

Happily Ever After Books to Read Aloud

Unit 1

F *Jack the Wolf* by Yvonne Jagtenberg. Roaring Brook Press, 2002. Jack's very first day in a new school is made more interesting when he is asked to play the wolf while the class sings about Red Riding Hood.

F *Little Red Riding Hood: A Newfangled Prairie Tale* by Lisa Campbell Ernst. Aladdin Paperbacks, 2005. This retelling is full of surprises, including a tractor-driving grandma, a wolf that learns to bake muffins, and even a muffin recipe that includes Grandma's secret ingredient.

F *Oops!* By Colin McNaughton. Voyager Paperbacks, 2000. Preston the Pig matches wits with a forgetful wolf who is not sure which story he is in. When Preston, wearing his red coat with a hood, meets the wolf on the way to Granny's house, the wolf doesn't know whether to huff and puff or gobble Granny. In the end, Preston saves the day.

F *The Wolf's Chicken Stew* by Keiko Kasza. Putnam Juvenile, 1996. A wolf tries to fatten up a little chicken for his stew by leaving tempting food for her each day. When he finally decides she's plump enough, the chickens surprise him by thanking him for all the treats he has been giving them. So, what can Uncle Wolf do but bake them some cookies?

F *The Wolf's Story* by Toby Forward. Illustrated by Izhar Cohen. Candlewick Press, 2005. The wolf narrates his own defense in this beautifully illustrated account of what really happened to Red Riding Hood. The wolf claims he worked for Grandma and Grandma's ending up in the closet was really just an accident. Everyone will enjoy sorting out the facts of the case.

I *Wolves* by Michael George. The Child's World, 2000. In the real world, the wolf is quite different from his fairy-tale personality. This nonfiction book is illustrated with wonderful photographs of this often misunderstood animal. Children will learn about wolf habitat, habits, and behavior.

F *Yahoo for You* by Dana Meachen Rau. Illustrated by Cary Pillo. Compass Point Books, 2006. Each time a little girl visits her grandma, she tries one new thing, and her grandma shouts, "Yahoo!" This book gives children a chance to talk about things they do with grandparents or other adults.

F Fiction **I** Informational Text



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Unit 2

I *Bears!* By the editors of *Time for Kids* with Nicole Iorio. HarperCollins, 2005. Bears—their variety, where they live, what they eat, how they hibernate—are the subject of this very simple photo essay. This is an undemanding but interesting introduction to these fascinating animals.

F *Big Black Bear* by Wong Herbert Yee. Houghton Mifflin, 1996. This is a lively tale with a twist, told in verse. A huge, black bear with bad manners takes over a little girl's house. Then an even bigger black bear comes to show her little one good manners. The story is a lesson in hospitality, generosity, and joyful surprises.

F *The Cat Who Came for Tacos* by Diana Star Helmer. Illustrated by Vivi Escrivá. Albert Whitman & Co., 2003. Flynn, a homeless cat, discovers a welcoming Señor and Señora who say, “mi casa es su casa.” (My home is your home.) Flynn learns to follow the house rules while making himself part of the family. Flynn could teach Goldilocks a few lessons about being a good guest!

F *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* retold and illustrated by James Marshall. Penguin Young Readers Group, 1998. Goldilocks's mother sends her to buy muffins in the next village and cautions her not to take the shortcut because there are bears in the woods. But Goldilocks, always a girl to do just as she pleases, pays no attention.

I *Grizzly Bears* by Gail Gibbons. Holiday House, 2003. This is an informative book full of illustrations, diagrams, maps, and intriguing details about these formidable animals. How did an animal this fierce and imposing become endangered? Although there is much information to think about, the format of this book makes it appropriate for young children.

F *Please Say Please! Penguin's Guide to Manners* by Margery Cuyler. Illustrated by Will Hillenbrand. Scholastic, 2004. Had Goldilocks read this book, the story would have been quite different. Penguin's friends have come to dinner, but how badly they all behave! Children will respond to the questions the animals ask.

F *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* retold by Michael Rosen. Illustrated by Helen Oxenbury. Aladdin Books, 1992. The whole family is going on a bear hunt, and they are going to get a big one. Obstacles abound in this fun and thrilling version of the classic children's chant.

