

Incoming First Graders Book Recommendations

Picture Books

I Like Myself!

by Karen Beaumont; David Catrow (Illustrator)

High on energy and imagination, this ode to self-esteem encourages kids to appreciate everything about themselves—inside and out. Messy hair? Beaver breath? So what! Here's a little girl who knows what really matters. At once silly and serious, Karen Beaumont's joyous rhyming text and David Catrow's vibrant illustrations unite in a book that is sassy, soulful . . . and straight from the heart.

Diary of a Worm

by Doreen Cronin and Harry Bliss

This is the diary of a worm. This worm lives with his parents, plays with his friends, and even goes to school. But unlike you or me, he never has to take a bath, he gets to eat his homework, and because he doesn't have legs, he just can't do the hokey pokey—no matter how hard he tries.

My Brave Year of Firsts: Tries, Sighs, and High Fives

by Jamie Lee Curtis; Laura Cornell (Illustrator)

The tenth children's book by the #1 New York Times bestselling team of Jamie Lee Curtis and Laura Cornell celebrates the extraordinary, everyday bravery of trying new things for the very first time. Whether Frankie's learning to ride a bike, love her first dog, make new friends (her very first twins), or help out her dad, she discovers that trying new things is how she grows—and that being brave enough to do so is what growing up is all about.

Last Stop on Market Street

by Matt de la Peña (Author), Christian Robinson (Illustrator)

Every Sunday after church, CJ and his grandma ride the bus across town. But today, CJ wonders why they don't own a car like his friend Colby. Why doesn't he have an iPod like the boys on the bus? How come they always have to get off in the dirty part of town? Each question is met with an encouraging answer from grandma, who helps him see the beauty—and fun—in their routine and the world around them.

A Rainbow of Friends

by P.K. Hallinan

Friends come in all colors and sizes; they can be funny or serious, musical or athletic, outgoing or quiet. This book reminds children to celebrate their differences because that is what makes each of us so special.

How Rocket Learned to Read

by Tad Hills (Author, Illustrator)

Learn to read with this New York Times-bestselling picture book, starring an irresistible dog named Rocket and his teacher, a little yellow bird. Follow along as Rocket masters the alphabet, sounds out words, and finally . . . learns to read all on his own!

What If Everybody Did That?

by Ellen Javernick; Colleen Madden (Illustrator)

If you drop just one soda can out the window, it's no big deal...right? But what if everybody did that? What if everybody broke the rules...and spoke during story time, didn't wash up, or splashed too much at the pool? Then the world would be a mess. But what if everybody obeyed the rules so that the world would become a better place? Using humorous illustrations rendered in mixed media, these questions are answered in a child-friendly way and show the consequences of thoughtless behavior.

The Couch Potato

by Jory John; Pete Oswald (Illustrator)

The Couch Potato has everything within reach and doesn't have to move from the sunken couch cushion. But when the electricity goes out, Couch Potato is forced to peel away from the comforts of the living room and venture outside. Could fresh air and sunshine possibly be better than the views on screen?

The Color of Us

by Karen Katz

Seven-year-old Lena is going to paint a picture of herself. She wants to use brown paint for her skin. But when she and her mother take a walk through the neighborhood, Lena learns that brown comes in many different shades. Through the eyes of a little girl who begins to see her familiar world in a new way, this book celebrates the differences and similarities that connect all people.

The Word Collector

by Peter H. Reynolds (Author, Illustrator)

In this extraordinary new tale from Peter H. Reynolds, Jerome discovers the magic of the words all around him -- short and sweet words, two-syllable treats, and multi-syllable words that sound like little songs. Words that connect, transform, and empower. From the creator of *The Dot*, *I Am Human*, and *Happy Dreamer* comes a celebration of finding your own words -- and the impact you can have when you share them with the world.

The Skin You Live In

by Michael Tyler; David Lee Csicsko (Illustrator)

With the ease and simplicity of a nursery rhyme, this lively story delivers an important message of social acceptance to young readers. Themes associated with child development and social harmony, such as friendship, acceptance, self-esteem, and diversity are promoted in simple and straightforward prose. Vivid illustrations of children's activities for all cultures, such as swimming in the ocean, hugging, catching butterflies, and eating birthday cake are also provided. This delightful picture book offers a wonderful venue through which parents and teachers can discuss important social concepts with their children.

Other Authors We Recommend:

Syd Hoff

Fran Manushkin

Cynthia Rylant

Chapter Books

Fly Guy series

by Ted Arnold (Author & Illustrator)

Boy and fly meet and so begins a beautiful friendship. Er, and so begins a very funny friendship. Using hyperbole, puns, slapstick, and silly drawings, bestselling author Tedd Arnold creates an easy reader that is full of fun.

A Jack Book series

by Mac Barnett; Greg Pizzoli (Illustrator)

From New York Times bestselling author Mac Barnett and Geisel Award-winning illustrator Greg Pizzoli, an uproarious early reader series about a mischievous rabbit, a cranky old lady, and a lovable dog. Meet Jack: He lives in a tree house. His interests include snacks, petty theft, and lipstick graffiti. Jack also loves his friends, he just has a funny way of showing it sometimes . . .

Heidi Heckelbeck series

by Wanda Coven; Priscilla Burris (Illustrator)

Heidi Heckelbeck seems like any other eight-year-old, but she has a secret: She's a witch in disguise. Careful to keep her powers hidden (but excited to use them all the same), Heidi's learning to live like any other kid—who just happens to be witch. And with easy-to-read language and illustrations on almost every page, Heidi Heckelbeck chapter books are perfect for beginning readers.

Mercy Watson series

by Kate DiCamillo; Chris Van Dusen (Illustrator)

To Mr. and Mrs. Watson, Mercy is not just a pig – she's a porcine wonder. And to the portly and good-natured Mercy, the Watsons are an excellent source of buttered toast, not to mention that buttery-toasty feeling she gets when she snuggles into bed with them.

Frog and Toad series

by Arnold Lobel

From writing letters to going swimming, telling stories to finding lost buttons, Frog and Toad are always there for each other—just as best friends should be.

Nate the Great series

by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat; Marc Simont (Illustrator)

Join the world's greatest detective, Nate the Great, as he solves the mystery of the lost picture! Perfect for beginning readers and the Common Core, this long-running chapter book series will encourage children to problem-solve with Nate, using logical thinking to solve mysteries!

Pizza and Taco Graphic Novel series

by Stephen Shaskan

A hilarious young graphic novel series about two best friends, Pizza and Taco.

Elephant and Piggie series

by Mo Willems (Author & Illustrator)

Elephant and Piggie is a book series for early readers created by Mo Willems. The series is written in a comic book style, and features two friends: an elephant named Gerald, and a pig named Piggie.