

# Books Before Kindergarten

The following is a list of suggested books available at Acton Memorial Library!

There are classics and newer titles as well as more and less “advanced” titles. They can all be good choices, as long as you are enjoying books together. At the end of this booklist, there is a list of additional resources you can use to find other recommended titles. As you explore, you and your child are sure to find your own favorites, too!

Most of the books on this list are in our picture book section, organized alphabetically by author. A few titles are in other areas, included just below at the beginning of the list.

## Books found in sections other than Picture Books

**J EasyReader Hoff** *Danny and the dinosaur* story and pictures by Syd Hoff.

A little boy is surprised and pleased when one of the dinosaurs from the museum agrees to play with him.

**J EasyReader Lobel** *Frog and toad are friends* by Arnold Lobel.

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

**J EasyReader Seuss** *One fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish* by Dr. Seuss.

A story-poem about the activities of such unusual animals as the Nook, Womp, Yink, Yap, Gack and the Zeds.

**J EasyReader Sharmat** *Nate the great* by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat ; illustrated by Marc Simont.

Nate the Great solves the mystery of the missing picture.

**J EasyReader Willems** *We are in a book!* by Mo Willems.

Gerald and Piggie discover the joy of being read. But what will happen when the book ends?

**J 398.2 M134** *Anansi the spider : a tale from the Ashanti* adapted and illustrated by Gerald McDermott

In trying to determine which of his six sons to reward for saving his life, Anansi the Spider is responsible for placing the moon in the sky.

**J 398.2 P454** (Marcellino) *Puss in boots* by Charles Perrault ; illustrated by Fred Marcellino ; translated by Malcolm Arthur

A translation of the French- fairy tale about the cat who with a sack and a pair of boots gained a fortune for his master.

**J 398.21 G864** (Zelinsky) *Rapunzel* retold and illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky.

A retelling of a folktale in which a beautiful girl with long golden hair is kept imprisoned in a lonely tower by a sorceress.

## Picture Books

**J BoardBk Gomi** *Spring is here* by Taro Gōmi.

Follows the four seasons around the year, from snow melting into spring, through the quiet harvest and the fall of snow, and then to spring again.

**J A,B,C Martin** *Chicka chicka boom boom* by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault ; illustrated By Lois Ehlert

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

**J PictureBk Asch** *Bear shadow* by Frank Asch.

Bear tries everything he can think of to get rid of his shadow.

**J PictureBk Aylesworth** *My grandfather's Coat* retold by Jim Aylesworth ; illustrated by BarbaraMcClintock

A tailor's very old overcoat is recycled numerous times over the years into a variety of garments and other uses.

