

K

Kindergarten Recommended Reading List 2024-2025 | oppl.org/kids-lists

Picture Books

Abed, Omar. *The Book that Almost Rhymed*. A boy begrudgingly composes a sometimes-rhyming adventure with his precocious little sister.

Ali, A.E. *Our Favorite Day of the Year*. A group of boys become best friends throughout a school year marked by diverse holidays, discovering the differences that make their bond special and the universal traits that they share.

Aronson, Katelyn. *Poo-Dunit?* Mouse is dismayed to step outside her house and discover a giant pile of poo! It's too big to be Squirrel's, too dark to be Coyote's, and too messy to be Deer's. Will Mouse ever track down the culprit?

Asbell, Steve. *Flap Your Hands*. Four neurodivergent kids facing some stressful moments use body movements called stims to self-regulate their emotions.

Barnett, Mac. *John's Turn*. It's John's big day at school with a dance performance for Sharing Gifts time. He's nervous, looking out at the kids staring back at him, but he takes a big breath and begins.

Bernstrom, Daniel. *Song in the City*. A young blind girl, filled with the sounds of her beloved city, helps Grandma realize that the city makes music as beautiful as the sounds they revere in church.

Bontiago, Lynnor. *Sari Sari Summers*. Nora loves spending summers with Lola at her sari-sari store, a treasure trove filled with everything you could need, from hair accessories to toys, creamy yema to sour tamarind candy. And she is finally big enough to help her grandmother in the shop!

Brown, Karamo. *I Am Okay to Feel*. A father and son are caught in a storm, giving them a chance to experience and talk about different feelings.

Cali, Davide. *Too Many Pigs and One Big Bad Wolf*. Once upon a time, there were three little pigs. Then the wolf ate them. THE END. The big bad wolf doesn't want to tell a long story, he wants to get to the eating part. But the narrator has other ideas... like a pig soccer team.

Catchpole, James. *What Happened to You?* (series) Joe is fed up with only ever being asked about his one leg. All he wants to do is play Pirates. But as usual, one after another, all the children ask him THAT question.

Cole, Henry. *Nesting*. The story of a robin's journey as she builds a nest in a tree, lays beautiful blue eggs, raises her young and protects them from natural dangers until they can fly on their own.

Cronin, Doreen. *Lawrence & Sophia*. Lawrence, who prefers to stay in his small backyard, and Sophia, a bird avoiding the ground, help each other overcome their fears during a rainstorm.

Datcher, Michael. *Harlem at Four*. Two stories about Harlem: the adventures of a four-year-old Black girl named Harlem, and the history of New York's Harlem neighborhood.

Denise, Christopher. *Knight Owl*. Owl has always dreamed of becoming a knight, even though he's not the biggest or the strongest. But his sharp nocturnal instincts can help protect the castle, especially when knights go missing.

Doerrfeld, Cori. *Ready to Soar*. Riley's paper airplane is ready for take-off, but criticisms from all the birds threaten to ground the plane, until Riley meets a more supportive friend and rediscovers the joy of soaring.

Eady, Antwan. *Nigel and the Moon*. When Nigel looks up at the moon, his future is bright. He imagines himself as a dancer, astronaut, and superhero, too! It's easy to whisper his dreams to the moon, but not to his classmates during Career Week, especially when he already feels out of place.

English, Karen. *Red Shoes*. Malika is delighted when Nana surprises her with a beautiful new pair of red shoes! Malika wears them everywhere... until they begin to pinch her toes. Time to visit the resale shop, where the shoes can be resold so somebody else can enjoy them!

Farrell, Alison. *The Hike*. Snacks, supplies, and a dog. What more do these three young female explorers need for an epic adventure?

Feder, Tyler. *Bodies Are Cool!* Height, size, shape, skin color, tummies, scars, prosthetics: "My body, your body, every different kind of body! All of them are good bodies! BODIES ARE COOL!"

Fritsch, Kelly. *We Move Together*. Mixed-ability kids creatively negotiate everyday barriers and find joy and connection in disability culture and community. Perfect to start conversations about disability, accessibility, social justice, and community building.

Gonzalez, Xelena. *Where Wonder Grows*. Grandma invites her granddaughters to explore her collection of treasures, magical rocks, crystals, seashells, and meteorites, to see what wonders are revealed.

Gorman, Amanda. *Something, Someday*. Even the smallest gesture can have a lasting impact on the world's biggest problems!

Higuera, Donna Barba. *El Cucuy is Scared, Too!* Ramón is a little boy who can't sleep, nervous for his first day at a new school. El Cucuy is the monster who lives in Ramón's cactus pot. He can't sleep, either. El Cucuy is scared, too!

Hubbard, Kristen. *Dear Stray*. A little girl adopts the prickliest stray kitten at the shelter because sometimes she feels prickly, too.

Hull, Eliza. *Come Over to My House*. A cast of friendly characters invite friends over for a play—there's fun to be had, food to eat and families to meet!

Hussain, Nadiya. *My Monster and Me*. A little boy's worry monster follows him everywhere he goes: when he gets dressed, when he wants to play with his toys, and even when his friends come over to visit. How can he escape his worries?

Jayawardhana, Ray. *Child of the Universe*. This book shares the immensity of a parent's love along with the message that we are all connected to the broader cosmos in important and intimate ways.

Joy, Mackenzie. *Wallflowers*. People call you a wallflower, shy, or quiet, or maybe even scared. People sometimes think these are bad things, but you are happy just the way you are. And maybe you don't need to learn to be loud like them, they just need to learn to listen.



continued on back

Learn more: oppl.org/kids-lists

K

Kindergarten Recommended Reading List 2024-2025 | oppl.org/kids-lists

Picture Books cont.

