Reid's Read-Alouds 2 Rob Reid



Reid's Read-Alouds 2

Modern-Day Classics from C. S. Lewis to Lemony Snicket

Rob Reid

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Introduction

The first edition of *Reid's Read-Alouds* (ALA Editions, 2009) profiled children's and young adult books published between the years 2000 and 2008. This companion volume showcases two hundred strong read-aloud books that were published from 1950 to 1999.

This project turned into both a scavenger hunt and a trip down memory lane. I revisited books that I had read to groups of young people during my years as a junior high school English teacher and also as a youth services public librarian. I looked at books I had never read before but were recommended to me by other professionals as successful read-alouds. I examined books that were read to me as a child to see if they were still relevant to today's youth. I read and reread approximately four hundred fiction chapter books, folklore collections, informational books, and biographies before selecting the two hundred titles found in this collection.

During my "hunt," I looked for a variety of genres and age levels and a good balance between male and female protagonists. I looked for literary aspects that would connect with the modern child, particularly avoiding concepts and language that might seem dated. I looked for a wide representation of authors, limiting myself to selecting one or two of their works, although many authors have several more titles that are superb read-alouds. I looked for representative books from each of the five decades, but I quickly realized that it would be impossible to try to have equal numbers from each decade. In fact, you'll find more titles from the 1990s than from the other decades added together. The simple reason is that there are more books from the 1990s still in print, another requirement for a title to be included in this book. So many wonderful read-alouds from the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s in particular are no longer in print, although one may find them in libraries or find used copies through the Internet. Even some favorites from the 1980s and 1990s are no longer available. I realized this while poring over back issues of the annual *Choices*, published by the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

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I discarded many older titles, too, because of racial stereotypes. Many times, ethnic characters were given pidgin English dialect or were misrepresented in other ways. I relied heavily on both the CCBC and the Oyate website for their insights on books by and about people of color. In all but a few examples regarding books featuring minority protagonists, I went with insider author perspectives. Unfortunately, this decision highlights the scarcity of books written by authors of color before the year 2000.

I also chose not to include works that had excessive swearing, sexual incidents, or characters dealing with personal private matters, such as puberty. These books are better suited to be read by individuals. There are indeed some titles in this collection that contain some strong language. I highly recommend that one preview an entire book before reading it aloud to children or teens.

The focus of the two *Reid's Read-Alouds* books as well as the "Reid-Aloud Alert" column in *Book Links* magazine is on finding wonderful titles to read to *groups* of young people. The titles have been considered for flowing text, engaging storytelling, and appeal to a wide range of young listeners. The suggested grade levels listed with each annotation are listening levels, not reading levels. Through the years, I have read these books to children at public library programs and tours, in classrooms, in detention centers, in camps, in parks-and-recreation programs, and to neighborhood kids and homeschooled children.

Finally, the unique feature that sets my books and column apart from other read-aloud resources are the "10 Minute Selections." These are captivating episodes taken from the books that can be read in one brief sitting. In reality, these selections can range from five minutes to fifteen minutes. The "10 Minute Selection" feature originated during my time as a children's librarian, when I had limited times with visiting groups. Looking back, I also realized I employed them during my teaching years, when we took a break from other studies and shared quality oral-literature moments. Even though I no longer work in a public library or in a classroom for younger kids, I continue to read to the young. I have spent the last few years sharing these modern-day classics, both old favorites and those "new" to me, with many groups of kids in a variety of settings.

All of the books in this collection are kid-tested. Some of the books made us laugh; some made us cry. They all touched us in one way or another. Their worth cannot be overestimated, and for that, I thank the wonderful authors featured here for sharing their talents.



The Read-Alouds

Alexander, Lloyd. *Time Cat: The Remarkable Journeys of Jason and Gareth.* Holt, 1963. 206 p. Gr. 3–5.

Jason discovers that his cat, Gareth, not only has the ability to talk but also is able to transport both of them through time. They visit several places—from ancient Egypt, where cats were held in high esteem, to seventeenth-century Germany, where cats were hunted, accused of being witches' demons. The two also visit Rome, Great Britain, Ireland, Japan, Italy, Peru, and the Isle of Man. Before returning home, they help the rebels' cause during the American Revolution in 1775.

10 Minute Selection: Read chapter 1, "The Visitors." After a particularly rough day, Jason learns that Gareth can talk. He also discovers that Gareth "can visit nine different lives. Anywhere, any time, any country, any century." Continue reading chapter 2, "The Sacred City of Cats." Egyptians grab Jason and urge him to bring his cat to meet the Lord of the Two Lands of Egypt. If not, Jason will be thrown to the crocodiles. Jason protests when he learns that the ruler plans to take possession of the cat. Jason is thrown into a tiny room. The end of this passage makes for a good cliff-hanger. However, if time allows, include chapter 3, "Neter-Khet." The pharaoh demands that Gareth entertain him. Of course, cats do only what they want to do. In the end, the ruler Neter-Khet learns that "not even Pharaoh can give orders to a cat."

Almond, David. Skellig. Delacorte, 1999. 182 p. Gr. 5-8.

Michael moves into a new house. He and his parents are worried about his baby sister, who is seriously ill. Michael meets a homeschooled girl named Mina, who becomes his friend. There is a dilapidated garage on the property. Michael finds a mysterious man or a humanlike beast in the garage. The creature, known as Skellig, hardly moves because of arthritis. Skellig likes to eat Chinese food as well as bluebottle flies and spiders. And it appears that Skellig has wings. Is he a man, an

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owl, an angel? The way that Skellig interacts with Michael, Mina, and eventually the baby makes this magical realistic book a powerful read-aloud.

