

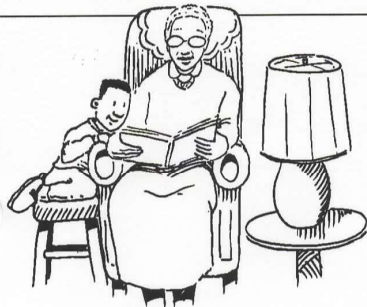


A Sample of Read-Aloud Favorites

Why do some children love to read whereas others almost never read for pleasure? Often, someone helped these young readers get *excited* about reading.

They have seen others enjoying books and have listened to wonderful stories. In short, these children have experienced the pleasure that reading can bring. Your child can, too!

In this special report on “read-aloud” books, *Reading Connection* is pleased to present a small sample of the books children love most. But first, we’ll answer a few of the most common questions parents ask about reading.



Q How can I help my child get excited about reading?

A The easiest way to improve your child’s reading, writing, and speaking skills is by reading good books aloud. Studies have shown that reading aloud is probably the most important activity in building reading success and enjoyment. It’s also a good idea to keep a wide variety of reading materials around the house and to make sure your child sees *you* reading for pleasure.

Q Where do I find the books that are best for my child?

A There are thousands of wonderful children’s books to choose from. If you need help finding good books, check with the school librarian or drop by your public library for advice. Several guides have been published that describe hundreds of excellent books for young readers. Some of the best resources include:

- ♥ *The New Read-Aloud Handbook* by Jim Trelease (Penguin)
- ♥ *Choosing Books for Kids* by Oppenheim, Brenner, and Boegehold (Ballantine)
- ♥ *New York Times Parent’s Guide to the Best Books for Children* by Eden Lipson (Random)
- ♥ *The RIF Guide to Encouraging Young Readers* by Ruth Graves (Doubleday)

Q What suggestions can you give to make read-aloud time a success?

A Build read-aloud time into your daily routine. A regular time—even just 15 minutes—can help create a lifelong reader. And it’s never too late to show your child reading is fun. Choose books on topics your child is interested in—he will be more likely to read and enjoy them.



Q Can you name a few of the best read-aloud books for elementary children?

A The list below will get you started. Most of these books are highly recommended on popular “read-aloud” book lists, including *The New Read-Aloud Handbook* by Jim Trelease and the Reading is Fundamental *Children’s Bookshelf*. Some of these books are available in Spanish, but check with a librarian to be sure.

We urge you to review books personally to see if they’re appropriate for your child.

Amelia Bedelia by Peggy Parish (K–4): Amelia is a lovable girl who is a walking disaster. She creates a giant mess because she takes directions literally. Many sequels.

Bedtime for Frances by Russell Hoban (K–2): Frances is a badger who can’t get to sleep. Many of the bedtime excuses children give are humorously contained here.

Charlotte’s Web by E.B. White (K–4): Wilbur, a barnyard pig, is supposed to be butchered in the fall. The animals—especially a spider named Charlotte—and the farmer’s daughter work to save his life.

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Cricket in Times Square by George Seldon (3–6): A classic story of a cat and mouse who live in Times Square and discover Chester, a musical cricket. A wonderful tale of friendship and sacrifice.

Crow Boy by Taro Yashima (K–4): A shy little schoolboy is ignored and taunted by his classmates. Finally, a special teacher brings out the boy's silent gifts. Everyone sees that differences in people make life exciting. A wonderful message!

If I Ran the Zoo by Dr. Seuss (K–4): Gerald McGrew populates the zoo of his imagination with wonderful, funny, and exotic creatures. Only Dr. Seuss could describe these rare species!

If I Were in Charge of the World by Judith Viorst (3–6): A collection of 41 humorous poems about children's hopes, fears, and feelings.

Ira Sleeps Over by Bernard Waber (K–6): Ira wonders if he should take his teddy bear when he spends the night at his friend's house. Can lead to interesting family discussions.

Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell (4–6): An inspiring story based on the experiences of Karana, an island girl, who is marooned on an island off the coast of California.

James and the Giant Peach by Roald Dahl (3–6): The story of James, a young orphan, who leaves his miserable life with mean relatives to live inside a giant peach. Inside the peach, James meets a marvelous group of characters.

Little Bear by Else Holelund Minarik (K–1): A series of books about Little Bear and his

family. Covers things that are important to children, such as birthdays, playing, and wishing.

Make Way for Ducklings by Robert McCloskey (K–2): This modern classic follows Mrs. Mallard and her eight ducklings as they search for a new home.

Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel by Virginia Lee Burton (K–2): The heartwarming story of Mary Anne, the old-fashioned steam shovel, who proves she and her owner can still be useful to the town of Popperville.



Miss Nelson is Missing by Harry Allard (K–4): After they're faced with an unpleasant substitute, the children in Miss Nelson's class come to realize what a wonderful teacher they have.

My Side of the Mountain by Jean George (3–8): Sam Gribble is a modern-day Robinson Crusoe. He describes his year of surviving as a runaway in the mountains.

Storm Boy by Colin Thiele (3–6): An Australian hermit and his son live by the sea. They adopt and train a little pelican that is lost to thoughtless hunters.

Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing by Judy Blume (3–5): This book is about Fudge, who is two-and-a-half and usually the center of attention in his family; and Peter, who feels like a "fourth grade nothing."

Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold (K–3): Story of a young girl living in Harlem in the 1930s who dreams she can be free, flying anywhere she wants to go.

The Hole in the Dike, retold by Norma Green (K–2): The inspiring legend of a

brave little Dutch boy who discovers the hole in the dike and plugs it with his finger until help arrives.

The Island of the Skog by Steven Kellogg (K–2): A boatload of mice find the island of their dreams, but are frightened by a scary monster already living there. They learned that talking about problems can sometimes overcome obstacles.

The People Could Fly, retold by Virginia Hamilton (K–up): This Newbery Medal winner contains 24 African-American folktales selected for children.

The Reluctant Dragon by Kenneth Grahame (3–5): This is a charming book about a reluctant dragon who wants nothing to do with violence. Wonderful introduction to a legendary time and place.

The Sign of the Beaver by Elizabeth G. Speare (3–up): The story of two boys — one white, the other Native American — who come of age in the Maine wilderness before the Revolutionary War. A sensitive study of their developing relationship.

Tikki Tikki Tembo by Arlene Mosel (K–2): An amusing legend of how the Chinese people changed from giving their first-born sons very long names to giving them shorter ones.

Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls (3–7): A 10-year-old boy grows up in the Ozark Mountains and works to buy a pair of hounds. A wonderful book of perseverance, courage, work, and life and death.

Where the Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein (K–8): A hilarious collection of 130 poems. Full of surprise endings and exciting rhythms — sure to tickle your child's funny bone.



Reading Connection Beginning Edition

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