
EMERGENT

Arnosky, Jim

Armadillo's Orange

ISBN 0399234128

As Armadillo makes his daily trek to search for grubs to feed his rumbling tummy, he passes his neighbours without a second glance. He is solitary and seems happy to be. He always finds his way home by looking for the large orange that lies at the entrance to his burrow. Imagine his consternation when a wily wind blows the orange away and he is no longer sure of his destination. Neighbours to the rescue...and Armadillo learns a valuable lesson.

Blair, Margot

The Red String

ISBN 0892363401

An open drawer is where this bit of red string begins its journey. We follow it as it makes its way around the world, showing us what fun can be had when you let your imagination soar. Beginning as a jumprope, it transforms itself into a clothesline, a highway, and more. When the journey is done, it returns full circle to its starting point...the open drawer. No words are needed to tell its story, but many will be spoken as young children share its trek.

Boynton, Sandra

Barnyard Dance

ISBN 1563054426

Do you like to dance? Your toes will be tapping when you share this book...over and over and over again. It is filled with wacky farm animals and their wily ways. You cannot help but get caught up in the rhyme and rhythm that is so evident in Boynton's writing. She sure knows how to capture an audience and soon the children will be spouting the endearing text without help or prompts. The benefits of such books are long lasting as children come to grips with the concept of rhyme and soon use it when they begin their journey toward independent reading.

Brown, Ruth

Ten Seeds

ISBN 0375806970

This might seem like a simple counting book at first glance, but it is much more than that! When ten sunflower seeds are planted, eager readers expect to watch them sprout and thrive. Not so simple...since the seeds are haphazardly destroyed by an array of events. A slug, a cat, a pigeon, a ball...each plays a part in the destruction of one seed after another. When only one survives, we discover that that is the number needed to ensure the growth of yet another plant and the cycle continues. Perfect illustrations bring clarity and understanding for young readers.

Carter, David

Peekaboo Bugs

ISBN 0689850352

David Carter has created some wonderfully madcap books in his *Bugs in a Box* series. In this one he covers each page with interesting and imaginative bugs hidden under colourful flaps...five at a time. The guessing begins and is tested; and then the reader can turn a wheel and move the creatures, assuring that the fun is about to begin all over again. Don't just look at this book from the series; there are a number of others that are equally charming and interactive. The print is bold, the words familiar, and the fun infectious.

Catalanotto, Peter

Kitten Red Yellow Blue

ISBN 0689865267

We have met Mrs. Tuttle before (*Matthew ABC* and *Daisy 1,2,3*). Her stories lead children to an awareness of new concepts. This time she combines colour and community. When Sophia has a litter of sixteen calico kittens, it is community workers who help Mrs. Tuttle out of her predicament. Each selects a kitten, then dresses it to match their particular job in the neighbourhood. The kittens seem secure and happy in their new homes; and in the end, Mrs. Tuttle is able to arrange a reunion with the mother cat to prove that all is well. The author, who is also the artist, chooses to use a predominantly grey palette making the featured colour stand strong and clear for his young audience.

🍁 Denton, K

A Child's Treasury of Nursery Rhymes

ISBN 1553379802

This has long been a favourite book to give to new parents. It is filled with rhymes, familiar and not so, and Kady's inspiring watercolours. She brings such great joy to the characters that she creates to people the pages. As they read, parents will return to happy memories of their own childhood when nursery rhymes were the staple at bedtime. Children need to hear rhyme from a very early age to help them when they begin their journey to reading independence. They learn these rhymes easily when they are read repeatedly and they love to pore over the whimsical pages as they reread their favourites.

🍁 Dodds, Dayle Ann

Where's Pup?

ISBN 0887766226

The non-stop activity of the circus and its performers is evident as a small clown searches high and low for Pup. The grandeur and ceremony is captured in the use of rich colour and an energetic final page that is quite remarkable. Each new performer encountered has no recollection of seeing Pup, but they prolong the search with rhyming replies that send the searcher along the path to his ultimate discovery.

