

Appendix: Books to Read Aloud

This list is adapted from the ReadyReaders website.

All of these books are excellent read-aloud choices for children of all ages. With each title is a brief summary.

A Chair for My Mother, Vera B. Williams. A Caldecott Honor book, this is a warm, simple, engagingly illustrated story about a family with strong bonds. A fire destroys their old furniture, and three generations come together—a child, her mother, and her grandmother—to save their money in order to buy a new easy chair.

A Hat for Minerva Louise, Janey Morgan Stoeke. A hen feels cold, but she wants to stay outside in the snow, so she goes searching for warm things. Some of the things she finds are ridiculous (a garden hose, a pot), and even the warm things are funny—mittens on her head and tail.

A-Hunting We Will Go!, Steven Kellogg. A lively, funny song-story with amusing, detailed pictures to read and/or sing aloud. A sister and brother try to put off going to bed by singing a song that takes them on an imaginary trip. They meet a moose and a goose on the loose, a weasel at an easel, and finally—after hugs and kisses—it’s off to sleep they go!

All By Myself, Mercer Mayer. Most of the “little critter” books are very popular with preschool children. In this one, the hero learns how to do things like get dressed, brush his teeth, etc., all by himself.

All the Colors of the Earth, Sheila Hamanaka. A wonderful book about diversity. Vocabulary might be a little advanced for younger children.

Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing, Judi Barrett. Especially loved by preschool children and their teachers alike. A laugh-aloud, never-dull book that will be requested over and over again.

Bark, George!, Jules Feiffer. A hysterical, well-written, well-illustrated book by the famous satirist. George, who is a dog, meows! Then he quacks, oinks, and moos. His annoyed and anxious mother takes him to the vet, and guess what? The vet pulls a cat, a duck, a pig and a cow out of George! Now he can bark, but will he? Readers and children alike will laugh out loud at this highly entertaining book.

Barnyard Dance!, Sandra Boynton. If you want a great read-aloud for younger children, get this strongly rhythmical, rhyming book. The robust dancing of nutty farm animals is rudely interrupted by messy monsters. Don’t worry: the mess gets fixed. A great book that really illustrates the powerful effects of language.

Big Bad Wolf Is Good, Simon Puttock. The big bad wolf has a bad reputation, so no one will be his friend. The wolf decides to be useful and good, but Mrs. Chicken refuses to let him babysit, because she’s afraid he’ll eat the little chicks all up. Finally, after the wolf tries to save a baby duck, Mrs. Duck takes

a chance on him and invites him to come in for tea. The illustrations of a sad-faced, teary-eyed wolf are quite a change from the usual mean, threatening wolves in storyland. The story also gives a reader a chance to explain that real wolves aren't evil animals at all.

Black on White, Tana Hoban. This book is part of a series of wordless picture books that help children to identify the connections between what they see and what people say (i.e., things and words that name them).

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?, Bill Martin, Jr. The first in a series of books, and probably the best one. A tender rhyming book with beautiful illustrations. Each page features a new animal that sees another one, making us want to turn the page and see it too. Preschoolers will love repeating the rhythmic question on each page. Others in this series: *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?*; *Panda Bear, Panda Bear, What Do You See?* (featuring endangered animals).

Can't You Sleep, Little Bear?, Martin Waddell. A tender tale about a little bear who is afraid of the dark, and the big bear who comforts him. First, the big bear brings in lights, and then the two step outside and see the stars at night. A reassuring book for little ones and a good story to quiet children down, this book feels similar in its tone and style to *Goodnight Moon*.

Caps for Sale, Esphyr Slobodkina. A classic and well-respected tale about a peddler with stacks of caps to sell, and the funny things that occur as he tries to sell them. See what happens when he takes a nap under a tree full of monkeys!

Charlie Parker Played Be Bop, Chris Raschka. This book is an outstanding, snappy read-aloud filled with rhythm and jazz and simple (but highly energetic) text and drawings. There are nonsense sounds and real sounds that you and the kids can repeat and share; as a bonus, the book is a great introduction to the great Charlie Parker, to jazz music, and to a couple of musical instruments.

Chewy Louie, Howie Schneider. Chewy Louie is a silly puppy who eats everything in sight. Did he even eat a piece of the front cover of this book? An exciting story with fun-filled illustrations.

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, Bill Martin, Jr. A wonderfully funny, rhythmical, and suspenseful alphabet book about adventurous letters climbing a coconut tree. It's such fun for the children to repeat the refrain, "chicka-chicka-boom-boom," as the letters tumble down, scramble up, etc. The illustrations are exciting and colorful.

