

Books to Check Out—Monthly Themes & Holidays

Birthdays

January

February

March

April

May

June

July

August

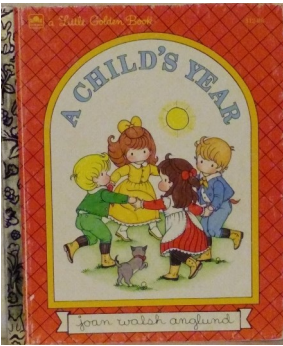
September

October

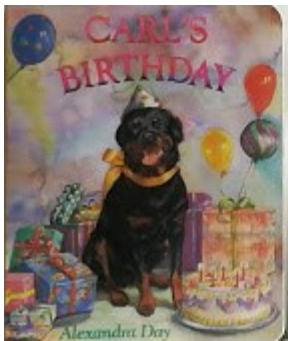
November

December

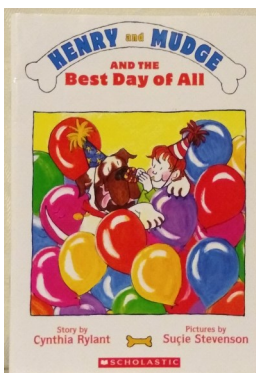
Holidays that change dates year to year



Begins with a poem (cycle of 12 months, four seasons, days and nights, gift of time), then each double page focuses on one month—cute illustrations, minimal text (rhymes with next), ends with short poem inviting anticipation of the next year.

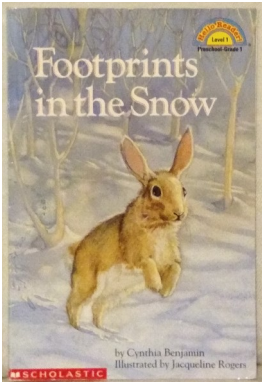


Nearly wordless board book depicting a special day—Carl and Madeleine have quite an adventure as partners in “crime” on Carl’s birthday, that was supposed to be a surprise. Just a fun, fun story.



Chronicles Henry’s birthday with his dog, family, and friends.

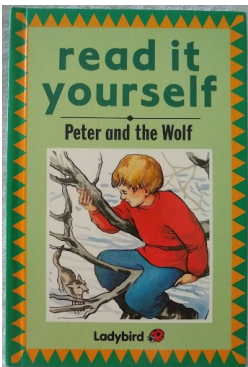
January



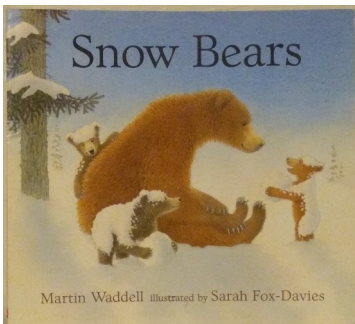
Each animal goes home (hops, runs, etc.), showing animal winter homes. Super simple, brief, repetitive text Pleasant, quite realistic illustrations.



"A Ukrainian folktale adapted by Katalina Page", simple leveled reader from www.readinga-z.com. Compare to the Jan Brett version.



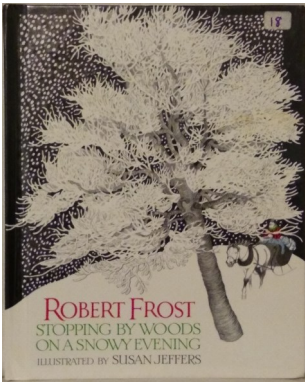
Story simply told, based on the symphony by Prokofiev (1936)—written as a Russian folk tale, and with the intention of introducing the instruments of the orchestra to children. Lots of opportunity for talking about the various elements of the story, beside afterward listening to the piece to go with it.



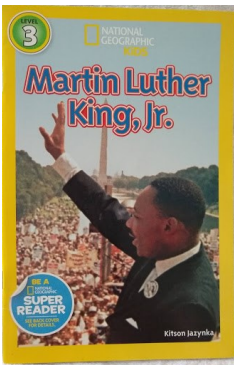
A day of playing in the snow, Momma and cubs are anthropomorphized, live in a cabin, and eat toast by the fire at the end of the day. Still, cute story, cute illustrations.



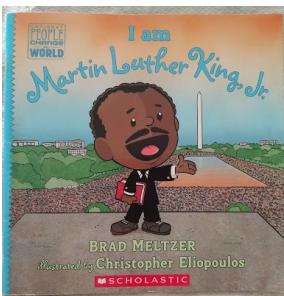
An illustration of the famous song, using mice and other animal characters. Other than being dressed and acting like people, the animals are fairly realistically drawn. Fun way to sing, delightful illustrations. Although this song is usually sung at Christmas, it doesn't have any direct reference to Christmas.



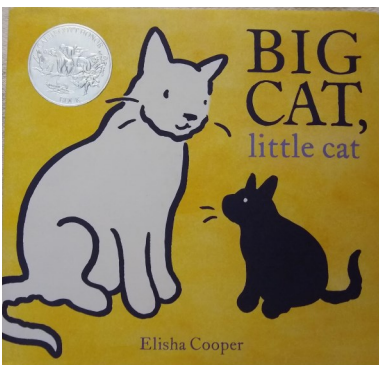
An illustration of the poem by Robert Frost. Few words on each page makes it more accessible to children. Nice illustrations, things to notice and talk about. The number 18 in the top right corner is the DRA level of the text—18 would be early 2nd grade.



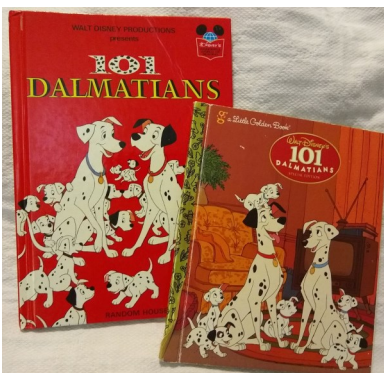
Should be pre-read and summarized for the understanding and attention span of the preschooler. It's a level 3 reader—for a fluent reader—about 2nd grade.



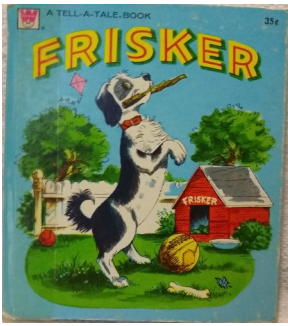
Too much for a preschooler—look at the pictures together and retell simplified version. I didn't like that all the other adults had adult bodies, but throughout the book MLK Jr's body never grows up. Nice simple reference book for the one reading and retelling.



A study in opposites (black, white, older, younger), growing/aging, teaching/learning, etc.



White dogs with black spots—adventure, cooperation vs evil, etc.



Black and white dog finally adopted by just the right family, who appreciate his character and talents.



A set of board books, simple, limited text with a bit of info, and opportunity to predict. Look for animals that are white, black, or black and white.



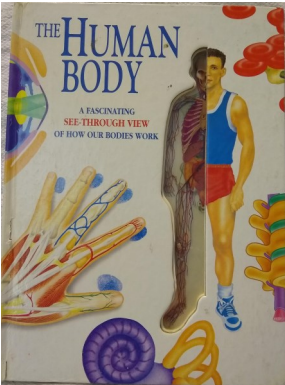
The New Book of Knowledge, entry for animal—browsing book. Look for pictures of black, white, or black and white animals. Where do they live? You might just enjoy looking at other animal pictures . . . Tracks in the snow, homes (including prairie dog town), feeding habits, how they move (animals: locomotion, including baby crawling).

February

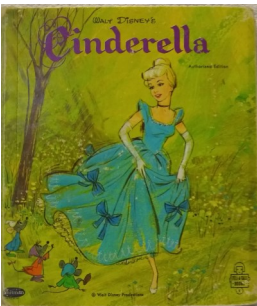
(wish list: Groundhog Day by Lisa M. Herrington, Scholastic Rookie Read-About Holidays. Nonfiction grades preK-K, 1-2, guided reading K; DRA level 18. 32 pages.

Or—

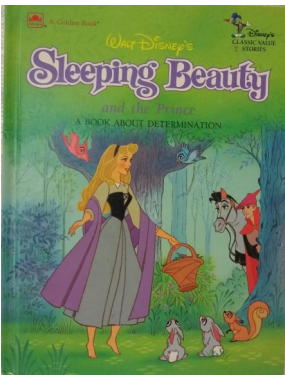
Groundhog Day by Michelle Aki Becker, Rookie Read-About Holidays series. Grades preK-K, 1-2, guided reading H)



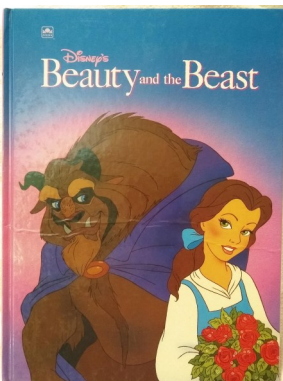
Browsing/reference book . . . Look at how the heart pumps blood all around the body, providing each part of the body with food and oxygen, and taking away waste air (carbon dioxide, same gas in soda pop!), and liquids to the kidneys & bladder. Keep it simple.



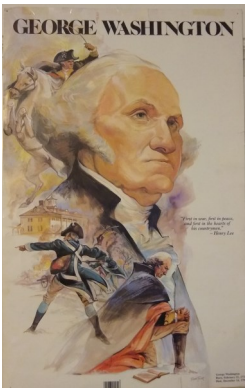
Simple retelling of the Disney version of Cinderella. One way of introducing a discussion about true beauty (inner goodness), and true love (can you really know enough about a person after one night at a ball? Compare "Frozen" movie)



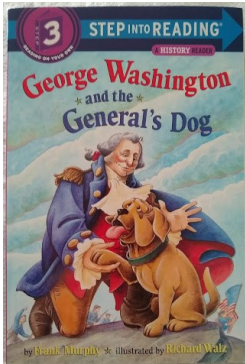
Another fairy tale about love. Should the love of a lifetime be based on physical beauty or voice quality? What if those things are lost in a tragic accident or illness? Of course the implication of the story is that she is really a kind and good person. Look for clues of that. Of course kids love the magical—but you can also discuss pretend and real. If there is too much text for the attention span, you can summarize, or if the child knows the story, have the child retell the story along with the pictures.



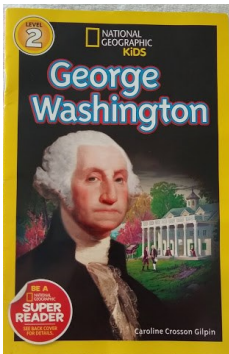
A third, but certainly not the last, fairytale about love. This time the couple grow to love one another over time. The beast has to learn how to control his temper, learn manners, etc. before he can have a happy family life. Beauty over time recognizes his good qualities. Her love for her father is strong enough to be willing to sacrifice her life for him. Her love and loyalty to the beast give her the courage to stand against the crowd. She doesn't fall for the egotistical popular guy—she wants a more equal relationship. If too much text, summarize or have the child tell the story.