10 Minute Selection: Read the very short chapter 3. Michael is exploring the garage. "I leaned across a heap of tea chests and shined the flashlight into the space behind and that's when I saw him." The man keeps asking, "What do you want?" Move on to chapter 7, another short excerpt. Michael ventures into the garage again and talks to the stranger. Michael also meets Mina. Finally, read chapter 20. Michael takes Mina to meet Skellig for the first time. Skellig refuses to answer the children's questions, but he accepts their food and medicine. When Mina tells him that he must let them help him, he replies, "Do what you want."

Armstrong, Jennifer. Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World: The Extraordinary True Story of Shackleton and the Endurance. Crown, 1998. 126 p. Gr. 5–12.

Sir Ernest Shackleton and his crew left England in 1914 and set off to Antarctica. In 1915, their ship, the *Endurance*, was trapped in the ice and crushed. "What he and his crew did succeed in doing in 1915–1916 was one of the most incredible feats of survival ever recorded. Every stage of their journey seemed more remarkable than the last." Every single member of the twenty-four-man crew survived some of the world's harshest conditions. Author Armstrong does a remarkable job of conveying the excitement and emotions of this true event as fine as any fictional survival story.

10 Minute Selection: Inform your audience that this story really happened to a crew that was stranded in Antarctica around the time of World War I. Read the last half of the chapter titled "Winter on the Pack," beginning with the sentence, "The Boss found ways of maintaining a routine in order to keep the crew from going crazy with cabin fever." These activities included mandatory haircuts, lectures, theatrical productions, and dog races. The running joke was that the men would make a toast "to our sweethearts and wives—may they never meet!" The chapter ends with the ominous line, "Outside in the darkness, the endless mass of pack ice was grinding against itself like a restless giant breaking mountains in its sleep."

Second 10 Minute Selection: Read the second half of the chapter titled "Pressure," beginning with the sentence, "The afternoon of September 30 brought an enormous ice floe bearing down on the ship from the port side." This passage shows the *Endurance* tilting from the pressure of the ice. "Everything that wasn't nailed down slid, slithered, and crashed against the bulwark. Dogs and men all went head over heels in a mass of howling confusion." Later on, Shackleton gives the order to abandon ship. "Then they went over the side, leaving *Endurance* to die in the grip of the ice."

Avi. Poppy. Orchard, 1995. 147 p. Gr. 3-5.

Mr. Ocax is an owl who rules the mice under his "protection." The mouse family has grown so large that some members need to move and locate a new food supply. Mr. Ocax forbids the move, but a young mouse named Poppy travels to the New House "on the northern side of Dimwood Forest." It's a dangerous journey. She narrowly escapes a fox and runs into a log belonging to Ereth, a porcupine. Poppy has always heard that porcupines eat mice. Poppy soon learns that Mr. Ocax is the one eating the mice, and she faces him in a showdown. The other titles in the Tales from the Dimwood Forest series include *Poppy and Rye* (1998), *Ragweed* (1999), *Ereth's Birthday* (2000), *Poppy's Return* (2005), and *Poppy and Ereth* (2009).

10 Minute Selection: Read the last few pages of chapter 10, "Dimwood Forest," beginning with the sentence, "Poppy made her way northward through the forest in short runs." A fox chases her into a log. The chapter ends with, "She was trapped." Read the entire following chapter, titled "Erethizon Dorsatum." Poppy meets Ereth. His dialogue is a delight to read aloud. "What the bee's butt are you doing here, fur ball?" Ereth chases the fox away. Poppy believes the porcupine will eat her and hides further in the smelly log. The chapter ends with Ereth asking, "Poppy . . . you wretched excuse for a runt, why the devil are you hiding in my toiler?"

Avi. Romeo and Juliet—Together (and Alive!) at Last. Orchard, 1987. 122 p. Gr. 5-8.

Eighth-grader Pete Saltz has a crush on Anabell Stackpoole, but he's too shy to tell her. His buddy, narrator Ed Sitrow, creates a plan to cast Saltz as Romeo and Anabell as Juliet in a quickly thrown-together, student-driven production of Shakespeare's play. Sitrow soon finds himself in over his head. Saltz's rival, Hamilton, tries to sabotage the play; the spotlight girl has a crush on Sitrow (and doesn't know how to operate the spotlight); and the set and costumes aren't ready until the actual production. This leads to the play hilariously featuring everything from log-cabin sets to costumes with jingling bells on pointy-toed shoes and paper crowns from Burger King. The characters also appear in the book *S.O.R. Losers* (1984).

10 Minute Selection: Read the very short chapter 3. Sitrow looks up the definition of *love* in the dictionary. He informs other students that Saltz is in love. He quotes the dictionary definition when he tells them that Saltz "has an attraction, desire, or affection for her, too. And while I know it's hard to believe, she seems to be arousing delight, admiration, tenderness (of an elicit kind), sympathetic interest, as well as benevolence and devoted affection." Move on to chapter 5. Sitrow calls for a secret meeting and sets up the grand plan. Finally, read chapter 18. Saltz

is worried about the kissing scene. He's never kissed a girl before. Neither has Sitrow, who nonetheless instructs Saltz to scrunch and suck and practice on either a Cabbage Patch Kid or a dog.

Ayer, Eleanor. Parallel Journeys. Atheneum, 1995. 228 p. Gr. 6-12.

Author Ayer delivers a clear-cut look at World War II in Europe, supplemented with the first-person accounts of Jewish survivor Helen Waterford and Alfons Heck, who became a high-ranking officer of the Hitler Youth. "One followed Hitlerism, the other the Holocaust, along a parallel journey through history." The two met several years after the war and collaborated to tell their stories, giving unique perspectives of the events that happened. There are several German names and phrases throughout the book.

