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.

Downloadable PDF available at www.ala.org/alsc/compubs/booklists
STARTING TO READ

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

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

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.

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

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.

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

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?

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

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.

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.

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


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


**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!


**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.


**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. unpaged. 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. unpaged. 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.


Thomas, Jan. Is Everyone Ready for Fun? Illus. by the author. Beach Lane Books, 2011. unpaged. The cows come to visit chicken unexpectedly bringing some crazy plans that chicken isn’t very happy about.


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. unpaged. 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. unpaged. 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.


**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.

**Brue, 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?”


**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.


**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?


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.


Alvin Ho is back and he has to go camping where he fears bears, darkness, and . . . pit toilets?


Feisty and full of ideas, Gooney Bird figures out how to make everyone feel like they are having a special trip on school vacation.


Although Oliver’s overprotective parents make it hard for him to make decisions; a new class assignment might finally inspire him to express himself.


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.


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.


After capturing a humongous bullfrog, Owen discovers a two-person submarine that takes him, his friends, and nosy neighbor Viola on a dazzling adventure.


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.


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.


A likable worrywart works through his dilemmas with the help of his teacher and friends in these four brief stories.


Reverso poems based on fairy tales that have a different meaning when read up or down. Cool!


When Eleanor’s first and favorite babysitter moves away, her life becomes as dreadful as the black parts of a banana.


Danny the Dragonling and his sidekick Wendell are kidnapped by a bat monster—fast paced adventure with humor galore.


Lulu wants a pet brontosaurus and always gets what she wants—but the brontosaurus has other ideas.


EllRay feels he needs something to brag about to be popular, but his plan backfires.


Good-natured and dorky, Oggie is willing to do almost anything to use the mean girl’s pool next door.


A peek into the daily lives of Abraham Lincoln’s younger children, Willie and Tad, is warm and revealing.


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.