with parents there to coach them on reading aloud to their children over the phone because for many of them that's the only way (over the phone) they stay connected to their children. And, I mean, how do you talk to 3 year olds on the phone? It's quite challenging but if you could read them a story. So, I said to the men ...

Sarah: This is so smart.

Pam: ... it was the men's class at the time, I said if you could find out what your children's favorite books are I will find them for you and I will bring them and you will have them to read to them. And so this one dad said to me, "I have three year old twins," and he said, "Do you think you could get me Good Night, Gorilla?" And I said, "Well, sure. That might be a little challenging to read on the phone seeing as it's mostly a wordless book." And he said, "Yeah, but you know the little mouse with the banana, it's on every page, and I could say to them "Where's the mouse with the banana?" and I was thinking this dad knows his stories.

Sarah: Oh, no kidding.

Pam: And so I left my time with them, I went around the corner to one of my favorite book thrift shops, walked in, what was the first book I found?

Sarah: No way!

Pam: Good Night, Gorilla. I bought it, back in my car, go back around the block, and dropped it off at the jail and said, "Make sure [this person] gets this book."

Sarah: That is amazing. Oh my goodness.

Pam: I couldn't believe it.

Sarah: And, I can hear dad's voice over the phone and the kids picture it in their imagination or maybe they have a copy of it on their lap ...

Pam: Well, we got them two copies so we mailed home a copy and he has a copy.

Sarah: Oh gosh, I cannot love that any more. Oh my goodness.

Pam: I know, it was so great. Plus, if you think about it, say their favorite book was Thomas the Train or something, and so the dad gets on the phone or the mom gets on the phone and says, "Oh look, I got a book from our library here to read to you tonight. Do you like Thomas?" So, here's this child on the other end going, "Thomas!? Thomas is my favorite!" — instant connection!

Sarah: Yep.

Pam: Instant.

Sarah: Instantly. I'm trying to think of some other wordless books that our listeners may not have heard of. Maybe the Peter Spiers books, like Rain, and there's a Noah's Ark one, and I'm trying



to think what else. He's done a lot of wordless books that are just ...

Pam: And have you seen Chalk?

Sarah: I don't think so. Chalk?

Pam: Oh my goodness! It's called Chalk.

Sarah: K.

Pam: It is one ... it's new, fairly new, I think ... but it was new to me when I got introduced to it a couple of months ago, and it's about these three children who come onto a playground and there's this big dinosaur thing that you climb on, or whatever...

Sarah: Oh, I see it, I just looked it up.

Pam: ... and there's this bag hanging there of chalk, and they look in it and they take out the chalk and they start drawing on the pavement, and whatever they draw happens. This one girl drew butterflies and all of a sudden butterflies come up off the pavement and this whole thing, so there's two girls and a boy, and the boy gets this most mischievous look on his face, and he draws this tyrannosaurus rex, really ferocious and up it springs, and they're all terrified and they run to hide in the slide, and he's coming after them, and I won't tell you the ending because it's too cool how it ends, but I can't recommend that book highly enough, called Chalk. I can't think of the author right at this moment.

Sarah: I'm looking at it online as you described it, it's Bill Thompson, and we will put a link to the Show Notes, and I'm going to get my hands on this because the illustrations look fantastic.

Pam: It is fabulous and the ending is just unbelievable, the ending of the book. I just won't ruin it for anybody because it's just so spectacular.

Sarah: Now we're all going to scramble out to our libraries. The library hold list just got very long on Chalk.

OK, so before we hopped on, you told me about some research you dug up. Can you tell our listeners about that because I loved hearing what you had to say about that?

20:20 Brain-building

Pam: So, I started researching, I do this all the time—it's so much fun, I'll put "the benefits of ..." and whatever it is I want to know, so I put "the benefits of children hearing live story-telling" and woaah, a couple of articles came up that were just so exciting to me that were saying when you hear someone telling a story, and I'm thinking reading probably as well, that it isn't even the story part of your brain that becomes activated ; if they're telling about "I was cold and hungry"—those parts of your brain that would have to do with being cold or being hungry also light up, so there's all this brain activity that is happening when we're listening to a story. And so, one of the things I had said is well, no wonder that children who have been read to from birth to school-age start out with such an advantage in being able to learn to read because the best way that I show it to parents is legos, and they have those little mats that you can build on?