10 Minute Selection: Inform your audience that the following excerpt is a real account, not a work of fiction. Read most of chapter 14, "Our Journey to Heaven," beginning with the sentence, "The women in Helen's group, having lived through their first selection, now rejoined the men." Helen learns that she is in "Birkenau, one of the forty camps at Auschwitz." She recognizes Anne Frank's mother talking to another prisoner. Helen gives an account of the conditions the prisoners faced. At the end of the chapter, Helen tells how Mrs. Frank died and how Anne was shipped to another camp. End the passage with the line, "Helen and her group of 300 waited, wondering what fate the Germans had in store for them next."

Second 10 Minute Selection: If time allows, read a passage that shows the rare perspective of a former Nazi. Read the long chapter 13, "A Meeting with *Mein Führer*." Alfons, a sixteen-year-old member of the Hitler Youth, is stunned to learn that the Allies are very close to Germany. He is also surprised when he is named the new *Gefolgschaftsführer*, "a rank nearly equal to an army captain, in charge of 150 to 190 boys." At one point, he orders his boys to shoot an elderly teacher if he comes back and interferes. Alfons is taken to a train where he meets Albert Speer, "one of the two or three most powerful men in Germany." Despite their losing efforts, Speer asks the Hitler Youth to fight on. At the end of his speech, Speer introduces "somebody very special. The door opened and in walked Adolf Hitler."

Babbitt, Natalie. Kneeknock Rise. Farrar Straus Giroux, 1970. 118 p. Gr. 3-6.

The village of Instep is situated below a cliff in the Mammoth Mountains known as Kneeknock Rise. Legend has it that the terrible Megrimum lives on Kneeknock Rise. The villagers hear it moan when the weather gets bad. A young boy named Eagan is sent to visit his Instep relatives—Aunt Gertrude, Uncle Anson, and cousin Ada. Another relative, Uncle Ott, is missing and has left his dog, Annabelle, behind. One day, Ada teases Eagan, saying that he is too afraid to climb up

Kneeknock Rise. Eagan heads "toward the cliff, fearless and wild, and the old dog ran after him." When Eagan's aunt hears that he is climbing up to the Megrimum, she drops "in a faint to the floor."

10 Minute Selection: There are no numbered chapters in the book. Start reading the beginning. Through Babbitt's wonderfully descriptive writing, we learn about Kneeknock Rise, the Megrimum, and the cast of characters. One night, Eagan wakes up to "a violent crash of thunder." Ada joins him, and they listen for the Megrimum. "Just then, from somewhere high up in the night, a thin, wailing sound came riding down the wind." They spot a figure climbing down the mountain during a flash of lightning. Aunt Gertrude comes in and screams. She sees something outside of the window and faints. End the passage with the line, "And Annabelle, emerging from under the cot, stood with her front paws on the windowsill, barking on and on against the glass, which now showed nothing but the empty, drizzling dark."

Babbitt, Natalie. Tuck Everlasting. Farrar Straus Giroux, 1975. 139 p. Gr. 4-8.

The book starts with one of my favorite opening sentences: "The first week of August hangs at the very top of summer, the top of the live-long year, like the highest seat of a Ferris wheel when it pauses in its turning." One August, Winnie Foster is walking through her family's woods when she comes upon a teenage boy drinking from a spring. The boy—Jesse Tuck—and his family kidnap Winnie; they want to explain why she should not drink from the spring nor tell anyone about it. The Tucks had found a spring that gives eternal life. A strange man in a yellow suit shows up with evil intentions to own the woods and sell the water to "certain people, people who deserve it. And it will be very, very expensive." Winnie has to decide if she will take a drink of the special water.

10 Minute Selection: Read chapters 7 and 8. Winnie learns the story of the Tuck family and how they came to understand they would live forever. Jesse states, "As far as I know, I'll stay seventeen until the end of the world." The passage ends with "not one of them noticed that the man they had passed on the road, the man in the yellow suit, had crept up to the bushes by the stream and heard it all, the whole fantastic story."

Ball, Zachary. Bristle Face. Holiday House, 1962. 206 p. Gr. 4-8.

Jase is a fourteen-year-old runaway who adopts a funny-looking dog he names Bristle Face. "He looked like he had started out to be a hound, then decided he'd look better as a porcupine." The two befriend Lute, a fairly lazy store owner who has decided to run for sheriff. Bristle Face is good at digging up box turtles, but Jase has dreams of Bristle Face becoming a fox hound. Rad Toler, the current sheriff, shows up at Lute's store one day. "He pointed to Bristle Face and said, 'That one. I'm takin' him with me."

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10 Minute Selection: This is actually just a four-minute passage. Start well into chapter 3, "Old Red Snow," beginning with the sentence, "Right then a terrible squawking set up amongst the chickens." Bristle Face is chasing Widow Jarkey's rooster and then spots a rabbit. He runs into a clothesline and finds himself "head and front feet into a pair of the Widow's bloomer kind of underpants." The story turns into a slapstick chain of events. The passage ends with, "The Widow was still laughing too, and she told me she'd had so much fun out of Bristle Face that she wasn't even mad about her clean clothes getting dirty."

Second 10 Minute Selection: Read the middle portion of chapter 6, "Cat Fight," starting with the sentence, "We followed the creek to the big pool." Jase is deep in the woods trying out a fishing hole for the first time. As he's about to bait his hook, he gets a strange feeling. "Eight or ten feet in front of me, crouched down on a flat rock that was about two feet above me, yellowish eyes looking like two fire coals there in the daylight, was a panther." The panther attacks, but Bristle Face charges. Jase gets slashed by the panther's claws and falls into the water. He's aware that Bristle Face and the panther have also fallen in. End the passage with this cliff-hanger line: "I watched them and waited for Bristle Face and the panther to come to the top. But they didn't."