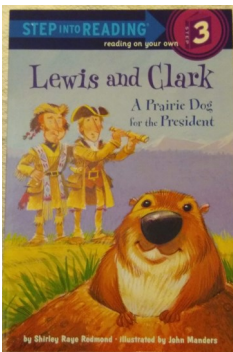
A poster of George Washington with just a little text: "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." by Henry Lee. Also gives his birth and death dates. "Reading" the pictorial information helps children recognize the man, the clothes of the time, and the transportation of the time (horse). It will help the children remember and be able to visualize who George Washington was. An explanation of the text helps as well. Look at \$1 bills, quarters. You might attach one of each on the poster.



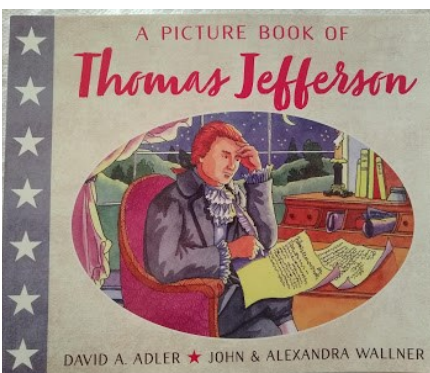
Read aloud for preschoolers, probably engaging enough story to keep the attention, but could be read in parts if one sitting is too much. Develops a child's appreciation for George Washington as a person, as well as a public figure.



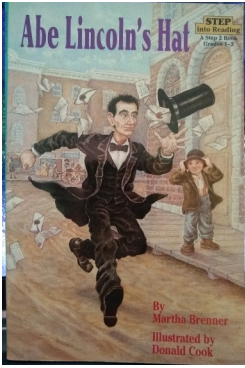
Depending on the child's maturity, a preschooler might be able to engage with this Level 2 reader (reading independently—late 1st grade to early 2nd grade). The images will help to make meaning.



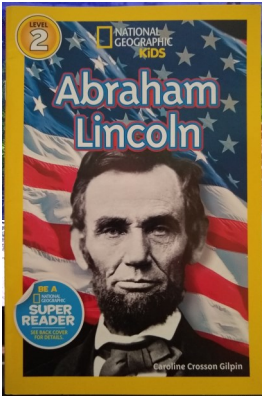
This story begins with President Thomas Jefferson, and returns to him—as he was the impetus for the Lewis and Clark expedition. Cartoonish illustrations, humorous, but do give an idea of the times. This is a Step into Reading level 3, Reading on Your Own, grades 1-3. You can also find it read on YouTube, to see if you want to own or loan it. Children will be more engaged by someone reading it in person. You might compare prairie dog with gopher, and groundhog/woodchuck.



Summarize as needed, look/read and talk about the pictures. A good, fairly simple biography of Thomas Jefferson and his many interests, as well as accomplishments. A list of other picture book biographies by the author on the back cover, as well as in the front. Read again in Kindergarten, and others in the series through about 2nd grade.



A lot more about Abe Lincoln than his hat . . . Great background info on our 16th president, written in simple prose, but possibly too much for a preschooler in one sitting. Might be best to divide it up according to the attention span of the child(ren). Step into Reading, step 2, grades 1-3. You can watch/listen to it read on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwZfpQCKSz8>

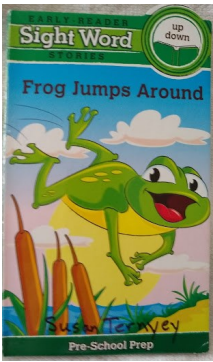


Also a national Geographic Kids Level 2 reader. (See George Washington, above). You can adapt it to the readiness of the child(ren).

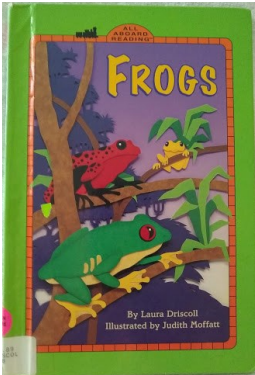
Book about presidents' day?

Wish list?

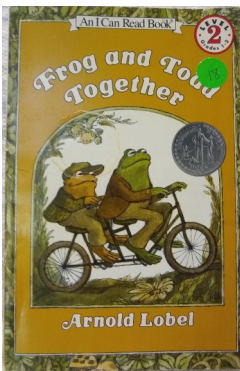
Take a Hike, Teddy Roosevelt! (Step into Reading level 3)
Frank Murphy



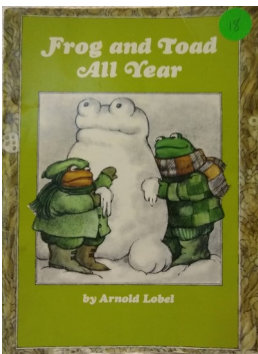
Very limited, repetitive text. Illustrations appealing to youngsters. The purpose is to learn sight words up and down. It doesn't have to be Leap Year to talk about it!



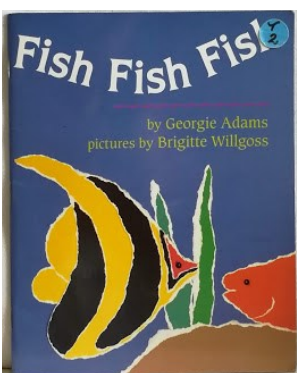
Non-fiction Level 1 reader, preschool to grade 1. Simple, informational text. Artistic, but reasonably realistic illustrations.



Five short little stories about Frog and Toad, who are best friends. Can you compare Frog and Toad? What can you learn from each story? What can you learn about friendship? Do you have to only be friends with people just like you? Which story do you like best? May lead to a discussion about the similarities and differences between real frogs and toads. Do they both leap? DRA reading level 18, An I Can Read Book level 2 (grades 1-3).

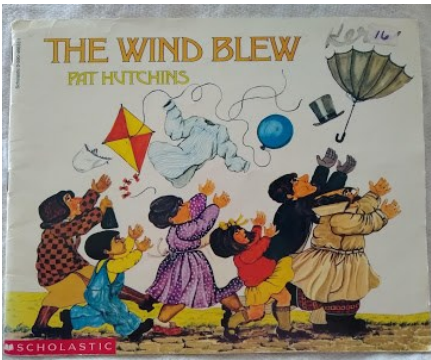


Five more short little stories about Frog and Toad. Begins and ends in winter, with spring, summer, and fall between. A good springboard to talk about the seasons ahead, and the cycle of a year, as well as fun things to comment on in each story. DRA level 18.

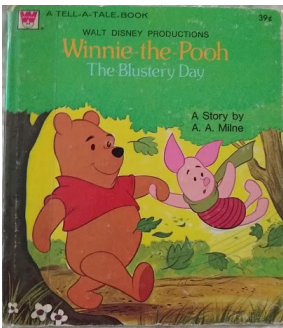


A simple, lyric, partly informative, introduction to fish. Artwork is more artistic than realistic, but suitable for the text. Lots of descriptive words.

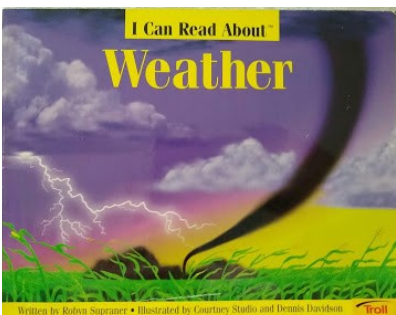
March



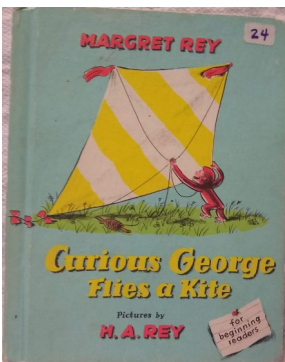
A simple engaging story about wind. Rhyming couplets, with imaginative text and appealing artwork. Apparently set in England, though I can't place the flag.



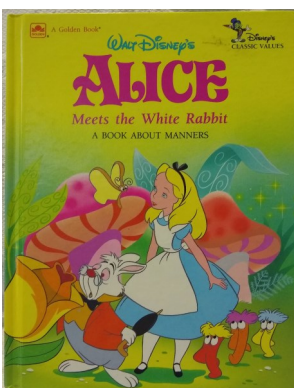
Beloved characters for generations: Winnie the Pooh, Gopher, Piglet, Kanga & Roo, Owl, Eeyore, Rabbit—solve problems together with compassion and kindness. On this blustery day Pooh goes to wish everyone Happy Windsday, and Piglet joins him. Owl's house blows down. Eeyore spends some days looking for just the right house. When he shows everyone what he has found, it is Piglet's house . . . But Piglet doesn't mention that. Pooh offers to let Piglet live with him. Understated humor. Limited text in nice size font. Maps inside each cover. Lots to engage and talk about.



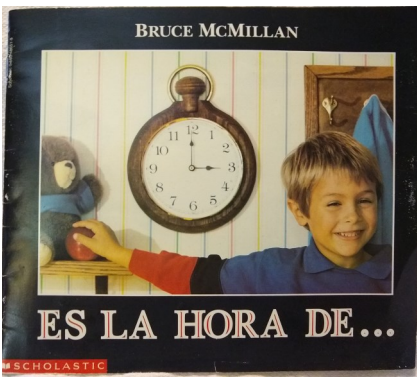
Begins simply, but some pages may need to be summarized for young children. I Can Read About series, list of other titles on the back cover—animals and science.



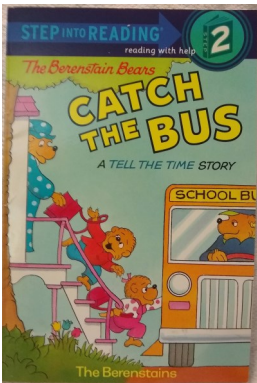
An imaginative story about a pretend monkey and his adventures, including one with bunnies, fishing, and of course, kite flying. The kind of tall tale that kids love. DRA level 24, about mid 2nd grade.



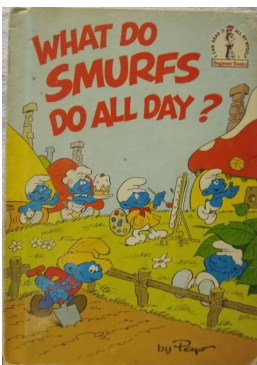
Alice has all kinds of adventures when her imagination runs away with, or from, her and she dreams up a whole confusing sequence of events. . . Including a tea with the mad hatter and the March hare. The story doesn't include the entire story, but focuses on manners and the lack of them. If it's too much text, you or the child can retell a simplified version of the story to go with the pictures. You might have a tea party, practicing manners, wearing all kinds of hats, or March wind-blown hair. The chemicals hat makers used in the old days would affect their brains (and you can talk about the importance of protecting your mind from mind altering chemicals). Why do you think a March Hare would be associated with a mad hatter?