Click Clack Moo: Cows That Type, Doreen Cronin. The idea is hilarious! Some cows in a barn are too cold. They find a typewriter and type a letter to the farmer asking him for electric blankets. The farmer ignores their letter, so they go on strike. Then they type and post a sign that says *No milk today*. In the end, the strike gets resolved with the help of a duck and some open discussion. A non-preachy, lighthearted story with a valuable lesson about using words to work out problems.

Clifford the Big Red Dog, Norman Bridwell. The first in a series of many books about Clifford, a red dog that is bigger than a house, and a little girl named Emily Elizabeth. The very idea of so huge a dog is exciting to the youngest children, and they sit spellbound as Clifford, who doesn't quite understand just how big he is, causes all sorts of mayhem. Some of the Clifford books are a lot less engaging; this one is always a hit!

Cock-A-Doodle Moo, Bernard Most. A rooster loses his voice and can't wake up the farm. The cow tries to help, but can't say, "cock-a-doodle-doo!" After the cow tries "sock-a-noodle-noo" and other laughable variations, she manages a

- “cock-a-doodle-moo,” and everyone finally wakes up. Kids love the funny words and the cartoon drawings.
- Corduroy*, Taro Gomi. A little girl can't afford to buy Corduroy, a lonely toy bear. But Corduroy thinks he's not adoptable because he's not perfect, as he's missing a button from the strap of his overalls. After the store closes, Corduroy gets down off the shelf and looks for the button all over the store. He has a great adventure, but ends up back on the shelf, sadder than ever, and still with no button. The next day, the little girl returns with money and buys the little bear. She doesn't care if he isn't perfect. She loves him anyway. A beautiful story, beautifully told.
- Daddy Is a Doodlebug*, Bruce Degen. A young doodlebug describes how he and his father are alike, and explores the things they enjoy doing together.
- Dancing in My Bones*, Sylvia Andrews. An engaging rhyming book that can be sung to the tune of “If You're Happy and You Know It.” The little ones will enjoy reading or singing this book along with you, and they'll like the appealing drawings too.
- Dinosaurs Dinosaurs*, Byron Barton. A delightful introduction to dinosaurs of various types, shapes, and sizes. The words in the text are fine for younger children, and there are dinosaur names in the back of the book for readers. This book is also a conversation-starter.
- Don't Eat the Teacher!*, Nick Ward. Sammy the shark is always biting. He eats his school friend, then spits him out. He eats an activity book. He eats his artwork. He even eats the teacher (a lobster). A silly book with funny pictures. No seriousness at all.
- Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, Mo Willems. A pigeon that longs to drive a bus sees a chance to make its dream come true when the bus driver takes a short break.
- Dream Dancer*, Jill Newsome. Little Lily dances all the time and everywhere—when she's awake and in her dreams. Then she breaks her leg and despairs until her grandmother gives her a small ballerina doll. Is it Lily or is it her doll who perseveres and dances the way back to health? An intelligent story about hope and the human spirit.
- Duck on a Bike*, David Shannon. A duck thinks outside the box, and decides to ride a bike. The other farm animals tell him he is wacky, that he'll get hurt, that it's not what dignified animals do, etc. But in the end, the duck's crazy idea doesn't seem so crazy any more. A clever book about the importance of individuality and creativity, even when others may not understand it. Fun-filled illustrations.
- Feast for Ten*, Catherine Falwell. An appealing counting and sharing book that children will love to read with you. Diversity of characters and family love add to this rich mix.
- Feathers for Lunch*, Lois Ehlert. Twelve well-known, colorfully and accurately depicted birds and a pet cat go on a non-threatening chase. This book has the added attraction of being a very good introductory nature guide.
- Fidgety Fish*, Ruth Galloway. A colorfully illustrated adventure story about a little fish with BIG energy! He fidgets endlessly, which kids completely understand... and they enjoy learning the word “fidgety” too.
- Fish Eyes: A Counting Book*, Lois Ehlert. An imaginative counting book featuring flashy fish floating by. This book can also be used to teach colors and shapes, and it contains some snappy adjectives.

- Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*, Eileen Christelow. Mischief and merry-making by five goofy monkeys who all fall off the bed, of course, despite being told repeatedly, “No more monkeys jumping on the bed!” The kids love to wag their index finger back and forth and repeat this refrain, which makes this an engaging read-aloud counting book.
- Frog and Toad Are Friends*, Arnold Lobel. Five very short stories about two amphibious pals.
- Gingerbread Boy*, Richard Egiellski. Chased through New York City by famished residents, this delicious cookieboy meets his inevitable end in Central Park. A critically acclaimed modern retelling of an old classic.
- Give the Dog a Bone*, Steven Kellogg. About 250 kinds of dogs, some likeable kids, and a few kooky old men give new life to an old counting rhyme that you and children can say or sing. Everyone—from human to critter—has something silly to say or do. Vivacious and terrific read-aloud fun.
- Go Away, Big Green Monster!*, Ed Emberly. A little hard to find but well worth the trouble! Use the hardcover edition as your read-aloud. Children will cheer after you read this “scary” story about a big green monster, whose features appear and then disappear with each turn of a cut-out page. You shout, “Go away Big Green Monster!” and, one by one, the same features vanish in reverse order. The kids get to tell the monster not to come unless they say so! The pictures are bold and captivating, and kids will want this one again and again.
- Go Dog, Go!*, P.D. Eastman. A simply lovable love story with simple words that kids will naturally connect with the engaging pictures. A favorite for more than 40 years.
- Good Night, Owl*, Pat Hutchins. A very sleepy owl just can’t get any rest. He tries, but every time he almost falls asleep, some other animal lands in his tree and makes a racket. The owl has finally has enough, and he gets the last screech! A good read-aloud book with snappy descriptions of animal sounds and a guaranteed laugh at the end.
- Goodnight Moon*, Margaret Wise Brown. What can anyone say about this perfect book except that it is perfect? No child should miss this timeless classic bedtime or quiet-time story.
- Green Eggs and Ham*, Dr. Seuss. If you read this book quickly and use different voices for the speaking parts of Sam-I-Am and his tormentor, the kids will hang on your every word. A playful classic about a stubborn and very picky eater, who finally agrees to try green eggs and ham—if only to get rid of that pesky Sam.
- Gregory the Terrible Eater*, Mitchell Sharmat. What would worry goat parents more than a goat child that won’t eat goat foods? Instead of shoes, ties, violins and tin cans, Gregory wants eggs and orange juice. What is a good goat parent to do? A funny book that can spark great discussions about food that’s good for us and junk food.
- Growing Vegetable Soup*, Lois Ehlert. “The best soup ever” is in the best how-to introduction to garden veggies. From the planting of the seed, to the picking of the plant, to the preparation of the veggie, to the putting in the pot—this is the complete picture. And what vivid, gorgeous illustrations—almost good enough to eat!
- Guess How Much I Love You*, Sam McBratney. A sweet story about Nutbrown bunny and his daddy. The little one tries to put off going to bed by coming up with all kinds of ways he loves his dad, but his dad comes up with even better

- comparisons. Soft and lovely illustrations. A good quiet-down book to read aloud.
- Harold and the Purple Crayon*, Crockett Johnson. A little boy walks and draws his way through the moonlight with a purple crayon and a big imagination. The drawings are very simple and spare, but this classic story is full of tenderness and feeling.
- Harry the Dirty Dog*, Gene Zion. Harry is a white dog with brown spots, and he detests baths. To avoid one, he runs away and gets into mischief and dirt, which turns him into a brown dog with white spots. When he goes home, his family doesn't know who he is! A page-turning, funny, lovable read-aloud.
- Here Come the Tickle Bugs!*, Uncle Sillyhead III. With the refrain, "Here come the tickle bugs," this perfectly foolish book makes kids giggle when they hear it. Full of different-colored silly bugs, this silly book is great fun.
- Hi, Pizza Man!*, Virginia Walter. A yummy book in which Mom distracts a hungry child by using animal sounds as potential greetings for the pizza-delivery person. A very clever book that works wonderfully as a read-aloud.
- Home for a Bunny*, Margaret Wise Brown. An oldie but goodie. A little bunny looks high and low for a home. Sometimes, the place is inaccessible. Sometimes, the current occupant won't share. But, finally, the bunny meets another bunny who invites him to share a home under a stone. Lovely illustrations with lots of opportunity to point out details.
- Honey I Love*, Eloise Greenfield. A highly appealing rhyming book about childhood pleasures, with delightful illustrations of the happy African-American child who experiences them. This positive, beautiful book is a wonderful read-aloud.
- How Do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight?*, Jane Yolen. This wonderfully written and illustrated book is the first and best in a series of books that use dinosaurs to teach good behavior and coping skills. A fun-filled, meaningful book.
- I Love You, Stinky Face*, Lisa McCourt. In this book and its companion, *I Miss You, Stinky Face*, children find a feeling of safeness. This highly recommended book is all about a mother's unconditional love.
- I Stink!*, Kate & Jim McMullan. Kids are crazy about this strange garbage truck with its big mouth and its gross appetite for stinky stuff. How can anyone resist? Incidentally, they'll learn to appreciate what garbage trucks do for us, but most of all they'll get a kick out of copying this brash truck as it burps and growls its way through its rounds.
- I Was So Mad*, Mercer Mayer. The whole series of "little critter" books is enjoyed by children. In this book, they can easily relate to a little guy who isn't allowed to do some things he would like very much to do—like tickling the goldfish. The very expressive faces of the characters in this series are especially appealing to young children.
- If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, Laura Numeroff. This is the first in a series of comical misadventures and tongue-in-cheek lessons about cause and effect. All of the books in this series feature a boy who gets into hysterical situations that lead to other hysterical situations. He learns that taking care of the demands of a needy animal can be quite exhausting!
- I'm Gonna Like Me: letting off a little self-esteem*, Jamie Lee Curtis. What makes this book fun is the illustrations, which are sure to make children giggle. What makes the book worthy is the self-acceptance message that it conveys.