Bauer, Joan. Rules of the Road. Putnam, 1998. 201 p. Gr. 6-12.

Jenna has had her driver's license for only six months when Mrs. Gladstone, the head of the Gladstone Shoe Stores, hires Jenna to be her driver. Mrs. Gladstone had noticed Jenna's head for business and employs the teen's help to thwart a company takeover by her son, Elden. They take a cross-country trip in Mrs. Gladstone's Cadillac from Chicago, Illinois, to Dallas, Texas. Jenna is hesitant about taking the job, but she needs to get away from her alcoholic father. The two unlikely travelers become strong allies against Elden and the stockholders. Jenna and Mrs. Gladstone reappear in the book *Best Foot Forward* (2005).

10 Minute Selection: Read the opening chapter. We see Jenna in action as a top-notch shoe saleswoman. "My grandmother always said that everyone needs something in life that they do pretty well. For me, it's selling shoes." Jenna is nervous because Mrs. Gladstone, the company president, is in the store watching everything. Jenna is horrified when her father shows up at the store drunk, hollering her name. Move on and read a brief passage from chapter 2, beginning with the sentence, "The phone rang." Mrs. Gladstone hires Jenna as a driver. Jenna is not sure. "'Mrs. Gladstone, I've only driven a twelve-year-old Honda Civic, never a Cadillac.' 'That will change tomorrow, won't it? Good night.' 'But—' Click." End with the sentence, "'You've never been in a Cadillac,' Faith countered, grabbing half my sandwich."

Bauer, Marion Dane. On My Honor. Clarion, 1986. 90 p. Gr. 4-5.

Joel isn't crazy about Tony's suggestion to bike to Starved Rock State Park, but he gives in. Joel's father makes him promise to stick to the plan. "On your honor? Joel's father said. You won't go anywhere except the park? On my honor, Joel repeated." Before they arrive at the park, Tony stops his bike by a river and convinces Joel to go swimming. Tragically, while trying to show off his swimming abilities, Tony disappears in the water. Joel panics. A teen couple stops and unsuccessfully helps Joel search for Tony. Joel convinces them that he'll contact the police. Instead, he bikes home and tells everyone that Tony went to the park ahead of him. Now he has to get through the next few days with this terrible secret.

10 Minute Selection: Read chapter 3. Tony climbs into the Vermillion River. Joel hesitates. "It's really dirty. And the worst of the stuff, chemicals and sewage, you can't even see." Tony, as usual, gets his way and Joel enters the water. The two get into an argument. Joel loses his temper and challenges Tony to swim out to a sandbar. Continue reading chapter 4. Joel swims to the sandbar. He makes it and looks back to brag. "Behind him stretched the river, smooth and glistening, reddish brown, but there was no sign of Tony."

Lewis goes to live with his uncle Jonathan in Michigan after his parents are killed in a car crash. Jonathan has purchased an old mansion that belonged at one time to the wizard Isaac Izard. Lewis meets Mrs. Zimmerman, Jonathan's next-door neighbor, who just happens to be a witch. Jonathan himself has dabbled in magic. Lewis learns that Izard had placed a mysterious clock somewhere in the house; they can hear the ticking. They hurry to locate it after Lewis discovers the following passage, written by Izard: "Doomsday not come yet! I'll draw it nearer by a perspective, or make a CLOCK that shall set all the world on fire upon an instant." There are nineteen books in the series. The second title is *Figure in the*

Shadows (1975). Some of the latter books were written by Brad Strickland from

Bellairs's notes.

Bellairs, John. The House with a Clock in Its Walls. Dial, 1973. 179 p. Gr. 4-7.

10 Minute Selection: As setup, inform your audience that Lewis has told a boy named Tarby that he is able to raise the spirits of dead people. Read chapter 5. Lewis has arranged to meet Tarby in a cemetery at midnight. They are sitting in front of a tomb. Lewis draws the proper symbols, but he becomes stumped at one point. "Lewis had read in Jonathan's book that you were supposed to fill in the space with the name of the dead person." Lewis doesn't know the name, but his hand is guided to write the name Selanna. There is a loud booming noise from the tomb. "The iron doors jolted, as if they had been struck a blow from inside. The chain rattled, and there was a clunk on the pavement. The padlock had fallen." The boys run.

Berry, James. Ajeemah and His Son. HarperCollins, 1991. 83 p. Gr. 6-12.

It is 1807 in Africa. Ajeemah is accompanying his son Atu as they go to present a dowry to Atu's future stepfather—a dowry of two gold coins hidden in Ajeemah's shoe. Along the way, the two are captured by slave traders and shipped to Jamaica. They are sold and separated. They never see each other again. Ajeemah wants to set his owner's plantation on fire. Atu wants to run away. He goes so far as to steal a gun. Atu eventually dies. Years later, Ajeemah remarries and slavery is outlawed. He recounts his story at his daughter's wedding. "Then the people stood, looking at Ajeemah. They didn't seem to know what to do, how to love him and honor him. . . . Obviously overcome by the moment, Ajeemah merely stood there. Somebody began to clap. And everybody clapped." Despite its slim size, there is a lot of emotion packed into this book.

10 Minute Selection: There are no chapters. Start at the beginning and read through to the line, "And as the coast of Africa disappeared, a long-drawn-out groan of grief rose up together steadily from the people one after another, till all died away into silence." These first few pages tell of the kidnapping of Ajeemah and Atu.