Although in Spanish, the time shown on the clocks and the pictures are sufficiently self explanatory for non-Spanish speakers/readers. Point to the numbers on the clocks, and the pictures, and ask what is happening in the picture.



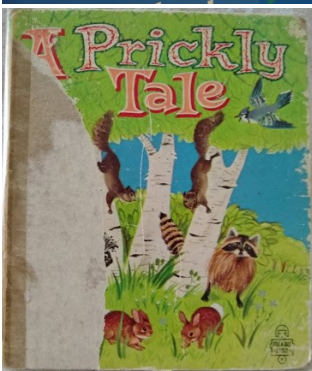
Another book about time. Simple text, analog and digital clocks. Preschoolers can be introduced to clocks, but will learn more intricate details of telling time in about 2nd grade. Step into Reading level 2, reading with help, preschool to 1st grade.



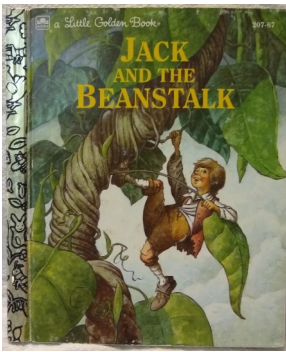
Further elaboration on time. Simple story. Compare what the Smurfs do all day, to your day.



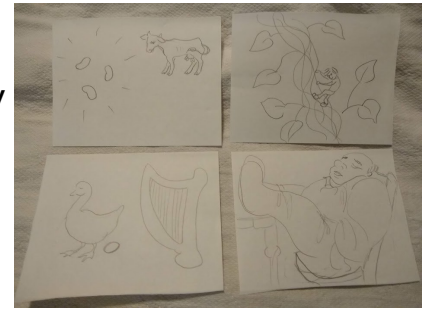
A variety of Dr. Seuss books . . . Some collections of Beginner Books, as well as single titles, such as Hop on Pop, Fox in Sox, One Fish Two Fish, Put Me in the Zoo, Green Eggs and Ham, Dr. Seuss's ABC book, etc . . .



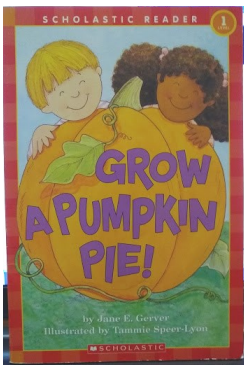
Showing signs of the vicissitudes of books, a favorite for Spring. Animals of the forest awake, begin spring cleaning, except porcupine. He finally gets up and gets busy when all the others have finished. Poetic and imaginative text, recognizable illustrations.



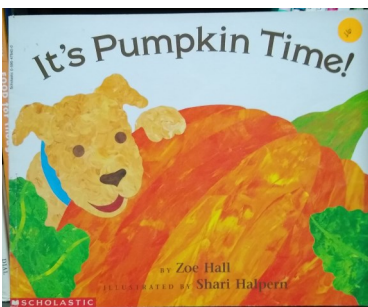
Time to think about gardening? Wishing for magic seeds that would lead to a fortune? Lots to talk about here . . . The story is saved morally by the revelation at the end that actually a giant had stolen the items from Jack's father long ago, and left them destitute. All is righted at the end. You can draw a few simple illustrations from the story for the child to put in order and retell the story. Bean seeds are pretty easy and fun to grow.



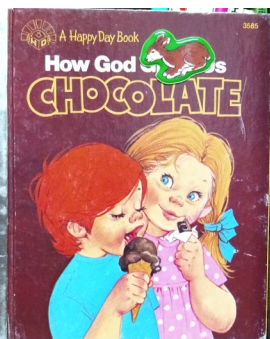
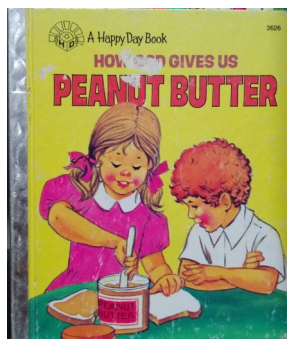
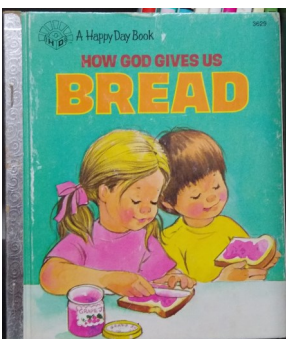
Little Red Hen takes seeds/grains of wheat, grows them, harvests and mills it, and at last makes bread. Who will help her? You can try sprouting wheat, or even planting and growing it in a container. If possible, visit a wheat farm when the wheat is ready to be cut. Watch or grind some grain into flour. Make bread, using kitchen math and science.



Minimal, rhyming text in large font, follows pumpkin development from seed to pie. Some activities at the end. Cute illustrations. Level 1: "simple words & short sentences for the newest readers."



Simple limited text in large font with simple illustrations follows the development from planting the Jack O'Lantern patch through the growing season, to Halloween. Progress of a seedling illustrated at the end. DRA level 16—end of 1st grade reader.

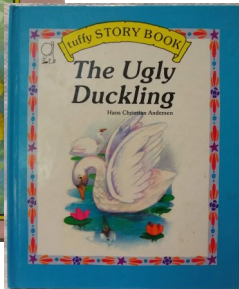
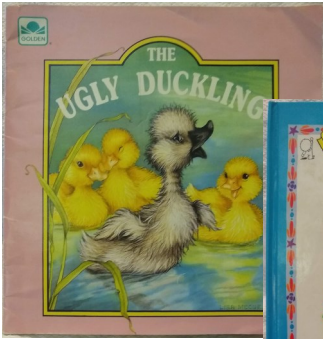


Series explaining where things come from—follows development from the seed/farm through growth, harvest, and processing. Brief text, fairly realistic illustrations. More titles inside back covers.

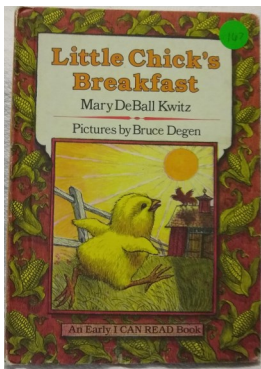
April



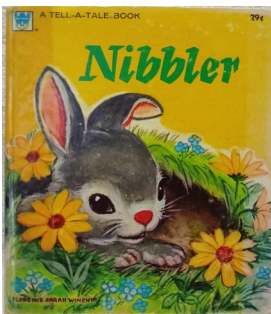
Simple brief text, read aloud to young children, tells about water needs and uses. Great full color, full page photos. List of Happy Day book titles by Standard Publishing, inside back cover.



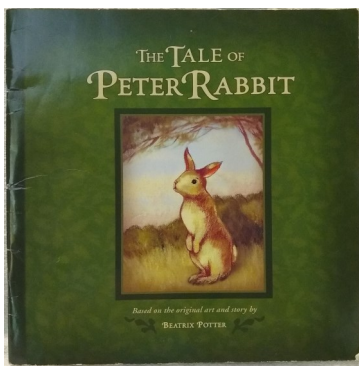
Two versions of "The Ugly Duckling", also often found in compilations. Ducks take to water, but so do swans. Being young and awkward can be difficult, and sometimes the crowd doesn't accept differences. But don't give up being who you are . . .



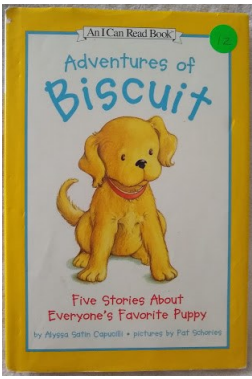
Little chick is anxious for breakfast . . . Watches as the day begins at the farm, and others are getting their breakfast. At last little chick and the other chickens are fed. Simple text in large font, fairly realistic illustrations. An Early I Can Read Book, possibly DRA level 16—first grade reading.



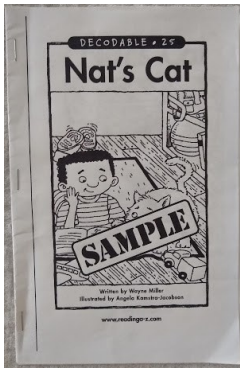
Nibbler is a timid bunny, but in the end finds his courage when danger appears. Simple story, Illustrations ok.



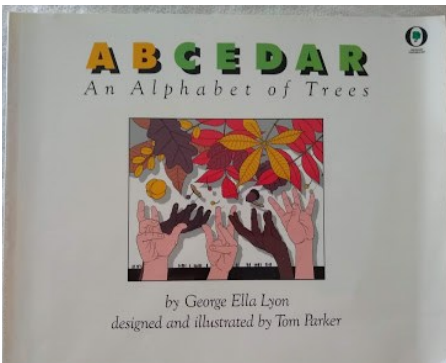
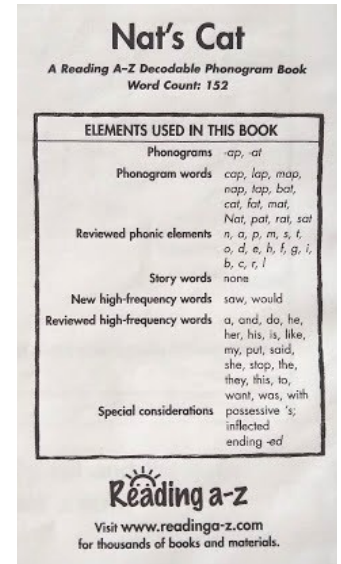
"Based on the original art and story by Beatrix Potter". Loved for generations. What happens when a bunny doesn't heed his mamma's instructions?



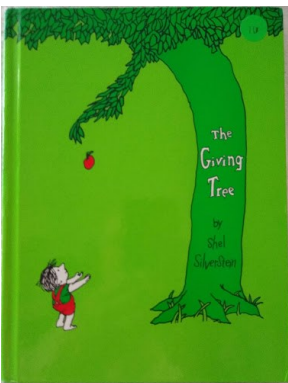
“Five stories about everyone’s favorite puppy” one has a duckling, one kittens. Limited text in large font. Short stories, adorable illustrations. Gentle humor. DRA level 12, 1st grade reader, but great read aloud for non-readers.



Great story to read with pre-schoolers, pointing to the words as you read them. Short short a words.

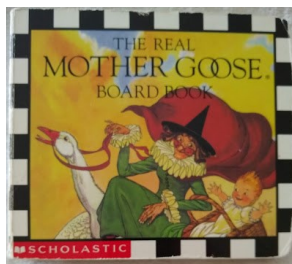


Text is just a labeling of each kind of tree (in alphabetical order). Illustrations show the leaves, a silhouette of the shape of the tree, and relative size to people. Some flowers, fruit, and seeds. After reading, take a walk around the neighborhood, or visit an arboretum. If in the neighborhood, or at a park, or picnicking, collect some leaves and do leaf art. Talk about leaves we eat, other things trees give us . . .

