

# Great Early Elementary Reads

The ALSC 2011-2012 School Age Programs and Services Committee recommends these titles for children who are just learning to read and beginning to read on their own. The books included were published between 2009 and 2011. However, many are part of a larger series that young readers will also enjoy.



## STARTING TO READ

**Arnold, Tedd.** *I Spy Fly Guy*. Illus. by the author. Scholastic, 2009. 30p.

Buzz and Fly Guy enjoy a game of hide-and-seek until the garbage man makes an early pickup.

**Bliss, Harry.** *Luke on the Loose*. Illus. by the author. Toon Books, 2009. 32p.

Luke's fascination with a flock of pigeons takes him on an adventure through New York City in this graphic novel for beginning readers.

**Bogart, Jo Ellen.** *Big and Small, Room for All*. Illus. by Gillian Newland. Tundra Books, 2009. 32p.

Using lyrical poetry, the author introduces the concept of the biggest to the smallest, from the vastness of the universe to things unseen by the naked eye.

**Capucilli, Alyssa Satin.** *Biscuit and the Lost Teddy Bear*. Illus. by Pat Schories. HarperCollins, 2011. 29p.

Biscuit discovers a lost teddy bear and helps to reunite it with its owner.

**Chaconas, Dori.** *Cork & Fuzz: The Swimming Lesson*. Illus. by Lisa McCue. Viking, 2011. 32p.

Cork wants Fuzz to visit his home, but since Cork lives in the water he must help Fuzz learn to swim and conquer his fear of water first.

**Cooper, Wade.** *Starry, Starry Night*. Photos. Cartwheel/Scholastic, 2009. 32p.

Beginning readers will delight in the photographs and simple text that introduce the sun, moon, solar system, and other things in space.

**Farber, Erica.** *Cake Soup*. Illus. by Huck Scarry. Sterling, 2011. 25p.

For Lowlie's birthday his friends mix together all sorts of great things—juice, eggs, milk, ice cream, and more—then put it into the oven to bake, but is it a cake?

**Griffiths, Andy.** *The Big Fat Cow that Goes Kapow*. Illus. by Terry Denton. Feiwel & Friends, 2009. 144p.

Ten silly stories told in snappy rhymes are paired with simple line drawings for a goofy, engaging book that kids will love.

**Hayes, Geoffrey.** *Benny and Penny in the Toy Breaker*. Illus. by the author. Toon Books, 2010. 32p.

When wild cousin Bo comes to visit, Benny and Penny team up to protect their toys from his reckless ways. Despite their efforts, Bo still gets his hands on their backyard treasure map.

**Heller, Alyson.** *Touchdown!* Illus. by Steve Björkman. Simon Spotlight, 2010. unpag.

It's time to play football and J.B. doesn't think girls can play but Tess shows him differently with a bit of good sportsmanship thrown in.

**Hoberman, Mary Ann.** *You Read to Me, I'll Read to You: Very Short Fables to Read Together*. Illus. by Michael Emberley. Little, Brown, 2010. 32p.

Aesop's Fables come to life when poet laureate Hoberman retells them in a lightly humorous "I read, you read" format.

**Hopkins, Lee Bennett.** *Dizzy Dinosaurs: Silly Dino Poems*. Illus. by Barry Gott. Harper, 2011. unpag.

Simple rhymes and delightful illustrations AND dinosaurs? A sure winner.

**Howe, James.** *Houndsley and Catina: Plink and Plunk*. Illus. by Marie-Louise Gay. Candlewick, 2009. 42 pages.

Houndsley and Catina are best friends, but they have a hard time telling each other the truth about being nervous.

**Kohuth, Jane.** *Ducks Go Vroom*. Illus. by Viviana Garofoli. Random, 2011. unpag.

Three noisy ducks make a mess at Goose's house.



**Lin, Grace.** *Ling & Ting: Not Exactly the Same!* Illus. by the author. Little, Brown, 2010. 44p.

Twins Ling and Ting may look alike, but don't let that fool you!

**Lunde, Darrin.** *Hello, Baby Beluga*. Illus. by Patricia J. Wynne. Charlesbridge, 2011. unpag.

Learn about beluga whales, where they live and what they eat.