F Fiction **I** Informational Text



Happily Ever After Books to Read Aloud

Unit 3

F *Jabuti the Tortoise: A Trickster Tale from the Amazon* by Gerald McDermott. Harcourt, 2001. Jabuti, a flute-playing tortoise, lives in the Amazon. Most of the birds love his music, but Vulture does not. The nasty trick that Vulture plays on Jabuti explains why the tortoise has a cracked and patchy shell.

F *The Leopard's Drum: An Asante Tale from West Africa* by Jessica Souhami. Little, Brown, 1995. So magnificent is Leopard's wonderful drum that the Sky-God has offered a reward for it. Python, Elephant, and Monkey try and fail to get the drum, but Achi-Cheri, the tortoise, succeeds. He asks that in return he be given a hard shell to protect him from animals that bite. The rhythmic text and brilliant illustrations make this a lively read aloud.

F *Tudley Didn't Know* by John Himmelman. Sylvan Dell, 2006. Tudley doesn't know that turtles can't fly or light up their tails like fireflies, so he tries to do these things to help his friends. Fortunately, his friends come to his rescue when he needs to know what it is that turtles really do to survive. The book includes information about real turtles and their characteristics.

I *Turtle Crossing* by Rick Chrustowski. Holt, 2006. Newborn painted turtles take a perilous journey from broken egg shells to ponds and lakes, dodging raccoons, opossums, hungry birds, and busy roads. In this nonfictional account of a young turtle's journey, the turtle is helped to the other side of a road by friendly humans. The story and illustrations tell the story from a turtle's point of view.

F *Turtle Splash! Countdown at the Pond* by Cathryn Falwell. Greenwillow Books, 2001. "Ten timid turtles, lounging in a line, startled by a bullfrog...then there were nine." Through nine more simple examples, Falwell brings to life the natural habitat of the painted turtle and a day in the life of the pond. The book includes instructions on making leaf prints.

F Fiction **I** Informational Text



Happily Ever After Books to Read Aloud

Unit 4

F *Centipede's 100 Shoes* by Tony Ross. Holt, 2003. When little Centipede hurts one toe, his mother says it is time for shoes. Little Centipede orders a hundred shoes, but it turns out he has only 42 legs. What little Centipede does with the extra shoes and socks will make everyone laugh and be grateful for only two feet.

F *The Elves and the Shoemaker* retold and illustrated by Jim La Marche. Chronicle Books, 2003. This is a beautiful rendition of the classic tale with illustrations from a prize-winning painter. The elves are rewarded and never seen again, but the shoemaker and his wife live happily ever after.

F *The Princesses Have a Ball* by Teresa Bateman. Illustrated by Lynne Cravath. Albert Whitman, 2002. In a retelling of a classic Grimm fairy tale, the princesses escape the palace at night, not to dance away the hours with royalty, but to play basketball. The cobbler discovers the girls' secret and outfits them with playing shoes that help them become winners.

F *Rumpelstiltskin* retold and illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky. Puffin Books, 1996. In this lushly illustrated Caldecott Honor Book, an elf helps the miller's daughter with the seemingly impossible task of spinning straw into gold. But he requires a high price in return. The elf is no hero in this powerful re-telling of the Grimm fairytale.

F *The Shoemaker Extraordinaire* by Steve Light. Harry N. Abrams, 2003. Hans Crispin was an uncommon shoemaker. Whatever the problem, he could solve it with a unique pair of shoes. When the jealous cobbler sends Hans on an expedition to outfit the giant, Barefootus, it is the cobbler, not Hans, who is in for a surprise. The colored cloth and paper collage illustrations, together with the shoe-tread stamped endpapers add to this imaginative tale about shoes.

I *Shoes, Shoes, Shoes* by Ann Morris. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1995. This is a fascinating nonfiction photo essay on the multicultural landscape of shoes around the world. From shoes for the snow to shoes to be worn underwater, there is a shoe for every climate, every country, and every foot.