Sarah: Yeah.

Pam: OK, this mat is your child's brain at birth and every story you read to them, every song you sing to them, add another lego, add another lego, add another lego. Every story, every song. Do you want to send your child off to school or homeschool with this size brain or this size brain? Because every one you add is going to increase what they have to work with. And, it's just such a



visual way of getting it—how much it matters that we read to them and sing to them.

Sarah: I love that metaphor. I love that visual image—that’s exactly what Jim Trelease spent the entire book basically, *The Read-Aloud Handbook*, convincing us of, I think. Is, basically, we know for certain that children who are read to have better vocabulary, and the vocabulary at kindergarten-age is a big indicator of how hard schooling will be, so we can set our kids up for success—it’s exactly like you’re saying, we’re just piling those legos on with every story that we read aloud.

Pam: Oh, his book was the first one that sold/turned me on to how important it is to read to children. That book is the foundation of the literacy movement, in my opinion.

Sarah: It really is. It’s the first book I read where I realized. It was like a water-shed moment for myself because I realized we don’t just read aloud until our kids can read. I always thought yes, of course, you read aloud to kids because they can’t read to themselves. And then once they can read to themselves you set them loose, and that was the first book that challenged that idea for me and said, no no, reading aloud is a value all of its own and it should still continue to be done. And I knew, instinctively, that I enjoyed being read to long after I could read on my own but I needed that book to convince me to show me how much it mattered.

23:13 Building a 'Bridge'

Pam: Absolutely. There was one day, my daughters were seven years apart so it was really hard to read-aloud something that was appropriate for both of them...

Sarah: Yes.

Pam: ... but, one new year’s day we were supposed to go to this party and we wake up to it’s snowing and it’s like little snow, big snow, and it was going and going, and I thought there’s no way we’re going to end up leaving our road today. And so I said, “Why don’t you get one of the books that you got for Christmas and we’ll start reading that,” and it was *Bridge to Terabithia*.

Sarah: Oh!

Pam: And we started reading that aloud. We ended up stopping mid-afternoon to eat the potluck dish we had made that we were obviously not taking anywhere, and we finished the entire book that day. It was the first time we had ever read a whole chapter book in one sitting.

Sarah: Wow.

Pam: I mean, they’ll never forget it. I’ll never forget it. That day will just stand out in our minds forever, plus it is such an incredible book, but I could barely talk at the end of the day.

Sarah: Oh yeah, for sure.

Pam: To just hear them say, “Just one more chapter, one more chapter, one more page, one more chapter, you can’t stop now.” It’s the best; it doesn’t get any better than that.

Sarah: I agree. I completely agree. When my kids go, “Just one more,” especially when I’m thinking it’s past their bedtime but I’m like, eh, can I read you just a little bit more? That’s when you know you’ve stumbled on a winner. Can you tell us about the book, *Fairy Pantry Project*?



24:59 The Book Fairy Pantry Project

Pam: I would love to tell you about it. So, I am a great-grandmother and that is because my granddaughter had a baby two years ago and I knew that one of the most important things in his life was going to be that they read to him so I was writing a letter, I was a doula, so I also got to be at the birth (only I wasn't in the role of doula but there were like four doulas in the room because so many people in my family are doulas) and I was writing this letter to my granddaughter telling her how important it was going to be to read to David every day and at her baby shower they did this beautiful thing where they had these cards and people wrote promise cards. And some people wrote, "I'll bake cookies with him" or "I'll take him fishing" and so my promise card was "You will always have the best books." And so, when I was writing this letter I said I will make sure that he has books all the time, and you please make sure that you read to him, and somehow that letter morphed into the poem which became "Please Read to Me." And, I thought wow, I don't even write poetry (sometimes I do, but not usually), and I thought this is an awesome poem I wonder who would be interested in it so I started Googling "early literacy, family literacy" and these same statistics kept coming up on every site, that two-thirds of the 15.5 billion children living in poverty in this country do not own even one book. I was dumbfounded.

Sarah: Can you repeat that? Repeat that statistic because that's mind-blowing.

Pam: So, the 15.5 billion children living in poverty in this country do not have even one book to call their own. I just couldn't believe it. And it just kept

coming up on site after site, 10 million in this country who do not own one book, I just couldn't imagine that this could be, and I'm like, I as a private citizen can do something about this. Yes, there are all these literacy organizations and I thought I don't know how but I'm going to do something about this. And then a few days later I was at my moms and her television was on and they were talking about gearing up for a food drive for the food pantries. And I was like food pantries? Food pantries? So, one in five children is food insecure and one in four is not learning to read. Bingo. We already have in place every community has food pantries so the very families who are using the food pantries are the very families who don't have books in the home. The number one indicator that children will arrive at school ready to learn to read is the number of books in their home in the preschool years...

Sarah: Yes.

Pam: ... not their parent's education level. I mean, and of course, being read to, but they're not going to be read to if there are no books in the home.

Sarah: Exactly. Kind of hard to do it when they're not available. And, I think Jim Trelease mentions that too in *The Read-Aloud Handbook*, just that even if they don't pick up off the shelf and read, just the sheer number of books, regardless of how much those books are read, it's kind of astounding. The presence of books.

Pam: It is.

Pam: And so, being the Good-Will shopper that I am, I'm just a major fan of repurposing and recycling and all that. I knew there was no shortage of gently used books in this country. They're everywhere. And so I thought well, what if the people who have books instead of just



dropping them at their local thrift store, wherever, if they could bring them to the Food Pantries and they could be given to the people who need them, so it's kind of a Robin Hood kind of project, in a way—not that I steal the books from the rich and give them to the poor, but it's in that direction—it gives children, especially, this is one of the things I love so much about it, is that it's children helping children to end literacy. And so I do this circle of literacy; so we do book drives at the schools so they bring books to the school, donate them, I get them to the food pantries, the parents come to the food pantries, pick out books, which I mean if you're struggling to buy enough food, you don't have a budget to buy children's books, so how often do you get to be the one who picks out the books for your children? I mean, one of the things I learn from working with the incarcerated parents was that no matter what their parenting circumstances, every parent desperately wants to do for their own children. Even though they appreciate everything anyone else does for their children they want to do for their own children, so they have three children, oh, buddy loves dinosaurs, let's get him this book on dinosaurs. And Sally loves horses, well, look at this horse book, let's get a board book for the baby. So when those books come home they get to be the hero, they have presents for their children. And they're way more invested in reading them to them. It's a win-win just all the way around. So I started with one food pantry and I went and said if I bought you books would you give them out on the food pantry day? And they said absolutely.

Sarah: Oh, goodness.

Pam: And it just started with that and then I went forward with it as a project and here we are. It'll be three years in October, it's in other states. My

goal for it is for it to be in every food pantry, first in Maine and then every food pantry in the country, every food pantry in the world, and it's just growing. Now that we have Facebook, it's in New Zealand because somebody in New Zealand saw my post. It's just amazing how the word can spread now that we have Facebook. I am just so excited to think about. It just made me so sad to think of 10 million children going to bed at night without being read a bedtime story. That's not OK.

Sarah: No, and just exactly what you're saying about parents so wanting to do right by their children and the fact that they don't have the resources to get books, if they don't have the resources to buy food, they don't have the resources to go buy books, and to make it convenient and to be told, 'Here, choose any of these books!' It's just so beautiful. One of the things you say on your site is only the children with books can read and only the children who can read will thrive. And I read that three times and my heart started beating a little faster, because yes!

Pam: It's true. It's totally will impact their standard of living and their quality of life.

Sarah: OK, if you're listening to this podcast right now and your heart just started beating fast and you thought, 'I want to do that in my community,' I want to send you to Pam's website which is BookFairyPantryProject.com. We will, of course, have a link to it in the Show Notes at the Read-Aloud Revival (www.ReadAloudRevival.com/116) but again, that's BookFairyPantryProject.com and you can learn how to get involved there because every child in our community deserves to own their very own book.