- J PictureBk Barrett**      *Cloudy with a chance of meatballs* by Judi Barrett ; and drawn by Ron Barrett.  
Life is delicious in the town of Chewandswallow where it rains soup and juice, snows mashed potatoes, and blows storms of hamburgers--until the weather takes a turn for the worse.
- J PictureBk Barton**      *Airplanes* by Byron Barton.  
Brief text and illustrations present a variety of airplanes and what they do.
- J PictureBk Bemelmans**      *Madeline* by Ludwig Bemelmans.  
Madeline, smallest and naughtiest of the twelve little charges of Miss Clavel, wakes up one night with an attack of appendicitis.
- J PictureBk Bridwell**      *Clifford, the big red dog* by Norman Bridwell.  
Emily Elizabeth describes the activities she enjoys with her very big, very red dog and how they take care of each other.
- J PictureBk Brown**      *Goodnight moon* by Margaret Wise Brown ; pictures by Clement Hurd.  
Goodnight to each of the objects in the great green room: goodnight chairs, goodnight comb, goodnight air.
- J PictureBk Burton**      *Mike Mulligan and his steam shovel*; by Virginia Lee Burton.  
When Mike Mulligan and his steam shovel, Mary Ann, lose their jobs to the gasoline, electric, and diesel motor shovels, they go to a little country town where they find that one new job leads to another.
- J PictureBk Cannon**      *Stellaluna* by Janell Cannon.  
After she falls headfirst into a bird's nest, a baby bat is raised like a bird until she is reunited with her mother.
- J PictureBk Carle**      *"Slowly, slowly, slowly," said the sloth* by Eric Carle.  
Challenged by the other jungle animals for its seemingly lazy ways, a sloth living in a tree explains the many advantages of his slow and peaceful existence.
- J PictureBk Cash**      *I saw the sea and the sea saw me* by Megan Montague Cash.  
A girl enjoys using all of her five senses to explore the ocean, but when a jellyfish appears she discovers that the sea is not always nice.
- J PictureBk Cousins**      *Peck, peck, peck* by Lucy Cousins.  
Pecking his way through the door of a house, an intrepid little woodpecker busily raps on a rhyming sequence of indoor objects, from a hat and a mat and a racket and jacket to a teddy bear and a book called Jane Eyre.
- J PictureBk Crews**      *Freight train* by Donald Crews.  
Brief text and illustrations trace the journey of a colorful train as it goes through tunnels, by cities, and over trestles.
- J PictureBk Cronin**      *Click, clack, moo : cows that type* by Doreen Cronin ; pictures by Betsy Lewin.  
When Farmer Brown's cows find a typewriter in the barn they start making demands, and go on strike when the farmer refuses to give them what they want.
- J PictureBk Day**      *Good dog, Carl* by Alexandra Day.  
Lively and unusual things happen when Carl the dog is left in charge of the baby.
- J PictureBk DePaola**      *Strega Nona : an original tale* by Tomie de Paola.  
Grandma Concetta heals everyone with her remedies and advice, and when she retires, she leaves Nona her magic pasta pot with its secret ingredient.
- J PictureBk Dunrea**      *Gossie* by Olivier Dunrea.  
Gossie is a gosling who likes to wear bright red boots every day, no matter what she is doing, and so she is heartbroken the day the boots are missing and she can't find them anywhere.
- J PictureBk Ehlert**      *Growing vegetable soup* by Lois Ehlert.  
A father and child grow vegetables and then make them into a soup.
- J PictureBk Emberley**      *Go away, big green monster!* by Ed Emberley.  
Die-cut pages through which bits of a monster are revealed are designed to help a child control nighttime fears of monsters.
- J PictureBk Falconer**      *Olivia* and illustrated by Ian Falconer.  
Whether at home getting ready for the day, enjoying the beach, or at bedtime, Olivia is a feisty pig who has too much energy for her own good.

**J PictureBk Feiffer**      *Bark, George* by Jules Feiffer.

When George's mother tells her son to bark, George goes "Meow," which definitely isn't right because George is a dog. When she asks him again, he goes "Oink." What's going on with George? Readers will delight at the surprise ending!

**J PictureBk Fleming**      *Lunch* by Denise Fleming.

A very hungry mouse eats a large lunch comprised of colorful foods

**J PictureBk Freeman**      *Corduroy* by Don Freeman.

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

**J PictureBk Gag**      *Millions of cats* by Wanda Gág.

How can an old man and his wife select one cat from a choice of millions and trillions?

**J PictureBk Galdone**      *The gingerbread boy* by Paul Galdone.

The Gingerbread Boy eludes the hungry grasp of everyone he meets until he happens upon a fox more clever than he.

**J PictureBk Guarino**      *Is your mama a llama* by Deborah Guarino ; illustrated by Steven Kellogg

A young llama asks his friends if their mamas are llamas and finds out, in rhyme, that their mothers are other types of animals.

**J PictureBk Henkes**      *Egg* by Kevin Henkes.

Three little birds crack their way out of eggs and fly away, leaving one egg sitting all alone until the three chicks come back and discover a friendly baby alligator has finally hatched.

**J PictureBk Heo**      *Ten days and nine nights* an adoption story by Yumi Heo.

A young girl eagerly awaits the arrival of her newly-adopted sister from Korea, while her whole family prepares.

**J PictureBk Hest**      *Off to school, Baby Duck!* by Amy Hest ; illustrated by Jill Barton.

Baby Duck experiences the fear of the first day of school, but with a little help from Grampa, everything turns out okay in the end.

**J PictureBk Hill**      *Spot goes to school* by Eric Hill.

Spot the dog has an eventful first day at school. Illustrations feature lift-up flaps.