- Is Your Mama a Llama?*, Deborah Guarino. Children learn some interesting facts about animals from this delightfully illustrated, award-winning book with its simple questions and rhyming answers.
- It Looked Like Spilt Milk*, Charles G. Shaw. A delightful book that engages children in an imaginative guessing game. A white object changes its shape on every page. And on every page, that shape looks like something familiar, but it's not that thing at all. Not until the end do we learn what it actually is!
- It's the Bear*, Jez Alborough. This is one of those scary-yet-silly rhyming books that children enjoy. A bear smells the food from a picnic of a child and his mother. The child hides inside the picnic basket, but his oblivious mom doesn't notice the bear—until he takes the pie. In the end, the bear runs one way and the people run the other way. The illustration at the end will make everyone laugh.
- Kitten's First Full Moon*, Kevin Henkes. Winner of the Caldecott Medal, this lovely book tells the story of a persistent little kitten who thinks the moon is a bowl of milk and futilely tries all sorts of ways to get it. In the end, she learns there's no place like home to fulfill her heart's desire.
- Leaf Man*, Lois Ehlert. This book traces the possible journeys of a Leaf Man who blew away. On each page, brightly colored leaves in the shapes of animals and other objects fly wherever the Leaf Man must blow. The book not only encourages small children to think about ways to arrange leaves they might collect in fall, but the endpapers name various kinds of leaves. A spectacular nature book.
- Leo the Late Bloomer*, Robert Kraus. Poor little Leo the lion just can't do anything right. He can't read or write, and he's a messy eater. This worries Leo and his watchful father, but not his mother. She urges patience, and in due time Leo blooms! Captivating, expressive characters, a little suspense, and a happy ending please everyone.
- Lucy's Picture*, Nicola Moon. A sensitive and beautifully made book about individuality, creativity, beauty, giving, and love. Lucy's grandfather is blind, and Lucy wants to make him a picture he can "see" with his hands. So while her classmates are painting pictures, Lucy's teacher encourages her to follow her own muse. By pasting objects with different textures onto paper, Lucy makes a collage that her grandfather enjoys.
- Machines at Work*, Byron Barton. During a busy day at the construction site, the workers use a variety of machines to knock down a building and begin constructing a new one.
- McDuff Comes Home*, Rosemary Wells. This book is part of a series about the adventures of McDuff, a cute little terrier. In this book, he runs after a rabbit and gets lost in the process. Luckily, a motherly lady with a motorcycle sticks him in her side car and takes him back home. The story and vivid illustrations delight children, and McDuff is a very appealing character.
- Mice Squeak, We Speak*, Tomie dePaola. A simple, clever, highly praised rhyming book featuring the sounds that animals make and what we do differently (i.e., speak). Colorful, full-page, carefully considered illustrations and text.
- Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel*, Virginia Lee Burton. This classic story teaches children that where there's a will, there's a way. Mike Mulligan (and his steam shovel Mary Ann) have made tunnels through mountains, giant holes in which tall buildings sit, and canals for boats; but now, there is electricity and gasoline, so no one seems to want to dig things with a steam shovel.

