



Kindergarten Recommended Reading List 2020-2021 | oppl.org/kids-lists

Picture Books

Berger, Samantha. *What if...* A child who likes to draw and write stories imagines what would happen if there were no pencils, paper, or other tools for being creative.

Bobowicz, Pamela. *What Makes A Hero.* Meet the inimitable, expectation-destroying, glass ceiling-shattering, world-saving female superheroes of the Marvel Cinematic Universe, and celebrate the strength, intelligence, and ingenuity of the women who are vital to the best stories.

Bryon, Nathan. *Rocket Says Look Up!* Aspiring astronaut Rocket draws her community together to see a rare appearance of the Phoenix Meteor Showers, hoping especially that her big brother, Jamal, will look up from his phone.

Campoy, Isabel. *Maybe Something Beautiful.* Mira lives in a gray and hopeless urban community until a muralist arrives and, along with his paints and brushes, brings color, joy, and togetherness to Mira and her neighbors.

Clanton, Ben. *Rot: The Cutest in the World.* Rot, a mutant potato, enters a "Cutest in the World" contest but worries when he sees his competition.

Clark-Robinson, Monica. *Let the Children March.* Under the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King, children and teenagers march against segregation in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963.

Dieckmann, Sandra. *Leaf.* When a polar bear arrives unexpectedly in the woods, the animals fear and avoid him until, one day, they watch as he attempts to fly over the water with wings made of leaves. Maybe he just needs some help to get home?

Graegin, Stephanie. *Little Fox in the Forest.* A wordless picture book in which two friends follow a young fox deep into the woods and discover a wondrous and magical world.

Harren, Kayla. *Mary Had a Little Lizard.* A modern take on Mary Had a Little Lamb featuring hilarious antics as Lizard sneaks into Mary's backpack and causes nothing but mayhem in her Kindergarten class.

Higgins, Ryan T. *We Don't Eat Our Classmates.* When the class pet bites the finger of Penelope, a tyrannosaurus rex, she finally understands why she should not eat her classmates, no matter how tasty they are.

Howley, Jonty. *Big Boys Cry.* As they walk to his new school, a frightened Levi and his father learn that it is okay for big boys to cry.

Joy, Angela. *Black is a Rainbow Color.* From the wheels of a bicycle to the robe on Thurgood Marshall's back, Black surrounds our lives. It is a color to simply describe some of our favorite things, but it also evokes a deeper sentiment about the incredible people who helped change the world and a community that continues to grow and thrive.

Khan, Hena. *Under My Hijab.* As a young girl observes six women in her life who each wear the hijab in a unique way, she also dreams of the rich possibilities of her own future and how she will express her own style one day.

Lin, Grace. *A Big Bed for Little Snow.* When winter comes, Mommy makes a soft bed for Little Snow to sleep on, but each night he cannot resist jumping on the bed, causing tiny feathers to fly down.

Lloyd, Megan Wagner. *Finding Wild.* Two kids set off on an adventure and discover all the beauty of the natural world. As they make their way back to the city, they discover that wild exists not just off in some distant place, but right in their own backyard.

Loomis, Ilima. *'Ohana Means Family.* In this cumulative rhyme in the style of "The House That Jack Built," a family celebrates Hawaii and its culture while serving poi at a luau.

Luyken, Corinna. *The Book of Mistakes.* As an artist creatively incorporates her slip-ups into drawings, readers see how "mistakes" can provide inspiration and opportunity, and how both the art and artist are works in progress.

Martinez-Neal, Juana. *Alma and How She Got Her Name.* When Alma Sofia Esperanza José Pura Candela asks her father why she has so many names, she hears the story of her name and learns about her family.

McDaniel, Breanna J. *Hands Up!* A young girl lifts her hands up in a series of everyday moments before finally raising her hands in resistance at a protest march.

Miller, Zietlow Pat. *Be Kind.* When Tanisha spills grape juice all over her new dress, her classmate contemplates how to make her feel better and what it means to be kind.

Morales, Yuyi. *Dreamers.* An illustrated picture book autobiography in which award-winning author Yuyi Morales tells her own immigration story.

Nayberg, Yevgenia. *Anya's Secret Society.* Born in Russia, where left-handers are frowned upon, Anya learns to use her right hand, except when she draws with her imagined secret society of famous but when she moves to America, she no longer feels she needs to conceal a piece of her identity.

Oliver, Alison. *Moon.* Throughout her busy days, Moon wonders what it would be like to be wild and free until the day she meets a wolf and learns his "wolfy ways."

Perkins, Useni Eugene. *Hey Black Child.* A lyrical, empowering poem that celebrates black children and seeks to inspire all young ones to dream big and achieve their goals.

Phi, Bao. *My Footprints.* Angry and lonely after being bullied, Thuy pretends she is different creatures, including an especially strong, wonderful being made up of her two mothers and herself.

Rex, Adam. *School's First Day of School.* It's the first day of school at Frederick Douglass Elementary, and everyone's just a little bit nervous, especially the school itself.

Reynolds, Peter H. *The Word Collector.* Jerome enjoys collecting and using words that he hears, reads, or sees, and then decides to share his collection with others.

Santat, Dan. *Are We There Yet?* Everyone knows that car rides can be boring. And when things get boring, time slows down for this family--so much that it starts going backward, into the time of pirates! And princesses!