**J PictureBk Horse**      *Little Rabbit goes to school* by Harry Horse.

Little Rabbit takes his favorite toy, Charlie Horse, along for his first day of school and when there is trouble, he blames it all on Charlie.

**J PictureBk Hutchins**      *Rosie's walk* by Pat Hutchins.

Although unaware that a fox is after her as she takes a walk around the farmyard, Rosie the hen still manages to lead him into one accident after another.

**J PictureBk Johnson**      *Harold and the purple crayon* by Crockett Johnson.

Harold goes for an adventurous walk in the moonlight with his purple crayon.

**J PictureBk Johnson**      *Henry hikes to Fitchburg* by D.B. Johnson.

While his friend works hard to earn the train fare to Fitchburg, young Henry Thoreau walks the thirty miles through woods and fields, enjoying nature and the time to think great thoughts. Includes biographical information about Thoreau.

**J PictureBk Juster**      *The hello, goodbye window* by Norton Juster ; pictures by Chris Raschka.

A little girl describes the magic kitchen window in her grandparents' home.

**J PictureBk Keats**      *The snowy day.* by Ezra Jack Keats.

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

**J PictureBk Kraus**      *Leo the late bloomer* by Robert Kraus ; pictures by José Aruego.

Leo, a young tiger, finally blooms under the anxious eyes of his parents.

**J PictureBk Krauss**      *The carrot seed* by Ruth Krauss ; pictures by Crockett Johnson.

Despite everyone's dire predictions, a little boy has faith in the carrot he plants.

**J PictureBk Krishnaswami**      *Chachaji's cup* by Uma Krishnaswami ; illustrations by Soumya Sitaraman.

A boy learns about his family history and the Partition of India from his great uncle, through stories told over a beloved old teacup.

**J PictureBk Langstaff**      *Over in the meadow* by John Langstaff ; with pictures by Feodor Rojankovsky.

A presentation of an old counting rhyme about meadow animals and their activities. A page of music is included.

**J PictureBk Leaf** *The story of Ferdinand*, by Munro Leaf; illustrated by Robert Lawson.  
In this classic and well-loved tale the bull, Ferdinand, would rather smell the flowers than fight in the bullring.

**J PictureBk Lee** *In the snow* written and illustrated by Huy Voun Lee.  
A mother and son practice writing Chinese characters in the snow. Introduces the characters for ten simple words.

**J PictureBk Lin** *The ugly vegetables* by Grace Lin.  
A little girl thinks her mother's garden is the ugliest in the neighborhood until she discovers that flowers might look and smell pretty but Chinese vegetable soup smells best of all. Includes a recipe.

**J PictureBk Lionni** *Mr. McMouse* by Leo Lionni.  
Timothy, a city mouse who has been transformed into a tiny man, searches for his true identity among a group of field mice.

**J PictureBk Lo** *Auntie Yang's great soybean picnic* by Ginnie Lo ; illustrations by Beth Lo.  
A Chinese American girl's Auntie Yang discovers soybeans-a favorite Chinese food-growing in Illinois, leading her family to a soybean picnic tradition that grows into an annual community event.

**J PictureBk London** *Froggy gets dressed* by Jonathan London ; illustrated by Frank Remkiewicz.  
Rambunctious Froggy hops out into the snow for a winter frolic but is called back by his mother to put on some necessary articles of clothing.

**J PictureBk Look** *Henry's first-moon birthday* by Lenore Look ; illustrated by Yumi Heo.  
A young girl helps her grandmother with preparations for the traditional Chinese celebration to welcome her new baby brother.

**J PictureBk MacDonald** *The squeaky door* retold by Margaret Read MacDonald ; pictures by Mary Newell Depalma  
When Little Boy is frightened by a squeaky bedroom door, his grandmother brings in various animals to help him feel secure enough to sleep. Includes notes on the story's origins.

**J PictureBk Marshall** *George and Martha : the complete stories of two best friends* by James Marshall: foreword by Maurice Sendak  
Like all best friends, George and Martha do everything together--go to the movies, play at the beach, and just hang around not doing much of anything. George and Martha teach each other the limits in a close friendship.