Dunrea, Olivier

BooBoo

ISBN 0618356541

BooBoo is a refreshing addition to Dunrea's gaggle of tiny goslings. You might remember Gertie & Gossie and even Ollie. BooBoo is a lovely shade of blue and her special curiosity is food...any food belonging to anybody. Each new taste elicits the same response... 'good food'. There is nothing that she doesn't find tasty and delicious until she meets with a soap bubble. The results are engaging. Children will be shouting out warnings as she reaches toward a beehive as her final temptation. Short sentences, repetitive text, and an evident rhythm make BooBoo a perfect choice for this age group.

Ehlert, Lois

Snowballs

ISBN 0152020950

If ever you want to foster creativity in the outdoors, here's the recipe! Take fresh-fallen snow, a bag of 'great stuff', a spirited artist, her vivid imagination, and her love of bold colour. This book will be the inspiration for a day filled with creating imaginary snow creatures (a family, at the very least) whose many attributes come from the bag filled with found objects.

You might do it outside on a relatively warm day, or inside with bright construction paper and lots of space for building.

Emberley, Ed

Go Away, Big Green Monster

ISBN 0316236535

‘Again!’ and ‘Again!’ and ‘Again!’...the refrain does not change no matter how many times you read this book! It is so much fun to create and then destroy a monster in a matter of moments. Ed Emberley inspires with his colourful, cutout character that builds with simple language and then diminishes as we say goodbye to each nasty piece of the puzzle. This will not be an ‘old’ favourite for your classroom; it will be an ‘always’ favourite. This is a book that makes young children want to learn to read and they will soon be reading it to each other and to anyone who happens to pay a visit.

Felix, Monique

Tuba Lessons

ISBN 0898125227

What wit this tale of a traveling boy exhibits! The almost wordless story begins and ends with admonishments; the rest is left for beguiled readers to follow the action, without the need for text. The road seems deviously like a musical staff and the lines are there to lead the young musician down various paths, while enticing the forest animals to join his journey. Who wouldn’t want to dawdle in celebration of such spontaneity?

Fleming, Denise

Mama Cat Has Three Kittens

ISBN 0805071628

Who marches to the beat of a different drummer in your family? In the case of Mama Cat’s litter, it’s Boris. Boris naps while Mama teaches his straight-laced siblings the tricks of the feline trade. While Mama and his siblings sleep, Boris is ready to spring into action. Then, Boris pounces! The artwork is a visual feast, and the tiny trios of additional characters who are hidden in the pages will gain the rapt attention of even the youngest listener. Don’t miss Mama Mouse and her babies!

Fleming, Denise

Time to Sleep

ISBN 0805067671

Bear can tell that winter is on its way by the frost in the air. Before settling in, as is the case with the many who will love hearing this story at bedtime, there is just one ‘more’ thing that he must do. He must tell his friend Snail. As we watch his astute assurance pass to each of his forest friends, we are also privy to the natural changes that are taking place around them. The surprise ending adds just the right touch to beg the question, “Can we read it again?”

Fox, Mem

Tough Boris

ISBN 0152896120

Mem Fox has been, for many, a wonderful focus for author study. She has such a passion for children and their reading and will do countless rewrites to craft a perfect readaloud. Boris is a tough, greedy, massive, scary pirate; all of those traits evident in the watercolour art that accompanies the text. But, he also has a heart and we are lucky enough to experience it. In a parallel wordless story, we meet the young boy who shares the swashbuckling, adventurous brigand’s sorrow.

Frazee, Marla

Hush Little Baby

ISBN 0152014292

Songbooks hold a special place in the hearts of many. They can be the first books that make children think of themselves as quite brilliant ‘readers’. They learn the words easily and will return to the book repeatedly to share it with anyone who wants to admire this new skill. Marla Frazee creates a family whose love and concern for their baby is evident as they seek help from a tinker man to find that which will attract his attention and cease the cacophony of screeching that permeates their space. At long last, peace comes to all and the song comes to an end.

Guarino, Deborah

Is Your Mama a Llama?

ISBN 0439598427

When children hear books that incorporate rhythmic text and rhyming words, they develop a growing awareness for the written word and the stories told. Recognizing and reproducing rhyme enhances their early reading ability. This book provides loveable characters, gentle humour and a guessing game that intrigues and delights. Once heard, emergent readers will independently share it with all who will listen.

