

The
Reader

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The Reader Recommends....

Reading with Babies

Peck Peck Peck by Lucy Cousins

From the creator of *Maisy* comes the delightful story of a young woodpecker as he journeys through his first day learning to do what woodpeckers do best - peck, peck, peck! After his daddy shows him how, he flies from place to place perfecting his peck, pecking more and more holes right through the pages, until it's time for bed. The clever rhyming text is a real joy to read aloud and the bright, bold illustrations make this a great book for sharing and interacting with, especially as the holes little woodpecker makes just happen to be the perfect size for little fingers! All the things little woodpecker pecks through will help build vocabulary too and perhaps even inform future reading as he pecks right through a copy of *Jane Eyre*!

Clap Hands by Helen Oxenbury

You and your child will love sharing this book together as part of your bed time routine. Little fingers will want to turn over the chunky board pages and you will both find yourselves joining in with the actions of the sweet, cuddly babies and their families as they share noisy fun together. This colourful and attractive book is one of a series of board books by Helen Oxenbury - look out for *Say Goodnight* as another perfect bed time treat!

Old Macdonald had a Farm by Siobhan Dodds

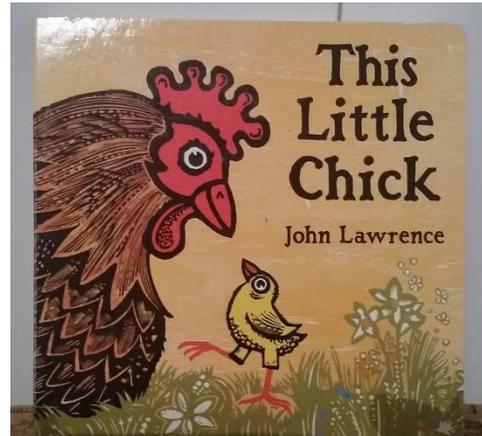
A great version of a favourite classic with flaps for little fingers to lift on every page to reveal a farm yard animal. You will both be singing along together as you explore Old Macdonald's farm meeting all his familiar animals: sheep, cows and who knows what else. Charming illustrations provide lots to talk about...ee-i--ee-i-oo!

Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown

Perhaps better known in the USA, this timeless story celebrates its 70th anniversary next year. It tells the story of a young rabbit settling down to sleep - but not before saying goodnight to just about anyone and everything! Understated illustrations accompany the gentle rhythm of the words, making for a calming and relaxing read, and you'll also have great fun trying to spot the mouse on each page. A perfect book to share with little ones at the end of the day.

A Surprise for Tiny Mouse by Petr Horacek

Join tiny mouse on one BIG adventure! Explore her world with your little one in this interactive wheel-spinning story as she discovers different types of weather. Tiny Mouse loves to play outside, listening to the crackle of leaves in the wind and nibbling on corn in the sunshine but when the rain comes out, Tiny Mouse escapes to her mouse hole ... Can you find the reason she'd want to come back out? This is a beautiful story with a surprise to come at the end!



This Little Chick by John Lawrence

It's the little chick's first day playing on the farm. His brothers and sisters all want to stay nestled up with mum but he's out for adventure. Join him as he learns to imitate the sounds of animals of all shapes and sizes in fantastic rhyming verse. Hop along with the frogs, follow the sheep about and strut out with the smelly pigs.

John Lawrence, a wood carver as well as illustrator, brings this story to life in bold and bright images that will delight and amuse children and parents alike.

[Eric Carle books](#)

Polar Bear, Polar Bear What Do You Hear?

A wonderful introduction to the natural world, this simple but beautiful book abounds with animal sounds! If you've ever wondered what noise a flamingo makes, then wonder no more (Answer: they 'flute'). Eric Carle's illustrations make for a multi-sensory delight.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar

An all-time favourite with generations of children since it was first published back in the late 60s. The perfect interactive book to read with your child at bedtime, indeed at anytime! The life cycle of a caterpillar is brought colourfully to life by fantastic illustrations. We eat our way through a wonderful variety of food: including fruit, chocolate cake and salami until we feel sick. Then that magic moment when the beautiful butterfly emerges from its cocoon on the final page.

From Head to Toes

From the writer of the classic *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* - among 70 other books - comes another beautifully illustrated picture book, this time introducing children to lots of different animals. Our fascinating characters include a penguin, a giraffe and a buffalo, and as we are shown how these animals move, children will be encouraged to see if they can move their bodies in the same way. A fun book for you and your child to share, this is a great option whether just before bed or when you're all still full of the day's energies.

Where Bear by Sophy Henn

Polar Bear is getting just a bit too big for home so the little boy in our story decides to find him a new place to live. The question is: where exactly can Polar Bear live? From carnival to cave, Polar Bear is unimpressed. When the boy finally thinks he has the perfect solution, what will this now mean for their friendship? A witty and affectionate portrait of a very unlikely friendship.