**J PictureBk McKissack** *Goin' someplace special* by Patricia C. McKissack ; [illustrated by] Jerry Pinkn Pinkney.  
In segregated 1950s Nashville, a young African American girl braves a series of indignities and obstacles to get to one of the few integrated places in town: the public library

**J PictureBk McMullan** *I stink!* by Kate & Jim McMullan.  
A big city garbage truck makes its rounds, consuming everything from apple cores and banana peels to leftover ziti with zucchini.

**J PictureBk McQuinn** *Lola plants a garden* by Anna McQuinn ; illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw.  
Lola plants a flower garden with her parent's help, and watches it grow.

**J PictureBk Meddaugh** *Martha speaks* by Susan Meddaugh.  
Problems arise when Martha, the family dog, learns to speak after eating alphabet soup.

**J PictureBk Murphy** *I kissed the baby!* by Mary Murphy.  
Various animals tell how they saw, fed, sang to, tickled, and kissed the new duckling.

**J PictureBk Numeroff** *If you give a mouse a cookie* by Laura Numeroff ; illustrated by Felicia Bond.  
Relating the cycle of requests a mouse is likely to make after you give him a cookie takes the reader through a young child's day.

**J PictureBk O'Connell** *The baby goes beep* by Rebecca O'Connell ; illustrated by Ken Wilson-Max.  
A baby makes various sounds as he explores the world around him.

**J PictureBk Pak** *Dear Juno* by Soyung Pak ; illustrated by Susan Kathleen Hartung.  
Although Juno, a Korean American boy, cannot read the letter he receives from his grandmother in Seoul, he understands what it means from the photograph and dried flower that are enclosed and decides to send a similar letter back to her.

**J PictureBk Pak**                      *Sumi's first day of school ever* by Soyung Pak ; illustrated by Joung Un Kim.  
By the time Sumi finishes her first day of school, she decides that school is not as lonely, scary, or mean as she had thought.

**J PictureBk Parr**                      *The peace book* by Todd Parr.  
Describes peace as making new friends, sharing a meal, feeling good about yourself, and more.

**J PictureBk Pinkwater**              *The big orange splot* by Daniel Manus Pinkwater  
When a seagull drops a can of orange paint on his neat house, Mr. Plumbean gets an idea that affects his entire neighborhood.

**J PictureBk Polacco**                  *Chicken Sunday* by Patricia Polacco.  
To thank Miss Eula for her wonderful Sunday chicken dinners, three children sell decorated eggs to buy her a beautiful Easter hat.

**J PictureBk Recorvits**                *My name is Yoon* by Helen Recorvits ; pictures by Gabi Swiatkowska.  
Disliking her name as written in English, Korean-born Yoon, or "shining wisdom," refers to herself as "cat," "bird," and "cupcake," as a way to feel more comfortable in her new school and new country.

**J PictureBk Rey**                        *Curious George* by H. A. Rey.  
The curiosity of a newly-captured monkey gets him into continual trouble.

**J PictureBk Rohmann**                *My friend Rabbit* by 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.

**J PictureBk Sendak**                    *Where the wild things are* Story and pictures by Maurice Sendak.  
A naughty little boy, sent to bed without his supper, sails to the land of the wild things where he becomes their king.

**J PictureBk Sheth**                      *Sona and the wedding game* by Kashmira Sheth ; illustrated by Yoshiko Jaeggi.  
Sona is excited about attending her first Indian wedding, especially since her sister is the bride, but when she learns that tradition requires her to steal the groom's shoes during the ceremony she must ask her annoying little cousin, Vishal, for help.

**J PictureBk Simont**                    *The stray dog : from a true story by Reiko Sassa* retold and illustrated by Marc Simont.  
A family befriends a stray dog, names him Willy, and decides to keep him.

**J PictureBk Slate**                      *Miss Bindergarten gets ready for kindergarten* by Joseph Slate ; illustrated by Ashley Wolff.  
Introduces the letters of the alphabet as Miss Bindergarten and her students get ready for kindergarten.

**J PictureBk Slobodkina**                *Caps for sale : a tale of a peddler, some monkeys and their monkey business* told and illustrated by Esphyr Slobodkina.  
A band of mischievous monkeys steals every one of a peddler's caps while he takes a nap under a tree.