- Mirandy and Brother Wind*, Pat McKissack. A gorgeously illustrated, award-winning story about a kind little girl and her clumsy friend, who want to win a dance contest. Mirandy's kindness to her friend helps her triumph, because she is able to capture Brother Wind, who helps them dance beautifully together.
- Mouse Count*, Ellen Stoll Walsh. What she did for colors in *Mouse Paint*, the author does for numbers here. An exciting story about a blue snake who captures ten tiny mice, some while they're sleeping, one while it's hiding. He sticks them in a jar and plans to eat them, of course; but the ten little mice outwit him, one by one, as we count back from ten. A page-turner and a counting book in a colorful package.
- Mouse Paint*, Ellen Stoll Walsh. One of the best read-aloud books to teach children about colors. Three peppy white mice jump into jars of yellow, red, and blue paint and then jump out again, creating puddles of paint. They dance and splash their way through the pages of the book, mixing up colors and creating exciting new colors. Brightly colored illustrations and lively characters hold children's attention beautifully.
- Mr. Brown Can Moo, Can You?*, Dr. Seuss. Oh, the wonderful things Mr. Brown can do! And the amazing sounds he can make! He can make the sounds of a popping cork, a klopping horse, a goldfish kissing, thunder booming, eggs frying... An irresistible, repeat-after-me book that little ones relish!
- My Family Plays Music*, Judy Cox. A delightful, award-winning book to introduce musical instruments and type of music to children. Everyone in this rainbow of a family is a wonderful musician, and each one plays a different instrument and a different kind of music, making a rainbow of sounds. Bring along a few of the easy-to-carry smaller instruments and let the children help you read this one aloud!
- My Friend Bear*, Jez Alborough. A warm, gentle story about loneliness, friendship, and love. A lonely little boy with a teddy bear is walking through the woods when he spies a very large teddy bear. Soon an enormous real bear appears, and the frightened little boy holds out his teddy bear and pretends that it—not he—is doing the talking. But the real bear is lonely too, and soon the boy, the bear, and their teddy bears are laughing together and becoming friends.
- My Friend Rabbit*, Eric Rohmann. Something always seems to go wrong when Rabbit is around, but Mouse lets him play with his toy plane anyway because he is his good friend.
- My Little Sister Ate One Hare*, Bill Grossman. A goofy, laugh-out-loud book with a storyline that resembles the old song, "I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly." This book works best with children old enough to get the silly jokes and even sillier pictures.
- My Truck Is Stuck!*, Kevin Lewis/Daniel Kirk. This is a hilarious story with very funny pictures. A couple of dogs in baseball caps are driving a dump truck full of bones, and the truck gets stuck in a pothole. The doggy drivers flag down one vehicle after another, but—alas—the truck stays stuck until a tow truck comes to the rescue. In the meantime, some sneaky prairie dogs (who made the pothole in the first place) run off with the cargo.
- Oh, A-hunting We Will Go*, John Langstaff. It's the old folk song decorated with fun-filled pictures and featuring verses both old and new. The book comes with guitar and piano music. Children might even add their own verses!

Old Black Fly, Jim Aylesworth. An unusual, very funny alphabet book. Family members chase a fly that zips through the house and through the alphabet as it wreaks havoc. The book also has energetic, colorful drawings and an attention-holding, strong rhythmic chant that children can repeat after the reader at the end of each rhyme.

On Mother's Lap, Ann Herbert Scott. An updated, nicely illustrated story about the expansiveness of love. In a cold, sparsely furnished space, a little boy gets his blanket and toys and climbs into his mother's lap. Then his baby sister cries and, to the boy's dismay, his mother wants to bring her to the rocking chair too. It's crowded but it's warm, and there is enough room for him after all.

On the Day You Were Born, Deborah Frasier. A beautiful book with a message about the uniqueness of every child and the place of each of us in the universe. Captivating illustrations fill this book that reinforces self-esteem.

Over in the Meadow, Jane Cabrera. We love this particular version of the popular song-poem, mainly because the illustrations, which look like finger painting, are so wonderful.

Peek-A-Moo!, Marie Torres Cimarusti. A lift-the-flap book that is sure to be a read-aloud hit. Odd little animals play peek-a-boo with the children you read to. They'll want to hear this one again!

Peekaboo Kisses, Barney Salzman. A loving lift-the-flap, touch-and-feel book. The illustrations are vivid and bright, and the very young will love the textures of the animals under the flaps. At the end, the flap reveals a mirror and ME!

Planting a Rainbow, Lois Ehlert. This glorious book uses vivid colors to explain and show how seeds gradually grow into different plants, each with its own unique flower. A terrific way to teach a young child about how plants and flowers grow, each in its unique way.

Polar Bear Night, Lauren Thompson. A beautifully illustrated award-winner.

Popcorn: A Frank Asch Bear Story, Frank Asch. A bear invites all his friends to a Halloween party, and one by one they show up with a gift of popcorn! Soon, the the whole house fills up with popcorn.

Rainbow Fish, Marcus Pfister. The celebrated story of a richly endowed, lonely fish, who learns that giving things to others brings happiness. Rainbow Fish has an abundance of sparkly scales, and the other fish have none. When a wise octopus suggests that his selfishness is to blame for his loneliness, Rainbow Fish changes his ways.