Henkes, Kevin

Kitten’s First Full Moon

ISBN 0060588284

In this Caldecott Medal winner, Kevin Henkes turns to a totally different artistic style, using black and white lines and shades of grey, to tell this deceptively simple story of a kitten learning about the world. Imagine her surprise when she sees a bowl of milk in the sky and is not able to taste it. She tries and fails, then tries again. But, nothing she does brings her closer to her target. Finally, wet, hungry and tired, she heads for home where she is greeted with a most welcome surprise!

Hoban, Tana

So Many Circles, So Many Squares

ISBN 0688151655

This title, only one of the many remarkable books by this perceptive artist and photographer, may encourage readers to come to know and appreciate her body of work. Her conceptualization of the many seemingly mundane discoveries in a young child’s life deservedly holds a place of honour on the reading shelves of young children. She brings SO MANY concepts to brilliant and clear light. Please don’t stop at this book – use it as a springboard to the life and legacy of Tana Hoban, teacher extraordinaire.

Hutchins, Pat

Changes, Changes

ISBN 0689711379

It begins with a set of blocks. Add a soaring imagination, an artist’s creative spirit and, once purchased, you have the chance to share this tiny treasure with any eager child. A house catches fire and becomes a fire engine; the fire engine pours so much water on the fire that a boat is needed. All can be created with a few skillful changes. The stories can be told in new and varying ways for hours. As with all fine wordless books, the illustrations tell a tale that begs discussion, invites comparisons and shared memories, and guides its readers to the joy a book without words can bring.

☀ Lesynski, Loris **Zig Zag: Zoems for Zindergarten** ISBN 1550378821

Poet Loris Lesynski works hard at her craft to deliver just the right words with a heaping helping of zaniness that is so appropriate for this group of readers. She fills the pages with her cartoon-like characters and dramatically uses the white space to give readers lots to discuss while they share her zippy ‘zoems’. The poems begin where the day begins, at the door of the kindergarten classroom. With each new verse she invites us into the inner sanctum of kindergarten ‘kapers’ from the beginning of the day until the door closes on the last to depart. If you are looking for new and original rhymes to have your kids rocking, you would not go wrong with this book.

☀ MacLeod, Liz **I Heard a Little Baa** ISBN 1550744968

Similar in scope to Guarino’s *Is Your Mama A Llama?* this infectious little book is a fold-out reading game. It’s great fun for everyone, and soon children will be sharing its text with a doll, a partner, a grandma, or even on their own. Rhyme is evident, clues are provided, and guessing is allowed...often without reservation or self-control for the intensity of the response. Perfectly sized for little hands, it will be read and loved until it falls apart. You might even have the desire to trash it yourself after being called upon time and time again to LISTEN!

Martin, Bill Jr. **Chicka Chicka Boom Boom** ISBN 068983568X

Imagine a kindergarten child sitting with a tape of Bill Martin’s raucous romp through the alphabet...ponytail swinging, caught up in the pure delight of the words and their rhythm. As she turns the pages, she sings the song at the top of her voice and can do nothing but stop and listen. She would certainly share her special book with all who would take the time to hear her ‘read’ it. This text’s long life on a myriad of bookshelves is testament to its endless charm.

McCully, Emily **Four Hungry Kittens** ISBN 0803725051

‘When the cat’s away, the kittens will play’ is a new adage to describe the action in this fast-paced adventure. The fact that there are no words to tell the story does not reduce the suspense. There is nothing that cannot be seen in the expressions of these well-developed characters. Mama has gone searching for food and becomes trapped in a barn and the kittens seize the opportunity to do some exploring without recognizing the inherent dangers. Leave it to a capable and concerned canine to keep them from evident danger, and to ensure that they are reunited with their concerned mother.

☀ Milich, Zoran **City 123** ISBN 1553375408

A stunning counting book offers the young child a chance to practise this new concept, while looking closely at the urban environment in which the items are found. This is the fourth in a series (*City ABC, City Signs, City Colours*) and shows a notable evolution in design and perception. Familiar objects and bright colours add to its appeal for all readers and provide a model for young writers who want to try something new when presenting information to an audience. Now, you can sit back and listen to the counting!