F Fiction **I** Informational Text



Happily Ever After Books to Read Aloud

Unit 5

F *Cha-Cha Chimps* by Julia Durango. Simon and Schuster, 2006. If you can say “ee-ee-oo-oo-ah-ah-ah,” you can read this rollicking adventure in which the ostrich dances the polka, the zebra leads a jig, and the hippo does the hokey-pokey. For Mama Chip’s ten grooving little ones, it’s home to bed and a goodnight kiss, and then it’s Mama’s turn to dance—after she calls the babysitter, of course.

P *Grasshopper Pie and Other Poems* by David Steinberg. Grosset & Dunlap, 2004. Tickling dads, sneezing elephants, and aliens in the soup inhabit this collection of five whimsical stories. Equal helpings of rhyme and slapstick makes story time with Steinberg a frolic.

P *The Llama Who Had No Pajama: 100 favorite Poems* by Mary Ann Hoberman. Harcourt Paperbacks, 2006. Never use an armadillo as a pillow. That’s sage advice, and it can be found in a marvelously diverse collection of poems about animals, birthdays, troublesome siblings, and much more, all of it an outstanding introduction to the way poetry enlivens our view of the world.

F *Sylvia Long’s Mother Goose* collected and illustrated by Sylvia Long. Chronicle Books, 1999. Not all collections of Mother Goose are alike. This book, thoughtfully arranged and beautifully illustrated, is a softer and gentler retelling of these beloved tales. Old Mother Hubbard is a spider with her babies, and Humpty Dumpty is a little bird coming out of his shell.

F *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish* by Dr. Seuss. Random House, 1960. No writer’s nonsense makes more sense to young children than that of Dr. Seuss. This classic collection of pets no one really has is as delightful today as when it was first published. Everyone will agree there are funny things everywhere.

F *Wiggle* by Doreen Cronin. Atheneum, 2005. Wiggles are the only appropriate response to this irrepressible book of rhythmic nonsense. Be warned, because “if you wiggle with your breakfast, it might wind up on your head.” The illustrations wiggle right off the page. This book will be a favorite when it is time to get out the children’s wiggles.

F Fiction **P** Poetry



Happily Ever After Books to Read Aloud

Unit 6

I *Birds* by Adele Richardson. Capstone Press, 2005. This beautifully illustrated guide to the lives and behaviors of birds is a gold mine of facts: their nesting habits, their preferences in food, the way they protect their babies and teach them independence, and much more.

F *The Nightingale* adapted and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Phyllis Fogelman Books, 2002. Pinkney, a four-time winner of the Caldecott Medal, has moved the traditional tale from the palace in China to the lavish palace of the King of Morocco. Using a lush, North African setting changes the feel of the story, but none of its original delight.

F *The Nightingale* retold by Stephen Mitchell. Candlewick Press, 2002. The beauty of this classic take is illuminated by the illustrations of Bagram Ibatoulline. The paintings are as rich as tapestries of fine Chinese art and the story is close to the original. This is a good version to compare to Pinkney's and the version in Unit 6.

F *Welcome, Brown Bird* by Mary Lyn Ray. Harcourt, 2004. On a farm in North America, the brown thrush sings a song a young boy will never forget. When the seasons change, the thrush flies thousands of miles to a South American rainforest, where another young boy is enthralled by its song. This quiet book is a simple celebration of migration and the magic of birdsong.

I *What Makes a Bird a Bird?* By May Garelick. Mondo Publishing, 1995. How do we know a bird is a bird? True, most birds can fly, but so can other creatures. It is not their wings or their song that makes birds unique. With Garelick as our guide, we are drawn to a conclusion that will surprise the reader or listener by its very obviousness. This is a nonfiction classic, rich and informative.

I *Why Do Birds Sing?* By Joan Holub. Dial books for Young Readers, 2004. This lively, fact-filled book is organized by topic and provides a wealth of information about the nine thousand species of our feathered friends. Why do birds sing and build nests? Holub tells us. We also learn how to take care of pet birds and build a feeder for the wild ones. The book has wonderful illustrations to catch the eye of a young bird-watcher.

F Fiction **I** Informational Text



Happily Ever After Books to Read Aloud

Unit 7

F *Aesop's Fables* retold by Jerry Pinkey. North-South Books, 2000. This lushly illustrated collection houses more than 60 of the original fables, including *The Town Mouse*. Each fable is on one page, with the moral in italics at the end. A great discussion starter.

