



## Recommended Picture Books to Read Aloud to Preschoolers – Second Graders (with suggested vocabulary words)

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**Key for age recommendations: P = Preschool, K= Kindergarten, 1 = 1<sup>st</sup> Grade, 2 = 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

- Allen, J. & Humphries, T. (2000). Are You a Ladybug? Kingfisher. P-1  
An informative and appealing nonfiction book. Part of the "Backyard Books" series.  
*Vocabulary: aphids, problem, underneath, congratulations*
- Allen, J. & Humphries, T. (2002). Are You an Ant? Kingfisher. P-2  
An appealing informational picture book about the life cycle of black garden ants.  
*Vocabulary: larva, pupa, nurseries, corridors, prey, aphids*
- Aylesworth, J. (1992). Old Black Fly. Henry Holt. P-K  
A fly buzzes through the alphabet in this rollicking, rhyming text with a surprise ending.  
*Vocabulary: bothered, frolicked, nibbled, pestered*
- Bruel, N. (2005). Bad Kitty. Scholastic. K-2  
Kitty takes several hilarious trips through the alphabet when her owners give her healthy, then cat-friendly foods.  
*Vocabulary: endangered, grappled, irritated, loitered, quarreled, tormented*
- Carle, E. (1997). From Head to Toe. HarperCollins. P  
Readers are invited to mimic the movements of animals in this colorful book.  
*Vocabulary: [wild animal and color identification]*
- Cronin, D. (2003). Diary of a Worm. Scholastic. K-2  
A young worm humorously describes his experiences, family, and friends.  
*Vocabulary: tunnel, hopscotch, Secret Service agent*
- Demi. (1990). The Empty Pot. Henry Holt. K-2  
In this folktale, an emperor challenges the children of China to grow flowers from his special seeds. Although Ping fails to get the seeds to grow, he is richly rewarded for his honesty.  
*Vocabulary: tended, successor, proclamation, eagerly*
- Dorros, A. (1991). Abuela. Puffin. 1-3  
A young Hispanic girl takes an imaginary flight over the city with her grandma.  
*Vocabulary: abuela, surround, papayas, harbor*
- Edwards, P.D. (1996). Some Smug Slug. HarperCollins. K-2  
A smug slug ignores the warnings of other animals and meets an unexpected ending.  
*Vocabulary: smug, slope, sinister, suspicion, sham, succulent*

- Edwards, P.D. (2001). Clara Caterpillar. HarperCollins. P-2  
Plain but plucky Clara, a cream-colored butterfly, uses camouflage to rescue conceited, crimson-colored Catisha from the clutches of a hungry crow.  
*Vocabulary: courageous, contented, cruel, scrumptious, conceited, camouflaged, crisis*
- Ericsson, J. A. (1993). No Milk! Tambourine. P-K  
Readers are encouraged to repeat the refrain, “but no milk!” as a city boy tries a variety of interesting methods to milk a cow.  
*Vocabulary: pail, stool, dented*
- Evans, K. (1992). Hunky Dory Ate It. Puffin. P  
Simple rhyming text invites children to chime in as a naughty dog steals and eats his neighbors’ food.  
*Vocabulary: [rhyming words]*
- Fleming, D. (2006). The Cow Who Clucked. Henry Holt. P-K  
A cow scours the farm in search of her lost “moo.”  
*Vocabulary: [farm animal identification]*
- Fox, M. (1988). Koala Lou. Harcourt Brace. K-2  
After other siblings come along, Koala Lou tries to regain the attention of her mother by competing in the Bush Olympics.  
*Vocabulary: splendid, compete, spectators, kookaburra, appeared*
- Fuge, C. (2006). Where To, Little Wombat? Sterling. P-K  
Little Wombat is dissatisfied with his own burrow and sets out to find a better home.  
*Vocabulary: grumbled, burrow, fantastic, marvelous, comfortable, appeared*
- Gibbons, G. (1999). Pigs. Holiday House. K-2  
Learn all about pigs in this informational picture book.  
*Vocabulary: domestic, descended, traits, moisten, desperate, cartilage, foraging*
- Gray, L. M. (1994). Small Green Snake. Orchard. K-2  
Despite his mother’s dire warnings, a daring young snake ventures over the garden wall.  
*Vocabulary: startled, stern, chorus, boldly, disappear*
- Gunson, C. (1995). Over on the Farm. Scholastic. P  
Ten lively baby animals are counted in this variation on the “Over in the Meadow” rhyme.  
*Vocabulary: clever, leap, rustle, orchard*
- Henkes, K. (1991). Chrysanthemum. Greenwillow. K-2  
Chrysanthemum is teased at school because of her unusual name, until her adored music teacher reveals an unusual name of her own.  
*Vocabulary: appreciate, dreadful, miserably, fascinating, envious, indescribable*
- Henkes, K. (1993). Owen. Troll. P-1  
Owen’s parents try a variety of methods to get him to relinquish his favorite yellow blanket. Finally his mother thinks of the perfect solution.  
*Vocabulary: absolutely, invisible, essential, especially*
- Henkes, K. (1987). Sheila Ray the Brave. Puffin. K-2  
Sheila Rae is fearless until she gets lost taking a new way home from school. Luckily her

timid sister Louise is there to help her.

