

FICTION

Armstrong, Mia. "Mia the Masterpiece: An Empowering Story about Inclusivity and Growing Up with Down Syndrome" 2025

A touching story that gives readers a glimpse of life from the perspective of someone with Down syndrome. Mia, a young girl with tan skin and blonde hair, has Down syndrome, and that makes her different in some ways, but she is also the same in many others. She likes surfing and sleepovers and says of her best friend Monroe, "We are different, but also alike." When completing a self-portrait for her class, Mia draws what she feels like instead of what she looks like. Her friends don't understand at first, but when they do, they like her drawing. Young readers will find this book delightful. It can be both a mirror and a window to learn about how differences are what make people special.

READER ARMSTRONG

Awar, Jashar. "Loops" 2026

Mastering the mystery of laces is the name of the game in this paean to practice and patience. Our brown-skinned, dark-haired, hoodie-wearing hero bursts onto the page wearing only one shoe; the other one, which the little one kicked off, lies a few feet away. "I can't keep losing these shoes," the child laments. "My first ones with laces." The obvious solution? "I gotta tie them tight this time." An illustrated, somewhat intimidating guide depicts every step of the shoe-tying process. Frustration is inevitable, but the protagonist is remarkably mature in the face of failure. "That could have been worse. Next time it will be better!" is a mantra few would dispute. And even though the child does repeatedly lose a shoe along the way, the little one perseveres. A meta ending – in which the youngster runs to the front of the book to retrieve the lost shoe – brings the story full circle while drilling home a lesson in persistence.

E AWAR, POP NOW AWAR

Bailey, Linda. "Lena the Chicken (But Really a Dinosaur!)" 2025

Lena lives in a chicken coop, and she looks a lot like a chicken. But deep down, she's convinced that she's a DINOSAUR! She can feel it in her bones. Lena just doesn't understand the scaredy chickens in her family, and they don't understand her either, with her ferociousness and big ideas. The people on the farm are also baffled, except for little Madeline, who thinks Lena has personality. And then, when a dastardly weasel turns up and threatens the coop, Lena's fearful family chickens out again. It's up to Lena to unleash her inner dinosaur like never before – to save the coop and show this silly bunch of chickens how to stand up for themselves!

E BAILEY

Barnett, Mac. “Rumpelstiltskin” 2025

A humorous retelling of Rumpelstiltskin, the story of a mysterious gnomelike man who helps the daughter of a miller spin straw into gold in exchange for her firstborn child.

E BARNETT

Brallier, Max. “The Face in the Mirror and Other Scary Stories” 2025

Who is that trapped inside the mirror? What happens when a wish comes true? This scary story collection from New York Times bestselling author Max Brallier is perfect for beginning readers who are looking to be spooked. With simple text, creepy full-color artwork on every page, genuine scares, and a spooky "invisible" message on the cover, these five hair-raising stories are sure to send shivers down your spine.

J FIC BRALLIER

Campbell, Scott. “Cabin Head and Tree Head: Vol. 1” 2025

Whether drawing portraits or hiding out, Cabin Head and Tree Head are an irresistibly charming pair who support one another's ideas (digging for treasure without a map) and help one another overcome challenges (bad haircuts). They have no shortage of friends in a fascinating world full equally memorable characters with minds (and heads) of their own. These are the lighthearted tales of two pals who think differently – and entirely embrace it.

J GN CAMPBELL

Dean, James. “Pete the Kitty and the Beanstalk” 2026

Once upon a time, a kitty named Pete and his friend Callie climbed a beanstalk as tall as the sky. At the top, they heard "Fe! Fi! Fo! Fum!" But where are the sounds coming from? Beginner readers will love this new Pete-tastic spin on the beloved fairytale Jack and the Beanstalk.