F *Country Kid, City Kid* by Julie Cummins. Holt, 2002. Ben lives in a farmhouse in the country and awakens in the morning to the sound of cows and birds. Jody lives in an apartment in the city and awakens to taxicab horns and fire truck sirens. Their lives are different in many ways, but when they meet at summer camp, they find they have much in common.

F *Make Way for Ducklings* by Robert McCloskey. Viking Press, 1941; Puffin, 1999. Generations of small children have been delighted by this Caldecott Award winner of 1941. Mr. and Mrs. Mallard deal with all the tribulations of city life as they try to find a safe haven for their babies. They chose well when they decide on the Boston Public Gardens, because if you visit, you will find them there to this day.

F *The Subway Mouse* by Barbara Reid. Scholastic, 2005. Nib is a city mouse who lives in the subway. All his life, he has heard tales of a more beautiful place, at the tunnel's end, where there are trees and stars. His brave adventures to this beautiful place are exciting, and Nib learns that even the most serene settings may present unexpected dangers.

F *Town Mouse, Country Mouse* by Jan Brett. Putnam, 2003. Mr. and Mrs. Town Mouse exchange houses with Mr. and Mrs. Country Mouse, each needing a change of scene. The details of the illustration enhance the settings and the dangers. The author has supplied humor and suspense at every turn.

F *Wow! City!* By Robert Neubecker. Hyperion Books for Children, 2004. There are few words in this book, but it says "city" in ways that words cannot. The amazing and enormous illustrations shout city: museum, bus, bridge, buildings, lights, parade, people, and subway. This book will nourish any discussion of what it feels like to be in a big city. Wow!

F Fiction



Happily Ever After Books to Read Aloud

Unit 8

A *A is for Africa* by Ifeoma Onyefulu. Puffin, 1997. This alphabet book uses the author's own photographs from Nigeria. The colorful images reflect village life, warm family ties, and the diversity typical of the continent.

F *Anansi and the Talking Melon* retold by Eric A. Kimmel. Holiday House, 1994. Anansi, the spider, is born conniver. He has convinced the other animals that a melon can talk. The mysterious melon is a fount of insults to all the beast that buy into the spider's scam. Of course it's Anansi himself who is doing the talking. Janet Stevens's drawings of elephant, rhino, and king monkey make this a hilarious trickster tale.

F *The Gruffalo* by Julia Donaldson. Dial Books for Young Readers, 1999. A fox, an owl, and a snake are about to make a meal of poor mouse. But mouse is as clever as he is tiny. He convinces his assailants that he is on his way to see the Gruffalo, a creature with terrible tusks, teeth, claws, and jaws, and an appetite for whatever animal happens to be threatening his little rodent friend.

F *Mrs. Chicken and the Hungry Crocodile* by Won-Ldy Paye and Margaret Lippert. Holt, 2003. When Mrs. Chicken is captured by the hungry crocodile, we have every reason to believe she is a goner. How Mrs. Chicken convinces the crocodile that they are actually sisters is clever indeed. This is a tradition story from the Dan people of Liberia that the author first heard from his grandmother when he was very young.

F *Sungura and Leopard: A Swahili Trickster Tale* by Barbara Knutson. First Avenue Editions, 2007. The leopard and little hare don't realize that the house each has been building is the same house, and now that it's finished, each wants it for himself. The clever hare tricks the naïve leopard into giving up his claim and leaving, never to return.

F *Who's In Rabbit's House?* retold by Verna Aardema. Illustration by Leo and Diane Dillon. Puffin, 1992. This clever and animated Africa story is depicted as a play with humans wearing African animal masks. Rabbit finds that an interloper calling himself The Long One has taken over his house. Each animal of the village tries his own brand of destructive persuasion to remove the intruder, but it is little Frog who frightens The Long One out into the open. The ending is a surprise!

F Fiction **A** Alphabet Book



Happily Ever After Books to Read Aloud

Unit 9

F *Marsh Music* by Marianne Berkes. Millbrook Press, 2000. Maestro Frog has raised his baton and is ready to begin the magical outdoor symphony. Although the rhyming story is a fantasy, each species of frog has been carefully drawn and its sounds are authentic. The musical terms and melodious frogs are introduced in a glossary. A marvelous introduction to music and to frogs.