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Picture Books

Sima, Jessie. *Harriet Gets Carried Away*. While shopping with her two dads for supplies for her birthday party, Harriet, who is wearing a penguin costume, is carried away by a waddle of penguins and must hatch a plan in order to get herself back to the store in the city.

Singh, Ranjit. *Nimesh the Adventurer*. Nimesh is walking home from school. Except ... there happens to be a shark in the corridor. And a dragon in the library! And why would crossing the road lead to the North Pole?

Verde, Susan. *Unstoppable Me*. This unstoppable little boy runs, jumps, and soars through his day. He takes a little time to refuel, then he's back at it--zooming and zipping around.

Wenzel, Brendan. *They All Saw a Cat*. In this glorious celebration of observation, curiosity, and imagination, we explore the many lives of one cat, and how perspective shapes what we see.

Zachariah, Abdul-Razak. *The Night is Yours*. From a vantage point high in their apartment, a parent narrates as Amani plays hide-and-seek at night with her friends in the neighborhood, with the help of the moon.

Nonfiction

Barss, Patchen. *Flow, Spin, Grow: Looking for Patterns in Nature* (516.15 BAR). There are patterns throughout nature around us all the time, such as spiraling and spinning, the way shapes stack, the way things crack.

Elliott, David. *In the Past* (811 ELL). A poetic introduction to the dinosaur world illuminates a host of creatures both new and familiar, ranging from the mysterious Trilobite to the famed Tyrannosaurus Rex.

Ford, Gilbert. *The Marvelous Thing That Came From a Spring* (688.72 FOR). One day, a spring fell from the desk of Richard James, an engineer and dreamer. Its coils took a walk...and so did Richard's imagination. Welcome to the Slinky!

Fishman, Seth. *Power Up* (612 FIS). Did you know there is enough energy in your pinkie finger to power an entire city? And that everything you do—running, jumping, playing, and exploring—uses that same energy inside of you?

Gravel, Elisa. *The Toad* (597.87 GRA). Distinctive trait: Warts. Special talent: Eating her own skin. Disgusting? Yes, but fun, too! And good for the environment.

Levine, Sarah. *Tooth by Tooth: Comparing Fangs, Tusks, and Chompers* (599.943 LEV). What animal would you be if your top canine teeth grew almost all the way down to your feet? This book will keep you guessing as you read about how human teeth are like—and unlike—those of other animals.

Maclear, Kyo. *It Began with a Page* (B FUJIKAWA). Gyo Fujikawa was the first illustrator to show babies of all ethnicities on the same pages together. Now it's time for Gyo's story to be told--a story of artistic talent that refused to be constrained by rules or expectations.

Macy, Sue. *Miss Mary Reporting* (B GARBER). As a child in the 1920s, Mary Garber loved sports and played tackle football with the boys in her Winston-Salem neighborhood. She became a sportswriter for 56 years and was the first woman to receive the Associated Press Sports Editors Red Smith Award, presented for major contributions in sports journalism.

Martinez, Claudia Guadalupe. *Not a Bean* (595.78 MAR). Mexican jumping bean isn't a bean at all. It's a fascinating home and food source for a special kind of caterpillar!

Rabinowicz, Alan. *A Boy and a Jaguar* (B RABINOWITCZ). Alan loves animals, but the great cat house at the Bronx Zoo makes him sad. Why are they all alone in empty cages? More than anything, he wants to be their champion—their voice—but he stutters uncontrollably--except when he's talking to animals.

Slade, Suzanne. *Out of School and Into Nature* (B COMSTOCK). From the time she was a young girl, Anna Comstock was fascinated by the natural world. In following her passion, this remarkable naturalist and artist blazed a trail for female scientists today.

Walters, Eric. *From the Heart of Africa: A Book of Wisdom* (398.996 WAL). A collection of African wisdom gorgeously illustrated by artists from Ghana, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Canada, the United States and more.

Monarch Award Titles

The Monarch Award is Illinois' K-3 Readers' Choice Award. The name Monarch was chosen because of its familiarity to children and to symbolize the growth, change and freedom that becoming a reader brings. The Monarch is designed to encourage children to read critically and become familiar with children's books, authors and illustrators.

Adamson, Ged. *Douglas, You're a Genius*.

Alexander, Kwame. *The Undeclared*.

Berger, Samantha. *What If...*

Butler, Dori Hillestad. *King & Kayla and the Case of the Missing Dog Treats*.

Clark-Robinson, Monica. *Let the Children March*.

Cummings, Troy. *Can I Be Your Dog?*

Denise, Anika. *Planting Stories: The Life of Librarian and Storyteller Pura Belpré*.

John, Jory. *The Good Egg*.

Keating, Jess. *Cute as an Axolotl*.

Khan, Hena. *Under My Hijab*.

Lê, Minh. *Drawn Together*.

Miller, Pat Zietlow. *Be Kind*.

Mora, Oge. *Thank You, Omu!*

Morales, Yuyi. *Dreamers*.

Quintero, Isabel. *My Papi has a Motorcycle*.

Seluk, Nick. *The Sun is Kind of a Big Deal*.

Steele, K-Fai. *A Normal Pig*.

Thomas, Jan. *What is Chasing Duck?*

Williams, Lily. *If Sharks Disappeared*.

Winstanley, Nicola. *How to Give Your Cat a Bath in Five Easy Steps*.