Miller, Margaret

Big and Little

ISBN 0688147488

Minimal in text, but long on colour and interest, this book treats readers to a photographic journey in size and opposites. Familiar objects and spare rhythmic wording are sure to appeal to this audience. The author keeps the format clear and comfortable as she explores the difference between big and little. Be it people, animals, toys, fruit, or body parts, Miller's commendable photography creates a useful and exemplary look at what can be done when you combine words with perfect pictures.

Miller, Margaret

Guess Who?

ISBN 0688127835

Lucky we are that children just learning to read love books that require thought and visual acuity. In this book, noted photographer Margaret Miller provides endless joy for her young admirers. Each time the question is asked, photos are presented and a list of ridiculous possibilities suggested. Kids will get their giggle fix as they peruse the clear and well-designed pictures, while trying to offer an accurate response.

 Munsch, Robert

Mud Puddle

ISBN 1550374680

The errant and exasperating mud puddle described here causes untold difficulties for Jule Ann. No matter the time of day or the circumstance, she cannot seem to avoid confrontation. She tries to prepare herself and to dodge its antics, but the mud puddle just appears and attacks. She is defenseless. When she finally faces her nemesis, Jule Ann triumphs. We are left to applaud her ingenuity and persistence. You go, girl!

 Pearson, Debora

Leo's Tree

ISBN 1550378457

To plant a tree to honour the birth of a child or the death of a loved one seems such an endearing and truly worthy tradition. To write a story in rhythmic text, with grace and love, which will bear many readings is a commendable task. As Leo grows, so grows the linden tree that is planted at his birth. They experience life together through continuous seasons and then take great joy in the addition of a partner tree when Leo's baby sister, Sophie, is born.

 Raffi

Spider on the Floor

ISBN 0375822208

While loving Charlotte may give one pause when considering the fate of a wayward spider, one's initial reaction would be to STOMP. Thus, in one's mind, a spider on the floor is just where it should be...not on one's toe, one's leg, one's stomach or anywhere else. Kids, however, delight in singing this song about a witty spider that uses a child as a ladder to get to the top. Using songbooks as a starting place for successful early reading makes good sense. This is just one of a series made popular by this well-loved children's entertainer.

Raschka, Chris

Yo! Yes!

ISBN 0531071081

Only 34 words and a friendship launches. When two young boys...polar opposites of each other...meet on the street, there is little to convince the reader that they could become friends. One is unassuming; the other is brash. One is black, the other white. One is wise to the ways of the street, the other naïve and inexperienced. Their feelings are worn on their sleeves and there is little to lead us to believe that they can overcome their differences, also evident. Will they take a chance on friendship? Why not?

Rathmann, Peggy

Good Night, Gorilla

ISBN 0698116496

Who could resist reading this bedtime story repeatedly? When the zookeeper begins his routine of assuring that his charges are comfortable for the night, he is unaware that a scheming simian is right behind him releasing said animals from their cages. As he strolls toward hearth and home, we watch the liberated zoo populace accompany him. Turning out the light and whispering good night to his wife, she is startled by the cacophony of good nights that follow his. She returns the animals to the zoo, inadvertently letting the tiny gorilla follow her right back home where he tucks himself in for a good night's sleep. Bravo!

Rathmann, Peggy

The Day the Babies Crawled Away

ISBN 0399231196X

A story within a story, children will love following the adventure of an intrepid batch of babies who seem less than enthralled by the perceived fun of a county fair. While the townspeople partake of the joy inherent in the annual celebration, the babies set off for greener pastures. Luckily, one young boy is vigilant and notices the antics of these juvenile citizens. He follows them and eventually convinces them to return to the fold. The silhouette illustrations provide a perfect backdrop for all the action.

 Reid, Barbara

Read Me a Book

ISBN 0439957265

The images that Barbara Reid creates for this simple and elegant book are her trademark...expressive, detailed renderings of the joy that families share when they read with each other at any time of the day or night. She gently reminds us that kids need to hear a multitude of wonderful stories if they are to discover the joy inherent in reading and to become readers for their lifetime. The simple text will encourage kids to be soon reading it back to their parents and caregivers.

