

15 Classic Read-Alouds

Suggested by Kay Weisman in *Book Links*, July 2006

These titles “have proven popular as read-alouds for several generations of kids. Pick up an old favorite—or try something you missed when you were a child—and savor the pleasure of sharing great literature with new readers.”

(Grade levels listed indicate audience guidelines rather than reading levels.)



Mr. Popper’s Penguins by Richard and Florence Atwater (**J F Atw**)

(K-Gr. 5) Housepainter Mr. Popper’s desire for travel and adventure leads him to adopt two penguins and, eventually, set out on a coast-to-coast vaudeville tour with his family, the birds, and the birds’ offspring.

The House with a Clock in Its Walls by John Bellairs (**J F Bel**)

(Gr. 4-8) When orphan Lewis Bernavelt comes to live in a house filled with marble fireplaces, secret passageways, and unused rooms, he soon learns that life with his wizard uncle is never boring.

The Mouse and the Motorcycle by Beverly Cleary (**J F Cle**)

(K-Gr. 4) Ralph a reckless young mouse living at the Mountain View Inn, absconds with a toy motorcycle and learns to ride it.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl (**J F Dah**)

(K- Gr. 4) Charlie Bucket and four others find Golden Tickets, allowing them a tour of Wonka’s chocolate factory, where they meet the legendary Willy Wonka.

The Reluctant Dragon by Kenneth Grahame (**J F Gra**)

(K-Gr. 4) When a pacifist dragon, content to write poetry and enjoy himself, meets up with legendary dragon-slayer Saint George, the tow must come to terms with the villagers’ expectations that the dragon be slain.

Busybody Nora by Johanna Hurwitz (**E Hur**)

(Preschool-Gr. 3) Nora and her younger brother, Teddy, introduce themselves to the people living in their New York City high-rise, make stone soup, celebrate Daddy’s birthday, and give a party for all their neighbors.

Just So Stories by Rudyard Kipling. (**J F Kip**)

(K-Gr.5) First published in 1912, this collection of pourquoi tales set in Africa and India features rich language and lyrical style so select an unabridged version that preserves Kipling’s original language.

From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler

by E.L. Konigsburg (**J F Kon**)

(Gr. 3-6) Claudia and her brother Jamie run away from home to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, where they find mystery, adventure and intrigue.

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe by C. S. Lewis (**J F Lew**)

(Gr. 2-6) Peter, Edmund, Lucy and Susan travel through a magical wardrobe into the land of Narnia and begin a quest to rid the country of the evil White Witch and her followers.

Pippi Longstocking by Astrid Lindgarden (**J F Lin**)

(K-Gr.5) This irrepressible and intrepid heroine and mistress of Villa Villekula, Pippi Longstocking, accompanied by her monkey, Mr. Nilsson, plays tag with policemen, entertains two burglars, and celebrates her birthday, inspiring awe in her new friends Tommy and Annika.

Fables by Arnold Lobel (**E Lob**)

(K-Gr. 5) These 20 original fables with fresh, unexpected morals use animal characters to poke fun at human frailties.

The Hoboken Chicken Emergency by Daniel M. Pinkwater (**J F Pin**)

(Gr. 3-6) Young Arthur Bobowicz is sent to get a turkey for Thanksgiving and returns instead with a 266-pound live chicken named Henrietta. The two become friends, causing hilarious consternation in Hoboken.

The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin (**J F Ras**)

(Gr. 4-8) Sixteen people are invited to the reading of Samuel W. Westing's will, launching a dangerous and often surprising game to determine who will inherit his estate.

The Cricket in Times Square by George Selden (**J F Sel**)

(Gr. 2-6) Chester Cricket arrives in Times Square from Connecticut by way of a picnic hamper, and he takes up residence in a newsstand where he meets Harry the Cat, Tucker the Mouse, and a boy named Mario Bellini.

Charlotte's Web by E. B. White (**J F Whi**)

(K-Gr. 4) Wilbur is horrified to learn the fate of all farm pigs, but his spider friend Charlotte spins a web that helps to save Wilbur from becoming bacon. Charlottedeclares Wilbur to be "Some Pig."

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