**J PictureBk Steig**                      *Sylvester and the magic pebble* by William Steig.  
On a rainy day, Sylvester finds a magic pebble that can make wishes come true. Sylvester makes a wish that brings unexpected results. A story that is beautifully tender and filled with magic.

**J PictureBk Steig**                      *Pete's a pizza* by William Steig.  
When Pete feels miserable because rain makes it impossible to play ball outdoors, his father finds a fun indoor game to play with his son.

**J PictureBk Tafuri**                      *Have you seen my duckling?* by Nancy Tafuri.  
A mother duck leads her brood around the pond as she searches for one missing duckling

**J PictureBk Thong**                      *Round is a mooncake : a book of shapes* by Roseanne Thong ; illustrated by Grace Lin.

As a little girl discovers things round, square, and rectangular in her urban neighborhood, she is reminded of her Chinese American culture

**J PictureBk Viorst**

*Alexander and the terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day* by Judith Viorst ;  
Illustrated by Ray ruz.

On a day when everything goes wrong for him, Alexander is consoled by the thought that other people have bad days too.

**J PictureBk Waber**

*Ira sleeps over* by Bernard Waber.

A little boy is excited at the prospect of spending the night at his friend's house but worries how he'll get along without his teddy bear.

**J PictureBk Waber**

*Lyle, Lyle, crocodile.* by Bernard Waber.

Lyle is perfectly happy living with the Primms on East 88th St. until irritable Mr. Grumps next door changes all that.

**J PictureBk Wells**

*Max cleans up* by Rosemary Wells.

Max's big sister Ruby is determined to help him clean up his messy room, but he keeps rescuing things that she wants to throw away.

**J PictureBk Wells**

*Yoko* by Rosemary Wells.

When Yoko brings sushi to school for lunch, her classmates make fun of what she eats--until one of them tries it for himself.

**J PictureBk Wiesner**

*Tuesday* by David Wiesner.

Frogs rise on their lily pads, float through the air, and explore the nearby houses while their inhabitants sleep.

**J PictureBk Williams**

*A chair for my mother* by Vera B. Williams.

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

**J PictureBk Willems**

*Knuffle bunny: a cautionary tale* by Mo Willems

Trixie, Daddy, and Knuffle Bunny take a trip to the neighborhood Laundromat. But the exciting adventure takes a dramatic turn when Trixie realizes somebunny was left behind.

**J PictureBk Yoon**

*Bear's big day* by Salina Yoon.

Bear, feeling very grown-up, says goodbye to his stuffed rabbit, Floppy, and starts his first day of school but soon he is missing Floppy and worrying that he is not ready to be a big bear, after all.

**J PictureBk Young**

*Seven blind mice* by Ed Young.

In this retelling of the Indian fable, seven blind mice discover different parts of an elephant and argue about its appearance.

**J PictureBk Yuly**

*Night owl* by Toni Yuly.

A baby owl flies through the night, listening carefully to different sounds as he tries to find Mommy Owl.

**J PictureBk Zion**

*Harry, the dirty dog,* by Gene Zion. Pictures by Margaret Bloy Graham.

When a white dog with black spots runs away from home, he gets so dirty his family doesn't recognize him. Harry loves everything . . . except baths.

## Additional Resources for More Recommended Titles

- **book and media lists accessible through the AML website**

There are many excellent resources for finding books on our library website, including, for example, NoveList, featuring fiction reviews, author read-alikes, book discussion guides, recommended reading lists, award lists and feature articles.

<http://www.actonmemoriallibrary.org/resources-research/book-lists/>

Our children's department has a "What to Read" section on our website:

<http://www.actonmemoriallibrary.org/services/children/recommended-reading/>

- **books**

Here in the children's department, we have books full of book recommendations on our readers' advisory shelf.

- **goodreads**

Goodreads is the world's largest site for readers and book recommendations. You can also track your reading on this site, if you create an account.

<https://www.goodreads.com/about/us>

<https://www.goodreads.com/choiceawards/best-picture-books-2016>

- **ALA**

The American Library Association division Association for Library Service to Children has many terrific booklists here:

<http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia>

- **amightygirl**

A Mighty Girl's book section features over 2,000 girl-empowering books starring stellar female characters. With over 200 book categories to explore, including recommendations for age groups.

<http://www.amightygirl.com/books>