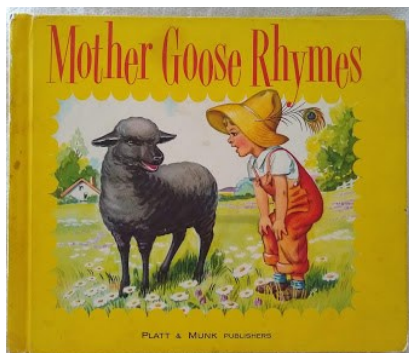


Classic story of a tree and all that she gives to a boy—a lead-in for a discussion of how trees help us, as well as how we may also take people in our lives for granted. Mostly a sentence on each page. Simple line drawings. DRA level 16 would be end of first grade reading.

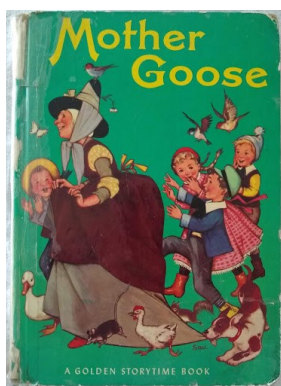
May



Board Book version. One rhyme on each left side, retro illustration for the rhyme, on the right. Extensions could be pursued for each rhyme.



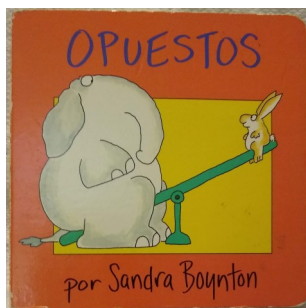
Published in 1953. I acquired the book for the illustrations I wanted to use as patterns for a project I was doing (like dish towels or a kid quilt).



The Mother Goose I grew up with, and still enjoy. 1963 edition, copyright 1957. Different style illustrations from the above, but I still like them.



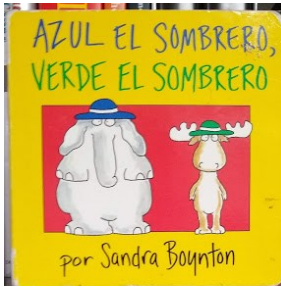
Why not learn a few words in Spanish for Cinco de Mayo? Bilingual board books make it easy and fun. Very limited text, real photos—no matter if you are reading for Spanish or English or both, or even alternating by day, these are great concept books for toddlers up.



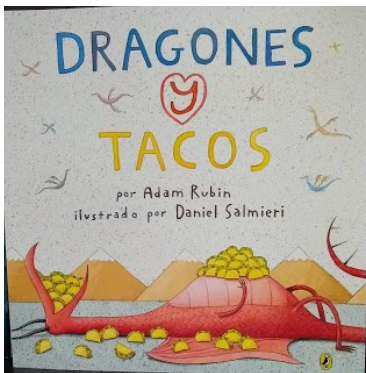
By the delightful children's author/illustrator Sandra Boynton. Pictures help you learn meanings without having to translate.



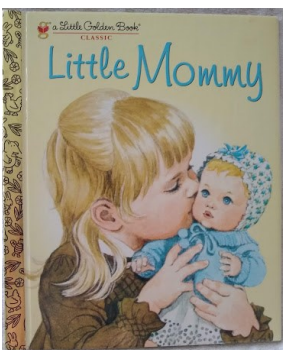
Spanish version of Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? One of the easiest ways to learn a new language is to use children's literature, especially simple books you are very familiar with. Read them side by side and talk about the meaning of the words. Practice again and again.



A fun little story helping you learn color and clothing words.



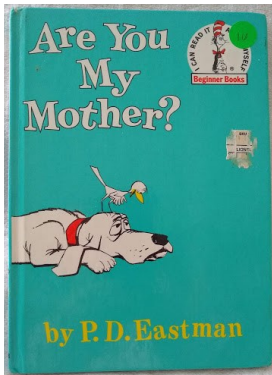
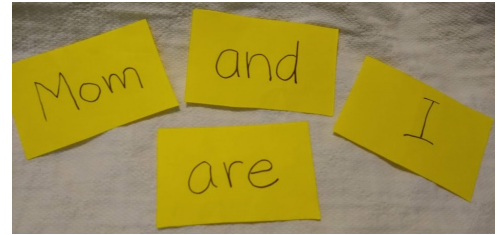
Spanish version of Dragons Love Tacos. Not really a beginning language learner, but if you have the English version, or if you know some Spanish, this is a delightful story for Cinco de Mayo. Plan a taco party for the day.



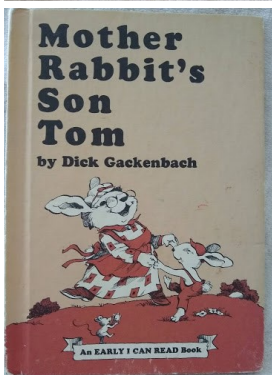
Traditional role of motherhood played by young girl with her dollies. Original copyright 1967. Pleasant quite realistic illustrations. Rhyming couplets, 1-2 lines per page.



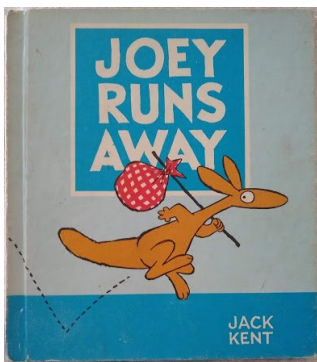
Level A reader, extremely limited text: "Mom and I are . . ." (picture clues) lions, elephants, giraffes, zebras, bears, apes, kangaroos, dolphins. From www.readinga-z.com (excellent resource for leveled readers, including science, languages . . .)



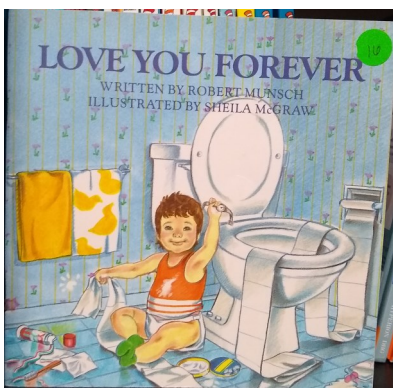
Delightful classic story of a little bird who goes looking for a mother he has never seen. Brief text, 3-color illustrations. An I Can Read it Myself beginner book. DRA level 16, first grader readers. What would you do if you lost your Mom? Talk about what to do when lost/separated from Mom. Should you just go looking for her on your own? Note little bird passed her right by, dangers he might have encountered . . .



Two short stories so typical of mom and child conversations—first story no matter all the nutritious bunny-like food mother offers, Tom wants a hamburger (through the seasons); second story Tom wants a pet and asks to keep several that show up, but Mother says no to each. Gentle humor, with surprise endings. An Early I Can Read Book, first grade.

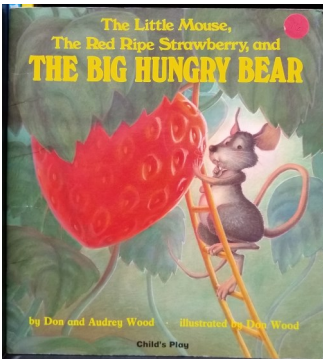


Joey doesn't want to clean his room, so decides to find a new home. Mother sadly goes to look for him—several animals want to take up residence in Joey's room (humorous illustrations), but mother says it's not for rent. Meanwhile Joey tries to find a better place, (more humor), They are at last reunited, and find that being together is worth even having to clean your room. Brief text, cartoon drawings. Fun story.

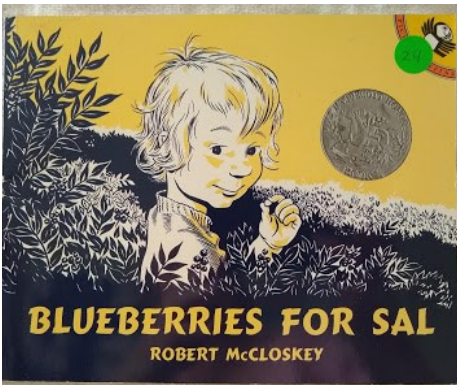


Good luck getting through this without choking up. Mother loves her child through all the growing up years, and even when he's an adult. Sings him a song about loving him forever. She finally gets to the stage where he must take care of her, and he sings the same song to her. Then sings it to his own daughter.

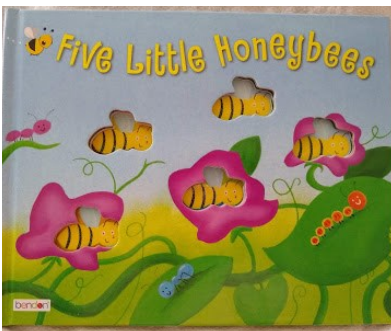
June



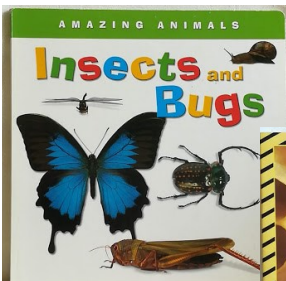
Little mouse is *so* looking forward to eating the red ripe strawberry. But he gets so worried about a big hungry bear coming and eating it before he can . . . Another one by Don and Audrey Wood. DRA level 16, first grade reader. Nice large illustrations, limited text in a very large font.



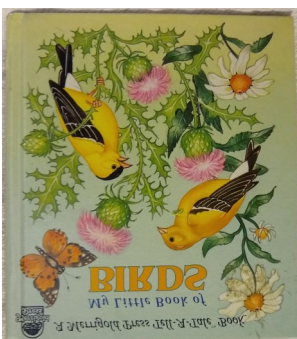
A read aloud—mom and Sal go blueberry picking. Meanwhile Momma bear and baby go blueberry eating. Mommas and their young get switched and with understated humor, each knows enough to back away . . . Eventually each momma finds the right youngster, and return home to preserve the nutritious berries for the winter, in their own way. Retro illustrations by Robert McCloskey (4 Caldecott award and honor books), originally published in 1948.



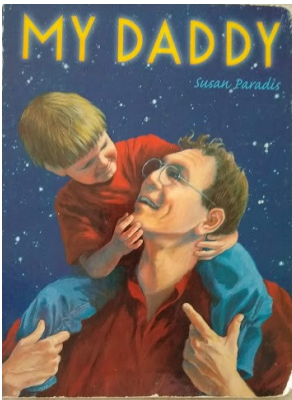
Board Book—counting backward (or subtracting), simple, very limited text in large letters. Illustrations cartoonish, and holes in the pages show the bees to come.



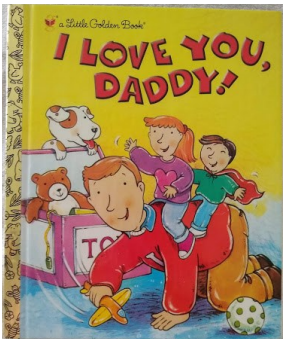
A couple more great books about insects and bugs for young children. Conversation stimulators. What Do Insects Do? Includes further information at the end. Science Emergent Readers series. Don't wait until the child can read, to share these great books with them.