Seeger, Laura

Lemons Are Not Red

ISBN 1596430087

This is both a book about colour and a gentle bedtime story to be shared in close proximity to the listener. While we learn that lemons are not red, even though the cutout appears to discount that observation, we go on to discover that a lemon is yellow and an apple is red. As she introduces more objects and colours and what they decidedly are not, Seeger balances her text with what they are. Using surprise pairings, she makes the guessing game fun through to the end. Kids will be begging for more and might be encouraged to try some of their own original pairs, teamed with common or not so common colours.

Shannon, David

No, David!

ISBN 0590930028

Who has not been admonished by an irritated mother for small indiscretions? When you know the rules, should you break them? If you are a young, determined, independent and feisty child, as David Shannon once was, you will relate to the hero in this hilarious glimpse at the life of one hectic household. The words are few; the reactions are indicative of the level of mischief accomplished here...and the frustration felt by all beleaguered parents at one time or another. Go to it, David!

Sis, Peter

Trucks, Trucks, Trucks

ISBN 0688162762

That Peter Sis knows young boys love trucks is evident when we catch our first glimpse of Matt's room, filled with trucks and pictures of trucks. As he heeds his mother's request to put the trucks away, Matt lets his imagination soar. Each truck brings new adventure. The text runs uphill at the right side of each double page spread, giving us a clear picture of the possibilities when trucks are part of your dream world. In a superb gatefold, a huge crane deposits Matt's sock in its assigned place and the task is complete. A clean room means a chance to move outside where trucks are part of the neighbourhood scene.

Steig, William

Pete's a Pizza

ISBN 0062051571

Kids love games that can be played again and again...*Peek-a-Boo, Pat-a-Cake, Red Rover*. On a rainy day when plans to be outside with friends are curtailed, along comes Pete's father to fashion a delectable pizza with his son as the tasty, tempting crust and numerous available toys and trinkets as toppings. Pete's happiness is evident in each detailed picture. Once read, this book will be chanted by one child to another, child to parent and on, and on. So simple in design and seamless in its presentation, Steig creates the perfect pizza party.

 Stinson, Kathy

Red is Best

ISBN 092023626X

In this quietly affirmative book, red replaces the beloved blanket as an all-time favourite. Mom may not understand its importance for her daughter; only red stockings will do even when they don't match the outfit she is wearing. Only red mittens with holes keep hands warm on the coldest day of winter. Red has to be the colour of choice when adding to the allure of a spiffy outfit. Other colours might be more appropriate, but will they put singing in Kelly's head? Probably not.

Taback, Simms

There was an Old Lady who Swallowed a Fly

ISBN 0670869392

Kids who can't read the simplest word will soon be singing and sharing this irreverent and highly ridiculous story of a woman who can swallow any manner of beast until she meets and eats the horse. Whoa! That brings an untimely end. Simms Taback fills the white space of each double page spread with detailed, captioned illustrations in an intense, multi-coloured palette. There is much to pore over and humour at every turn. Get your vocal cords limbered up, as the fun may never end.

🍁 Thompson, Richard **We'll All Go Flying** ISBN 1550417002

This text is, for many, a favourite of three fabulous concept books written by Richard Thompson and his wife, Maggee Spicer. Look for *We'll All Go Sailing* and *We'll All Go Exploring* to add to your classroom collection. This counting adventure releases our three fearless explorers to the sky in a bright red hot air balloon. As they soar, they also note shape, colour, habitat and sound. The ever-changing sky as backdrop for this escapade adds to its appeal to the senses. There is a promise as the story ends that this will not be the last voyage the three intrepid travelers share, and it is not.

🍁 Thornhill, Jan **Over in the Meadow** ISBN 1897066082

An old favourite made new again with illustrations awash with everyday objects, this book will be chanted and pored over by readers of all ages. Thornhill has created a feast for the eyes with her broccoli forest, her pretzel beaver dam and the many sets of animals that inhabit this magical meadow. Kids get practice at counting, rhyme, and the many delights of nature as they share this book with equally enthralled adults. To add punch, there is an index at the end that shows the collection of objects used to create this marvelous environment.