READER DEAN

DiCamillo, Kate. “Orris and Timble: Lost and Found” 2025

Unlikely friends Timble the owl and Orris the rat suffer a sudden separation in this second episode of a planned trilogy. Having filled his feathered friend's head with stories of quests, the bookish Orris should be unsurprised when Timble, who's growing into a mature owl and yearns to visit the stars and moon, fails to appear one night ... and then the next. Still, his friend's disappearance is enough to make a rat feel fretful, as well as a little abandoned. But worry turns to resentment when Timble does at last come back. It takes a little time and an emotional exchange (“I waited and waited for you.” “I was lost.”) to mend fences. Orris also heeds the slogan on a salvaged sardine tin (“Make the good and noble choice”), which the rat sometimes talks to when he's alone.

J FIC DICAMILLO

Fang, X. "Broken" 2025

When Mei Mei accidentally breaks her ama's favorite cup, she's convinced it's the end of the world. What if Ama is angry? What if she yells? What if she kicks Mei Mei out of her house? Mei Mei can't face it. But when Mimi, the innocent cat who witnesses her crime, ends up being blamed, the guilt is too much! Mimi's accusing eyes follow Mei Mei until she just can't take it anymore, and the truth comes spilling out.

E FANG

Forsythe, Matthew. "Aggie and the Ghost" 2025

A headstrong young girl finds herself in a haunted house standoff. Aggie's excitement about living independently quickly dissolves when she discovers that her lovely new cottage in the rainy woods comes with an unwelcome, shapeshifting, ghostly roommate. Determined to make it work, Aggie establishes house rules for the ghost — "no haunting after dark," "no stealing my socks," "no more eating all the cheese"— but her spectral companion proves resistant to regulation. The conflict escalates to a high-stakes tic-tac-toe match, where the winner gets the house.

E FORSYTHE

Freidrich, Paul. "Zebra and Yak: The Backwards Alphabet Book" 2025

When a book about the alphabet starts with Z, it's a pretty good indication that chaos and hilarity will ensue. Luckily Z and Y are right next to each other in the reverse alphabet, so Zebra can ask his friend Yak what's going on. Yak doesn't have all the answers (or any answers, really), but he helps Zebra investigate why the alphabet is presented backwards.

E FRIEDRICH

Gehl, Laura. "Attack Bunnies" 2026

This is the tale of forest guardians Carrot Cake and Pufftail, secret warriors who protect their home. When Renard Fox moves in, he seems to cause trouble. He chases chipmunks, disturbs Agatha Owl, and pelts the squirrel with nuts, but when Carrot Cake and Pufftail overhear him plotting to steal eggs, they know they must step in. Armed with one of the most powerful weapons they have – their words – the warriors realize that things are not always as they appear. The expressive characters perfectly match the playful action of the story to keep readers engaged, while Gehl's twist in the story delivers a subtle moral to not judge someone prematurely because, sometimes, maybe all they need is a hug.

E GEHL

Guojing. “The House that Floated” 2025

A family faces change with true ingenuity. Residing on an isolated cliff in a tiny red house, a couple spend their days fishing, dreaming, and watching the seasons pass. Soon they’re joined by a new companion, a baby whom they nurture year by year, sharing their love for moonlit nights and dolphin watching. As enchanting as their life is, the water that surrounds them is slowly, steadily rising, threatening to swallow their home, once far above sea level. With bravery and trust, the trio build a raft and transport their dwelling to higher ground, where waiting inhabitants hoist it into a peaceful green meadow. This enticing story is told wordlessly, with painterly landscapes providing the perfect setting for tender, intuitive interactions among a small cast of characters. As with much of Guojing’s work, a clear line connects this intimate tale to real-life societal challenges — in this case, the troubling consequences of climate change. And, like Guojing’s other books, the narrative is woven through with an unassailable belief in human goodness, the importance of family and community bonds, and the ineffable beauty of the fleeting world.

E GUOJING

Jin, Susie Lee. “I Am a Big Fish!” 2026

The little fish says it is really a big fish. The other fish and sea creatures do not believe the little fish. