

The 2005-2006
Building Readers

BOOK LIST

Recommended Books for Elementary School Children

Ages 5-8

The Mysteries of Harris Burdick, by Chris Van Allsburg (Houghton Mifflin). Thirty years ago, a man walked into a publisher's office with 14 drawings and snippets of text. He then left and never returned. Here, reproductions of his work offer the perfect jumping-off point for readers' imaginations. A truly unique, magical book.

Trixie Beldon #1: The Secret of the Mansion, by Julie Campbell (Random House). In this tale that launched a long series, Trixie's brothers get to spend the summer at camp, but she has to stay in Sleepyside! Life is so unfair. Still, there's that fortune-filled mansion, that mysterious runaway. Maybe Trixie won't be twiddling her thumbs after all.

A Child's Calendar, by John Updike (Holiday House). From the Pulitzer Prize-winning author comes this collection of poems, each focusing on a month of the year. Subtly profound—"First snow! The flakes/so few, so light/Remake the world/In solid white"—the rhymes are sentimental, not sappy.

Amelia and Eleanor Go for a Ride, by Pam Muñoz Ryan (Scholastic). When two of America's strongest, most independent women get together, something fascinating is bound to happen. And it does when first lady Eleanor Roosevelt joins pioneering aviator Amelia Earhart for a night flight over Washington, DC.

7 x 9 = Trouble! by Claudia Mills (Farrar Straus Giroux). Wilson will never earn that ice cream cone if

he doesn't learn his times tables. But math isn't easy (except for his little brother, Kipper). Of course, all Wilson really wants is a hamster. Just one problem: Mom says no. What's a third-grader to do?

Can You Guess My Name? by Judy Sierra (Clarion Books). A collection of kid-friendly tales from across the globe. The vividly illustrated stories include Nigeria's "How Ijapa the Tortoise Tricked the Hippopotamus," and Italy's "The Three Geese." An engaging, diverse set of yarns.

From the Bellybutton of the Moon (Del Ombigo de la Luna), by Francisco X. Alarcón (Children's Book Press).

Summertime comes alive in these poems—written in both English and Spanish—that capture the balmy, laid-back world from a child's point of view. Splashy illustrations add to the fun.

George Washington's Teeth, by Deborah Chandra and Madeleine Comora (Farrar Straus Giroux). "Snow fell on George at Valley Forge, his blue coat hung in tatters. By then he'd only seven teeth that couldn't even chatter!" Find out what else happens to the president's poor choppers in this based-in-fact tale.

Kate and the Beanstalk, by Mary Pope Osborne (Atheneum). A new take on an old yarn. Young Kate trades the family cow for a handful of magic beans. Soon, those beans grow into an enormous stalk leading up to the sky. There, Kate finds gold coins, an awful giant ... and the secret of her own past.



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Days Like This, by Simon James (Candlewick). "On my little guitar/With only one string/I play in the moonlight/Any old thing." This spare rhyme is just one of the many child-friendly poems in this breezy, delightfully illustrated collection. The just-long-enough verses are ideal for reading aloud.

Raising Sweetness, by Diane Stanley (G.P. Putnam's Sons). Pa sure does love them young'uns. That's why he adopted all eight! And even though he's a good man, he's not such a good cook. Or housekeeper. Or reader. But if little Sweetness goes to school, she'll get real smart and may find Pa a wife!

Paws Off, Cheddarface! by Geronimo Stilton (Scholastic). A truly cheesy chapter book. There are a thousand tales in New Mouse City, and Geronimo Stilton aims to tell them all. But, holey cheese! What's this? Is there a Geronimo imposter at paw, er, hand? And is this look-alike really trying to take over the Rodent's Gazette?

Riddle-icious, by J. Patrick Lewis (Alfred A. Knopf). "What's in a song, but not in a tune? What's in a star, but not in the moon? What's in the sun, but gone in the night? Out of range, but still in sight?" Give up? The letter S, of course! And if you thought this one was tricky, watch out—there's more.

Kids Knitting, by Melanie Falick (Artisan). Knitting has gone mainstream, so why shouldn't youngsters get in on the fun? In this filled-with-photos-and-illustrations guide, kids (and Mom and Dad) will learn how to pick up a pair of needles, grab a spool of funky yarn and create cool, crafty projects.

Ages 9-12

George vs. George: The American Revolution as Seen from Both Sides, by Rosalyn Schanzer (National Geographic). The Revolutionary War wasn't just an American story—it was a British saga, too. And in this fact-filled account of that epic conflict, both King George III and George Washington get to tell their tales.

Beyond the Deepwoods, by Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell (Random House). Young Twig has been raised by woodtrolls, so he assumes he's one of them—until

he learns otherwise. Soon, he sets off amid monsters, goblins and creepy creatures on a quest to discover his true identity. (Part of The Edge Chronicles.)

The Story of a Seagull and the Cat Who Taught Her to Fly, by Luis Sepúlveda (Arthur A. Levine). Zorba the cat promises the dying bird that he'll watch her egg, he won't eat it, and when it hatches, he'll teach the baby to fly. The first two promises are easy to keep, but the third? Where will Zorba begin?

Ida B ... and Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World, by Katherine Hannigan (Greenwillow Books). Mama's sick, Daddy has to sell off some of the land, and Ida B has to go back to school. How could everything be so wrong? And how can the feisty little girl make it right again?

Doodler Doodling, by Rita Golden Gelman (Greenwillow Books). "Teachers teaching. Fliers flying. Fliers teaching. Teachers flying. Teachers teaching flying fliers. Fliers flying teachers." What? Don't try to make sense of it, just hang on for the ride. This one is sure to twist your tongue!

The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place, by E.L. Konigsburg (Atheneum). Everyone thinks those metal-and-glass towers in Margaret Rose's uncles' backyard are hideous. But the 12-year-old knows that Uncle Alexander and Uncle Morris have created art, not eyesores. And she's determined to let their masterpieces stand.

Monsieur Eek, by David Ives (HarperCollins). What's hairy, bizarre and simply too weird for the locals? A shipwreck survivor nicknamed Monsieur Eek. And when the people of MacOongafoonsen decide he's a menace, they put him on trial for spying. Can young Emmaline defend the harmless newcomer?

The Crow-Girl, by Bodil Bredsdorff (Farrar Straus Giroux). The girl and her grandmother live together by the sea. Life is peaceful and good. But when Grandmother dies, the girl is left alone. Urged on by some circling crows, she soon sets out to build a new family. (Translated from the Danish.)

