

Recommended Reading List

Books are a great way to explore the arts with children—in fact, books are also an art form! As you read the books aloud, talk about the pictures, the characters, the setting, and the plot. Encourage children to share their ideas and reactions.

Dance

The Animal Boogie by Debbie Harter. Animals and children join in a colorful, joyous jungle dance. (Includes a CD)

Color Dance by Anna Jonas. With swirls of color, this is a graceful celebration of art and dance.

Dancing in the Wings by Debbie Allen. Illustrated by Kadir Nelson. Sassy has big feet and long arms, but she is determined to win a spot in the dance festival.

Earthdance by Joanne Ryder. Illustrated by Norman Gorbaty. Imagine you are the Earth and can dance along to its spinning, evolving nature.

Firebird by Misty Copeland. Illustrated by Christopher Myers. The famous American Ballet Theater star provides encouragement for a young African-American girl who hopes to be a dancer.

Emma and Julia Love Ballet by Barbara McClintock. A young girl and a professional ballerina get ready for the evening's performance.

Frances Dean Who Loved to Dance and Dance by Birgitta Sif. A little girl loves to dance but only by herself. Can she overcome her fears to share her love with others?

Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae. Illustrated by Guy Parker-Rees. Gerald the giraffe is told he's too clumsy to dance, but when he finds the right tune he just can't resist kicking up his heels.

I Am a Dancer by Pat Lowery Collins. Illustrated by Mark Graham. There are all kinds of everyday ways to be a dancer, from shimmying out of bed to splashing in puddles.

Jingle Dancer by Cynthia Leitich Smith. Illustrated by Cornelius Van Wright and Ying-Hwa-Hu. Jenna, who wants to be a jingle dancer at the powwow just like her Grandma Wolf, is helped by neighbors and family members as she assembles her traditional dress.



My Mama Had a Dancing Heart by Libba Gray. Illustrated by Raúl Colón. A dancer remembers her mother's dancing in this evocative story.

The Night Before My Dance Recital by Natasha Wing. Illustrated by Amy Wummer. A night of worry turns into triumph at a young girl's dance recital.

Pete the Cat and the Cool Cat Boogie by James Dean. Pete gets some advice on how to improve his dance steps.

The Rain Stomper by Boswell Addie. Illustrated by Eric Velasquez. Jazmin refuses to let a rainstorm ruin the big neighborhood parade.

Rupert Can Dance by Jules Feiffer. When Mindy goes to sleep, her cat Rupert dances the night away. When his secret is revealed, Mindy finds a way for them to dance together.

Song and Dance Man by Karen Ackerman. Illustrated by Stephen Gammell. Gliding across the room, Grandpa tells of tap dancing on the vaudeville stage.

Tallulah's Solo by Marilyn Singer. Illustrated by Alexandra Boiger. Tallulah is excited that her little brother is also taking dance class—until he is chosen for a major role in the ballet!

Music

Ah, Music! by Aliko. This is a thorough introduction to all aspects of music.

Baby Beluga by Raffi. Illustrated by Ashley Wolff. One in a series of "songs to read," this illustrated version of the much-loved song celebrates the "little white whale on the go."

Ben's Trumpet by Rachel Isadora. Ben would love to play jazz, like the cool musicians at the Zig Zag Club.

Charlie Parker Played Be Bop by Chris Raschka. Echoing the rhythms and sounds of jazz, the simple text and bold illustrations will set your toes tapping.

Drum Dream Girl by Margarita Engle. Illustrated by Rafael López. Meet Millo Castro Zaldarriago, who broke the barrier against female drummers in Cuba.

Five Little Speckled Frogs by Nikki Smith. Fun illustrations will keep children giggling as they sing along with the text.

Hana Hashimoto, Sixth Violin by Chieri Uegaki. Illustrated by Qin Leng. Inspired by her grandfather, Hana signs up to play the violin in a talent show.

This Jazz Man by Karen Ehrhardt. Illustrated by R.G. Roth. Meet nine great African-American jazz musicians in this version of the counting song "This Old Man."

M is for Melody by Kathy-jo Wargin. Illustrated by Katherine Larson. Instruments, composers, and styles are introduced in this musical alphabet book.

Mama Don't Allow by Thacher Hurd. A Dixie band of swinging alligators boogie all night long.

Max Found Two Sticks by Brian Pinkney. Two twigs become drumsticks as Miles taps out a beat.

Meet the Orchestra by Ann Hayes. Illustrated by Karmen Thompson. The instruments and the musicians who play them are introduced as they gather for an evening performance.

Music, Music for Everyone by Vera B. Williams. Rosa and her friends come together as the Oak Street Band to raise money for a good cause.

Squeak, Rumble, Whomp! Whomp! Whomp! by Wynton Marsalis. Illustrated by Paul Rogers. Musical sounds, from traditional instruments to the squeaking of a screen door, are described in words and pictures.