F *My Family Plays Music* by Judy Cox. Holiday House, 2003. Each member of a young girl's family plays a different kind of music. With each of them, the little girl plays a different instrument: tambourine, triangle, cymbals, bells, maracas, chimes, and soup kettle. By the end of the story, she learns she is a percussionist. An introduction to music in its many forms.

F *Sergei Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf* retold by Janet Schulman. Knopf, 2004. The Russian composer drew upon memories of his childhood in writing what has become a classic tale. The book is accompanied by a CD. The CD has a recording of the music by the Cincinnati Pops and narration by Peter Thomas. The book and CD are also an excellent introduction to classical music.

I *To Be an Artist* by Maya Ajmera & John D. Ivanko. Charlesbridge, 2004. To be an artist means so many things: to draw, to write, to paint, to act, to make music. This exuberant photo essay shows children from all around the globe doing all of these things, and it invites children to think of the many ways in which they too are artists.

F *Tubby the Tuba* by Paul Tripp. Dutton Children's Books, 2006. Tubby wishes that he might play the melody as beautifully as the other instruments of the orchestra do. How he achieves his heart's desire is the subject of this lovely introduction to the orchestra, an enormous favorite of children since pre-television times. The music on the accompanying CD was composed by George Kliensinger.

F *Zin! Zin! Zin! A Violin* by Lloyd Moss. Aladdin Paperbacks, 2005. The book opens with a sole trombone playing "a mournful moan and silken tone." A trumpet follows, forming a duet. In elegant and playful language, we follow each instrument, learning words such as *trio*, *quartet*, and *quintet* until we have a chamber group of ten.

F Fiction **I** Informational Text



Happily Ever After Books to Read Aloud

Unit 10

A *Alphabet Mystery* by Audrey Wood. Blue Sky Press, 2003. Charlie's letters are going to sleep, but one of them—little *x*—is missing. So begins an alphabetical adventure, full of fun and excitement, with letters abounding. In the end, even little *x* plays a part in helping Charlie prepare a surprise for his mother's birthday.

A *The Alphabet Room* by Sara Pinto. Bloomsbury Children's Book, 2003. This unique alphabet book provides abundant opportunities for expanding children's language. Each of the objects represented by a letter ends up in a room discovered by opening a door. Behind each door, the objects rearrange themselves, giving opportunities for children to describe what they see. Can you believe that the *guitar* is under the *kite*, upside down in a *bowl* which is sitting on a *hat*?

P *"A" Was Once an Apple Pie* by Edward Lear, adapted and illustrated by Suse Macdonald. Scholastic, 2005. This is an adaptation of the rollicking read-aloud poem. The cut-paper illustrations are lively and very colorful.

A *Bruno Munari's ABC* by Bruno Munari. Chronicle Books, 2006. This lovely alphabet book looks simpler that it is. For example, the fly escapes from the *F* page and shows up in many places: the *V* page, where he is taking a *voyage*, and the *Z* page, where he sounds *zzzz*.

A *Do Your ABC's, Little Brown Bear* by Jonathan London. Dutton Children's Books, 2005. Little Brown Bear and Papa Brown Bear play all the way through the day and through the alphabet. Each game has a letter, but children will also find other surprises with the same letter on each page. This is a lovely, warm story with all the letters there to enjoy.

A *The Hidden Alphabet* by Laura Vaccaro Seeger. Roaring Brook Press, 2003. Each letter is presented in a window appearing as an object beginning with that letter. When you open the window, the letter itself is revealed as part of the object. Children will delight in repeated explorations of this book.

A *Shiver Me Letters: A Pirate ABC* by June Sobel. Harcourt, 2006. Captain Crocodile has ordered his pirate crew to capture 25 letters of the alphabet (he already has the *Rrrrrr*) or go without their lunch. *A* for *anchor* and *P* for *parrot* are easy but *Q* for *questioned* and *U* for *underwater*? Less so. This ingenious yarn ends with *Z*'s zooming above the sleeping forms of the weary pirates.

A Alphabet Book **P** Poetry