Saturday Night at the Dinosaur Stomp, Carol Diggery Shields. As every kid knows, dinosaurs are really party animals, and these do all kinds of fun-filled dances (like the Triassic Twist). Colorful, entertaining, and a fun-filled read-aloud. Wait until the kids accompany you by shouting, "Boomalacka boomalacka! Whack! Whack! WHACK!"

Shake My Sillies Out, Raffi. This is a great book to read or sing aloud and get the wiggles and squirmies out! Vivacious illustrations and a lot of fun.

Sheep in a Jeep, Nancy E. Shaw. This is one of those goofy, imaginative stories that delight kids. With its Seuss-like rhymes and outrageously funny pictures, this is a book destined for long-term survival, even if you may question the survivability of the dumb sheep in the jeep.

Shoo Fly!, Iza Trapani. An appealing song or story to sing or read aloud. The illustrations are captivating and the tale of the struggle between a mouse and a fly is entertaining.

Silly Sally, Audrey Wood. Unabashedly rhyming, read-aloud silliness involving a silly girl who goes to town in a silly way—walking backwards, upside-down. She’s joined by a pig doing an upside down jig and other silly animals, but all of them eventually end rightside-up.

Sleepy Bears, Mem Fox. Another award-winning book to help every child go to sleep. A mother bear and her little ones snuggle in a big bed to go to sleep for the winter. The mother bear invents a simple, lovely, imaginative story in rhyme that appeals to the individuality of each of her cubs. There’s a fairy-tale rhyme for one little cub, a circus rhyme for another, an adventure rhyme for a third, and so on. Sweet dreams... especially on cold winter days.

Snowballs, Lois Ehlert. In this great read-aloud book for a gloomy winter’s day, we watch the construction of a snow family, including people and pets—all beautifully dressed up. The unique, detailed illustrations are bright and engaging, and there’s an extra bonus: a recipe for popcorn balls!

Snowmen at Night, Caralyn Buehner. A child wonders why a snowman looks so droopy in the morning, and then gets the answer: the snowman was out playing all night—throwing snowballs, drinking cocoa, and generally cavorting with friends. No wonder he’s such a mess!

Somewhere Today—A Book of Peace, Shelley Moore Thomas. A simple, engaging book about caring, sharing, and friendship. Wonderful photography shows young children of all races and ages involved in helping other people, young and old. The book ends with the gentle suggestion that every child can do little things to help make the world a better place.

Swimmy, Leo Lionni. Swimmy is a little fish who is dark, while all the other little fish are light. In this appealing story, Swimmy solves a big problem—how to stop the big fish from eating the little fish. A natural leader, Swimmy gets the little fish to unite into a formation that makes them look like one gigantic fish. Then he places himself in the position of the eye of the gigantic fish. United in this way, the little fish can survive. Cleverly conceived and very popular.

Sylvester and the Magic Pebble, William Steig. Sylvester the donkey finds a magic pebble and unthinkingly wishes he was a rock when frightened by a lion. Although safe from the lion, Sylvester cannot hold the pebble to wish himself back into a donkey.

Tacky the Penguin, Helen Lester. Tacky is not a proper, go-along penguin. But it’s nutty Tacky who figures out how to fool the hunters who want to capture all of the penguins. The little lesson about the value of thinking for oneself is brightly illustrated and the characters are very expressive.

Ten, Nine, Eight, Molly Bang. A Caldecott Award-winning, beautifully illustrated book in which a little girl and her daddy have fun playing a rhyming game when it’s the little one’s bedtime.

That Toad is Mine, Barbara Shook Hazen. Two boys who are good friends usually share everything. But when they happen onto a little toad, both of them really want it! What happens next is amusing and a good lesson about sharing. Colorful, exciting pictures will have the kids wanting to know what happens next.

The Big Blue Spot, Peter Holwitz. A big blue spot feels lonely and looks for a friend. In the process, the blue spot meets spots of many other colors. Simply written, with a “what happens next?” plot, this is an excellent book about colors and about diversity too.

The Colors of Us, Karen Katz. A wonderfully told, loving story about a little girl whose friends have skins the delicious colors of cinammon, ginger, chocolate, honey, pizza, peaches. A great book about the greatness of diversity.

The Doorbell Rang, Pat Hutchins. Two children plan to share a dozen cookies between them (six apiece), but then the doorbell rings, and two more children come in (three apiece now!). But that doorbell just keeps on ringing, and kids, cats, mops, kitchen stuff, bikes, and all sorts of clutter add to the fun! Oh no! Now there are more children than cookies! But wait, here comes Grandma...