Kemp, Laekan Zea. *A Crown for Corina*. Today is Corina's birthday, and she's excited to wear the biggest crown with the most beautiful flowers picked from her abuela's garden!

Laden, Nina. *Love is My Favorite Color*. From hoping to caring to peace to sharing, colors can convey different ways to find joy in the everyday.

Lindstrom, Carole. *We Are Water Protectors*. An urgent rallying cry to safeguard the Earth's water from harm and corruption, inspired by Indigenous-led movements across North America.

Llanos, Mariana. *Benita and the Night Creatures*. Benita loves to read in bed but keeps getting interrupted by a whistling Tunché, a scary Supay and other spooky creatures from Peruvian lore. To the creatures' disbelief, Benita is so absorbed by her book that she's not the least bit scared of them.

Maclean, Roz. *More Than Words*. Nathan doesn't say much. He sure has a lot on his mind, though. At school, Nathan quietly observes the ways his peers communicate. Even when they're not talking, they're expressing themselves in all sorts of ways!

Miller-Lachmann, Lyn. *Ways to Play*. Riley has plenty of ways to play, like lining up dolls and stuffies by size and shape, using sharp crayons to draw big, swirly patterns. But bossy cousin Emma thinks those ways are wrong, wrong, and wrong.

Oswald, Pete. *Hike*. In the quiet early light of morning, a father and child wake up for a hike into the mountains, where they witness the magic of the wilderness, overcome challenges, and play a small role in the survival of the forest.

Percival, Tom. *Ruby Finds a Worry*. Ruby is a happy, curious, imaginative young girl who finds a Worry. It starts small and gets bigger every day. A new friend shows her that everyone has worries, and there's a great way to get rid of them, too.

Reynolds, Aaron. *Rescuing Mrs. Birdley*. An enthusiastic young animal "expert" uses her mind, courage and knowledge of nature to rescue her teacher, who has escaped from school and gone wild at the local grocery store.

Tatsukawa, Maya. *Mole is not Alone*. Anxious Mole is invited to a party. What if the party is too rowdy or he doesn't know anyone there? Can Mole find a quiet way to make friends.

Thompkins-Bigelow, Jamilah. *Your Name Is a Song*. Frustrated that teachers and classmates keep mispronouncing her beautiful name, a little girl tells her mother she never wants to go back to school. Her mother teaches her about the musicality of African, Asian, Black-American, Latinx, and Middle Eastern names on their walk home.

Wenzel, Brendan. *Every Dreaming Creature*. An exploration of the sensory experiences of different animals through the perspective of dream.

Wong, Jack. *When You Can Swim*. A reverent celebration of learning to swim among a diverse cast of children and families who each experience the mysterious joys of water in nature.

Nonfiction

Alko, Selina. *Joni: The Lyrical Life of Joni Mitchell* (B MITCHELL). A celebration of the iconic folk artist, including her childhood on the Canadian prairie, battle with polio, and the cultural turbulence that inspired her.

Allen, Tessa. *Sometimes People March* (303.484 ALL). Throughout American history, one thing remains true: no matter how or why people march, they are powerful because they march together.

Ignatofsky, Rachel. *What's Inside a Bird's Nest* (598.156 IGN). A beautifully illustrated book about the behavior and life cycle of birds.

Jameson, Karen. *Time to Shine: Celebrating the World's Iridescent Animals* (591.472 JAM). Have you ever noticed the rainbow-like shimmer on certain bird feathers, insect bodies and animal scales? This effect changes depending on the angle from which it's viewed, and animals across the globe use iridescence to blend in and stand out.

Kuo, Julia. *Luminous: Living Things That Light Up the Night* (572.435 KUO). When it's dark out, we need light to see. But what if your body could make its own light? Bioluminescence is the light from living things, including fireflies and foxfire, fungi and glow-worms, deep-sea fish and vampire squids.

Schaefer, Lola M. *Hands-on Science: Matter* (530.4 SCH). In this interactive picture book, young readers squish, squeeze, and jiggle matter on the page, using their imagination to conduct simple lab experiments.

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.

Biedrzycki, David. *Invasion of the Unicorns*.

Carzoo, Breanna. *Lou*.

Cordell, Matthew. *Cornbread & Poppy*.

Eady, Antwan. *Nigel and the Moon*.

Engle, Margarita. *Destiny Finds Her Way: How a Rescued Baby Sloth Learned to Be Wild*.

Higgins, Ryan T. *Norman Didn't Do It!: (Yes, He Did.)*

Hirsch, Rebecca E. *Rise to the Sky: How the World's Tallest Trees Grow Up*.

Holub, Joan. *I am the Shark*.

Jeffers, Oliver. *There's a Ghost in this House*.

López-Alt, J. Kenji. *Every Night is Pizza Night*.

Marsh, Sara Glenn. *Dragon Bones: The Fantastic Fossil Discoveries of Mary Anning*.

McAnulty, Stacy. *Our Planet!: There's No Place Like Earth*.

Moore, Katrina. *Grandpa Grumps*.

Park, Jane. *Hidden Animal Colors*.

Rex, Michael. *Facts vs. Opinions vs. Robots*.

Rovin-Murphy, Deborah. *Jackie and the Mona Lisa*.

Thompson, Dan. *Tig and Lily: Tiger Trouble*.

Van Dusen, Chris. *Big Truck, Little Island*.

Vo, Young. *Gibberish*.

Wolff, Ashley. *Wildfire!*