Bloor, Edward. Tangerine. Harcourt, 1997. 294 p. Gr. 7-10.

Paul and his family move to Florida, where part of Paul's middle school has been destroyed by sinkholes. He transfers to Tangerine Middle School and joins the soccer team. His achievements are overshadowed by his older brother Erik's accomplishments on the high school football team. Paul is bothered by Erik's cruel tendencies. Even though he is an athlete, Paul has been legally blind since he was five years old. He functions well enough with his thick glasses. Throughout the story, Paul is bothered by hidden memories that eventually reveal the real cause of his disability.

10 Minute Selection: Read the chapter titled "Friday, September 22." It is Paul's first soccer game for his new team, the War Eagles. They are on the road, facing the Whippoorwills, a team known for its dirty tactics. "I don't know why—maybe they were mad about having such a wimpy nickname—but these guys turned out to be really nasty. So did their fans." Paul's team gets tripped, elbowed, spit upon, and cursed. Paul goes in the game during the second half when his teammate Tino retaliates by throwing punches at an opponent. A fullback for the other team knocks Paul down, "stretched out my goggles from my face, scooped up a handful of mud, and smeared it in my eyes. *In my eyes!* I went berserk!" Paul gets taken out for throwing punches. Paul is finally told by a teammate that he's a true War Eagle and that he has brothers to back him up.

Blume, Judy. Fudge-a-Mania. Dutton, 1990. 147 p. Gr. 1-4.

The Tubman and Hatcher families decide to take a vacation together in Maine. This upsets Peter Hatcher since Sheila Tubman is his sworn enemy. The summer house is very full with two grandparents, several pets, and Peter's guest Jimmy Fargo. Even Jimmy's father decides to join them at the last minute and sleeps on the couch. Peter's little brother Fudge loses his pet mynah bird Uncle Feather, gets sick from eating too many blueberries, gets stuck in a folding bed, and plans on marrying Sheila so she can keep away monsters at night. The other books featuring Peter, Fudge, and Sheila are *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* (1972), *Otherwise Known as Sheila the Great* (1972), *Superfudge* (1980), and *Double Fudge* (2002).

10 Minute Selection: Read the first three chapters, which are very short. Chapter 1, "Who's the Lucky Bride?" finds Fudge declaring his plans to marry Sheila Tubman. Peter pretends to faint every time Sheila's name is mentioned. Chapter 2, "Pete and Farley," finds the Hatcher family trying to have a quiet meal at Tico-Taco. Fudge asks the waiter if he has cooties. Chapter 3, "The Most Disgusting of Them All," has the Hatcher family showing up in Southwest Harbor, Maine. While the Tubmans come out to greet them, Peter's dog, Turtle, runs into a skunk. Have fun reading the dialogue of the characters, who speak as they hold their noses. "Thith ith too nautheating for wordth,' Libby said, grabbing Jake and running back into the house. 'Do thomething, Peter!' Sheila yelled. 'What am I thuppoth to do?'"

Bond, Michael. *A Bear Called Paddington*. Houghton Mifflin, 1958. 128 p. Gr. K–4.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown encounter a small, polite bear in London's Paddington Station. He tells them that he has arrived from Darkest Peru. Mr. and Mrs. Brown find a note on the bear's suitcase that reads "Please look after this bear. Thank you." They do just that and name the bear after the train station. Paddington becomes a part of the family, which includes the children, Judy and Jonathan, and the housekeeper, Mrs. Bird. Paddington has several small adventures, including taking a difficult bath, going shopping and winding up in the store's front window, helping Mr. Brown win a painting competition, attending a play and impressing the cranky lead actor, getting lost at the beach, and performing magic tricks that don't always work. Paddington is featured in several more chapter books and picture books. The second chapter book in the series is *More about Paddington* (1959).

10 Minute Selection: Read chapter 3, "Paddington Goes Underground." Paddington is served breakfast in bed, which proves to be harder to eat than it looked. Judy and Mrs. Brown are impatient to take Paddington shopping, so the young bear puts his bacon in his travel case. They are followed by dogs. Paddington has trouble navigating the crowds and escalators in the Underground. He gets separated from his companions and runs into trouble with an inspector. Mrs.

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Brown and Judy come to the rescue. The inspector has other things on his mind. "Judging by the noise coming from the top of the escalator there was some sort of dog fight going on. It needed investigating."

Boston, L. M. *The Children of Green Knowe*. Harcourt, 1955. 183 p. Gr. 3-5.

A little boy named Tolly moves to Green Noah, once known as Green Knowe. His great-grandmother Oldknow welcomes him, as do the spirits of three children—Toby, Linnet, and Alexander—who all lived there in the seventeenth century. They had all died in the Great Plague. Great-grandmother Oldknow spins stories about the three children; their horse, Feste; and the events surrounding the old manor. Tolly learns of a curse put on the house by a gypsy woman many years before. The big tree called Green Noah is dangerous. It even has a song about it. "Green Noah / Demon Tree / Evil Fingers / Can't catch me!" The other books in the series include *Treasure of Green Knowe* (1958), *The River at Green Knowe* (1959), *A Stranger at Green Knowe* (1961), *An Enemy at Green Knowe* (1964), and *The Stone of Green Knowe* (1976).

10 Minute Selection: Read the chapter titled "Toby's Story." Once upon a time, Linnet was ill, and Toby had to ride on the horse, Feste, to find the doctor. When they reached the bridge over the river, Feste refused to go on it, even after Toby hit the horse. Instead, Feste jumped in the river. When they made it safely to land, Toby yelled at the horse. "Suddenly there came a hair-raising scream, the scream of rending wood, sounding like an animal in panic. The wooden bridge twisted and cockled under his eyes and, with cracks like cannon fire, collapsed and was swept in a tangled mess downstream." The horse had saved Toby, and they made it to the doctor's home in time. End with the sentence, "The next thing that Toby knew was that Feste was blowing down his neck as if to say: 'That supper was splendid, but how about breakfast?'"

