

3-5 Year Old Book List

Abiyoyo by Pete Seeger(4-8)

Main Theme: Music/Art

Other Theme: Diversity

Description:

A father and his son save the town by singing a song to a mean giant who then dances till he drops. This playful book is adapted from a song by Pete Seeger.

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst (4-8)

Main Theme: Health/Safety

Other Theme: Self-esteem

Description:

When Alexander's day deteriorates, he must deal with his range of emotions to maintain his balance. With humor and insight, this story provides a way of looking at emotional health.

Amazing Grace by Mary Hoffman (4-8)

Main Theme: Self-esteem

Other Theme: Diversity

Description:

Grace's supportive mother and grandmother help her realize that she can accomplish anything if she puts her mind to it, no matter what others say.

Anansi the Spider by Gerald McDermott (4-8)

Main Theme: Diversity

Other Theme: Self-esteem

Description:

A traditional tale from Ashanti, Father Anansi and his individually talented sons learn a lesson in cooperation and give the world a very special gift-the moon.

Apples and Pumpkins by Anne Rockwell (4-8)

Main Theme: Math/Science

Description:

Celebrate the special colors and pleasures of autumn with a child as she visits a farm, picks pumpkins, and goes trick-or-treating.

Arroz Con Leche: Popular Songs and Rhymes from Latin America by Lulu Delacre (4-8)

Main Theme: Literacy Development Through Media

Other Themes: Diversity, Music/Art

Description:

Rhymes, chants, and ditties from Latin America are presented in English and Spanish and the gentle illustrations are perfect to share with young children.

Arthur Writes a Story by Marc Brown (4-8)

Main Theme: Literacy Development

Other Themes: Music/Art, Peer Relationships

Description:

Arthur becomes confused when he takes advice from others but learns that the best stories come from experience. How Arthur writes about his dog, Pal, will affirm the importance and pride children take when writing creatively.

The Art Lesson by Tomie DePaola (4-8)

Main Theme: Music/Art

Other Themes: Diversity, Self-esteem

Description:

Though some of the other kids in Tommy's school think it's dumb that he is so interested in art, a special teacher-and, of course, his family-encourage Tommy's talent in this autobiographical story.

Aunt Flossie's Hats (and Crab Cakes Later) by Elizabeth Fitzgerald Howard (4-8)

Main Theme: Diversity

Other Theme: Self-esteem

Description:

The olden days come alive for two African American girls when they visit their Great-Great-Aunt Flossie and her large collection of hats, each with its own story. This warm story is based on the author's

recollections of her elderly aunt.

Babushka's Doll by Patricia Polacco (4-8)

Main Theme: Diversity

Description:

Natasha is demanding of her busy grandmother, Babushka. When Babushka lets her play with one of her old dolls, Natasha gets a dose of her own medicine when the doll comes to life. The Russian setting comes alive in spirited watercolors.

A Bad Case of Stripes by David Shannon (4-8)

Main Theme: Self-esteem

Description:

Camilla Cream worries about what everyone will think of her and so is highly distressed when she develops stripes as colorful as rainbow. The humor in this morality tale is over the top and will not be missed by slightly older readers.

The Bat Boy and His Violin by Gavin Curtis (4-8)

Main Theme: Music/Art

Other Themes: Diversity, Self-esteem

Description:

Even though his father is a manager of a team in the Negro Baseball League, Reginald is more interested in playing the violin. This warm story introduces a fascinating time in American history and the relationship that develops between a father and child.

The Biggest Pumpkin Ever by Steven Kroll (4-8)

Main Theme: Peer Relationships

Other Themes: Math/Science

Description:

Two mice-one a house mouse, the other from the field-work together to grow the biggest pumpkin ever to show the power of teamwork and what focusing on a goal can accomplish.

Bigmama's by Donald Crews (4-8)

Main Theme: Diversity

Other Theme: Self-esteem

Description:

The young narrator and his family enjoy the pleasures of summer at their grandparent's rural home. Only the astute viewer realizes that this African American family has traveled from the north to the segregated south in the late 1940s. Note the final page where the author/illustrator presents a self-portrait of him as an adult looking back.

A Birthday Basket for Tia by Pat Mora (4-8)

Main Theme: Diversity

Other Themes: Music/Art, Self-esteem

Description:

Cecelia, a Mexican American girl, prepares a special basket for her great aunt's upcoming 90th birthday. The child's pride in her work is evident in her narration of the story, sprinkled with Spanish words.

The Bossy Gallito/El Gallito Mando by Lucia M. Gonzalez (4-8)

Main Theme: Diversity

Description:

An officious rooster—a truly bossy bird—encounters trouble on the way to his uncle's wedding. This cumulative folktale from Latin America is illustrated to evoke this culture with verve and humor.

Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain by Verna Aardema (4-8)

Main Theme: Math/Science

Other Theme: Diversity

Description:

In the cadence of "The House that Jack Built", a farmer waits for rain to nourish the dry landscape. The way rain contributes to a healthy environment is imbedded in this cumulative poem.

Carlos and the Squash Plant**Carlos y la planta de calabaza by Jan Romero Stevens (4-8)**

Main Theme: Health/Safety

Other Themes: Diversity, Science/Math

Description:

Carlos has a serious aversion to baths. One day, he has an itchy ear and notices something growing there. Children will recognize the humor in the silly situation and the tale's cautionary note on the

importance of personal hygiene.

Chair for My Mother by Vera Williams (4-8)

Main Theme: Health/Safety

Other Themes: Self-esteem

Description:

When they lose everything in a fire, a girl, her mother, and her grandmother save coins in a jar to buy a new chair for Mama to rest in when she comes home from her job as a waitress. This story can begin a discussion of fire safety among other topics.

Chester's Way by Kevin Henkes (4-8)

Main Theme: Peer Relationships

Description:

Chester and Wilson have their own settled ways of doing things. That is until Lilly arrives in the neighborhood. A duo becomes a trio of friends though not without some growing pains and compromise.

Chicken Sunday by Patricia Polacco (4-8)

Main Theme: Music/Art

Other Theme: Diversity

Description:

The narrator and her friends, Stewart and Winston, earn money to buy the boys' grandmother a new Easter hat by decorating Russian "pysanky" eggs. Traditions brought by immigrants and those of African Americans come together through art and mutual respect.

Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes (4-8)

Main Theme: Self-esteem

Other Theme: Peer Relationships

Description:

Chrysanthemum loves her name, a reflection of her parents' love for her, until she's teased about it at school. With the help of a caring teacher, the children and Chrysanthemum come to appreciate her unusual name.

Dancing with the Indians by Angela Shelf Medearis (4-8)

Main Theme: Music/Art

Other Theme: Diversity

Description:

Older readers will appreciate the different dances that a girl and boy witness on their annual visit to the Seminoles in Oklahoma to pay tribute to the tribe that gave refuge to their grandfather, a runaway slave.

David Goes to School by David Shannon (4-8)

Main Theme: Health/Safety

Description:

David behaves monstrously in school much to the delight of the readers and to the horror of adults. His bad behavior, however, can serve to initiate discussion about appropriate and safe behavior in school and elsewhere.

Diez Deditos/Ten Little Fingers by Jose-Luis Orzco (4-8)

Main Theme: Music/Art

Other Themes: Literacy Development Through Media, Diversity

Description:

This handsomely illustrated compilation of rhymes and songs has roots in traditional ditties as well as some original songs. Music and actions are included in this engaging and useful collection.

(Saturday Night at the) Dinosaur Stomp by Carol Diggory Shields (4-8)

Main Theme: Music/Art

Other Theme: Literacy Development Through Media

Description:

Imagine dinosaurs that dance and you've got the premise for this rollicking, rhyming, and imaginative book. Lively language and outrageous illustrations present a memorable Saturday night dance.

Does a Kangaroo Have a Mother, Too? by Eric Carle (4-8)

Main Theme: Self-esteem

Description:

The repetition and reinforcement of the notion that all creatures have mothers enhances a child's confidence in herself and her ability to read along.

The Doorbell Rang by Pat Hutchins (4-8)

Main Theme: Science/Math

Other Theme: Diversity

Description:

How can the cookies that mother just made be shared among all those who arrive at the house? Basic math concepts take on real meaning as tasty treats are divided in the increasingly crowded kitchen.

Dumpy La Rue by Elizabeth Winthrop (4-8)

Main Theme: Self-esteem

Other Themes: Music/Art

Description:

Dumpy La Rue is a pig whose desire to dance is stronger than his family's admonitions that he's too dumpy. Dumpy not only dances, but also inspires everyone to join in on the fun in this rhyming tale.

Everybody Cooks Rice by Norah Dooley (4-8)

Main Theme: Diversity

Other Theme: Self-esteem

Description:

Carrie tastes what her neighbors are preparing for dinner as she looks for her brother. Though everyone is from a different cultural background, each family is preparing rice, bringing home our commonalities.

Feast For 10 by Cathryn Fallwell (4-8)

Main Theme: Science/Math

Other Themes: Diversity, Health/Safety

Description:

As a family shops and prepares for a special meal, they must think about basic math concepts such as counting.

