This week your child is reading *The World According to Humphrey*, a fantasy about a hamster who changes a family’s TV-watching habits.

**Vocabulary on the Go** Humphrey can’t nap with so much noise in the Thomas household. What are ideal conditions for sleep? Take turns describing the conditions that you think are ideal for a good night’s sleep. Try to use these words in your descriptions.

appreciate  blaring  racket  nocturnal  combination

**Lesson Learned** Betty Birney, the author of this week’s selection, includes a very simple lesson in her story: turning off the TV can be a good thing to do. Have your child name a favorite story topic, such as sports, friends, animals, or adventures. Talk about lessons that authors communicate in that kind of story. For example, in sports stories, what does an author want readers to understand about teamwork? confidence? another important idea?

**A Listening Game** Choose a quiet spot in which you and your child can sit, indoors or outside. Set a timer for five minutes. Together, close your eyes and concentrate on the sounds around you. Then compare what you heard.

Help your child write a sound poem, in which each line describes a different sound that he or she heard.
**Turn It Off!**  The family in the story discovers the benefits of turning off the TV. Read and discuss this article together. It tells about an organization that wants real families to have those same benefits.

**Screen Time**

The Center for Screen-Time Awareness (CSTA) is an organization that wants families to live in healthier ways by spending less time in front of TV and computer screens.

CSTA says that the average person watches TV for four hours a day and spends at least another four hours of play with computers and other electronic devices. CSTA provides evidence showing that because people are sitting instead of being active, screen time can cause health problems in adults and children. Too much screen time also prevents family members from talking together and reduces children’s creative play.

Ever since 1994, families, schools, and community groups have participated in Turnoff Week, which is sponsored by CSTA. Participants cut back on their screen-time use and see how their lives change. As CSTA says, “Turning off the screen gives us time to think, read, create, and do the things we never have time for.”

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**Turnoff Week**  Together, find the website for the Center for Screen Time Awareness. Download some of the fact sheets provided by the Center. Review them with your child, and talk about the pros and cons of participating in Turnoff Week.

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**Book Links**

- *The World According to Humphrey*, by Betty G. Birney
- *Smart Dog*, by Vivian Vande Velde

**Internet Challenge**  Help your child search the Internet to find out what noise pollution is and how it affects people.