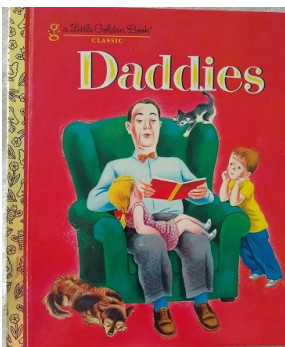
Fairly realistic illustrations. Talks about what a bird is, and tells about and compares various birds. If too much text, summarize, or just talk about the pictures.



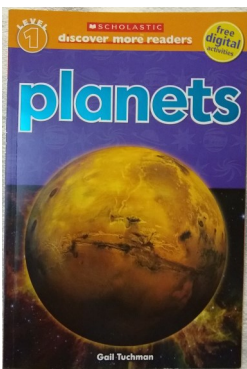
Board Book—through the awe-filled eyes of an admiring young son, Daddy is totally amazing! Very limited text in a large font on each left side, with an illustration on the right. Each illustration has details to look for (watch for elephants in surprising places, and the wild animals turn out to be stuffed animals).



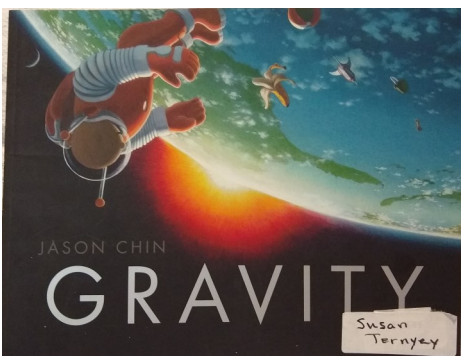
In rhyming quatrains kids tell about their different dads—each thinks he has the best dad. One quatrain and one 2 page illustration each.



Originally published 1953. In rhyming couplets, tells what different kinds of work Daddies do. Only one or two lines per page in mid-sized font. At the end of the day, Dad likes best to come home to his family.



Level 1 for beginning readers (200-500 words, simple sentences, new vocabulary, key facts, first infographics, famous people) . . . Says it appeals to K-1st graders, reading level grade 1. If the vocabulary is too advanced for your preschooler, you can just talk about the pictures. Illustrations combine photos and realistic drawing with cartoons. I'm not sure they are accessible to younger ones.

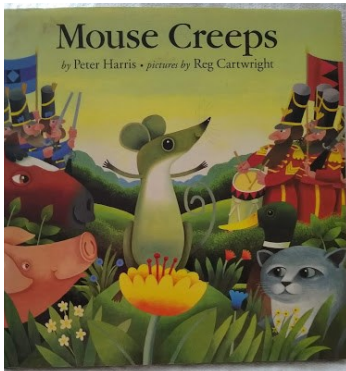


Simple explanation of Gravity, including earth, sun, and moon. Two to 7 words per page in very large, easy to read font. Poses "What if there was no gravity?" and illustrations show what would happen. Additional information in the back.

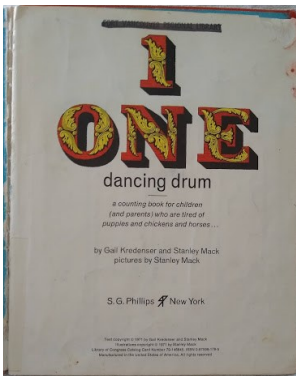
July



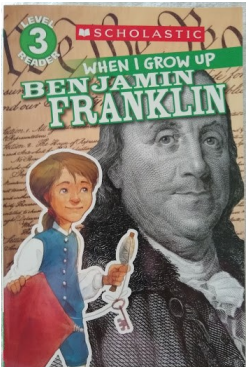
Caldecott Medal. Read aloud rhyming progressive soldier story set in the 1700s with elaborate illustrations. You may like to color your own decorative illustrations.



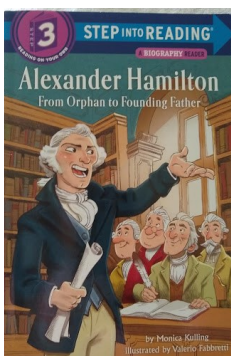
Case in point about not judging a book by its cover. Simple story written simply in two word sentences. Large print on left side page, and appealing illustrations on the right side. Rhyming couplets. Set in the days of muskets. Story begins peacefully, and eventually gets to war—which meets a humorous end. "Father at door. Soldier no more." Returns to "Dog sleeps. Mouse creeps." Good variety of verbs.



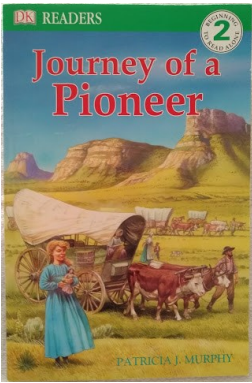
Counting book, as band assembles at a gazebo. Black and white pen illustrations with simple coloring (each group of instruments a different color). Alliteration; 3 word sentences. Often such bands have celebrated national and local holidays with music. You might go to see one, or watch a marching band in a parade.



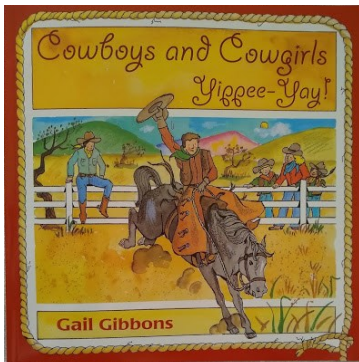
One of the most famous of the Founding Fathers, Benjamin Franklin. Great illustrations. If the text is too much for your preschooler, just talk about the pictures. A level 3 Scholastic reader, appeals to 1st to 3rd graders (mature preschoolers/kindergarteners?), 3rd grade reading level. An older child, after reading, might tell the story to younger child, give a synopsis, etc. A way of reinforcing and expanding learning skills. Includes a timeline of his life.



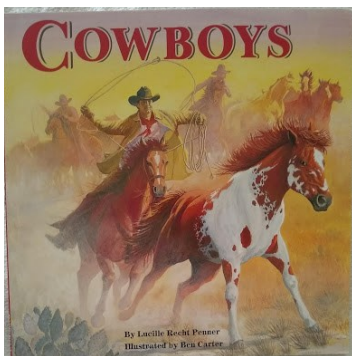
Lesser known to kids, is Founding Father Alexander Hamilton—though some might be aware of the recent musical. Engaging illustrations give a feel for the times. Another Scholastic level 3 reader "Reading on Your Own, Grades 1-3; engaging characters, easy-to-follow plots, popular topics. For children who are ready to read on their own." Other level 3 readers back inside cover: Francis Scott Key, George Washington, Teddy Roosevelt . . .



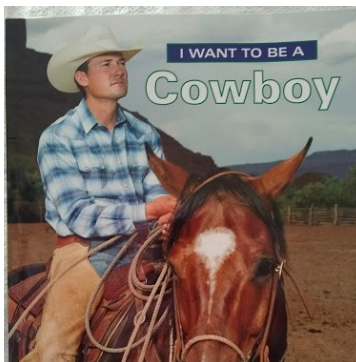
Summarize/talk about the pictures for preschoolers. DK reader level 2—beginning to read alone. I would say grades 1-2: this book has a lot of information. Written like a diary, so could easily be read in parts—there are 14 entries. It's difficult to find a genuine preschool level book about the pioneers.



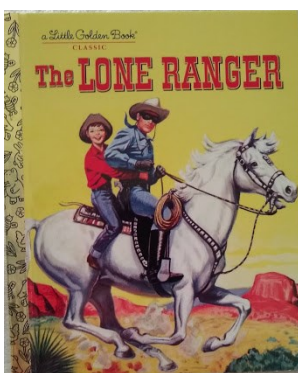
Look at and talk about the pictures for preschoolers. A lot of information—perhaps 2nd grade level. Doesn't talk about grazing open land.



Summarize/talk about the pictures. A lot of words and information for preschool—more for 1st-2nd grade. Good pictures give an idea of what life was like for cowboys in the old days. A list of books in the series inside back cover—a fairly wide range of topics.

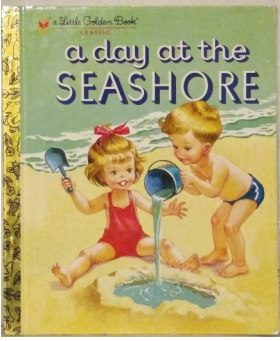


Brief text in large, bold font, good for preschool. Great photographs (large). Vocabulary includes occasional words like "equipment". Other titles in the series inside front cover, "I want to be . . ." various careers.

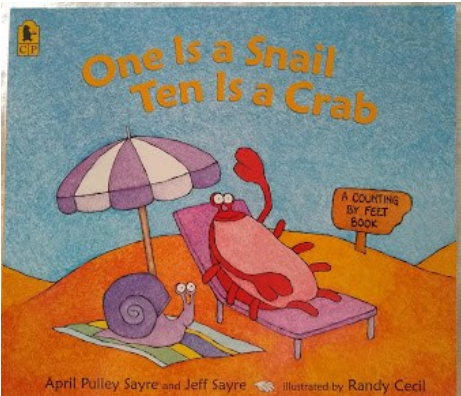


An entertaining (for children), if not realistic, story—like TV westerns. Colorful vocabulary. Could be a read-aloud, depending on interest level, or just tell the story from the pictures. Talk about what you see in the pictures—what details of the landscape, etc. What color horse would you like, and so forth. You could also discuss details of the story that are realistic or pretend 3 column list of titles inside back cover, variety of topics.

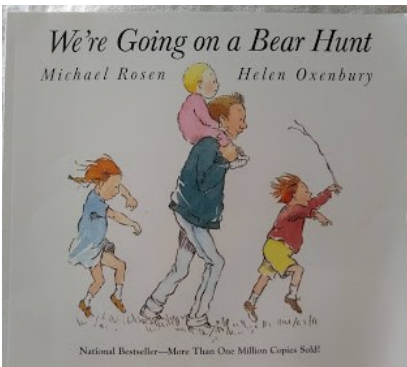
August



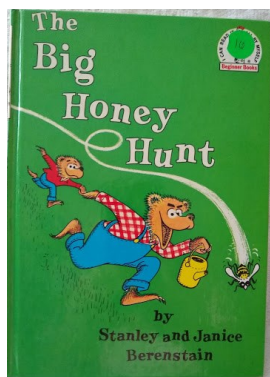
Original copyright 1951, so the illustrations are retro. Very cute, I think. A day at the beach for two little folks. Told in loose rhyme, not too many words per page.



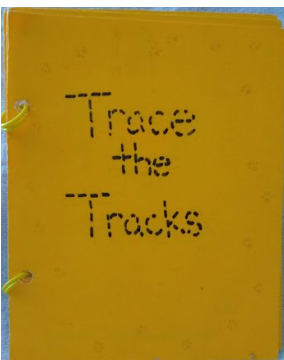
A foot counting book at the beach. Very large a limited text and full double page illustrations. Elements of addition and even multiplication (but you don't have to call it that, just counting by 10s) and different ways to come to the same number. You can read, then count the feet, page by page, to a reasonable point. You don't have to finish the book at once, you can see how far you can go each time. (1-10. then by tens to 100)



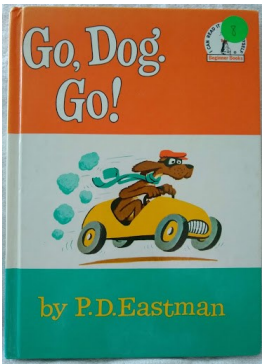
A family adventure, based on an American folk song. Most of the pictures look like summer, but there is a snow storm they trudge through. Large lovely illustrations, and large font with limited words. You can find various short videos of the folk song on the internet to sing and act along.



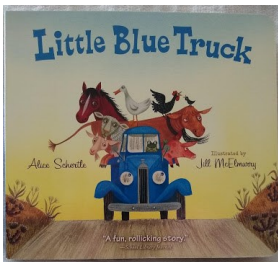
Humorous adventure of Dad and son going to find a honey tree. Short rhyming quatrains, in a good sized font. A favorite from couple of the best children's authors. DRA 16 is about a first grade level reading.



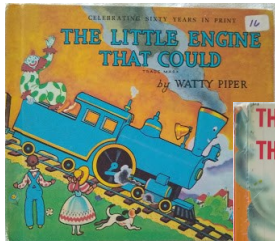
You can check out a reference book of animal tracks, or you can make your own, for your family summer adventures, whether in the neighborhood, wherever you go hiking or camping, at the beach . . . except under water.



How will you travel to your various summer activities? This classic Dr. Seuss has various forms of transportation, as well as various concept vocabulary, work and play, and in the end, a party. Various hats along the way. DRA 8, I Can Read It By Myself Beginner Book. Limited text, engaging illustrations.



Board Book—This story is actually set in the fall, and you can look for clues about what season it is. But it's such a cute transportation book, I'm including it here. Plenty of sound words, short rhyming quatrains. The friendly little truck ends up having to help a big rude truck out of the mud, and little blue trucks come to help, for his sake. Friendship, cooperation, kindness/thoughtfulness, helping even those who don't seem to deserve it . . . More in the series.

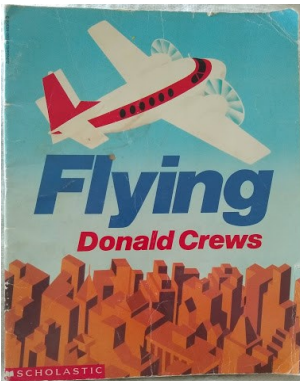


The Little Train That Won a Medal copyright 1947, The Little Engine That Could original copyright 1930. Similar themes about being helpful, even if small & less powerful, and believing in yourself and giving it your best try—vs the too proud.

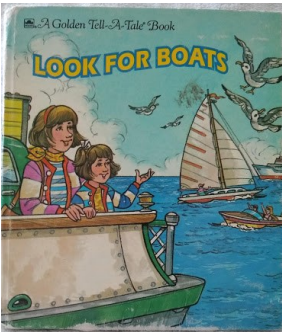


My 3 favorite train books:
Two Little Trains a real train, and a toy train going west
Trains simple non-fiction about trains
Freight Train colors and train cars

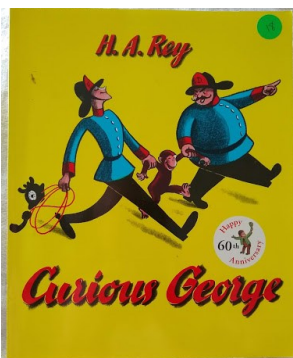




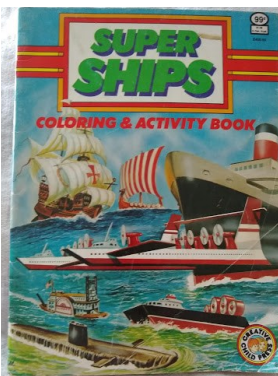
By the author of Freight Train, super simple book about flying (how it used to be to board a prop plane). Two page spread illustrations (includes jets), very large simple font minimalist text. Note the shadow of the plane. Views from above. Flies across the country. If you have flown, share experiences. Were you afraid? How did you handle it? Where did you fly? How long did it take?



Mom and daughter see all kinds of boats as they cross on a ferry to an island to see grandparents.

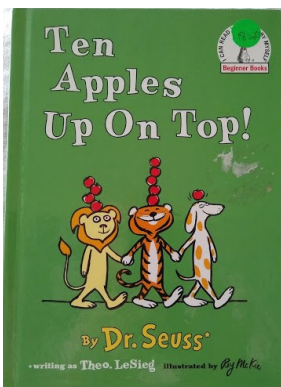


George sails on a big ship from Africa (rowboat from shore to big ship). Curiosity doesn't kill this little monkey, but it sure gets him into some predicaments, involving others as well. Only the beginning of a series of books about Curious George and the man with the big yellow hat. DRA reading level 18, beginning 2nd grade. Of course it's fun to watch the movie to compare, and the TV series is educational. Never try to do as George does, he's a monkey, and pretend, at that.

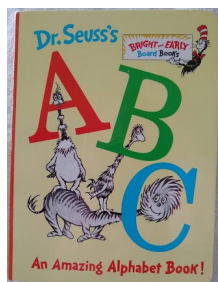


Coloring and Activity book that traces the development of water travel from the probable beginning (log), through various ancient and historic water craft to cruise ship, battle ship, tanker, hovercraft, and yacht. One sentence or phrase per page. Lots to converse about in each picture.

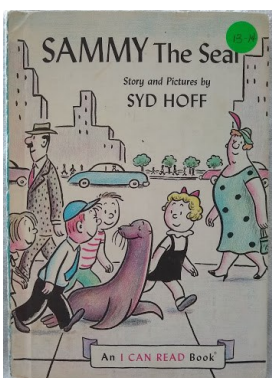
September



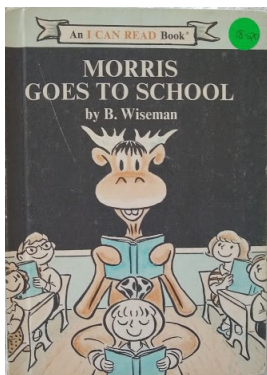
A counting adventure/competition, as characters try to outdo each other with the number of apples they can balance on their heads, while performing all sorts of acrobatics and evasions. Simple rhymes; not too much text on each page, in large font. Engaging story. DRA level 18-20, 2nd grade reading.



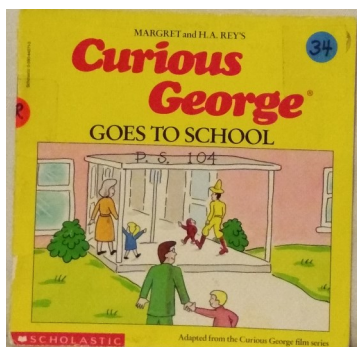
Board Book—begins “BIG A, little a, what begins with A? Aunt Annie’s alligator. A...a...A” and continues similarly through the alphabet, capital letters & lower case letters, and brief alliterative text. And of course Dr. Seuss’s humorous, sometime outrageous illustrations.



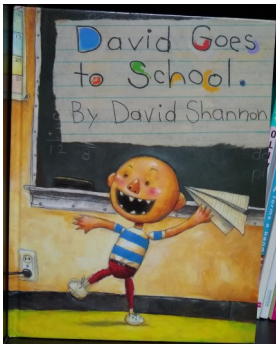
A fanciful story of a seal who gets permission from the zookeeper to go see what life is like outside the zoo. The city is wondrous, but it’s a hot day and he looks for some water to get into . . . Which gets him into hot water. He joins a line of kids going to school. He learns some lessons. But at the end of the day, he knows he belongs in the zoo, and the children promise to come see him there. DRA reading level 13-14, an I Can Read Book. Author Syd Hoff has written other delightful children’s literature.



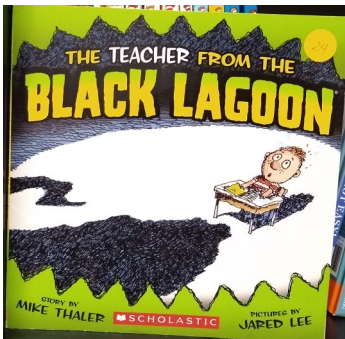
Morris finds the challenges of not being able to read or count. A man takes him to school, and the teacher welcomes him. All sorts of humor happens with Morris in school, but the teacher is patient and accepting, and Morris does begin to learn. DRA reading level 18-20, An I Can Read Book.



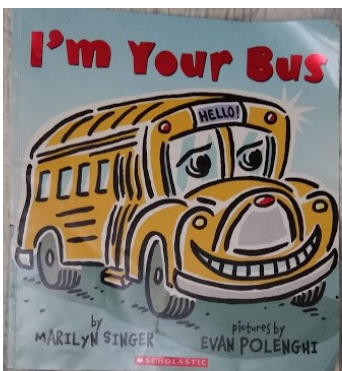
The man with the big yellow hat brings George to the school open house, and leaves George on his own while he goes to talk to George’s teacher. Through a mishap, George ends up finding a student’s missing work, and earns a star. 1-2 lines of text per page, nice size font. DRA reading level 34 (for vocabulary)—mid 3rd grade.



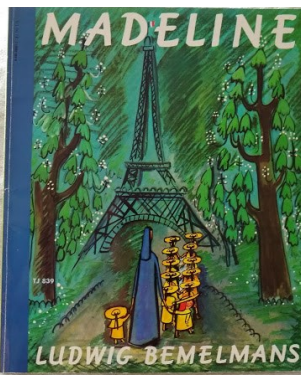
Ugly illustrations, but a good story about a boy that doesn't seem to fit in, has trouble with rules. He has to stay after and wash desks, for which he gets a commendation for a good job. Minimal text written by hand on similitude of lined paper for beginning writers. Lots to talk about on every page.



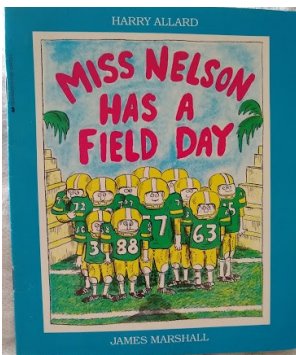
Simple brief text addressing fears about the first day of school and a new teacher. Turns out she's not so bad. DRA reading level 24—mid second grade, but probably a good book to read together before Kindergarten.



An imagined school bus day. Large font, not too much text. Rhyming. Kids can compare what their bus ride is like. Might be valuable to read before newbie starts riding a bus.