**Manushkin, Fran.** *Katie Woo: Where Are You?* Illus. by Tammie Lyon. Picture Window Books, 2011. 32p.

Katie and her family head to the mall for some shopping and when her parents get distracted she wanders away not knowing that she may be lost.

**Mayer, Mercer.** *Just a Little Sick*. Illus. by the author. HarperCollins, 2010. 32p.

Little Critter's sick day doesn't turn out quite the way he thought it would.

**McMullan, Kate.** *Pearl and Wagner: One Funny Day*. Illus. by R. W. Alley. Dial, 2009. 40p.

Wagner the mouse is not as happy about April Fools' Day as his friends, but he has a trick up his sleeve.

**O'Connor, Jane.** *Fancy Nancy: My Family History*. Illus. by Robin Preiss Glasser. HarperCollins, 2010. 32p.

Nancy has a decision to make—tell the truth or make it fancy—when she writes a report about her great-grandfather.

**Ries, Lori.** *Good Dog, Aggie*. Illus. by Frank W. Dormer. Charlesbridge, 2009. 48p.

Ben's dog, Aggie, is in need of some training. When obedience school doesn't work out, they must find a way to get Aggie to obey. Patience and the right incentive help both dog and owner build a happy relationship.

**Rylant, Cynthia.** *Mr. Putter & Tabby Clear the Decks*. Illus. by Arthur Howard. Harcourt, 2010. unpag.

Mr. Putter and his fine cat Tabby decide they need an adventure. When they team up with his neighbor Mrs. Teaberry, her good dog Zeke decides he doesn't want to leave the sightseeing boat!

**Scieszka, Jon.** *Trucks Line Up*. Illus. by David Shannon, Loren Long, and David Gordon. Simon Spotlight, 2011. 24p.

One morning Jack Truck calls all the local trucks to get in line and the trucks go 'round in many different directions until they are all lined up—on top of each other!

**Seeger, Laura Vaccaro.** *Dog and Bear: Three to Get Ready.* Illus. by the author. Roaring Brook, 2009. unpagated.

Friends dog and bear find ways to help each other through a variety of situations—always there for one another.

**Silverman, Erica.** *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa: Spring Babies.* Illus. by Betsy Lewin. Harcourt, 2010. 44p. A new calf, a new puppy, and a brood of owlets leave Cocoa unsure that he WANTS all of these new friends around, but as he learns that they will help with the work his jealousy subsides.

**Smith, Jeff.** *Little Mouse Gets Ready.* Illus. by the author. Toon Books, 2009, 32p. Mama's calling "Are you ready?" and Little Mouse scurries to put on ALL his clothes with a surprise ending.

**Thomas, Jan.** *Is Everyone Ready for Fun?* Illus. by the author. Beach Lane Books, 2011. unpagated.

The cows come to visit chicken unexpectedly bringing some crazy plans that chicken isn't very happy about.

**Wade, Mary Dodson.** *Plants Grow!* Photos. Enslow, 2009, 24p. How do plants grow? This easy volume shows the process, with simple words and colorful photographs.

**Weeks, Sarah.** *Mac and Cheese.* Illus. by Jane Manning. Laura Geringer Books, 2010. 32p. Meet Mac and Cheese—two cats who are best friends, but their personalities couldn't be more different—these kitties show how opposites complement each other.

**Willems, Mo.** *Time to Sleep, Sheep the Sheep!* Illus. by the author. Balzer & Bray/HarperCollins, 2010. unpagated. Sheep the Sheep bids goodnight to all her animal friends, who are getting ready for bed. But what about owl?

**Willems, Mo.** *We Are in a Book!* Illus. by the author. Hyperion, 2010. 57p. Elephant and Piggie make the shocking realization that they are being read! A brilliant addition to Willems' wonderful series.

**Yee, Wong Herbert.** *Mouse and Mole: A Winter Wonderland.* Illus. by the author. Houghton, 2010. unpagated. Friends Mouse and Mole discover they have different ideas about how to spend a wintery day but in the end their ideas aren't so different.