Freight Train by Donald Crews (4-8)

Main Theme: Literacy Development Through Media

Other Themes: Music/Art

Description:

A freight train whizzes through the pages of this modern classic. Children can identify its cars by name and color. The sequence of cars is repeated visually as the train speeds up and colors blur.

Frog and Toad All Year by Arnold Lobel (4-8)

Main Theme: Peer Relationships

Other Themes: Science/Math

Description:

The two friends share the simple pleasures over the course of a year, supporting each other and demonstrating the essence of friendship.

Gathering the Sun/Cosecha de Sol by Alma Flor Ada (4-8)

Main Theme: Literacy Development Through Media

Other Themes: Diversity, Science/Math

Description:

The Spanish alphabet becomes the platform for poems in both English and Spanish presenting Mexican farming and its bounty.

Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message by Chief Jake Swamp

Main Theme: Diversity

Description:

Drawn from Iroquois tradition, thanks are given for the bounty of earth and more. Realistic illustrations provide a sense of place for the gentle, almost spiritual verse.

Gracias, the Thanksgiving Turkey by Joy Cowley (4-8)

Main Theme: Diversity

Description:

A turkey, sent to Miguel by his truck-driving dad, becomes Miguel's pet and friend, following him everywhere – even to church. When dad returns home, even Abeulo and Abeula agree that Gracias, the recently blessed turkey, must attend dinner, not be dinner. Spanish words are integrated into this humorous tale.

Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert (4-8)

Main Theme: Health/Safety

Other Theme: Science/Math

Description:

Bold shapes and forms show tools needed for a garden and the plants from seeds to harvest when they make a healthful vegetable soup. Good eating habits and nutrition logically flow from the tasty bounty depicted.

Guess Whose Shadow by Stephen Swineburn (4-8)

Main Theme: Literacy Development Through Media

Other Themes: Diversity, Science/Math

Description:

An explanation of what makes shadows and why shadows come in different sizes opens this concept book, illustrated with crisp, colorful photographs. It's also a guessing game that invites prediction and close inspection of the world around us

Happy Birthday, Martin Luther King by Jean Marzollo (4-8)

Main Theme: Diversity

Other Themes: Literacy Development Through Media, Self-esteem

Description:

This easy biography of the Civil Rights leader provides an introduction to the man and his accomplishments, making them accessible to young children. Distinctive scratchboard illustrations complement the text.

Happy Birthday, Moon by Frank Asch (4-8)

Main Theme: Peer Relationships

Description:

A small brown bear wants to celebrate his friend, the moon's birthday by sharing something special. This cozy story shows the warmth of friendship and caring.

Have You Seen My Duckling? by Nancy Tafuri (4-8)

Main Theme: Literacy Development Through Media

Other Theme: Science/Math

Description:

The reader sees what the mother duck can't: her nearby duckling exploring its independence but close enough to feel safe. Uncluttered illustrations show the ducks in their natural environment.

A House for Hermit Crab by Eric Carle (4-8)

Main Theme: Science/Math

Other Theme: Literacy Development Through Media

Description:

A hermit crab's change of houses introduces sea animals and habitats in the illustrator's lively signature style.

A House is a House for Me by Mary Anne Hoberman (4-8)

Main Theme: Health/Safety

Description:

Animals, insects, and people all need shelter. This rhyming look at houses is coupled with detailed illustrations to introduce the wide range of homes and their importance to the safety and health of all creatures.

How Are You Peeling? Foods With Moods by Sexton Freyman (4-8)

Main Theme: Health/Safety

Other Themes: Music/Art, Self-esteem

Description:

Vegetable sculptures show an amazing array of emotions with which children (and adults) can empathize. The creative approach also helps readers put words to feelings and begin the process of "talking things out."

Imogene's Antlers by David Small (4-8)

Main Theme: Self-esteem

Other Theme: Diversity

Description:

One morning Imogene wakes up with a large rack of antlers on her head much to her surprise. She finds them both useful and difficult but carries them off well because of her innocence and solid sense of self. This "what-if" story is both funny and fresh.

Leo the Late Bloomer by Robert Kraus (4-8)

Main Theme: Self-esteem

Description:

Leo can't do everything that the other tigers can do, which worries his father but not his mother who assures both Leo and his dad that he's just a late bloomer. Of course, Leo blossoms into reading, writing, and speaking-a strong reassurance to other late bloomers.

Make Way for Ducklings by Robert McCloskey (4-8)

Main Theme: Health/Safety

Other Themes: Music/Art

Description:

When Mr. & Mrs. Mallard settle in Boston, they must learn to cross busy streets safely and find a true friend in a police officer.