The Eensy Weensy Spider, Mary Ann Hoberman. This gorgeously illustrated retelling is one that the youngest children will love. It's a feast for the eyes, and you can read or sing it. It strays from the original song, but it in lovely ways.

The Foot Book, Dr. Seuss. Opposites certainly attract in this funny classic about left, right, up, down, wet, dry, and other feet.

The Grouchy Ladybug, Eric Carle. A grouchy bug with a nasty disposition learns how to behave in this brightly illustrated book. It's best to get the hardback copy with die-cut pages to read to a group. A great teaching book, too, to talk about manners, to compare sizes, and to discuss the concept of time.

The Gruffalo, Julia Donaldson. A little mouse tries to keep a fox from eating him by inventing a story about meeting a gruffalo for lunch. Does the fox believe there is such a thing as a gruffalo? A funny, adventurous, wonderful read-aloud that kids love.

The Itsy Bitsy Spider, Iza Trapani. A delightfully illustrated and conceived version of this little rhyme, which will work best with the youngest children. This version will let you ask "What happens next?" Our little spider not only climbs up and gets washed out of the waterspout, but he then climbs unsuccessfully up a kitchen wall, into a yellow pail, and onto a rocking chair. Finally, he climbs a tree and succeeds in spinning a web. A happy ending and a good example of "try, try again."

The Kissing Hand, Audrey Penn. A little racoon is afraid to go to school, because he thinks he'll be lonely without his mother. His wise mother kisses the palm of his hand, and the little racoon feels her kiss travel up his arm and into his heart. She tells him that if he feels lonely without her, he will feel her kiss by pressing the Kissing Hand. In a touching climax, the little racoon gives his mother his own Kissing Hand, so that she won't be lonely without him either.

The Little Engine That Could, Watty Piper. This classic story is forever new. Get the version with the original text and illustrations if you can. An engine is pulling a train up a mountain to deliver toys and treats to children on the other side. It's very hard for him, but he tries and tries. And because he thinks he can, he succeeds!

The Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry and the Big, Hungry Bear, Audrey and Don Wood. The full-page illustrations, sound effects, and what-happens-next story will grab every child's attention. A frightened little mouse tries to keep a big, hungry bear from getting the red, ripe strawberry that the little mouse has just picked.

The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything, Linda Williams. A great "scary" silly story for October or any other time. The heroine is a fearless little old lady, who has to handle various articles of clothing and a pumpkin head that are chasing her. The text is funny; the rhythm is catchy; and the illustrations are engaging.

The Mixed Up Chameleon, Eric Carle. A chameleon is thrilled to learn that he can change his shape and color to conform to the different colors and shapes of many zoo animals. But then he starts looking like all of them at one time, and he learns that he also needs to reshape and recolor his ambitions.

The Monster at the End of This Book, Jon Stone. This funny page-turner features Grover of Sesame Street, who keeps imploring us NOT to turn the pages, because there's a monster at the end of the book. Of course, that makes the children want to turn the pages all the more. Guess who is at the end of the book?

The Napping House, Audrey and Don Wood. A great classic book to read after naps! This is a tale of relaxed people and animals who climb into a bed one by one. They are planning to join Grandma and take a nap; but the last one into bed is a flea with other plans! Amusing illustrations lighten and brighten as this sleepy book wakes up.

The Old Woman and Her Pig, Eric A. Kimmel. An updated folk story about an old woman trying to get her stubborn pig to come along. She enlists the help of a dog, a cat, a rat, etc. Children will love this rhythmic, cumulative read-aloud with its zany illustrations.

The Perfect Purple Feather, Hanoach Piven. Unusual, quirky illustrations and an imaginative rhyming story make this a sure winner. A little boy finds a purple feather, and all sorts of oddly-made critters want it for all sorts of unusual purposes.

The Pig in the Pond, Martin Waddell. A dare-to-be-different tale, as well as a fun-filled book to read to children. Although pigs don't swim, Neligan is awfully hot. She decides that the ducks and geese have it right and jumps into the pond too. So do all the other farm animals and the farmer! Silliness and something more...

The Right Number of Elephants, Jeff Sheppard. An unusual, riotous counting book. The book counts backwards from ten to one, with quirky text and big, full-of-life color illustrations.

The Snowy Day, Ezra Jack Keats. A 1963 Caldecott Award-winner, this beautiful classic is the simple story of a little boy who wakes up and discovers the wonders of a snowy city day. Keats' collages are remarkable for their simple, calm beauty and artistry, which mirror the child's joy in making snow angels and enjoying the snow.