This Land is Your Land by Woody Guthrie. Illustrated by Kathy Jakobsen. This celebration of the familiar American anthem can be sung by the whole family.

Trombone Shorty by Troy Andrews. Illustrated by Bryan Collier. This autobiography describes the author's childhood in New Orleans and how he became a musician.



Zin! Zin! Zin! A Violin by Lloyd Moss. Illustrated by Marjorie Priceman. Watch as an entire orchestra gathers on stage.

Visual arts

Action Jackson by Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan. Illustrated by Robert Andrew Parker. This award-winning biography follows Jackson Pollack as he creates one of his most famous paintings.

The Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse by Eric Carle. Celebrate your inner artist with this colorful guide.

Beautiful Oops! by Barney Saltzberg. Sometimes accidents lead to wonderful works of art.

Cherries and Cherry Pits by Vera B. Williams. Bidemmi loves to draw and every picture tells a story.

The Day the Crayons Quit by Drew Daywalt. Illustrated by Oliver Jeffers. When Duncan opens his crayon box he finds letters instead. Why are the crayons so mad?

The Day with No Crayons by Elizabeth Rusch. Illustrated by Chad Cameron. When her mother takes her beloved crayons away, Liza discovers color all around her.

The Dot by Peter H. Reynolds. Even though Vashti thinks she can't draw, a small dot shows her how.

Draw! by Raúl Colón. In a wordless picture book, a young boy draws his own African safari.

Henri's Scissors by Jeanette Winter. This picture book biography of the artist Henri Matisse celebrates his cut-paper collages.

I Am an Artist by Pat Lowery Collins. Explore the creative process of art as a way of seeing.

If Picasso Painted a Snowman by Amy Newbold. Discover the styles of 17 well-known artists in this picture gallery.

Mix It Up! by Hervé Tullet. An invitation to play with colors that will inspire you to experiment.

Mouse Paint by Ellen Stoll Walsh. Three white mice discover red, yellow, and blue and create a color riot.

The Pencil by Allan Ahlberg. A pencil creates an entire world, but then has to create an eraser and a paintbrush to help him manage things.

The Sky Painter by Maragarita Engle. Illustrated by Aliona Bereghici. This is the story of Louis Agassiz Fuertes, a young boy who is determined to paint birds.

Through Georgia's Eyes by Rachel Victoria Rodriguez. Illustrated by Julie Paschkis. This portrait of Georgia O'Keefe follows her from New York to New Mexico.

Uncle Andy's by James Warhola. When James visits his famous uncle, Andy Warhol, he understand how an artist can transform everyday items into art.

What To Do With an Idea by Kobi Yamada. Illustrated by Mae Besom. A little boy gets an idea but he's not sure what to do with it. As he grows, so does it—as does the world around him.

Drama/Theater

Abuela by Arthur Dorros. A young girl and her grandmother fly over New York on a magical journey.

Backstage Cat by Harriet Ziefert. A runaway cat named Simon reveals what goes on behind the scenes when he startles the leading lady.



Full Moon and Star by Lee Bennett Hopkins. Illustrated by Marcellus Hall. When Kyle writes a play about the moon and Katie writes one about a star, they decide to collaborate.

I'm a Frog by Mo Willems. Elephant is stunned when Piggie announces he is a frog, but Piggie explains it's just pretend.

Imagine That! by Yasmeen Ismail. Lila's imagination takes her on amazing adventures and faraway places, even on an ordinary day.

It's a Tiger! by David LaRochelle. Illustrated by Jeremy Tankard. A young boy escapes from a tiger over and over again in a series of outrageous adventures.

Ladybug Girl by David Soman. Illustrated by Jacky Davis. When Lulu puts on her ladybug costume, she can have fun all on her own.

Lola Loves Stories by Anna McQuinn. Illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw. The books that Lola's dad reads with her each night inspire her adventures by day.

Louise the Big Cheese by Elise Primavera. Illustrated by Diane Goode. Convinced that she will get the lead in the class play, Louise must deal with her disappointment when she is cast as a mouse instead.

Officer Buckle and Gloria by Peggy Rathmann. Safety tips can be boring—but not when Gloria the police dog acts them out!

Olivia Saves the Circus! by Ian Falconer. When all the circus performers are out sick, Olivia steps in so the show can go on.

The Pirate Jamboree by Mark Teague. A group of neighborhood kids pretend to sail the high seas.

Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold. A young girl imagines she can fly high above her home in Harlem.

Rifka Takes a Bow by Betty Rosenberg Perlov. Illustrated by Cosei Kawa. Part of a family of performers, Rifka gets a chance to shine when she accidentally walks on stage.

What to Do With a Box by Jane Yolen. Illustrated by Chris Sheban. A simple box can provide lots of fun if you use your imagination.



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