A delightful story, and favorite of generations. First copyright 1939. Madeline lives in a boarding school in Paris. Madeline, the youngest, is quite the character. Rhyming, a line per page. Black outline illustrations, with mostly yellow added, but a few more colors on a few pages. You can talk about how this is effective.

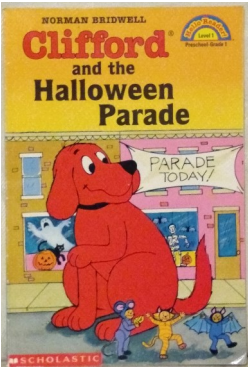


The school's football team is a disaster. No discipline. Coach has to take an extended leave. As substitute, along comes Viola Swamp. She mean business, and when the coach returns, the team is playing like a team, and win their game. On the last page we learn how Miss Nelson is related to Viola Swamp. Before reading this, read Miss Nelson is Missing! About a class that also needed the discipline of Miss Viola Swamp. Not too difficult as a read aloud for pre-schoolers. Opportunity for mystery solving.

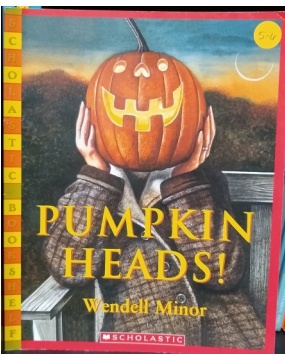
October



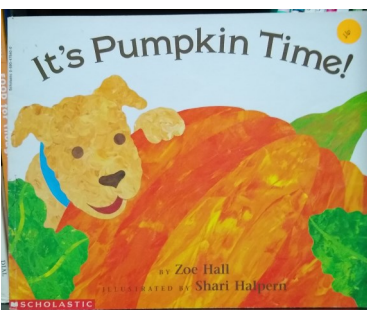
A story about friendship and telling the truth. "From the television script 'Leaf of Absence' by Scott Guy". Fairly brief text in a large font. First grade reading level with comprehension questions in the back. Gather fall leaves for science, art, math, and fun.



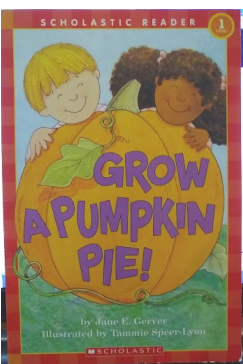
Very limited text in large font. Hello Reader! Level 1—Preschool to grade 1, ages 3-6. Includes a word list at the back, and lists of other leveled readers in the series inside front and back covers. Suggestions at beginning for helping the child before, during, and after reading.



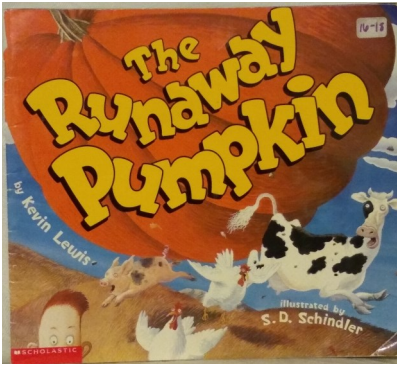
Limited text in a very large font, facing full page illustrations. Halloween theme. DRA reading level 5-6, first half of first grade.



Simple limited text in large font with simple illustrations follows the development from planting the Jack O'Lantern patch through the growing season, to Halloween. Progress of a seedling illustrated at the end. DRA level 16—end of 1st grade reader.



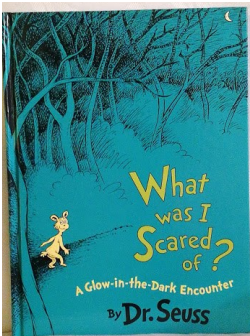
Minimal, rhyming text in large font, follows pumpkin development from seed to pie. Some activities at the end. Cute illustrations. Level 1: "simple words & short sentences for the newest readers."



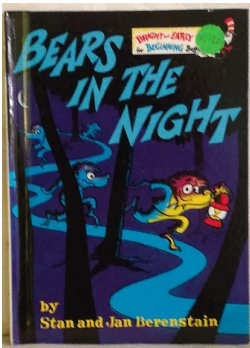
A Halloween story with many disasters, and everyone's idea of pumpkin food. When the pumpkin comes to a crashing halt, they squeeze the huge thing into the house where granny cooks up all kinds of pumpkin goodies on a wood stove, and everyone in costume dress sits down to eat them. DRA reading level 16-18, end of first grade.



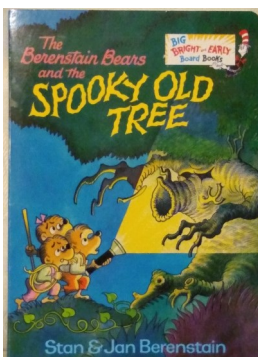
Brief repetitive, building text in large font opposite full page illustrations. Mystery and problem solving. About 2nd grade reading.



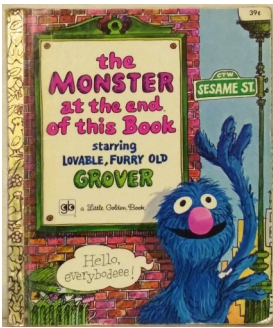
Finding out what seemed scary is not so scary at all once you understand. Read aloud for young children.



Bears go on a night time adventure. Minimal text, compelling story carried by illustrations. Words: in, out, to, at, down, over, under, around, between, through, up. Just enough repetition to make the story. DRA level 5-6, 1st grade readers, but lots of fun for a read aloud.



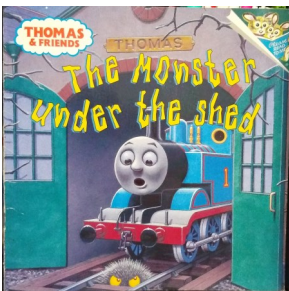
Limited text in large font, repetition, some rhyming. Another mysterious nighttime adventure with building suspense.



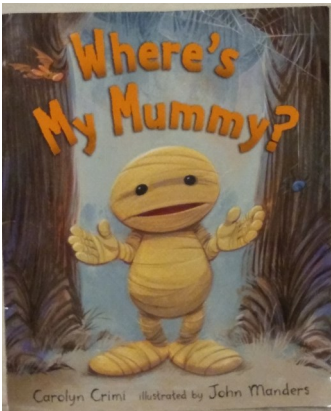
Loveable furry old Grover, from Sesame Street tries to keep the reader from turning the pages (very engaging for young ones, and humorous for adults as well). In the end, he is the monster at the end of the book.



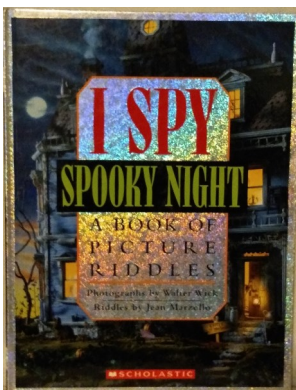
Story builds on characteristics of the monster, using colors and adjectives. Then the characteristics "go away" one by one. Limited text in large white letters on black pages. Read aloud. Animated reading on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPmLZLp-oec>



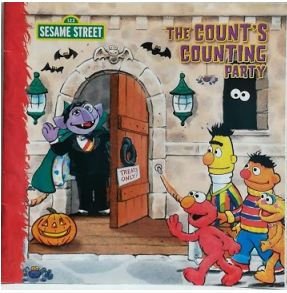
Read aloud for fans of Thomas & Friends, facing fears after hearing scary stories, and hearing scary noises at night. Turns out to be a hedgehog.



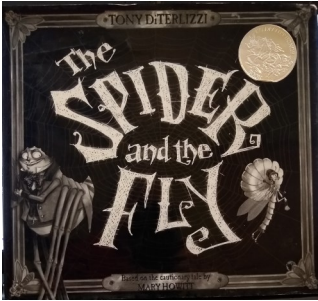
Baby Mummy doesn't want to go to bed, goes out to play Hide & Seek, gets lost—goes looking for his mummy. Encounters a series of creatures who were not his mummy. Mummy brings him home and puts him safely to bed. Read aloud. Large words in-hand lettering.



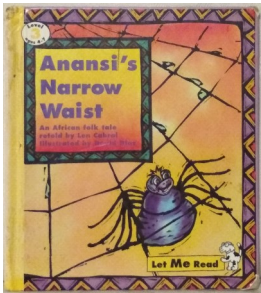
Read aloud. Two lines of rhyming text per page, large font. Illustrations are 2 page spreads. Text tells what to look for in each picture.



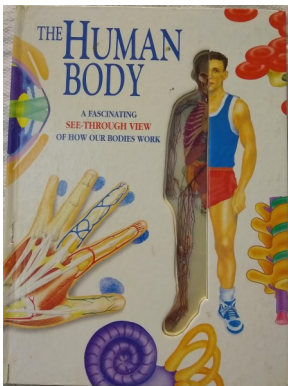
The count-loving count welcomes friends to his castle for a party. First they will find a list of things in numbers 1-10, then enjoy cupcakes. Some alliteration. Illustrated glossary at the end.



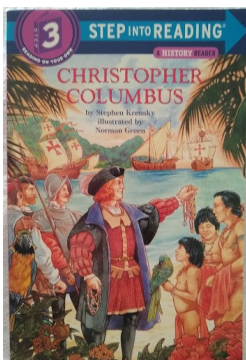
Black, white, and grayscale retro illustrations. White text on black pages, about 2-4 rhyming lines per page. The classic poem published in 1828, "a cautionary tale about the dangers of listening to the flattering words of . . ." anyone. Read on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fX3N4k1Ldz4>



One of many African folk tales about Anansi the spider, whose cleverness sometimes gets him in trouble. Let Me Read level 3, ages 4-7. Limited text in good size letters. Suggestions for helping your child become a reader, inside back cover, along with other titles (levels 1, 2, & 3)

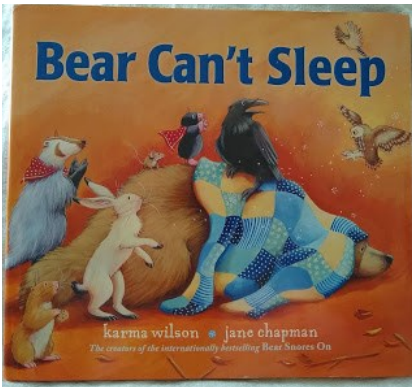


Browsing/reference book . . . Look at the skeletal system. Name a few easy bones (skull, ribs, knee-bone ...). Keep it simple. You might play "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes", or Simon Says or Hinges . . . Emphasizing moves of the bones and joints.