🍁 Thornhill, Jan **Wildlife ABC and 123** ISBN 1897066090

Unlike what is considered usual in counting and alphabet fare, this compilation of two previous books by noted Canadian illustrator, Jan Thornhill, has been reissued. As you would expect, there is much to see on the pages created to help garner an interest in young readers for letter and number. She has done an outstanding job of presenting numbers from 1 to 1000, while ensuring detailed work and important appeal. This book should be on the library shelf of every Canadian Early Years classroom...there is so much to see and appreciate.

Turkle, Brinton **Deep in the Forest** ISBN 0140547452

Not all fractured fairy tales have words as this brilliant little story proves. It has had a print life of more than twenty years and it is as appealing today as it was when it was first published. The fact that it is wordless makes it perfect for retelling while children are learning about setting, plot and characters. A tiny bear cub wreaks havoc when he invades the cabin of a young girl and her pioneer family as they take a walk in the forest. It is Goldilocks in reverse and readers will enjoy the gentle humour and warmth of it.

🍁 Watt, Melanie **Leon the Chameleon** ISBN 1553375270

Most chameleons have a special gift...their ability to change colour and become part of their surroundings. Not Leon! Leon has a big problem and it literally sets him apart from all of his friends. He wants to be like them; but, instead of blending with his environs, Leon stands out. Why? Well, Leon becomes the opposite colour, no matter where he is. Instead of green, he is red. Instead of blue, he is yellow. Instead, of purple, he is orange. Leon's special ability finally makes him a hero when the other chameleons become lost. A lesson in the colour wheel, as well as being proud of who we are, this little book will soon become a favourite.

Willems, Mo**Knuffle Bunny**

ISBN 0786818700

When Trixie and her Dad set off through their Brooklyn neighbourhood to help with the laundry, they have no idea how traumatic the trip might become. Trixie is accompanied by her faithful and much loved Knuffle Bunny. All is well. On their way home Trixie makes a frightening discovery and, in her best toddler talk, tries to explain it to her father. He does not understand the dilemma and each is distraught by the other's response. Once home it is Mom to the rescue and Trixie, upon seeing her beloved toy again, utters her first words. Perfect for storytime and a visual pleasure.

Willems, Mo

The Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog

ISBN 0786818697

With text that can be read, understood, and appreciated by our youngest readers and an idea that will have adult audiences laughing uproariously and wanting to hear it again, Mo Willems proves that *The Pigeon Drives the Bus* was not a fluke. He has created a character whose every movement belies his attitude and feelings toward the events described. Why should the pigeon not eat the hot dog? He found it...but what about the poor, little, defenseless, guileless duck who has never tasted one?

🍁 Williams, Felicity

Pocketful of Stars

ISBN 1550373862

Here's a great gift for the first-time parent. The pages are filled with poems and chants that children will love and parents will share with gusto. Accompanying each is a set of instructions that help make the sharing interactive. We know that the more we present rhyme to young children, the more they are able to reproduce it. They will soon be repeating the chants presented here and their internal collection of verse will grow by leaps and bounds.

Williams, Sue

I Went Walking

ISBN 0152007717

Repetition, rhyme, the love of animals, and a guessing game of sorts, this is a highly acclaimed successor to Bill Martin's *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*. When a little boy goes walking, he begins to accumulate a colourful menagerie of farm animals in his parade. Young readers will not tire of the repetitive nature of the text as they experience success in mastering it and joy in the vibrant watercolours. The final spread invites charmed readers to join in the chaos.

Wilson, April

Magpie Magic

ISBN 0803723547

The hands of a young and gifted artist give shape and life to a magpie, which offers a chance for magic and mayhem. As the child continues drawing, the objects gain dimension and the magpie devours, breaks and steals anything his inquisitive nature desires. When it becomes dangerous, the artist tries to gain control and fails miserably. As expected, the bird has the last laugh. The only words name the colours used in this inventive and brilliant caper. Well done!