Brittain, Bill. *Dr. Dredd's Wagon of Wonders*. Harper and Row, 1987. 179 p. Gr. 3–8.

The townspeople of Coven Tree are suffering from a great drought. A mysterious man named Dr. Dredd shows up promising rain. A boy named Calvin, who belongs to Dredd, has the ability to make it rain. Calvin runs away from his cruel master. The citizens of Coven Tree protect him once they learn Dredd is in league with the devil. Dredd, in turn, unleashes a series of horrors on the town, including a strongman, a black knight, and a fire-breathing dragon. This is the second book in the Coven Tree series. The other titles are *The Wish Giver* (1986) and *Professor Popkins' Prodigious Polish* (1990).

10 Minute Selection: Read a short portion of chapter 1, "Strangers," beginning with the line, "Ladies and gentlemen, I am Dr. Hugo Dredd." Dredd shows the

folks of Coven Tree the wonders inside his wagon. They learn about the suit of armor that once belonged to the Black Knight of Etherium. The suit of armor is split up. End the passage with the sentence, "Legend has it that if the two sections of armor were to be joined, the Black Knight would rise again to scourge the countryside." Move on to chapter 5, "No Holds Barred." Begin halfway through the chapter with the line, "By the middle of the afternoon, Calvin had mended a squeaky stair tread, fashioned a new handle for the grain shovel and fixed a broken harness in the barn." Dr. Dredd has brought his strongman, Antaeus, to battle Sven the blacksmith over Calvin. Ellen, Calvin's friend, helps discover the secret to defeating Antaeus. Dr. Dredd retreats back to his wagon. The chapter ends with Dredd talking to the suit of armor that once belonged to the Black Knight. "From somewhere deep within the armor came a low, hideous moaning."

Bruchac, Joseph. Eagle Song. Dial, 1997. 79 p. Gr. 1-4.

Fourth-grader Danny and his family left their home on the Mohawk reservation to live in Brooklyn. The other students tease Danny. "Hey, Chief, going home to your teepee?" His father visits Danny's classroom and shares a story and some information about the Iroquois. The other students are very receptive to the presentation, and Danny wonders if he'll be treated better. He learns the answer to that question when he's injured by a basketball that is thrown at him. Things get worse when Danny's mother gets a call that his father was injured in a construction accident. A glossary and a pronunciation guide are provided.

10 Minute Selection: Read chapter 4, "The Visit." Danny's father is the guest speaker in Danny's classroom. He holds up a wampum belt. "To us it is like a book because it tells a story." At this point, go back to chapter 3, "The Great Peace," and read the story that Danny's father shares with the class, the story of the peacemaker Aionwatha (Hiawatha). End with the sentence, "So the Great League of Peace was formed by our Iroquois people long ago," and jump back to read the rest of chapter 4. Danny's father goes on to tell how the founders of the United States used Iroquois symbols. At the end of the day, "the class exploded into applause. . . . It was great his father had come to school. But would the kids treat him better now?"

Bruchac, Joseph, and James Bruchac. When the Chenoo Howls: Native American Tales of Terror. Walker, 1998. 131 p. Gr. 4–8.

These twelve traditional and original Native American stories feature such creatures as the Stone Giant, the Flying Head, Ugly Face, Man Bear, the Spreaders, the title character, and more. The stories come from several Northeast Woodland Native American cultures, including the Abenaki, Seneca, Mohawk, Lenape, Oneida, Onondaga, Penobscot, and Passamaquoddy. In the story "Amankamek," a snake disguises itself as a human and takes a girl named Red Flower from her

family. In "Toad Woman," three contemporary friends are exploring a cedar bog when one of the boys goes under the water. Another boy believes he "saw something move just under the surface. It looked almost like a brown, long-fingered hand." A pronunciation guide is provided.

10 Minute Selection: Read the story "Keewahkwee." Little Weasel is a boy who lives with Older Sister. She keeps her face covered with her long hair. A rabbit informs Little Weasel that Older Sister is really Keewahkwee, a cannibal ogre who is fattening him up to eat. The boy runs away but is pursued. He is helped along the way by Porcupine and Heron before he finds his grandfather and a tiny dog. Older Sister catches up and is ready to eat them all when Little Dog shakes himself four times, grows larger with each shake, and destroys Keewahkwee.

Bunting, Eve. Someone Is Hiding on Alcatraz Island. Clarion, 1984. 136 p. Gr. 5–8.

Danny is being pursued by the Outlaws gang because he saved a mugging victim from the brother of a gang member. They spot him on Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco. He manages to jump aboard a departing tourist boat to Alcatraz Island. The four gang members follow on the next boat, forcing Danny to hide on the island overnight. The Outlaws catch Danny and a young park ranger named Biddy. They lock the two in cells while they look for one of their missing companions. Danny manages to escape and looks for a way to overthrow the gang and rescue Biddy.

10 Minute Selection: Read chapter 5. Danny is looking for a place to hide, knowing that the Outlaws are prowling the island. He is excited when he spots a group of rangers, but before he shouts, he realizes that the Outlaws have broken into the ranger station and are the ones wearing the ranger jackets. Danny climbs a water tower to better monitor the Outlaws. He soon hears a voice below him. It is Jelly Bean, one of the gang members. The chapter ends with Jelly Bean, who talks like his nose is stuffed, taunting Danny. "There you are Daddy-Boy. I'b cubbing to get you."

Burch, Robert. *Ida Early Comes over the Mountain*. Viking, 1980. 145 p. Gr. 3–5.

During the Great Depression in Georgia, a tall countrywoman named Ida Early shows up one day at the Sutton household looking for work. The children, tired of their bossy aunt Earnestine, who took over the household after their mother passed away, are immediately attracted by Ida's tall tales and playful character. One day, some classmates make fun of Ida's odd appearance. The Sutton children feel bad that they didn't come to her defense. Ida is no longer playful and prefers to go to bed early. Ida saves the day during a school program when a child's pet bear suddenly attacks one of the students. The sequel is *Christmas with Ida Early* (1983).



Grade-Level Recommendations

EARLY ELEMENTARY (GRADES K-2)

Blume, Judy. Fudge-a-Mania.

Bond, Michael. A Bear Called Paddington.

Bruchac, Joseph. Eagle Song.

Cameron, Ann. The Stories Julian Tells.

Catling, Patricia Skene. The Chocolate Touch.

Chew, Ruth. The Wednesday Witch.

Cleary, Beverly. The Mouse and the Motorcycle.

----. Ramona the Pest.

Clifford, Eth. Help! I'm a Prisoner in the Library.

Dahl, Roald. The BFG.

———. Fantastic Mr. Fox.

Danziger, Paula. Amber Brown Is Not a Crayon.

Estes, Eleanor. The Witch Family.

Gannett, Ruth Stiles. The Dragons of Blueland.

Hamilton, Virginia. The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales.

Hesse, Karen. Sable.

Hoban, Russell. The Mouse and His Child.

Howe, Deborah, and James Howe. Bunnicula: A Rabbit-Tale of Mystery.

Hurwitz, Johanna. Russell and Elisa.

King-Smith, Dick. Babe the Gallant Pig.

Kline, Suzy. Herbie Jones.

Lowry, Lois. All about Sam.

MacLachlan, Patricia. Sarah, Plain and Tall.

Mahy, Margaret. The Great Piratical Rumbustification and The Librarian and the Robbers.

Marshall, James. Rats on the Roof and Other Stories.

136 Grade-Level Recommendations

Namioka, Lensey. Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear.

Park, Barbara. Junie B. Jones Has a Monster under Her Bed.

Peterson, John. The Littles.

Pinkwater, Daniel. The Hoboken Chicken Emergency.

Rylant, Cynthia. Every Living Thing.

Scieszka, Jon. Knights of the Kitchen Table.

Smith, Dodie. The Hundred and One Dalmatians.

Smith, Janice Lee. The Monster in the Third Dresser Drawer and Other Stories about Adam Joshua.

Sneve, Virginia Driving Hawk. High Elk's Treasure.

Walter, Mildred Pitts. Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World.

White, E. B. Charlotte's Web.

Williams, Vera. Scooter.

Upper Elementary (Grades 3-5)

Alexander, Lloyd. Time Cat: The Remarkable Journeys of Jason and Gareth.

Almond, David. Skellig.

Armstrong, Jennifer. Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World: The Extraordinary True Story of Shackleton and the Endurance.

Avi. Poppy.

———. Romeo and Juliet—Together (and Alive!) at Last.

Babbitt, Natalie. Kneeknock Rise.

———. Tuck Everlasting.

Ball, Zachary. Bristle Face.

Bauer, Marion Dane. On My Honor.

Bellairs, John. The House with a Clock in Its Walls.

Blume, Judy. Fudge-a-Mania.

Bond, Michael. A Bear Called Paddington.

Boston, L. M. The Children of Green Knowe.

Brittain, Bill. Dr. Dredd's Wagon of Wonders.

Bruchac, Joseph. Eagle Song.

Bruchac, Joseph, and James Bruchac. When the Chenoo Howls: Native American Tales of Terror.

Bunting, Eve. Someone Is Hiding on Alcatraz Island.

Burch, Robert. Ida Early Comes over the Mountain.

———. Queenie Peavy.

Burnford, Sheila. The Incredible Journey.

Butterworth, Oliver. The Enormous Egg.

Byars, Betsy. The Pinballs.

Cameron, Eleanor. The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet.

Cassedy, Sylvia. Behind the Attic Wall.

Catling, Patricia Skene. The Chocolate Touch.

Chew, Ruth. The Wednesday Witch.

Christopher, John. The White Mountains.

Cleary, Beverly. The Mouse and the Motorcycle.

----. Ramona the Pest.

Cleaver, Vera, and Bill Cleaver. Where the Lilies Bloom.

Clements, Andrew. Frindle.

Clifford, Eth. Help! I'm a Prisoner in the Library.

Cooper, Susan. The Boggart.

——. The Dark Is Rising.

Creech, Sharon. Chasing Redbird.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963.

Dahl, Roald. The BFG.

——. Fantastic Mr. Fox.

Danziger, Paula. Amber Brown Is Not a Crayon.

DeFelice, Cynthia. Weasel.

DeJong, Meindert. The Wheel on the School.

Dickinson, Peter. Chuck and Danielle.

Dorris, Michael. Morning Girl.

-----. Sees Behind Trees.

English, Karen. Francie.

Enright, Elizabeth. Gone-Away Lake.

Erdrich, Louise. The Birchbark House.

Estes, Eleanor. The Witch Family.

Farmer, Nancy. The Ear, the Eye and the Arm.

Fitzhugh, Louise. Harriet the Spy.

Fleischman, Paul. The Half-a-Moon Inn.

Fleischman, Sid. By the Great Horn Spoon.

———. The Whipping Boy.

Fleming, Ian. Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bang.