*Vocabulary: creatures, occurred, familiar, convinced*

Isadora, R. (2007). The Princess and the Pea. G.P. Putnam's Sons. P-2  
The classic fairy tale is told in an African setting with colorful illustrations.  
*Vocabulary: difficult, terrible, sensitive*

Jenkins, S. (1997). What Do You Do When Something Wants to Eat You? Houghton Mifflin. P-2  
Fascinating factual book about animal defense systems.  
*Vocabulary: avoid, threaten, confusing, impossible, immune, predator*

Johnston, T. (1995). The Iguana Brothers. Blue Sky Press. 1-2.  
Tom and Dom, iguanas from Mexico, carry on humorous conversations in three vignettes.  
*Vocabulary: lolling, fearsome, constellation, attractive, "palido" (pale), "hola" (hello), "lo ciento" (I'm sorry)*

Lass, B. & Sturges, P. (2000). Who Took the Cookies from the Cookie Jar? Scholastic. P  
Skunk tries to find out who took the cookies from the cookie jar in this repetitive, rhyming chant. Includes instructions for a game to go with the chant.  
*Vocabulary: [woodland animal identification]*

Lester, H. (1986). A Porcupine Named Fluffy. Houghton Mifflin. K-2  
A porcupine learns to embrace his unusual name with the help of an unlikely new friend.  
*Vocabulary: delighted, suspicious, convinced, remained, exhausted*

Levine, E. (2007). Henry's Freedom Box. Scholastic. 2 and up.  
Gorgeously illustrated true story of Henry "Box" Brown, who mailed himself to freedom on the Underground Railroad.  
*Vocabulary: beckoned, factory, crate, warehouse, vitriol*

Look, L. (2006). Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding. Atheneum. 1-2  
A young Chinese-American girl describes the traditional Chinese customs – and her mixed feelings – surrounding her favorite uncle's wedding.  
*Vocabulary: wealth, bargain, aurora borealis, incense, ceremony, tofu*

Lowell, S. (1992). The Three Little Javelinas. Scholastic. 1-4  
Southwestern twist on the "Three Little Pigs" folktale.  
*Vocabulary: fortunes, coyote, hullabaloo, suspicious, discouraged,*

Lovell, P. (2001). Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon. Scholastic. K-2  
Molly Lou is a tiny dynamo who is proud of her quirks, thanks to her grandma's sage advice.  
*Vocabulary: boa constrictor, fumble fingered, glee, foolish, revealed*

Marshall, J. (1988). Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Dial. P-2  
Humorous retelling of the traditional folktale.  
*Vocabulary: naughty, scalding, porridge, smithereens, explanation*

McBratney, S. (1996). The Dark at the Top of the Stairs. Candlewick. K-1  
A wise old mouse leads his three young charges to the top of their cellar stairs to see the "monster" that lurks there for themselves.  
*Vocabulary: cellar, comfortable, journey, mention, heap*

- McDermott, G. (2001). Jabuti the Tortoise: A Trickster Tale from the Amazon. Harcourt. 1-2  
Brightly colored illustrations highlight Jabuti's triumph over Vulture, who is jealous of the tortoise's musical abilities.  
*Vocabulary: creatures, jealous, festival, soar, commanded*
- McMullan, K. H. (2002). I Stink! HarperCollins. P-2  
A garbage truck proudly describes itself and all the trash it eats from A-Z.  
*Vocabulary: "Dual op," hopper, throttle, ziti, reverse, compacted*
- Morgan, P. (1990). The Turnip. Putnam & Grosset. P-K  
Dedoushka's family helps him pull up an enormous turnip from his garden in this cumulative Russian folktale.  
*Vocabulary: turnip, field, clever*
- Morris, A. (1989). Bread Bread Bread. Scholastic. P-K  
Simple informational text about bread around the world.  
*Vocabulary: bagel, delicious*
- Muth, J. J. (2003). Stone Soup. Scholastic. K-2  
A retelling of the traditional tale, set in China. Three wise monks teach a village of unfriendly people how to work together by making stone soup.  
*Vocabulary: suspicious, disappeared, gathering, curiosity, banquet, generous*
- Neitzel, S. (1989). The Jacket I Wear in the Snow. Scholastic. P-K  
Cumulative rebus story about a little girl and her ill-fitting snow gear.  
*Vocabulary: caught, stiff, bunchy, loosened*
- Newman, L. (2004). Where is Bear? Harcourt. P-K  
Woodland animals play hide-and-seek in this appealing, rhyming story.  
*Vocabulary: [animal identification], sneaks, instantly, peers, explore*
- Orloff, K. K. (2004). I Wanna Iguana. G.P. Putnam's Sons. 1-2  
Alex uses all of his powers of persuasion to convince his mom to let him keep a pet iguana. Alex and his mother's exchanges are written in letter form ("Dear Mom").  
*Vocabulary: sensitive, compassionate, concerned, "trial basis," responsible*
- Pinkney, A. D. (2004). Sleeping Cutie. Harcourt. K-2  
An African-American girl is an angel except when it comes to bedtime -- until her parents buy her a magical toy owl.  
*Vocabulary: agreeable, complained, defiant, rearranged, companion, impressed*
- Pinkney, B. (1994). Max Found Two Sticks. Simon & Schuster. K-2  
An African-American boy makes music in the city with two sticks he finds.  
*Vocabulary: gather, breeze*
- Pinkney, B. (2006). Hush Little Baby. Greenwillow. P  
Illustrations of an early 1900s African-American family accompany this familiar lullaby.  
*Vocabulary: looking glass, lullaby*
- Prince, J. (2006). I Saw an Ant on the Railroad Track. Sterling. P-1  
A kindly switchman scrambles to save an ant from impending disaster in this rhythmic tale.  
*Vocabulary: switchman, shack, shellac, freight, poise*

- Raschka, C. (1992). Charlie Parker Played Be Bop. Orchard. P  
This playful, rhythmic text features the famous jazz musician.  
*Vocabulary: saxophone, chickadee, trombone*
- Rathmann, P. (1995). Officer Buckle and Gloria. Scholastic. K-2  
Officer Buckle's school safety presentations get a much needed boost when police dog Gloria joins him on stage.  
*Vocabulary: swivel, announced, expression, enormous*
- Rathmann, P. (2003). The Day the Babies Crawled Away. G.P. Putnam's Sons. P-K  
A young boy has a day of adventure with a group of runaway babies.  
*Vocabulary: contest, bog, invented, hero*
- Rockwell, A. (2002). Becoming Butterflies. Scholastic. P-1  
A young class observes caterpillars as they develop into butterflies in this factual story.  
*Vocabulary: milkweed, screened, chrysalis, nectar, instar, metamorphosis*
- Soto, G. (1993). Too Many Tamales. Putnam & Grosset. 1-2  
Amusing consequences result when a young Hispanic girl loses her mother's wedding ring while helping to prepare tamales for a special family dinner.  
*Vocabulary: masa [dough made of dried corn], apron, disappeared, platter, piped, remained, confess*
- Tolhurst, M. (1990). Somebody and the Three Blairs. Scholastic. P-2  
A new twist on the familiar folktale: a bear visits the house of the three human Blairs.  
*Vocabulary: wobbly, naughty, burglar*
- Waddell, M. (1992). Owl Babies. Candlewick. P-K  
Three baby owls worry when their mother temporarily disappears.  
*Vocabulary: trunk, swooped*
- Weeks, S. (1998). Mrs. McNosh Hangs Up Her Wash. Harper Festival. P-K  
Perky Mrs. McNosh dries many interesting items on her clothesline in this rhyming tale.  
*Vocabulary: clothesline, removable, apron, comfortable*
- Wells, R. (1997). Bunny Cakes. Puffin. K-1  
Max the bunny goes to the grocery store with humorous results as he "helps" his big sister Ruby make Grandma a birthday cake.  
*Vocabulary: different, beautiful, grocer, thrilled*
- Westcott, N. B. (1987). Peanut Butter and Jelly: A Play Rhyme. Puffin. P-K  
Two children and a lively assortment of animals help a baker make a giant peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Includes hand motions.  
*Vocabulary: knead, slice, smear*
- Willems, M. (2004). Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale. Hyperion. P-2  
A favorite stuffed animal is lost, then found in this humorous story.  
*Vocabulary: laundromat, realized*
- Willems, M. (2005). Leonardo the Terrible Monster. Hyperion. P-2  
Little Leonardo fails to be a scary monster, but succeeds at being a good friend.  
*Vocabulary: terrible, researched, candidate, unsuspecting*

- Williams, S. (1989). I Went Walking. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. Preschool  
 Predictable, repetitive text features colorful animals a child encounters on a walk.  
*Vocabulary: [farm animal and color identification]*
- Wilson, K. (2002). Bear Snores On. Margaret K. McElderry. P-1  
 Rhyming, predictable story about a group of animals who have a party in bear's cave.  
*Vocabulary: lair, heap, dank, stokes, blustery*
- Wood, A. (1987). Heckedy Peg. Voyager. 1-2  
 In this modern folk tale, a mother rescues her seven children (named after the days of the week) from the clutches of Heckedy Peg the witch, who has turned them into food.  
*Vocabulary: market, hobbled, porridge*
- Wood, D. and Wood, A. (1984). The Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry, and the Big Hungry Bear. Child's Play. P-K  
 With the help of a friend, mouse saves his strawberry from the clutches of an unseen bear.  
*Vocabulary: hidden, disguised*
- Zemach, M. (1983). The Little Red Hen. Farrar, Strauss and Giroux. P-1  
 In this traditional folktale, Little Red Hen gets no help from her friends, goose, cat, and pig, when she sets out to grow wheat to make bread.  
*Vocabulary: cottage, harvest, thresh*
- Zimmerman, A. & Clemesha, D. (1999). Trashy Town. HarperCollins. P-1  
 Mr. Gilly cleans up his town in this repetitive, rhyming story that invites participation.  
*Vocabulary: heavy ["heavy gloves"], empty, parlor*