

The Best Books for Grades K-3



Aardema, Verna **Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears**

A mosquito tells a tall tale that sets off a chain reaction.

Allard, Harry **Miss Nelson Is Missing!**

The kids in room 207 take advantage of their teacher's good nature until she disappears and they are faced with a vile substitute.

Andersen, Hans Christian & Jerry Pinkney **The Ugly Duckling**

An ugly duckling spends an unhappy year ostracized by the other animals before he grows into a beautiful swan.

Barrett, Judi **Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs**

Life is delicious in the town of Chewandswallow where it rains soup and snow mashed potatoes—until the weather takes a turn for the worse.

Based on recommendations of the *Rhode Island Educational Media Association*, an organization of school library media specialists, 2001

Bemelmans, Ludwig **Madeline**

Madeline, smallest and naughtiest of the twelve little charges of Miss Clavel, wakes up one night with an attack of appendicitis.

Brown, Marcia **Stone Soup**

Three hungry soldiers come to a town where all the food has been hidden. They make soup of water and stones, and all the town enjoys a feast.

Bruchac, Joseph **First Strawberries: A Cherokee Story**

A Native American legend about how strawberries came into the world.

Brunhoff, Laurent de **The Story of Babar, the Little Elephant**

Young Babar, escaping from a hunter, goes to the city where he is befriended by a rich old lady.

Burton, Virginia **The Little House**

A country house is unhappy when the city, with all its buildings and traffic, grows up around her.

Burton, Virginia **Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel**

Although Mike Mulligan's steam shovel is too old fashioned to compete with newer models, the people of Popperville find a way to keep them working.

Cannon, Janell **Stellaluna**

After she falls head first into a bird's nest, a baby bat is raised like a bird until she is reunited with her mother.

Carle, Eric **The Very Hungry Caterpillar**

A hungry little caterpillar eats his way through a varied and large quantity of food until,

full at last, he forms a cocoon around himself and goes to sleep.

Carlson, Nancy **I Like Me!**

A charming pig proves the best friend you can have is yourself.

Cooney, Barbara **Miss Rumphius**

Alice Rumphius wants to travel the world and do the one thing her grandfather told her to do—make the world more beautiful.

Cronin, Doreen **Click Clack Moo: Cows That Type**

In this witty tale, Farmer Brown's animals go on strike to demand better working conditions, with hilarious results.

De Paola, Tomie **The Popcorn Book**

What popcorn is, how it's stored, and how it's cooked, plus legends and recipes.

De Paola, Tomie **Strega Nona**

When Strega Nona leaves him alone with her magic pasta pot, Big Anthony is determined to show the townspeople how it works.

Eastman, P.D. **Are You My Mother?**

A little bird asks animals, planes and boats, "Are you my mother?" until he finds his own mother.

Emberley, Barbara **Drummer Hoff**

A cumulative folk song in which seven soldiers build a magnificent cannon, but Drummer Hoff fires it off.

Freeman, Don **Corduroy**

A toy bear in a department store wants a number of things, but when a little girl buys him he finds what he has always wanted most of all.

Goble, Paul **The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses**

Although she is fond of her people, a young girl prefers to live among the wild horses where she is happy and free.

Henkes, Kevin **Owen**

Owen, the mouse, has grown too big for his blanket.

Hoffman, Mary **Amazing Grace**

Although a classmate says that she cannot play Peter Pan in the school play because she is black, Grace discovers she can do anything she sets her mind to.

Keats, Ezra Jack **The Snowy Day**

The adventures of a little boy in the city on a very snowy day.

Kimmel, Eric **Anansi and the Moss-Covered Rock**

Anansi the Spider uses a strange moss-covered rock to trick all the other animals, until Little Bush Deer decides he needs to learn a lesson.

Lionni, Leo **Swimmy**

A little fish make the best of his size in a big way.

Lobel, Arnold **Frog and Toad are Friends**

Five tales recounting the adventures of two best friends-Frog and Toad.

MacLachlan, Patricia **All the Places to Love**

A young boy describes the favorite places that he shares with his family on his grandparents' farm and in the nearby countryside.

Marshall, James **George and Martha**

In five episodes, two hippos demonstrate the meaning of friendship.

Martin, Bill, Jr. **Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?**

Children see a variety of animals, each one a different color.

Martin, Bill, Jr. **Chicka Chicka Boom Boom**

An alphabet rhyme that relates what happens when the whole alphabet tries to climb a coconut tree.

McCloskey, Robert **Make Way for Ducklings**

A family of mallard ducks searches for a new home in Boston.

McCully, Emily Arnold **Mirette on the High Wire**

Mirette learns tightrope walking from Monsieur Bellini, not knowing he is a celebrated tightrope artist who has withdrawn from performing because of fear.