32:07 Let the Kids Speak

Now, it's time for Let the Kids Speak. This is my favorite part of the podcast where kids tell us about their favorite stories that have been read-aloud to them.

Child1: I'm **[**inaudible**]**. [Mom: and how old are you?] 6. [Mom: where are you from?] Canada. [Mom: and what's one of your favorite books?] Ramona. [Mom: why do you like the Ramona books?] Because she's really silly. [Mom: she's silly?] Mmm. [Mom: like, what does she do?] She grabs toothpaste and twirls it and twists it. [Mom: she squeezed all the toothpaste into the sink?] Mmm.

Child2: [Mom: what's your name?] Isaac. [Mom: and Isaac, how old are you?] 4. [Mom: where are you from?] Canada. [Mom: what is one of your favorite books?] Ralph on the Motorcycle. [Mom: Ralph on the Motorcycle? Why is that one of your favorite books?] He makes sound to make the motorcycle drive. [Mom: he has to make sound to make the motorcycle drive? What kind of sound does he have to make?] ****sound effects****

Child3: [Mom: what's your name?] My name is Sarah. [Mom: how old are you, Sarah?] I'm 6. [Mom: and where do you live?] I live in Washington. [Mom: and what's your favorite book?] The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe. [Mom: what do you like about the The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe?] When Aslan died. [Mom: when Aslan died.]

Child4: Hello, my name is Timothy. I am 8 years old and I live in Washington. My favorite book is The Voyage of the Dawn Treader and my favorite part about it is when they sail to the **[**inaudible**]**.

Child5: My name is Isaiah. I live in Washington. I'm 10 years old. My favorite book is Swindle by Gordon Korman. My favorite part is when the kids sneak into the house and take the **[**inaudible**]** card back.

Child6: Hi, my name's Fiona and I'm from Maine, and I'm 7 years old. And, my favorite book is Strega Nona because it has pasta and I love pasta, and we met Tomie dePaola—he's so amazing.

Child7: My name's Abby. And my favorite book is Fancy Nancy. I live in Missouri and my favorite one is Fancy Nancy, why? Because she was tugging with Frenchy, her dog, **[**inaudible**]** so many presents and it was made with pom poms, ribbons, all kinds like that. [Mom: they made a new tree topper for Fancy Nancy's Christmas tree.] Yeah. And it's called Splendiferous Christmas. [Mom: Splendiferous Christmas.]

Child8: [Mom: what's your name?] My name is Asher and I'm 7 years old. My favorite book, it's a very old name. [Mom: say, it's A Series of Unfortunate Events by, do you remember the author?] Lemony Snicket. [Mom: yes, and why do you like the book so much?] Because the awful thing, like silly things, because the awful things, silly things, he's saying, one of the things he's said was like 'now you must be asleep so you won't be able to finish a sad story,' [Mom: so he acts like you won't want to read the book but actually you really want to keep reading.] Yeah. [Mom: and why else do you like it?] Because he has a super big series, twelve or fourteen books, I think it's fourteen books. And that's why I like it.

Child9: Hi, my name is Katie and I'm 5 years old and I live in Louisiana. And my favorite book is Cinderella. What I like about it is that Cinderella and the prince get married.



Sarah: Awesome kids, thank you so much for your messages. Hey, thanks for joining me for another episode of the Read-Aloud Revival podcast. Next week, I'm going to be right here at the same place, same time. I'm going to have a great list of Christmas novels for you. We're going to be talk about wonderful novels and short stories, and I'm also going to tell you where you can find Read-Aloud Revival Christmas picture books and audio book recommendations, and all that good stuff. So, for everything bookish and Christmas-y, you want to come back here next week for Read-Aloud Revival episode 117. It's going to be a good one. Remember that you can get the Show Notes for today's Show at ReadAloudRevival.com/116 and hey, if you have just a second and wouldn't mind popping into iTunes and leaving us a rating or review for Read-Aloud Revival it just means a whole lot to us, and it helps other families find the Read-Aloud Revival and get the inspiration and the tools they need to make meaningful and lasting connections with their kids. So thank you so much for doing that, I appreciate every single one of those. And, I think that's it for today. So, until next time, go make meaningful and lasting connections with your kids through books.