

Reading Reaches Book Ideas

READING REACHES



KID'S MINDS © KID'S HEARTS

This is a partial list of the books that "Reading Reaches" readers have found to be fun to read aloud. The grade level listed is only a very general guide to age group. Many children enjoy books above and below their own age.

I always recommend The Read-Aloud Handbook by Jim Trelease. Jim includes an extensive list of books to read aloud, as well as suggestions for making reading aloud more enjoyable and productive.

So, in no particular order:

Miss Nelson Books, Harry Allard, ; Grade Level - 2nd, 3rd

This is a series of books featuring Miss Nelson, a school teacher, and her class of kids. Funny, with great illustrations.

Stop That Pickle, Peter Armour, 1st, 2nd

This has been a big favorite, with the kids repeating "Stop that Pickle!" at the bottom of each page.

Cloudy, With a Chance of Meatballs, Judith Barrett, 3rd - 5th

Funny premise for kids old enough to see the humor. What would our world be like if food fell from the sky instead of rain?

Air Mail to the Moon, Tom Birdseye 3rd - 5th

Good story about a 10 year old girl who loses her tooth. Before she can leave it for the tooth fairy, she misplaces it, and she threatens to send her brother and everyone else "Airmail to the Moon" if they don't bring it back. Good example of dialect that older children can relate to; Good example of apologizing for making false accusations.

Clifford, the Big Red Dog (series) , Norman Bridwell Preschool - 1st

This is a set of books that most kids already know and love. Clifford, with his friend Elizabeth, teaches lessons in dally living that are fun for this age group.

Polka Bats and Octopus Slacks, Calef Brown, 3rd - 5th

Off beat poetry. Great illustrations.

Lunchbox Mail, and Other Poems, Jenny Whitehead, 1st - 3rd

This is one of the few poetry books that stands up to the attention span of Shelter our kids. I don't know which I like best, the illustrations or the poetry, but the kids seem to like it all. My favorite is "The Stinkin' Fish Blues", but "Sweet Dreams" is a good poem to say good night with.

Arthur, (series) Marc Brown 2nd -, 3rd

Arthur is an aardvark, who lives with his younger sister and his parents. Lots of good lessons about family living

Lyle, (series) Bernard Waber, 2nd -, 3rd

Lyle is a crocodile, who lives with a little girl and her parents. He lives as normal life as any crocodile in Manhattan, and I suppose his dilemmas are the same everyone else growing up with a family in New York City.

Goodnight Moon, Margaret Brown, Preschool

A children's classic, reassuring of the familiar things around us as we go to sleep

The Escape of Marvin the Ape, Caralyn and Mark Buehner, 1st, 2nd

Low key premise, of an ape that walks out of the zoo and blends in with the city life around him. Well illustrated.

Five Little Monkeys, Jumping on the Bed, Eileen Christelow, Preschool, 1st, 2nd

This has been a big favorite. The kids all know it, and will read it with you.

Little Red Riding Hood, a New Fangled Prairie Tale, Lisa Campbell Ernst, 2nd -4th

A great twist on a familiar story.

When Bluebell Sang, Lisa Campbell Ernst, 2nd - 4th

So, why do cows stand by themselves under a tree in the field. Are they really singing? Here is the real story

Stella Louella's Runaway Book, Lisa Campbell Ernst 2nd - 4th

This is a great book to read to children who are already hooked on books. It involves a little girl who is horror-stricken when she misplaces her library book, and is afraid that she will not be allowed to check out another book until she finds it. There are a lot of things going on beneath the surface in this book.

Corduroy (series) Don Freeman, 2nd - 4th

Corduroy is a teddy bear who features prominently in the little girl's life. One of the aspects of this series of books that I particularly like, is that the author features many different ethnic groups in everyday "non-ethnic" settings

Dr. Seuss Preschool - Adult

There is a world of fun in the Dr. Seuss books. Start with "Hop On Pop", and "One Foot, Two Foot", for the preschoolers. Move through "Green Eggs and Ham" and "Cat in the Hat" for the lower grades. (There are some wonderful springboards for discussion in these two books.) And then move into "Horton Hears a Who", and similar for the older kids. Because there are so many Dr. Seuss books, it is sometimes appropriate to compare the different books with the older kids.

Hello, Cat. You Need a Hat, Rita Golden Gehman, Pre School

A real nice rhyming book.

If You Love a Bear, Piers Harper, PreSchool

Reinforces loving relationships, using a big teddy bear.

If Anything Goes Wrong at the Zoo, Mary Jean Hendrick, 2nd - 3rd

A funny story about taking the zoo animals into the home, if there is ever an emergency at the zoo.

The Doorbell Rang, Pat Hutchins, Preschool - 2nd

A fun book about sharing, about counting, and about dividing the cookies among an ever-growing number of children. A great participation book.

Harold and the Purple Crayon, Harold's Fairy Tales, Crockett Johnson, 1st, 2nd

Harold literally creates his own world and his own adventures by drawing them with his big purple crayon..

Mama Do You Love Me, Barbara Joose, 1st, 2nd

A delightful story of reassurance, set in the land of the Eskimo.

Goggles; Over in the Meadow; Peter's Chair, Ezra Jack Keats, 1st, 2nd

I really like Ezra Jack Keats. First, these are stories that this age group can relate to. Second, he uses African-American Kids in his story, without making this an "ethnic story"

The Stinky Book, Noah Lucas 1st, 2nd, 3rd

If there was ever a perfect book for 8-year-old boys, this is it. It has a number of scratch-and-sniff spots of things that, well, stink. Little boys say, "Ugh, gross! Let's read it again!"

Shortcut, David Macaulay, 3rd-5th

This is a good book for small groups. Much of the story is really told in the pictures, and it is subtle. It is a good book for kids who are able to remember well from one page to the next, because it builds, very subtly on pictures from earlier in the book.

Martha Speaks (and several follow-up books), Susan Meddaugh, 2nd, 3rd

These are stories about a dog that eats alphabet soup and learns to talk. Great consequences.

Angela's Airplane; Mummel, Mummel, Mummel; Purple, Green, and Yellow; Something Good; The Fire Station, Robert Munsch, 2nd- 4th

This group of books is typical of Robert Munsch.. They all feature strong-willed little girls in hilarious situations. The girls always come out on top, but not always in a predictable manner.

Love You Forever Robert Munsch, 2nd- 4th

I have read this book to five-year-olds, and I have read it to twelve-year-olds. It is funny, and poignant, and it really responds to our group of kids who need some reassurance that they can be loved unconditionally. THERE ARE NO BAD ROBERT MUNSCH BOOKS.

If You Give a Pig a Pancake; If You Give a Mouse a Cookie; If You Give a Moose a Muffin, Laura Numeroff, 2nd- 4th

A delightful group of similar books. Most of the kids are familiar with at least one of these, and they seem to enjoy comparing them to each other. The illustrations are well done (I am especially fond of the moose), and the stories have a satisfying conclusion.

Dogs Don't Wear Sneakers, Laura Numeroff, 2nd- 4th

Sometimes you just need something that is plain silly. And this book fits.

Snake Alley Band, by Elizabeth Nygaard 1st- 4th

This is a great participation book. It deals with a little snake who finds that jamming with different animals improves the sound of his band. The fun in reading this book is in assigning different animal jazz parts to the kids.

My Love for You, Susan Roth Preschool -1st

This is a reassuring book, and a counting book, and a colorful book about the world around us. The Mother tells her child that her love is "bigger than one elephant", and "taller than two giraffes", etc.

One Monday Morning, Uri Shulevitz, Preschool

This is one of those books that continually repeats itself, and adds an additional character for each day of the week. Small children delight in figuring out what is going to happen on each successive day of the week

There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly, Simms Tyback, 1st - 2nd

Another book that has become a great hit. It is another book that continues to build on itself, and it gets more and more outrageous as it goes along. Kids love to participate in this one.

Pigsty, Mark Teague, 1st - 2nd

This is a good "Boy Book" which follows to its natural conclusion, your Mother's cry, "Do you want to live in a room that looks like a pigsty?"

Many Moons, James Thurber, 3rd - 6th

This is a book that I read when I have an older group. It will take almost 30 minutes, which is too long for small children, and the humor is over the heads of some of the smaller kids. But the older children seem to delight in the fact that the King's wise men are all so foolish, and that the Princess Lenore can be so smart.

Alexander and Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day, Judith Viorst 2nd - 4th

If there was ever a book that little boys in the shelter could identify with, this is it. At the end of a day when everything goes wrong, Mom says, "Sometimes days are like that. Even in Australia." It's a good discussion book, and most of the kids are familiar with it already.

Sometimes I Feel Silly & Other Moods That Make My Day, Jamie Lee Curtis, 2nd - 4th

I often think of this as the girls' equivalent to "Alexander". The premise of the book is that we all have different moods at different times, and that this is okay.

McDuff Comes Home; McDuff Finds a Friend; McDuff Moves In, Rosemary Wells, 1st - 2nd

This is a nice quiet series of stories about a family and their terrier.

A Chair For My Mother, Vera Williams, 2nd - 4th

A story for older children about saving, as a family, for something that is important to the entire family. Although, the characters are African-American, the story is not.

The Napping House Wakes Up, Audrey Wood, Preschool- 2nd

This is another story where something is added on each page. In this case, it involves additions to the bed of nappers.

So Much, Trish Cooke, Preschool - 2nd -

Another book which features an African - American extended family and their "So Much" love for each other, but, again, it is not an "ethnic" story..

Liza Lou and the Yeller Belly Swamp, Mercer Mayer, 1st -3rd

This is sort of a Little Red Riding Hood story, which tells of a small African-American girl on her trips through the swamp to deliver the goods. Includes dialect, and a rhythm of speech peculiar to backwoods setting

Madeline (series), Ludwig Benelnams, 1st - 3rd

I read this occasionally, probably more for myself than for the kids. It has been around for a long time. I like the story and the pictures of the little girl in Paris, but I think perhaps it moves a little slow for my audiences.

Eloise (series), Kay Thompson, 3rd - 5th

I have mixed emotions about reading this book. Eloise is a female "Dennis the Menace" who lives in the Plaza Hotel in New York. I have always loved the stories, but the kids don't always seem to connect with them.

A Light in the Attic; Where the Sidewalk Ends, Shel Silverstein, 3rd - 5th

I like Shel Silverstein, but I admit that he has to be used judiciously. These are two collections of very short poems, and many of them are quite bizarre. Older kids will see the humor, but many younger kids will not understand

Duck in the Truck, Jez Alborough Preschool - 1st

A rhyming book about a "Duck who gets stuck in the muck with his truck", and the help he gets in removing it. The expressions on the faces are priceless. Kids seem to really like it.

Catalina Magdalena, Hoopensteiner Wallendiner Hogan Logan Bogan was her Name, Ted Arnold. Preschool - 5th

This has to be the most popular book I have ever read to kids. It is the book they beg for when I came in - so much so that I will sometimes deliberately not bring it so that I can honestly say that I don't have. You can guess a little about the book from the title, and the only other note I will make is that I always have to stop while the group sticks their toes in their nose.

Walter, the Farting Dog, William Kotzwinkle and Glenn Murray, 1st - 5th

Does this say "boy book" or what?

My Monster Mama Loves Me So, Laura Leuck K- 4th

Another cute story of Mom's love

Duck at the Door, Jackie Urbanovic 1st - 5th

A duck who doesn't want to move south in the fall comes to live with Mom and the pets. Fun story - great illustrations.

Scooby, Dooby Moo Doreen Cronin and Betsy Lewin 1st - 5th

Farmer Brown knows that the animals are up to something, but he can't figure out what. And he never does realize that they won the talent contest at the county fair.

Sheep in a Jeep, Nancy Shaw K-3rd

A fun rhyming book with hilarious consequences

Pigs Aplenty, Pigs Galore, David McPhail, K-4th

A rhyming book with a fun story. And since it ends with all the pigs going to bed, it is often a good book to end on

With only a few exceptions, all of these books are in print and are readily available