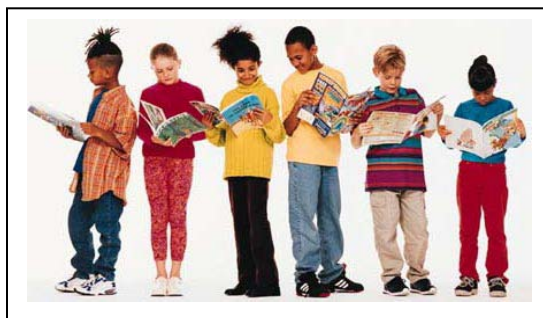


# Books to Read-Aloud with School-Aged Children



For more suggestions see  
The Carol Hurst Children's Literature Site  
<http://www.carolhurst.com/>

Nationally renowned storyteller and language arts consultant Carol Hurst offers an extensive collection of children's book reviews on her site organized by title, author, type of book, and suggested grade level.

*"It's fun. It builds community and a sense of belonging. It strengthens vocabulary, language, grammar and writing. It makes us aware of other places and other lives. It creates life-long readers."*  
*-Carol Otis Hurst*

## ***The Relatives Came***

by Cynthia Rylant (Picture Book **E Rly**) (Suggested for Pre-K)  
(It's just chuck full of humor and subtleties. Add to that the fact that it deals with extended families and we've got tons of things to point out to each other and to take in various directions. Follow one character throughout the story.)

## ***Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears***

by Verna Aardema (Picture Book **E Aar**) (Suggested for Kindergarten)  
(The plot is cumulative so that children who are not used to books and reading will get a recap of the action on each page. There's a lot to see on those pages because the illustrations show two plots simultaneously: what really happened and what was rumored to have happened. The plot is both funny and dramatic.)

## ***Chicken Man***

by Michelle Edwards (Picture Book **E Edw**) (Suggested for First Grade)  
(It introduces another community -- the kibbutz and the jobs that make the community work. Rody is transferred from job to job but he makes the best of each.)

## ***Swimmy***

by Leo Lionni (Picture Book **E Lio**) (Suggested for Second Grade)  
(The tiny red fish are menaced by a large one until Swimmy figures out a way for them to work together, making the whole greater than the sum of its parts and that is how members of communities protect each other.)

## ***The Mud Flat Olympics***

by James Stevenson (Picture Book **E Ste**) (Suggested for Second Grade)  
(Competition takes center stage but it doesn't destroy the community. The animal's Olympic games are hilarious: The All-Snail High Hurdle and The Smelliest Skunk Contest, for instance, but the animals love and respect each other and the community remains strong.)

## ***Amelia's Road***

by Linda Jacobs Altman (Picture Book **E Alt**) (Suggested for Third Grade)  
(Amelia's family travels to pick fruit and vegetables and she hates not having a place to belong. This time she is particularly anxious not to move on, because the teacher here has bothered to learn her name and has given her a star for a drawing she did of a house she'd like to live in. The story is respectful and honest about migrant life.)

## ***Seedfolks***

by Paul Fleischman (Chapter Book/Novel **J F Fle**) (Suggested for Third Grade)  
(This story portrays a community, home and hope. It starts with a little girl planting a seed in a vacant, trash-laden lot. This is a run-down urban neighborhood and, at first, her actions are viewed with suspicion -- she's probably hiding drugs, thinks one neighbor who sees her. Soon, however, others get involved and the garden that grows there transforms the neighborhood.)

### ***Dandelions***

by Eve Bunting (Picture Book **E Bun**) (Suggested for Fourth Grade)

(This picture book about a little girl who plants a clump of dandelions on the roof of their sod house dramatizes what makes a place home and what beauty is. Zoe and her family find strength in each other as they make a new home in the Nebraska territory.)

### ***The Widow's Broom***

by Chris Van Allsburg (Picture Book **E Van**) (Suggested for Fifth Grade)

(A witch's worn-out broom serves a widow well, until her neighbors decide the thing is wicked and dangerous! The illustrations are wonderful and the story is reminiscent of "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" but the new emphasis is on superstition and prejudice. The Spivey's determination to rid the neighborhood of the witch's broom and all its marvelous accomplishments is equaled by the widow's determination to keep her newfound friend and worker.)

### ***The Witch of Blackbird Pond***

by Elizabeth George Separe (Chapter Book/Novel **J F Spe**) (Suggested for Fifth Grade)

(Kit Tyler must leave behind shimmering Caribbean islands to join the stern Puritan community of her relatives. She soon feels caged, until she meets the old woman known as the Witch of Blackbird Pond. But when their friendship is discovered, Kit herself is accused of witchcraft!)

### ***Rebel***

by Allan Baillie (Picture Book **E Bai**) (Suggested for Sixth Grade)

(Based on a true story, Rebel tells about a community in Burma that stands together against a bully General marched his army into their village and rounded up the residents.)

### ***Wringer***

by Jerry Spinelli (Chapter Book/Novel **YA F Spi**) (Suggested for Sixth Grade)

Every sixth grader has felt peer pressure to do something he or she knows is wrong. Here's a book that brings it to center stage about a kid who dares to rebel against a brutal custom that involves an entire town. Ten year old Palmer, who refuses to participate, is condemned and scorned.

### ***The Table Where Rich People Sit***

by Byrd Baylor. (Picture Book **E Bay**) (Suggested for Seventh Grade)

(A young narrator has called a family meeting to discuss money -- she thinks they don't have enough. Her parents, however, consider themselves quite rich and they proceed to describe and enumerate their riches. They value working out of doors, wildlife, sunsets, coyote howls and the beauty they see all around them.)

### ***The Giver***

by Lois Lowry (Chapter Book/Novel **YA F Low**) (Suggested for Seventh Grade)

(A seemingly ideal society has eliminated all that they find inconvenient or unpleasant. They value conformity, good health and hard work. The price they've paid for their ideal society is something we learn about bit by bit. Jonas becomes the receiver of memories shared by only one other in his community and discovers the terrible truth about the society in which he lives.)

### ***Lon Po Po: A Red-Riding Hood Story from China***

by Ed Young (Picture Book **E You**) (Suggested for Eighth Grade)

(You are never too old to think about folk stories. Young's images of the wolf dominate the book in both obvious and subtle ways and will stimulate reflection about fear and respect for these fascinating creatures.)

### ***The Cry of the Wolf***

by Melvin Burgess (Chapter Book/Novel **J F Bur**) (Suggested for Eighth Grade)

(What if there was one surviving wolf in England and what if a man's obsession was to kill that wolf? What if you knew where that wolf was and you inadvertently told the hunter? What if the tables were turned and the hunter became the hunted?)

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