## READING ON MY OWN

**Atinuke.** *Good Luck, Anna Hibiscus.* Illus. by Lauren Tobia. Kane/Miller, 2011. 110p. Anna, who lives in Africa, can't wait to fly across the world to see her grandmother in snowy Canada.

**Barton, Chris.** *The Day-Glo Brothers: The True Story of Bob and Joe Switzer's Bright Ideas and Brand-New Colors.* Illus. by Tony Persiani. Charlesbridge, 2009. 48p. Two brothers who dreamed of being a magician and a doctor invent a whole new kind of glowing colors through years of experimenting.

**Becker, Bonny.** *The Magical Ms. Plum.* Illus. by Amy Portnoy. Knopf, 2009. 104p. Every third grader wants to be taught by this teacher who has a magical supply closet and makes the unexpected happen.

**Bruei, Nick.** *Bad Kitty Meets the Baby.* Illus. by the author. Roaring Brook, 2011. 143p. Bad Kitty tries to answer the important question: "What the heck is that thing?"

**Cronin, Doreen.** *The Trouble with Chickens.* Illus. by Kevin Cornell. Balzer & Bray/HarperCollins, 2011. 119p. Retired search-and-rescue dog J.J. Tully undertakes the case of the missing chicks—funny and fast-paced.

**DiCamillo, Kate and Alison McGhee.** *Bink and Gollie.* Illus. by Tony Fucile. Candlewick, 2010. 81p. Three delightful tales of two opposite, yet devoted friends who enjoy roller-skating, pancakes, and an imaginary hike up the Andes.

**English, Karen.** *The Newsy News Newsletter (Nikki & Deja).* Illus. by Laura Freeman. Clarion, 2010. 91p. The duo decides to create a newspaper about what's happening at school using their special pen and notepad and Aunt Dee's computer.

**Giff, Patricia Reilly.** *Big Whopper (Zigzag Kids).* Illus. by Alasdair Bright. Wendy Lamb Books, 2010. 66p. Destiny tells a major lie during Discovery Week at the Zigzag School. How will she ever get out of it?

**Gifford, Peggy.** *Moxy Maxwell Does Not Love Practicing the Piano: But She Does Love Being in Recitals.* Photos by Valorie Fisher. Schwartz & Wade, 2009. 176p. In this hilarious third installment about everyone's favorite 'tween procrastinator, Moxy is set to make her Piano Debut—if only she would practice.

**Grimes, Nikki.** *Make Way for Dyanonde Daniel.* Illus. by R. Gregory Christie. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2009. 74p. Dyanonde is adjusting to her new neighborhood and school, and reaches out to the new kid who always seems angry and rude.

**Hannigan, Katherine.** *Emmaline and the Bunny.* Illus. by the author. Greenwillow/HarperCollins, 2009. 94p. Emmaline convinces her parents to defy the mayor, who has outlawed anything messy, by planting an unruly yard just perfect for a wild bunny.

**Holm, Jennifer L.** *Squish: Super Amoeba.* Illus. by Matthew Holm. Random House, 2011. 90p. Can Squish, a meek amoeba, save the day when his best friend is threatened by a bully?

**Jenkins, Emily.** *Toys Come Home: Being the Early Experiences of an Intelligent Stingray, a Brave Buffalo, and a Brand-New Someone Called Plastic.* Illus. by Paul O. Zelinsky. Schwartz & Wade, 2011. 132p. In this prequel to *Toys Go Out*, six linked adventures detail how three toys came to live with Girl.

**Jules, Jacqueline.** *Freddie Ramos Takes Off (Zapato Power).* Illus. by Miguel Benítez. Whitman, 2010. 77p. Freddie finds a mysterious package outside his apartment containing sneakers that allow him to run super fast and inspire him to be a hero.



**Lasky, Kathryn.** *The Deadlies: Felix Takes the Stage.* Illus. by Stephen Gilpin. Scholastic, 2010. 142p.  
The Deadlies are like any other family with a loving mother and bright, rambunctious children - except they're spiders who live in a symphony hall.

**Look, Lenore.** *Alvin Ho: Allergic to Camping, Hiking, and Other Natural Disasters.* Illus. by LeUyen Pham. Schwartz & Wade, 2009. 170p.  
Alvin Ho is back and he has to go camping where he fears bears, darkness, and . . . pit toilets?