Fox, Paula. One-Eyed Cat.

Gannett, Ruth Stiles. The Dragons of Blueland.

George, Jean Craighead. My Side of the Mountain.

Giff, Patricia Reilly. Lily's Crossing.

Greenfield, Eloise. Koya Delaney and the Good Girl Blues.

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. Just Ella.

138 Grade-Level Recommendations

Hahn, Mary Downing. Wait Till Helen Comes. Hamilton, Virginia. The House of Dies Drear. ——. The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales. Hautzig, Esther. The Endless Steppe: Growing Up in Siberia. Henkes, Kevin. The Zebra Wall. Henry, Marguerite. Brighty of the Grand Canyon. Hesse, Karen. Out of the Dust. -----. Sable. Ho, Minfong. The Clay Marble. Hoban, Russell. The Mouse and His Child. Horvath, Polly. The Trolls. Howe, Deborah, and James Howe. Bunnicula: A Rabbit-Tale of Mystery. Hunt, Irene. Across Five Aprils. Huynh, Quang Nhuong. The Land I Lost: Adventures of a Boy in Vietnam. Ibbotson, Eva. The Secret of Platform 13. Jacques, Brian. Redwall. Jiménez, Francisco. The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child. Juster, Norton. The Phantom Tollbooth. Kennedy, Richard. Inside My Feet: The Story of a Giant. King-Smith, Dick. Babe the Gallant Pig. Kjelgaard, Jim. Outlaw Red. Kline, Suzy. Herbie Jones. Konigsburg, E. L. About the B'Nai Bagels. ———. From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler. Korman, Gordon. Why Did the Underwear Cross the Road? Krull, Kathleen. Lives of the Musicians: Good Times, Bad Times (and What the Neighbors Thought). Le Guin, Ursula K. A Wizard of Earthsea. L'Engle, Madeleine. Meet the Austins. ——. A Wrinkle in Time. Lester, Julius. More Tales of Uncle Remus. Levine, Gail Carson. The Fairy's Mistake. Lewis, C. S. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. Lindgren, Astrid. Ronia, the Robber's Daughter. Lisle, Janet. Afternoon of the Elves. Lowry, Lois. All about Sam.

MacLachlan, Patricia. Sarah, Plain and Tall. Magorian, Michelle. Good Night, Mr. Tom.

———. Number the Stars.

Maguire, Gregory. Seven Spiders Spinning.

Mahy, Margaret. The Great Piratical Rumbustification and The Librarian and the Robbers.

Manes, Stephen. Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days.

Marshall, James. Rats on the Roof and Other Stories.

Mazer, Norma Fox. Good Night, Maman.

McKay, Hilary. The Exiles.

Merrill, Jean. The Pushcart War.

Morey, Walt. Kavik the Wolf Dog.

Mowat, Farley. Owls in the Family.

Murphy, Jim. The Great Fire.

Myers, Walter Dean. Scorpions.

Naidoo, Beverly. Journey to Jo'burg: A South African Story.

Namioka, Lensey. Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear.

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. Shiloh.

——. Witch's Sister.

Norton, Mary. The Borrowers.

O'Brien, Robert C. Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH.

Paterson, Katherine. Bridge to Terabithia.

———. Lyddie.

Paulsen, Gary. Hatchet.

——. The Voyage of the Frog.

Pearce, Philippa. Tom's Midnight Garden.

Peck, Richard. The Ghost Belonged to Me.

———. A Long Way from Chicago.

Peck, Robert Newton. Soup.

Pellowski, Anne. Betsy's Up-and-Down Year.

Peterson, John. The Littles.

Phelps, Ethel Johnston, ed. Tatterhood and Other Tales.

Pinkwater, Daniel. The Hoboken Chicken Emergency.

Rawls, Wilson. Where the Red Fern Grows.

Rockwell, Thomas. How to Eat Fried Worms.

Rowling, J. K. Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone.

Rylant, Cynthia. Every Living Thing.

Sachar, Louis. Holes.

———. Sideways Stories from Wayside School.

San Souci, Robert D. Cut from the Same Cloth: American Women of Myth, Legend, and Tall Tale.

Scieszka, Jon. Knights of the Kitchen Table.

140 Grade-Level Recommendations

Singer, Isaac Bashevis. Zlateh the Goat and Other Stories.

Smith, Dodie. The Hundred and One Dalmatians.

Smith, Janice Lee. The Monster in the Third Dresser Drawer and Other Stories about Adam Joshua.

Sneve, Virginia Driving Hawk. High Elk's Treasure.

Snicket, Lemony. The Bad Beginning.

Soto, Gary. Baseball in April and Other Stories.

Speare, Elizabeth George. The Witch of Blackbird Pond.

Spinelli, Jerry. Maniac Magee.

Steig, William. Abel's Island.

Streatfield, Noel. Skating Shoes.

Taylor, Theodore. The Trouble with Tuck.

Temple, Frances. Grab Hands and Run.

Thomas, Jane Resh. The Comeback Dog.

Uchida, Yoshiko. Journey to Topaz.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief.

Voigt, Cynthia. Bad Girls.

-----. Homecoming.

Vuong, Lynette Dyer. The Brocaded Slipper and Other Vietnamese Tales.

Walter, Mildred Pitts. Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World.

White, E. B. Charlotte's Web.

White, Ruth. Belle Prater's Boy.

Williams, Vera. Scooter.

Wrede, Patricia C. Dealing with Dragons.

Wright, Betty Ren. Christina's Ghost.

Yee, Paul. Tales from Gold Mountain: Stories of the Chinese in the New World.

Yep, Laurence. The Ghost Fox.

Yolen, Jane. The Devil's Arithmetic.

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