Meddaugh, Susan **Martha Speaks**

Martha the dog eats some alphabet soup and starts to speak, to everyone's amazement.

Minarik, Else Holmelund **Little Bear**

Little Bear's four adventures include taking a trip to the moon and having a birthday party.

Miranda, Anne **To Market, To Market**

Meet a series of unruly animals that run amok, evading capture and preventing the narrator from cooking lunch.

Mitchell, Margaree King **Uncle Jed's Barbershop**

Uncle Jed finally opens his own barber-shop after years of struggle as the only black barber in the county.

Mosel, Arlene **Tikki Tikki Tembo**

When the eldest son fell in the well and most of the time getting help was spent pronouncing the name of the one in trouble, the Chinese, according to legend, decided to give all their children short names.

Ness, Evaline **Sam, Bangs & Moonshine**

A small girl learns a near tragic lesson in distinguishing fact from fantasy.

Parish, Peggy **Amelia Bedelia**

Amelia Bedelia's wacky misadventures as she interprets her instructions very literally.

Polacco, Patricia **Thank You, Mr. Falker**

After recognizing Patricia's incredible artistic ability and trouble with reading, Mr. Falker leads her to the magic of reading.

Rathmann, Peggy **Officer Buckle and Gloria**

The children at Napville Elementary School always ignore Officer Buckle's safety tips, until a police dog named Gloria accompanies him when he gives his safety speeches.

Rylant, Cynthia **Henry and Mudge: The First Book of Their Adventures**

Henry, feeling lonely on a street without any other children, finds companionship and love in a big dog named Mudge.

San Souci, Robert D. **The Talking Eggs**

In this Southern folktale, kind Blanche, following the instructions of an old witch, gains riches, while her greedy sister makes fun of the old woman and is duly rewarded.

Schwartz, David M. **How Much is a Million?**

The concepts of a million, a billion and a trillion are explained.

Scieszka, Jon The Stinky Cheeseman and Other Fairly Stupid Tales

Hilarious revisions of familiar fairy tales.

Sendak, Maurice Chicken Soup With Rice: A Book of Months

Rhymes about each month of the year.

Sendak, Maurice Where the Wild Things Are

After he is sent to bed without supper for behaving like a wild thing, Max dreams of a voyage to the island where the wild things are.

Seuss, Dr. The Cat in the Hat

Two children, sitting at home on a rainy day, are visited by the Cat in the Hat who shows them some tricks and games.

Seuss, Dr. Horton Hatches the Egg

When a lazy bird hatching an egg wants a vacation, she asks Horton, the elephant, to sit on her egg.

Shulevitz, Uri Snow

As snow flakes slowly come down, one by one, people in the city ignore them, and only a boy and his dog think that the snowfall will amount to anything.

Silverstein, Shel A Giraffe and a Half

Zany rhyme about a giraffe who accumulates some ridiculous things-like glue on his shoe and a bee on his knee-only to lose them again.

Sis, Peter Komodo

A child who loves dragons goes to the Indonesian island of Komodo in hopes of seeing a real dragon.

Steig, William Sylvester and the Magic Pebble

In a moment of fright, Sylvester the donkey asks his magic pebble to turn him into a rock but then can not hold the pebble to wish himself back to normal again.

Stevenson, James Mudflat Mystery

When a large box is delivered to Duncan while he is away, the other animals, in Mud Flat are consumed with curiosity about what might be inside.

Taback, Simms There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly

A rollicking, eye-popping version of the well-loved poem.

Trivizas, Eugene The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig

An altered retelling of the traditional tale about the conflict between pig and wolf—with a surprise ending.

Van Allsburg, Chris Jumanji

Left on their own for an afternoon, two bored and restless children find more excitement than they bargained for in a mysterious and mystical jungle adventure board game.

Van Allsburg, Chris The Polar Express

A magical train ride on Christmas Eve takes a boy to the North Pole to receive a special gift from Santa Claus.

Viorst, Judith Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day

Alexander wakes up with gum in his hair and learns that there are days when nothing goes right.

Williams, Suzanne Library Lil

A librarian makes readers not only out of the once resistant residents of her small town, but out of a tough-talking, television-watching motorcycle gang as well.

Williams, Vera A Chair for My Mother

A child, her waitress mother, and her grandmother save dimes to buy a comfortable armchair after all their furniture is lost in a fire.

Wood, Audrey Heckedy Peg

A mother saves her seven children from Heckedy Peg, a witch who has changed them into different kinds of food.

Wood, Audrey The Napping House

In this cumulative tale, a wakeful flea atop a number of sleeping creatures causes a commotion with just one bite.

Zion, Gene Harry the Dirty Dog

A little dog runs away because he hates baths and is so dirty when he returns that no one recognizes him.