**Lowry, Lois.** *Gooney Bird on the Map.* Illus. by Middy Thomas. Houghton, 2011. 128p.  
Feisty and full of ideas, Gooney Bird figures out how to make everyone feel like they are having a special trip on school vacation.

**Mills, Claudia.** *How Oliver Olson Changed the World.* Illus. by Heather Maione. Farrar, 2009. 103p.  
Although Oliver's overprotective parents make it hard for him to make decisions; a new class assignment might finally inspire him to express himself.

**Montgomery, Lewis B.** *The Case of the Stinky Socks (Milo and Jazz Mysteries).* Illus. by Amy Wummer. Kane, 2009. 94p.  
Two budding detectives use their sleuthing skills to find a pair of lucky (and stinky) baseball socks in this first in a series of detective books featuring this pair.

**Nelson, Vaunda Micheaux.** *Bad News for Outlaws: The Remarkable Life of Bass Reeves, Deputy U.S. Marshal.* Illus. by R. Gregory Christie. Carolrhoda, 2009. unpagged.  
This picture book biography tells the story of a bigger-than-life former slave who was cunning and fearless and a hero in the Old West.

**O'Connor, Barbara.** *The Fantastic Secret of Owen Jester.* Farrar, 2010. 168p.  
After capturing a humongous bullfrog, Owen discovers a two-person submarine that takes him, his friends, and nosy neighbor Viola on a dazzling adventure.

**O'Connor, Barbara.** *The Small Adventure of Popeye and Elvis.* Farrar, 2009. 149p.  
Life sure is boring for Popeye until a boy named Elvis gets his family's motor home stuck in the mud, and the duo finds excitement while exploring the surroundings.

**Pennypacker, Sara.** *Clementine and the Family Meeting.* Illus. by Marla Frazee. Disney/Hyperion, 2011. 162p.  
In Clementine's mind a family meeting means she's in trouble for something, but this meeting is different with a surprise even she doesn't expect.

**Schoenberg, Jane.** *The One and Only Stuey Lewis: Stories from the Second Grade.* Illus. by Cambria Evans. Farrar, 2011. 128p.  
A likable worrywart works through his dilemmas with the help of his teacher and friends in these four brief stories.

**Singer, Marilyn.** *Mirror Mirror: A Book of Reversible Verse.* Illus. by Josée Masse. Dutton, 2010. 32p.  
Reverso poems based on fairy tales that have a different meaning when read up or down. Cool!

**Sternberg, Julie.** *Like Pickle Juice on a Cookie.* Illus. by Matthew Cordell. Amulet, 2011. 122p.  
When Eleanor's first and favorite babysitter moves away, her life becomes as dreadful as the black parts of a banana.

**Vernon, Ursula.** *Lair of the Bat Monster (Dragonbreath)* Illus. by the author. Dial, 2011. 202p.  
Danny the Dragonling and his sidekick Wendell are kidnapped by a bat monster—fast paced adventure with humor galore.

**Viorst, Judith.** *Lulu and the Brontosaurus.* Illus. by Lane Smith. Atheneum, 2010. 113p.  
Lulu wants a pet brontosaurus and always gets what she wants—but the brontosaurus has other ideas.

**Warner, Sally.** *EllRay Jakes is a Rock Star!* Illus. by Jamie Harper. Viking, 2011. 116p.  
EllRay feels he needs something to brag about to be popular, but his plan backfires.

**Weeks, Sarah.** *Oggie Cooder, Party Animal!* Illus. by Doug Holgate. Scholastic, 2009. 176p.  
Good-natured and dorky, Oggie is willing to do almost anything to use the mean girl's pool next door.

**Wells, Rosemary.** *Lincoln and His Boys.* Illus. by P.J. Lynch. Candlewick, 2009. 96p.  
A peek into the daily lives of Abraham Lincoln's younger children, Willie and Tad, is warm and revealing.

**Wight, Eric.** *Frankie Pickle and the Mathematical Menace.* Illus. by the author. Simon and Schuster, 2011. 85p.  
Math is giving Frankie fits in this comic strip style chapter book until his family and friends give him the keys to solve math puzzles.



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