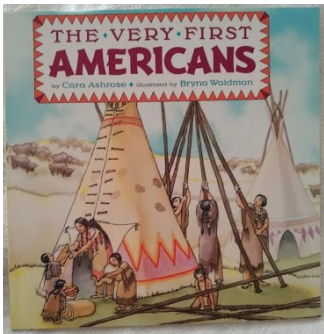
Columbus' 1st voyage, told in simple terms, but with interesting details. A read-aloud for preschoolers—possibly a bit long . . . Step into Reading level 3, reading on your own (grades 1-3)

November

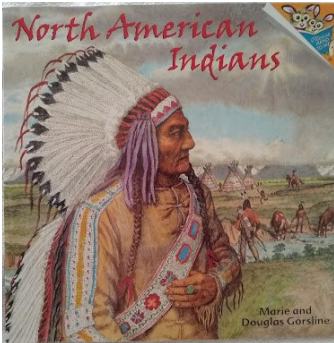


(elections?)

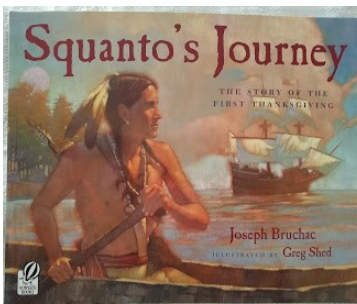
(Veteran's Day?)



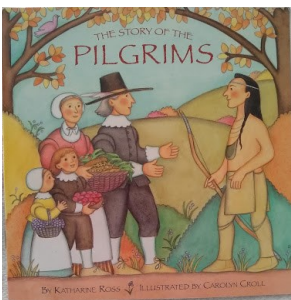
Summarize and talk about the pictures for preschoolers. You might mention that the horses the plains Indians rode were herds that developed from strays that got away from the Spanish explorers and conquistadors (conquerors—they conquered the Indians of Mexico and South America.) Text and pictures about different regional cultures, but no map. List of titles inside back cover.



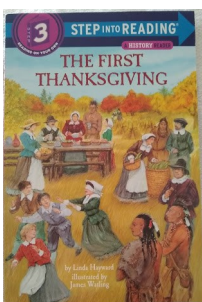
Nice introduction and map. A lot of words and information for preschoolers. Summarize and talk about the pictures. Could be read in parts, perhaps. Some fun details about their lives. Written about a 2nd grade level. 3 column list of titles in the series, inside back cover. *my pick



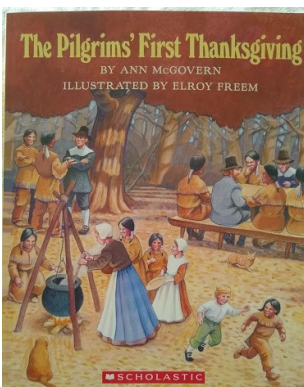
Beautiful full page illustrations accompany the amazing story of Squanto. Depending on the maturity of the children, probably the story would need to be summarized or talk about the pictures. The author is of Native American descent, and cares for accuracy. *my pick



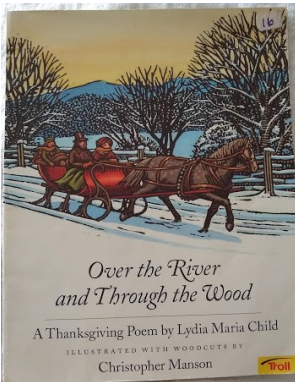
The introduction uses the term Pilgrim before the Puritans became Pilgrims, and their history in Europe is glossed over (as necessary for the purpose and audience)—so without getting *too* detailed, a few things could be clarified. Simple illustrations, text may need to be summarized. 3 columns of additional titles inside back cover.



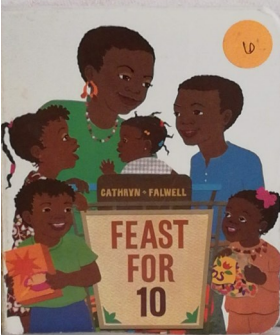
Simple text in large font, telling illustrations, including a cut-away of the Mayflower. A read-aloud for preK, Step into Reading level 3 (grades 1-3). Enough detail without too much. *my pick



Summarize as needed. Some details about the children. Divided by seasons, so it could easily be read in parts.



An illustration of the poem/song first published about 1845. Pictures are of Thanksgiving of the 19th century in snowy country. 2-3 phrases per 2-page illustration, in large font. Music printed in the back.



Very clever counting as the family shops for a family dinner, then counts again as they prepare it. Good feelings as everybody helps, then enjoys their feast together. The number written on the dot in the top right corner indicates reading level: DRA 6, grades K-1.

(wish list)
Thanksgiving is for Giving Thanks
By Margaret Sutherland

Limited text in nice size font. A sentence or two each 2-page illustration. Simple pleasant illustrations. Additional titles inside back cover.

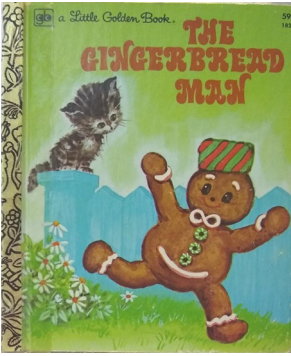
(wish list?)
What is Thanksgiving?
By Michelle Medlock Adams

Board book—rhyming quatrains. Simple sentences in large font. Pleasant illustration. A look at some Thanksgiving traditions, and then points out that Thanksgiving is for thanking God.

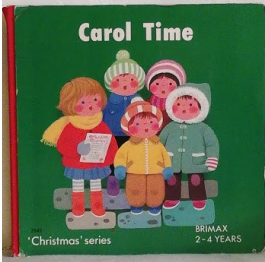
(wish list)
Sharing the Bread: An Old-Fashioned Thanksgiving Story
By Pat Zietlow Miller

Lyric text, repetition, large 2-page illustrations set in the days of wood cookstoves.

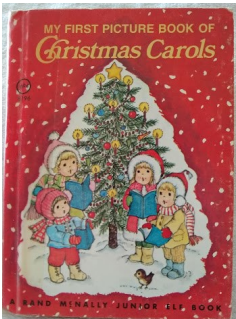
December



Read aloud. Not the shortest version, but cute.



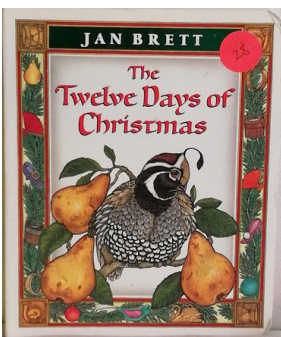
Board Book—the Christmas story through carols . . . not the full text, but enough to get readers/listeners started singing. Cute illustrations. One of a series.



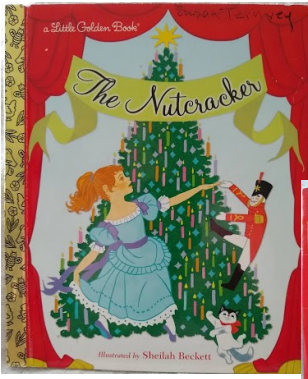
Two pages for each song, large font, cutsey illustrations.



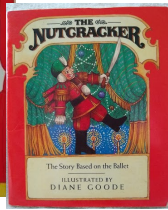
Board Book—beautiful pictures celebrating Christmas and the Christmas story, with the words to “Away in a Manger”.



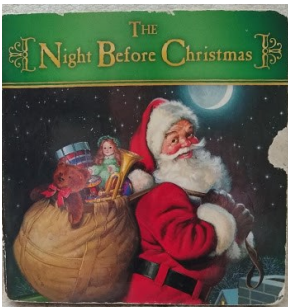
Board Book—Beautifully and uniquely illustrated by Jan Brett, with lots of details to look for in the pictures. The dot with the number written on it in the top left corner indicates the reading level. This book is rated for 3rd grade readers, but younger children will enjoy it read aloud.



Two versions of the Nutcracker. The smaller book is more wordy, but the larger is not terse. OK for kids with enough attention span. Or, could be summarized.



Board Book—read aloud. Text and font for a competent reader and not the youngest of listeners. Illustrations fairly realistic.



Board Book read aloud illustration of the famous Christmas poem. White text on dark green pages opposite fairly realistic, appealing illustrations. 2 quatrains per page.

(Kwanza)

(New Year's Eve)

Holidays that change dates yearly

Chinese New Year—new moon between Jan 21=Feb 20

Purim—Feb/Mar

Mardi Gras—day before Ash Wednesday/Lent; 47 days before Easter

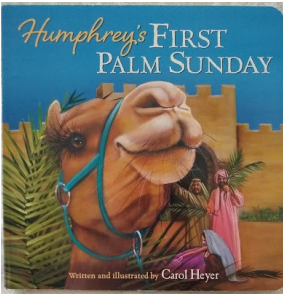
Palm Sunday/Good Friday/Passover/Easter—Mar-Apr

Ramadan

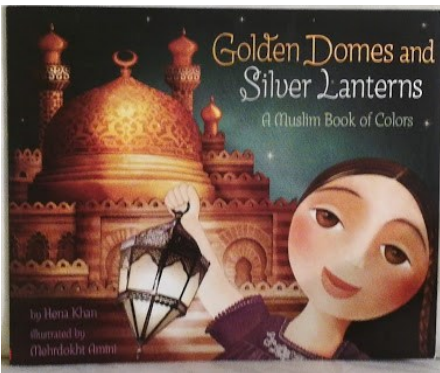
Pentecost/Whitsunday/Feast of Weeks/

Rosh Hashana/Yom Kippur/Sukkot

Hanukkah—Nov/Dec

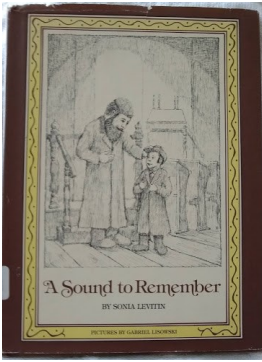


Board Book—Told from the viewpoint of a rather self-important camel; fairly realistic illustrations add humor to the tongue in cheek text.



Colors and Muslim culture, including gold and silver. Very large, limited text. Read aloud. Stylized illustrations.

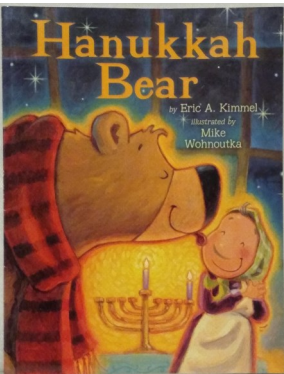
(Continued)



A Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur story. Read aloud to those with enough attention span, or summarize. Good size font, but a lot of words for little ones. Pencil illustrations.



Limited, rhyming text, but not especially large font. Set in snowy climate. Simple, stylized illustrations.



Cute story of a grandma whose eyesight is a bit dim. Read aloud, large font, but not too few words. Story engaging enough, that may not be an issue except for kids under 3. Recipe for latkes at the end.



A rhyming take-off from the Night Before Christmas. A quatrain or two per each double page illustration. Large, bold font. Somewhat strained rhyme in some places. Relates the story of Maccabees briefly. Gives a nice intro to the celebration Hanukkah. Heartwarming family story.