Mama Cat Has Three Kittens by Denise Fleming (4-8)

Main Theme: Peer Relationships

Description:

Boris always does just the opposite of what Mama and the other kittens do. How he relates to them and his lively personality are portrayed in large, textured illustrations and minimal text

Mama Zooms by Jane Cowen-Fletcher (4-8)

Main Theme: Diversity

Description:

A boy sits on his mother's lap in her wheelchair as they zoom to work and play and share imaginative adventures. What she cannot do because of her physical disability doesn't matter as much as what she does as an energetic and loving mom.

Happy Birthday, Martin Luther King by Jean Marzollo (4-8)

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Other Themes: Literacy Development Through Media, self-esteem

Description:

This easy biography of the Civil Rights leader provides an introduction to the man and his accomplishments, making them accessible to young children.

Distinctive scratchboard illustrations complement the text.

The Meanest Thing to Say by Bill Cosby (4-8)

Main Theme: Peer Relationships

Other Themes: Diversity, Self-esteem

Description:

What happens when children don't respond to a bully's taunts? The situation is quickly diffused, and the bully doesn't have any power left as Little Bill learns he has gained the confidence to ignore the name calling by a new boy at school.

Miss Mary Mack by Mary Anne Hoberman (4-8)

Main Theme: Literacy Development

Other Themes: Music/Art

Description:

The appeal of the familiar chant is presented with new stanzas and animated, lighthearted illustrations. Children will want to join in with the predictable rhyme and perhaps add to them.

My Mom Is My Show and Tell by Delores Johnson (4-8)

Main Theme: Music/Art

Other Theme: Diversity

Description:

When David's mom comes to school with him to talk about her career, she avoids his advice by breaking into dance in front of the school-to David's horror and his classmates' delight.

Officer Buckle and Gloria by Peggy Rathmann (4-8)

Main Theme: Health/Safety

Other Themes: Self-esteem

Description:

Officer Buckle visits schools with his canine assistant to give new meaning to safety. Humor is conveyed in what is shown in the contradiction between what is said and the action shown in the comic illustrations.

One of Three by Angela Johnson (4-8)

Main Theme: Self-esteem

Other Theme: Diversity

Description:

Sometimes being the youngest of three girls can be difficult; other times it's just fine. All children will appreciate the affirmation that their place in the family is special, just as in this realistically illustrated story.

Peter's Chair by Ezra Jack Keats (4-8)

Main Theme: Self-esteem

Other Themes: Literacy Development Through Media, Diversity

Description:

Peter is reluctant to give up his little chair when his baby sister arrives, but is reassured of his special place in the family by his loving parents. This classic deals effectively with sibling rivalry and the insecurity felt by the older child.

Pumpkin Pumpkin by Jeanne Titherington (4-8)

Main Theme: Science/Math

Description:

A boy plants a seed that grows into a huge pumpkin that he carves into a jack-o-lantern, saving some seeds to plant next year. Seasons and the plant cycle are introduced in this realistically illustrated book.

Rain Forest by Helen Cowcher (4-8)

Main Theme: Science/Math

Description:

Animals watch the deterioration of their environment due to the actions of humans. Lush, slightly stylized illustrations are used in this cautionary tale.

Red Riding Hood by James Marshall (4-8)

Main Theme: Health/Safety

Description:

This traditional tale retold and illustrated with sly humor can launch discussion about talking to strangers and looking for a trusted adult in a threatening or scary situation.

Saturday Night at the Dinosaur Stomp by Carol Diggory Shields (4-8)

Main Theme: Music/Art

Other Theme: Literacy Development Through Media

Description:

Imagine dinosaurs that dance and you've got the premise for this rollicking, rhyming, and imaginative book. Lively language and outrageous illustrations present a memorable Saturday night dance.

Taking a Walk/Caminando by Rebecca Emberley (4-8)

Main Theme: Science/Math

Other Theme: Diversity

Description:

Readers observe the environment on a walk from home to school in this everyday experience presented in Spanish and English.

The Story of Ferdinand by Munro Leaf (4-8)

Main Theme: Self-esteem

Other Theme: Diversity

Description:

Ferdinand the Bull would rather sit under his cork tree and smell the flowers than fight in Madrid's bullrings. When he's unwittingly recruited, he remains true to himself and will not fight. Individuality is celebrated in this classic black and white picture book.

Con Mi Hermano/With My Brother by Eileen Roe (4-8)

Main Theme: Self-esteem

Other Theme: Diversity

Description:

The activities shared by a boy and his older brother not only build their warm relationship, but bolsters the younger boy's self-esteem.

Yoko by Rosemary Wells (4-8)

Main Theme: Peer Relationships

Other Themes: Diversity, Self-esteem

Description:

Yoko's classmates tease her about the sushi she brings for an international lunch at school until one brave friend tries the traditional Japanese food.