The Sun Is My Favorite Star, Frank Asch. A little child tracks the journey of the sun through the day and relates to it both as a and as a big, warm, wonderful object of curiosity and wonder. Glorious illustrations make this a winner.

The Teeny Tiny Woman, Jane O'Connor. A clever, classic ghost story for pre-schoolers. A teeny-tiny woman on a teeny-tiny walk finds a teeny-tiny bone and takes it home to make a teeny-tiny pot of soup. That's when then the silliness and spookiness take over. An especially fun book to read to children in October.

The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs, Jon Scieszka. When Alexander Wolf is framed, he seeks justice and tells his own version of the story of the Three Little Pigs. Children will love this amusing rendition of the classic fairy tale.

The Very Busy Spider, Eric Carle. The spider begins with a few silk strands and, by the end of the book, she has created a complex work of art. Children will enjoy the tactile nature of this book and Eric Carle's vivid, expressive pictures.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Eric Carle. This is a wonderful, award-winning book, brightly illustrated, about a caterpillar who eats its way through the days of the week. If you read it to more than one child, try using a big version of this book, because its clever cut-outs would otherwise be difficult to see and manipulate.

The Wing on a Flea, Ed Emberly. An enticing book about circles, rectangles, and triangles and all the things they might be—both separately and in combination.

There's an Alligator under My Bed, Mercer Mayer. Another in the series of delightful books about unusual critters in a child's bedroom, this book is generally considered the best in the series. Yes, there is an alligator under the bed but, like the monster in the closet, what we imagine is far scarier than what is actually there.

Very Hairy Harry, Edward Koren. A funny book in which a barber tells hairy Harry all the advantages of being hairy. They include being able to hide your favorite things on your body, having your dog look like he's part of you, and being able to forgo winter clothes.

Waiting for Wings, Lois Ehlert. Another amazing book by the author of *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*. Breathtaking illustrations fill every page of this informative book about the life cycle of the butterfly. The text is a simple rhyme that echoes the gentleness of a butterfly. There are also facts about butterflies, including their names, which make this book interesting for older children too.

Watch Out! Big Bro's Coming, Jez Alborough. A funny-scary story that children adore. The jungle animals are terrified and hide, because they hear that Big Bro is coming. Little mice venture out and affirm the fact, which scares them even more. But aren't they all embarrassed when Big Bro shows up? Big pages and big, bright ink illustrations make this book a great read-aloud.

We're Different We're the Same, Bobbi Kates. A very good book on the subject of diversity and self-esteem.

What! Cried Granny, Kate Lum. A funny story about a little boy, who makes up all kinds of zany excuses explaining why he can't go to bed yet, and his creative, nattily dressed grandmother, who goes to great lengths to give him no other excuse. Even though she chops down a tree to make him a bed and does other clever and superhuman things to satisfy his every stated need, the little boy manages to find enough excuses to last the whole night.

When Daddy's Truck Picks Me Up, Jana Novotny Hunter. A little boy eagerly waits for his father to pick him up from school in his big tanker truck.

Where the Wild Things Are, Maurice Sendak. One of the best scary-funny books every written. Max makes mischief and gets sent to his room without supper. In his imagination, the room turns into an ocean on which he sails away to a forest filled with wild things. Max tames them and becomes their king, but he eventually decides to sail back home.

Where's Spot?, Eric Hill. Children love this classic book about a dog, and it's now been republished in brighter colors.

Where's the Baby?, Cheryl Christian. A lift-the-flap book with pictures of babies.

Who Is Driving?, Leo Timmers. Guess which animal is driving each of seven vehicles, then find out their destinations and the sounds the vehicles make.

Who Took the Cookies from the Cookie Jar?, Bonnie Lass. Children love this famous who-done-it. You can read it aloud, read along with children, sing it with them, and use it to play a circle game. (The melody and the game are printed at the

front of the book.) The illustrations are colorful and can be used to teach the names of the various animals who may have taken the cookies.

Whoever You Are, Mem Fox. A simple book with universal appeal, this book tells our youngest children that there are other children all over the world who may look and live differently, but who are all the same inside. The illustrations are as beautiful as the message.

Why Mosquitos Buzz in People's Ears: A West African Tale, Verna Aardema. A West African folk story about a mosquito, whose lies cause one strange thing after another to happen until finally, the sun itself stops rising. The artwork in this book is beautiful and captures the heat of a West African day and the velvety darkness of night. Little kids like pointing out a tiny pink bird that happens to be in every scene, and they love the silly sounds that the animals make.