Monkey Puzzle by Julia Donaldson

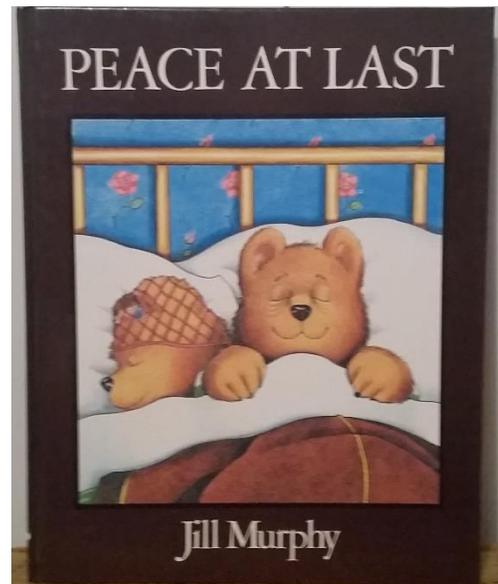
Little Monkey, separated from his mum, needs all the help he can get from Butterfly to find her. But can Butterfly work out what she looks like?! Each failed mother match brings an opportunity to laugh at the silliness of the butterfly. A fun read with lovely drawings, and lots of rhyme and repetition, you'll really enjoy reading this one aloud. The book also exists as a song (see the Big Book edition) which has been stuck in my head since my son turned two; enjoyable, but do be warned else it sticks for you too!

Penguin by Polly Dunbar

Young Ben, excited to unwrap his present, discovers that he has now become the proud owner of a penguin! But delight soon turns to disappointment when, in spite of Ben's best efforts, Penguin won't say a word. It is only when Lion finally appears that we, and Ben, are able to find out what's really been going on in Penguin's mind. The illustrations in this book are a joy and the last page is a triumph in itself, proving here that a picture really is worth a thousand words.

Peace at Last by Jill Murphy

The hour is late and it is definitely time to sleep. Slowly, very tiredly, you make your way up the stairs and get into bed, ready to fall asleep. But why can't Mr Bear fall asleep? Mrs Bear is going SNORE, SNORE. Baby Bear is playing aeroplanes: NYAAOW. Will Mr Bear ever get any peace? You'll love sharing this book, with plenty of noises to get the children joining in, and repetitions that will have them hooked from the youngest age. A book that has stood the test of time, and one that we are confident is here to stay.



Max the Brave by Ed Vere

Our fearless kitten Max the Brave already takes his mouse-chasing duties very seriously. The only snag for Max is that he doesn't yet know what a mouse looks like. This colourfully illustrated book will take you and your little one on an adventure with Max as he attempts to solve his own personal quest. There are many other animals to encounter along the way who will offer to help him out, and add some extra twists and turns to the journey. This is a firm favourite set to capture the imagination of any budding young reader!

Max at Night by Ed Vere

The sequel to *Max the Brave* has our plucky young kitten on the prowl once again – though this time not for a mouse, but the moon! Max appears all ready for bed: having drunk his milk,

brushed his teeth and cleaned behind his ears. But where is Moon to say goodnight to? Running throughout this charming book, there is a beautifully evocative night sky to guide your little ones all the way to its peaceful conclusion. You'll find in the gentle whispering of polite Moon 'Goodnight Max...And thank you very much for coming' an extra surprising and yet still soothing touch.

Each Peach Pear Plum Board Book by Allan and Janet Ahlberg

'Each Peach Pear Plum, I spy Tom Thumb!': so begins this beautifully illustrated, delicately coloured picture book, which is full of lovely and funny little details for you to enjoy and pore over with your baby or toddler. Every page has a rhyme and encourages excited chatter as the challenge is to spy the character hiding somewhere in the picture who then appears on the following page, so after we've spotted Tom Thumb we turn over to see: 'Tom Thumb in the cellar, I spy Cinderella' and so on. It's fun to search for the characters together and also to chant the rhymes and there's a lovely final picture where everyone comes together to eat plum pie and your little one will love spotting everyone. A book you'll share over and over again, finding something new each time.

Dear Zoo by Rod Campbell

I wrote to the zoo to send me a pet... so begins this classic lift the flap board book; a book you will want to share with your young child again and again. Lift the flaps together to discover the animals the zoo has sent: a monkey, a lion and even an elephant! But will they ever send the perfect pet? Have lots of fun making animal noises and guessing which animal is in the cage. You will have to read the book to find out which is the perfect pet but even when you know you will want to read Dear Zoo again and again and again.

Ready to Sing (Ladybird)

Warm up your vocal chords and get ready to sing along with this fun packed book filled with all the nursery rhymes you could need, including the full version of each one with all the words. Little ones will love being able to learn some more songs and rhymes with this colourful and beautifully illustrated squishy covered book. And it's sure to remind you of your own childhood favourites as well as other less familiar or long forgotten gems.

Shark in the Park by Nick Sharratt

Timothy Pope, Timothy Pope, looks once more through his telescope... and this is what he sees. Timothy is in the park and keeps thinking that somehow he can see a shark! But surely that fin is just a cat, or perhaps dad's hair? A brilliant book for doing the actions and for getting your little one to join in too. Pages with cut out holes will have children eager to be the one to turn the page, and the first to find out if it really is a shark or not. Just beware of leaving your child overly excited before turning off the light; both my son and I tend to be left a little hoarse from shouting 'There is a shark in the park!'

A Bit Lost by Chris Haughton

When Baby Owl falls out of his tree, he finds himself all alone in the middle of the forest. Squirrel offers to help Owl locate his mum, but what follows becomes a funny and yet repeated case of mistaken identity! Little ones will love to join in and help discover Owl's missing mum

for themselves. And don't miss out on an extra treat for adult readers, with that hidden quote from Robinson Crusoe...

Meg and Mog by Helen Nicoll

The 1970s Meg and Mog series began with this very first episode in which Meg the witch and her cat, Mog, cast a spell at a Halloween Party, one that goes off with a *bang!* The simple elements of this particular story, as it follows Meg's morning routine of dressing and then eating breakfast, are wonderfully brought to life here by the beautifully bold illustrations by Jan Pienkowski. With short little sentences on each page, and loud sound effects almost bursting out of the illustrations, this picture book is still the perfect choice for little ones as they take their first steps in learning to read.

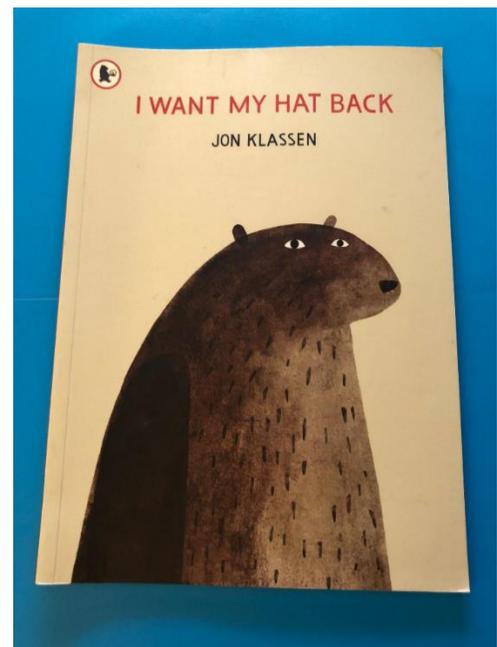
Reads for the Early Years

Three Little Pigs by Nicola Baxter

Fairytales can delight at any age, and Nicola Baxter's retelling of a much loved classic makes this book ideal for introducing little ones to the genre's captivating 'Once upon a time'. Your child will love joining in with the repeated chants of 'Little pig, little Pig, let me come in' as the Big Bad Wolf tries to catch each of the three, who are all the while courageously trying to make a safe home for themselves. One pig builds his house of straw, the other of sticks, and the last one of bricks. Which house might your little one choose to live in? Or will you together come up with ideas for a different kind of house to keep out such terrible intruders as the Big Bad Wolf? Have fun trying to outwit him; your eager little listeners will never forget it!

The Odd Egg by Emily Gravett

'All the birds had laid an egg. All except for Duck.' Not to be outdone, Duck makes sure he finds one of his own, but whilst this huge egg is in his eyes beautiful, all speckled with green spots, it is most certainly not a duck egg, and the other birds are less than impressed. Eventually the day arrives when each of the eggs begins, one by one, to 'Creak Crack' open... A beautifully-drawn and suspenseful story, with a delightful cast of various different birds, an exciting surprise reveal and a fetching knitted scarf. The illustration on the last page says it all, and will have you squeakily trying out the voice of the newly hatched little creature.



I Want my Hat Back by Jon Klassen

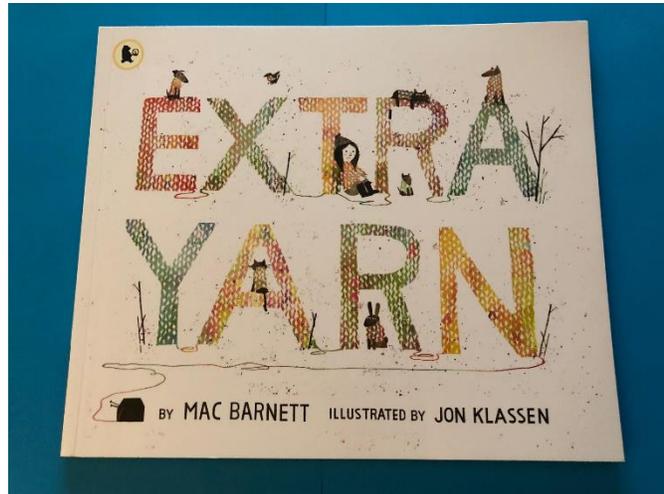
A cautionary and hilarious tale of what happens if you steal a hat from a bear... Beautifully and simply illustrated, children and adults alike will love to solve the mystery of who stole the hat! Great for reading aloud, with lots of different characters and expressions as well as some incredibly dramatic moments, and a stand off like you have never seen before.

This is Not My Hat by Jon Klassen

A follow-on to 'I Want My Hat Back', this story is about a little fish who steals a hat from a big fish and thinks he can get away with it. He believes he's perfectly justified in stealing the hat because he thinks it suits him better than it did the big fish. But the big fish notices the missing hat and chases after the little fish. The little fish hides and, although a crab has seen him, he trusts the crab to keep his secret safe. But will the crab stay true to his word? What will happen to the little fish?!

Extra Yarn by Mac Barnett

In the colourless town where Annabelle lives, everything seems to be covered either with snow or soot. Until one day Annabelle comes upon a box of colourful yarn; so she knits herself a jumper, and then makes one for her dog, only to find that she still has yarn to spare. As it turns out, Annabelle's store of colourful yarn appears to be endless, so she knits and knits until she has decorated the whole town with her beautiful, colourful creations.



A wonderfully simply illustrated book, this will give you and your child lots to meaningfully talk about. But do keep a look out for the powerful archduke and for any other surprises that might spring out upon you along the way!

Sam and Dave Dig a Hole by Mac Barnett

One Monday, Sam and Dave decide to dig a hole, planning not to stop until they find something spectacular! They dig this way and that, stopping only for chocolate milk and animal biscuits, but the "spectacular something" seems somehow to evade them. Perhaps they should ask their clever but silent dog for a clue? A funny book with plenty of visual surprise, it's the perfect choice if you're looking for something just a bit different, and you'll have great fun studying the expressions on the faces of Jon Klassen's all-knowing animals, each depicted with wonderful colour.

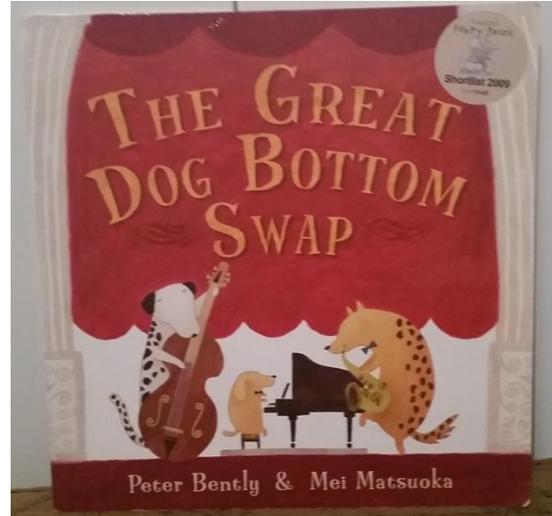
The Story of the Little Mole Who Knew it Was None of His Business

by Werner Holzwarth

It's one thing to have a pigeon poop on your head from above, but it's a total shocker for the Little Mole, whom upon poking his head from his burrow one morning, is hit on the head by a lump of brown, smelly 'business'.

Quite outraged by the incident, the Little Mole makes it his business to find out who the poo belongs to. From rabbit pellets to steaming patties no animal's excrement is left unidentified. Join Little Mole on his quest to find the perpetrator and take stinking revenge.

The Great Dog Bottom Swap by Peter Bently
Hilarious, inventive, and wonderfully fun to share with a child, or indeed with anyone you can find, this book attempts - you might say ambitiously - to answer the age-old problem of why dogs sniff each other's bottoms. It is the night of the summer ball, and all the dogs have their tickets ready. Like all well brought up dogs they hang up their bottoms in the bottom cloakroom, but disaster soon ensues ... Find out what exciting things happen at the dogs' ball, and the ultimate answer to our great doggy puzzle.



Aliens Love Underpants by Claire Freedman

One that never fails to get children giggling, this is a book about what happens in and around the washing line when you're not looking, giving an oddly brilliant answer to the perhaps familiar problem of those missing underpants. The story will no doubt add to the fun and fascination that underwear probably already holds for your child. Enjoy sharing some bedtime frivolity together; you'll all love it!

Dinosaurs Love Underpants by Claire Freedman & Ben Cort

Never mind meteors or climatic changes in atmosphere, according to this book Dinosaur extinction was down to a distinct shortage of underwear. Dinosaurs do not come off well in this glorious tale from Clare Freedman and Ben Cort. Howl with laughter with your little one as you read how 'The pants from Woolly Mammoth coats made Stegosaurus itchy!' or giggle at illustrations depicting Cavemen covering their wobbly bits with fig leaves! A gem. Now why are Dinosaurs no longer around? Because their eggs stink, get it??!

Man on the Moon by Simon Bartram

A real work of art, this book is about the life of the *actual* Man on the Moon: introduced to us here as 'Bob'. Every day Bob flies up to look after the moon and its visitors. But there is one set of visitors he doesn't know is there ... Bob might not be aware of any aliens but your kids will love pointing them out! A book that has so much real life in it that it can be hard to remember you can't have Bob's job yourself ...

The Day the Crayons Quit by Drew Daywalt (illustrated by Oliver Jeffers)

What happens when your colouring crayons decide that they don't want to be used anymore? This is a brilliant, funny story about a little boy who opens his desk one day to discover that his crayons are missing and in their place is a pile of notes written from his crayons – they've all decided to quit! No longer content with the status quo, fed up of being overworked or forgotten about, they go on strike. Read about life from a crayon's perspective and find out what the little boy's solution is to winning his crayons back. This story will encourage creativity and a healthy resistance of the norm!

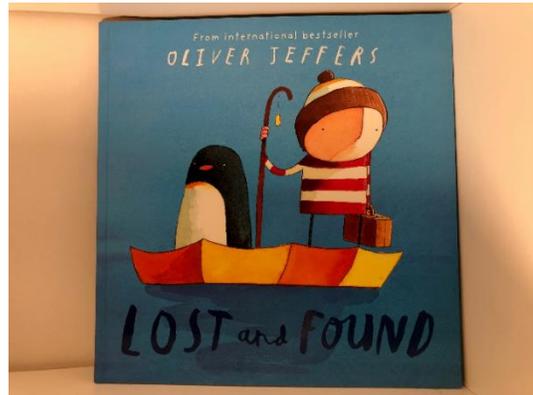
Oliver Jeffers books

The Great Paper Caper

There's a peculiar mystery going on down in the woods: tree branches keep disappearing and the animals' houses are being destroyed. Bewildered, the animals rally together in a determination to catch the branch-thief. Suddenly, one of them spots a clue: a paper aeroplane. Where did this come from? The police are called and eventually the culprit is caught. But what happens next? Join in this detective hunt and help the creatures of the forest solve the Great Paper Caper to find the missing link!

Lost and Found

Of all the things you expect to find on your doorstep, a penguin probably isn't one of them. But a penguin is exactly what the little boy in our story discovers one morning! Adventuring to the South Pole to return penguin home, soon our hero finds out that maybe Penguin wasn't lost after all... Oliver Jeffers is one of the best children's authors and illustrators around, and you will find this book a perfect introduction to the magical worlds he creates.

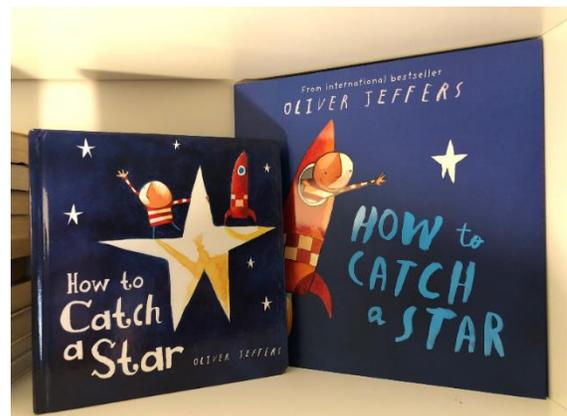


Up and Down

Picking up the story from *Lost and Found* of the newfound friendship shared by a boy and a penguin, the lovely illustrations in Oliver Jeffers' sequel, *Up and Down*, help to tell of the latest journey our penguin is keen to embark upon: now it is all about learning to fly! For anyone who has ever wanted to prove the impossible, this is a tale of the appeal of adventure; of the ups and downs which can often come with a friendship, and of how we might lose and yet still find one another once more.

How to Catch a Star

You will be entranced by this beautiful picture book which tells the inspirational story of a boy who loved the stars so much, he decided to catch one of his own. Every night he watched the stars in the sky from his bedroom window and dreamed of how he could be their friend and how they could play hide-and-seek together. We share the boy's disappointments and admire his patience – so there will be lots to talk about as you read this uplifting book together.



We're Going on a Bear Hunt by M. Rosen
'Stumble trip! Stumble trip! Stumble trip!'

Join this intrepid family on their adventure through a deep cold river, thick oozy mud and a big dark forest: on a mission to catch a bear!

There are many different obstacles to face through the course of the journey, and the pace of Rosen's writing combines beautifully with the book's well-loved illustrations to create an experience so vivid that we can almost feel the wind whistling through our hair, and the damp seeping into our socks as we splash, tiptoe and squelch our way from page to page. Perfect for sharing, there is lots of repetition in this story to delight little ones, and the real challenges faced by our bold characters are bound to spark excited discussion amongst older readers. One not to be missed!

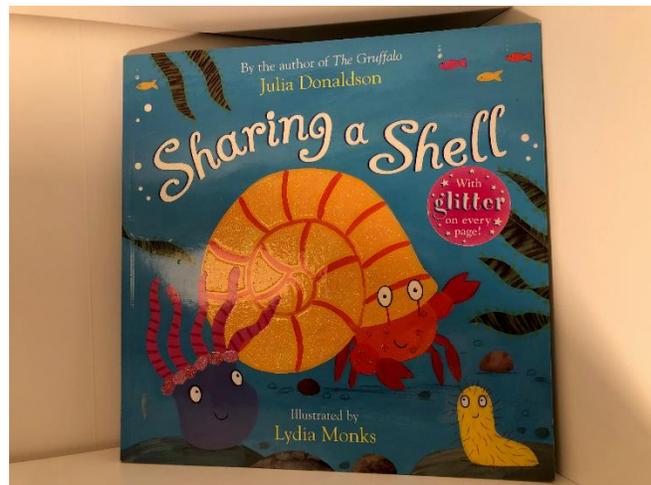
Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak

Join young Max on an adventurous encounter with numerous and wonderfully Wild Things; to be filled too, of course, with lots of wild rumpus! This is a hugely popular classic which encourages children's imaginations whilst allowing for lots of interaction as they pretend, naturally, to be Wild Things themselves. Packed full of adventure, with beautiful language and a story which will promote lots of discussion, this is a fantastic read to help release the wild side in any and all of us!

[Julia Donaldson books](#)

Sharing a Shell

Take a sunny trip to the seaside, where you can delve into the wonderful world of shells and the colourful creatures who nestle inside them. This heart-warming story tells of a loveable if somewhat reclusive hermit crab who is overjoyed when he finds a new shell to make his home in, but much less happy about the idea of having to share it with others. For our hermit crab it is a difficult thing to learn but he soon comes to discover that sharing is a much better option than having to face the world alone. The book helped me and my four year old speak about why having friends and sharing with them are really good things to do; I recommend it!



Zog

Accompany Zog, the hapless young dragon, as he makes his way through dragon school. Zog is helped out by a mysterious young girl; though she turns out to be a princess, this is not your usual fairytale princess but a strong little person who knows what she wants. There's a great rhythm to the rhyming language of the book; plenty of opportunity for silly voices, and

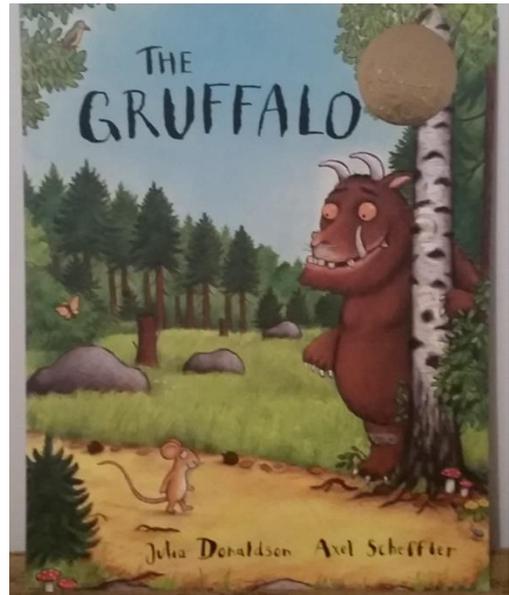
wonderful illustrations to explore with your little ones. I've been reading Zog to my son since he was two, and at five years old, this is still one of his favourites.

Stick Man

This delightful tale follows the misfortunes of the father of the Stick household, Stick Man, as he desperately seeks to be reunited with his loved ones back in the family tree. This fast paced and easy to read adventure soon has children joining in with the storytelling, and the charming illustrations provide a wonderful accompaniment to each funny episode on Stick Man's journey. Beware though, it may not be long before you find sticks sneaking in to the kids' beds for a snuggle!

The Gruffalo

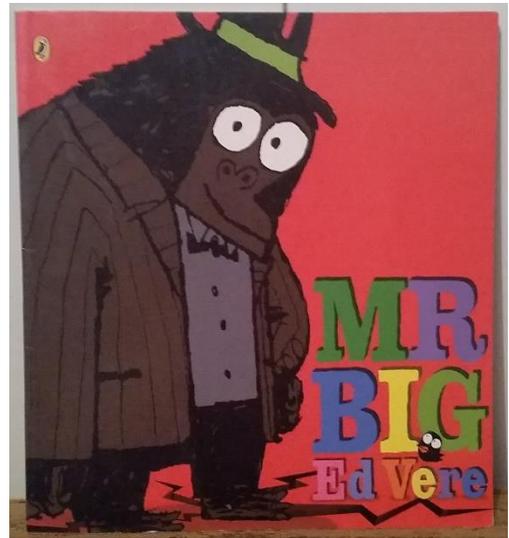
The very definition of a modern classic, *The Gruffalo* tells the story of a cunning mouse who hatches a plan to escape from the clutches of some hungry forest animals, keen to have him on their menu. Scaring them away by describing the worst creature of them all, the much-feared (but imaginary) Gruffalo, the mouse thinks he has the last laugh. But the Gruffalo could be more real than he thought...



Mr Big by Ed Vere

'A true friend can come in any shape or size.'

A wonderful, touching story reminding us not to judge by appearance. Mr Big feels all alone in the world - being a 'big' gorilla is a byword for scary to all the other animals. Yet on discovering a piano in a music shop, a piano looking every bit as alone as him, Mr Big channels his sadness into playing some truly beautiful Jazz. Jazz that drifts out into the night sky to attract some real cool cats playing at The Blue Note.... A great book. What grown up can resist getting the chance to read out lines like 'Hey man, that cat can play!' and 'He's cooking Daddio!'



Little Red and the Very Hungry Lion by Alex T. Smith

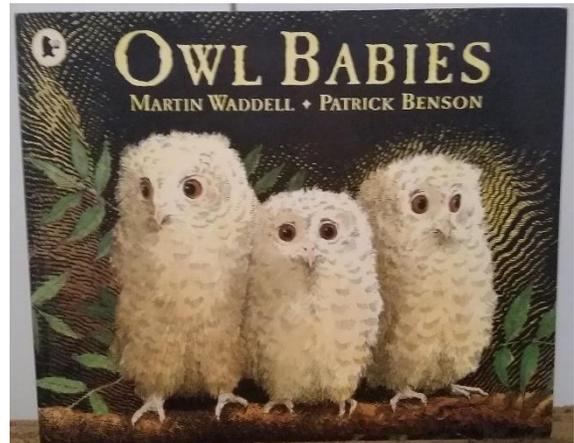
Full of energy, you'll be reminded with this book of the fairy tale classic, *Little Red Riding Hood*, though Alex Smith's twist places Little Red in an African safari landscape, this time keen to avoid being eaten by a lion. Colourful and delightfully fun, you'll find there's a whole array of exotic creatures to be discovered before you even get to him. At the crux of the story however, Little Red - more feisty perhaps than ever - will help your little ones think about the value of manners, as she manages finally to teach that naughtily hungry lion a lesson.

Handa's Surprise by Eileen Browne

Gorgeously illustrated, and spectacularly colourful, Handa's Surprise offers to take you and your child on a delightful Kenyan journey as Handa makes her way to a friend's village to share some fruit with her. With cheeky stealth, a host of creatures take the opportunity to help themselves to Handa's fruit, but at the end of the book she is to receive a lovely surprise ... An engaging celebration of diverse cultures, of friendship and of nature in all it's glory, your children won't be able to help joining in and trying to tell Handa what's behind her!

Owl Babies by Martin Waddell

When their Owl Mother mysteriously leaves the nest, Sarah, Percy and little Bill must be brave. But where has she got to, and just what will they do without her? This beautifully illustrated tale is ideal in helping younger children adjust to school and nursery, as they begin to find that their loved ones can't always be as close as they would like.

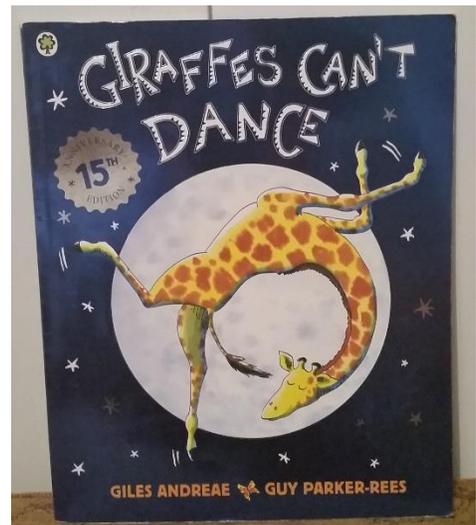


The Animal Boogie by Debbie Harter

This brilliant rhyming story is great for getting children singing and dancing, learning through music and movement, and having a chance to burn some of their exuberant energy (hopefully reminding you of yours!) Deep in the Indian jungle, children from all over the world have come together to jump, hop, shake and flap. Joining the animals, the children will soon know how to boogie just like them! With songs that are easy to read, and bright illustrations to enjoy, this book cannot fail to engage your fun-loving little ones!

Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae

A wonderfully heart-warming story of Gerald, a giraffe who longs to dance along with the other animals at the Jungle Dance, but who struggles to find his own rhythm and - like so many of us - the confidence to get into his own flow. Full of beautiful illustrations, there is lots to spot on every page of this book, and the words themselves are a great mix of both inspiration and fun. This is a great story for enabling discussion of feelings of embarrassment, shyness or being left out, with a lovely positive message to inspire each one of you to get up and don your dancing shoes!

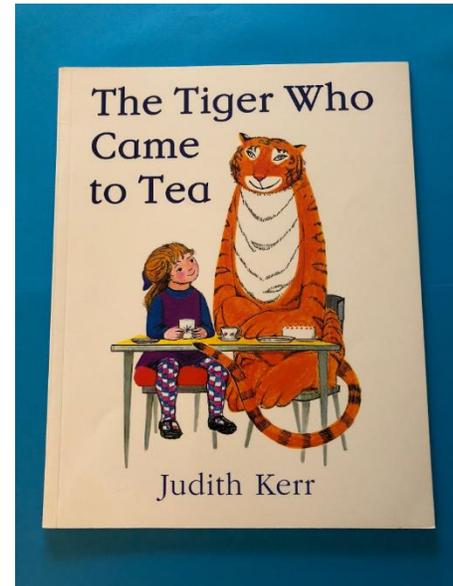


Ketchup on your Cornflakes by Nick Sharratt

Would you like ice cubes in your bed? Custard on your toast? The funniest of books, this will keep your little ones engaged and entertained for hours. A fantastically simple and original idea, the pages string together as a series of moveable flaps, all in a bright and colourful format, which are designed to inspire a wildly random range of culinary concoctions. Most enjoyable - for young and old alike.

The Tiger who Came to Tea by Judith Kerr

It's not every day that a tiger calls at your door, wanting to join you for tea. But that is exactly what happens to Sophie and her mummy in this delightful classic of a children's story. Watch the greedy tiger as he eats all the food, and drinks all the water (not forgetting all of daddy's beer!) and see how Sophie's family react to this unusual guest. A lovely story for all the family to enjoy.



The Slightly Annoying Elephant by David Walliams

With plenty to amuse both parent and child, David Walliams' book comes in a large hardback with vivid colours and big elephant-sized pictures. It tells the story of a persistent elephant whose visit causes mayhem, but who is still loveable nonetheless. A delightful read with younger children, and a gift for those who at the end of the day might need to be nudged into a smile.

Not Now, Bernard by David McKee

A funny story to be enjoyed by child and parent alike, this is also a more unusual one for our list. Parents will find in this book a cautionary but classic tale for modern times, one that is sure to make you think. When you were growing up, did you ever feel that nobody would listen to you? Bernard's parents are very preoccupied. In fact, they are so busy doing their own thing that a monster reading comics, breaking toys and even eating Bernard up, goes every bit unnoticed! Written and illustrated by the same name that brought us Elmer the elephant, King Rollo and Mr Benn, McKee's recognisable cartoonish style will have you quickly drawn in.

Oh No, George! by Chris Haughton

A captivating little tale of George the dog and his struggle to be good, when all he really wants to do is eat cake and chase cat! Full of detailed, emotion-filled pictures, and a plot which you'll love involving your little one in and chatting about, the book finally finishes up with a dramatic cliff-hanger ending. Perfect for reading aloud together.



Mr Tiger Goes Wild by Peter Brown

Peter Brown dedicates his book to ‘tigers everywhere’, in a delightful romp of an adventure that wittily celebrates that occasional walk on the *wild* side. Mr Tiger is a nattily-dressed, respectable sort of fellow going about his business, in a city populated by similarly civilised jungle animals. It’s all a bit grey, and, well...boring. So imagine his friends’ shock when Mr Tiger casts aside his top hat and tails, tries out a ROAR or two and abandons his orderly life for the wilderness! The question is, for all his new-found freedom, will Mr Tiger find things a bit lonely out there...? A beautifully-illustrated caper that will give both you and your kids the chance to practise your own ROARs!

Be Good, Gordon by Angela McAllister and Tim Archbold

A book with the perfect recipe for bedtime fun in a story simply bursting with life: Gordon is a child who, old before his time, always behaves impeccably - that is until a new babysitter is thrown into the mix - one who certainly does not. Lily Jigg-Popsicle’s only interest is in dreaming up ways to enjoy crazy play: from pirate ships and springy rocket launch pads to midnight feasts and mud dancing. Can Gordon be led astray ... and will his parents notice anything on their return?

The Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss

A funny book that teaches children how to have lots of good fun! Written and illustrated by Dr Seuss, this is a story of two children’s adventures with their pessimistic goldfish and The Cat In The Hat, a man sized cat with a red and white striped hat. Join them as they beat the boredom of a rainy day, in fantastic rhyme that simply rolls off the tongue.

Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss

Few children’s writers can rival Dr Seuss’s magical mastery of weaving a message into the seemingly ridiculous. Would you try a dish of green eggs and ham? Sam-I-Am is on a mission to persuade the other unnamed character in our story to taste this very delicacy, despite the repeated protest from his respondent that he won’t like it. Sam-I-Am’s persistence, in wacky rhymes and repetition, does eventually pay off however, and to the recipient’s surprise, he does actually quite enjoy it when he finally begins to tuck in. This book has something to say not only to young fussy eaters, but perhaps also to those of us who have lost the knack of trying new things for ourselves. Simple, colourful and full of the charm of Dr Seuss’ signature style, you’ll enjoy discovering how this book makes absolutely maximum use of its total of only fifty words.

Mr Biff the Boxer - Happy Family series by Allan Ahlberg

A 24-page book about fellow boxing rivals Mr Biff and Mr Bop, *Mr Biff the Boxer* is a book I recently passed to a young person who does boxing. It really allowed him to begin a relationship with reading – something he never felt he had prior to this. The book’s illustrations help to tell the story of his family’s efforts to get Mr Biff back in shape, in time for the annual charity match. It’s a great choice for those just beginning to grasp the written word for themselves, with a relaxed comic flow to the writing, and ample repetition as it builds.

Funny Bones by Allan Ahlberg

A book which will never grow old, this is a story of what happens at night when we've all gone to bed, telling the adventures of a big skeleton, a little skeleton and their skeleton dog as they come out to play. A must read for any young children just starting to read, Funnybones is a story full of humour and fun, which will stay with you your entire life. Bold pictures bring this story to life as you follow the skeletons on their midnight walk.

The Snowman by Raymond Briggs

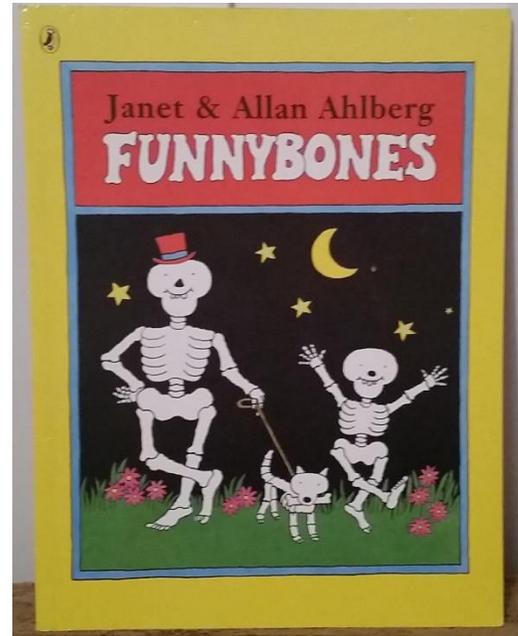
This children's picture book contains no words but has long captured the imagination of children and adults everywhere. The iconic pictures tell the story of a boy's Christmas adventure as his snowman comes to life, and takes him to explore the wonders of a white Christmas on their way to the North Pole.

Hansel and Gretel by the Brothers Grimm (Ladybird)

You're very, very hungry; deep inside a wood, and you stumble upon a house made of gingerbread, all decorated with sweets. What do you do? In this wonderful retelling of the Grimms' classic story, young Hansel and Gretel face just this problem. Help your little one confront the likes of the wicked witch, owner of said gingerbread house, and see if you can think of ways to help Hansel and Gretel escape from her clutches. A story which will leave you feeling that little bit braver about facing your own fears, in the knowledge that however small you may be, you can still defeat your enemies and arrive back home in time for tea.

Beegu by Alexis Deacon

From the get-go Beegu makes an impression, a sweet little alien sprawled dramatically across the bottom of the page, her crash-landed spaceship steaming in the background. The beautifully understated opening – 'Beegu was not supposed to be here' – sets the tone for a moving story about a lost child looking for her mum, who finds acceptance and friendship along the way amongst the 'small ones' of Earth, despite a hefty language barrier. With several pages that manage to speak volumes without any use of words, this is a book that will encourage your kids to think creatively about how different experiences might make us feel, whilst the unwelcoming attitudes of the adults in the story will no doubt give us 'bigger ones' pause for thought.



Mia's Story by Michael Foreman

A delicately realised story, beautifully conveying the power of family and community, and the possibility of hope - even in the most straitened of circumstances. Living in a house made of the city's discarded refuse, Mia has been given a dog found by her father, but when Poco runs away, Mia is led all the way up to the peaks of the snowy South American mountains in search of him. It is there that she makes a wondrous discovery; marking the start of a new venture, and the beginning of a new life for both Mia and her family.

The Enormous Crocodile by Roald Dahl

Over thirty years on, Roald Dahl's characteristically witty narrative, and weird and wonderful sense of humour still retains a timeless appeal. A nasty crocodile plans ways of disguising himself so that he can get to gobble up some children, but is repeatedly scuppered to great comic effect by other more friendly, and impressively valiant jungle animals. Dahl's masterful combination of prose and rhyme is accompanied once more by Quentin Blake's trademark illustrations, giving this story a classic finish.

Sylvia and Bird by Catherine Rayner

Sylvia, as the only dragon in the world, is terribly lonely. That is, until she meets Bird. This most unlikely of friendships blossoms, until Sylvia starts worrying that ultimately they may be too different from each other. Will Sylvia risk everything for the chance to find some of her own kind on the moon? Or will she realise the value of true friendship before it's too late? A gentle foray into big questions about who we are as individuals and what makes a friend, this book is also a feast for the eyes, with Catherine Rayner's signature watercolour style giving us the unique 'shimmer-shiny dragon' Sylvia, in blends of turquoise and aquamarine.

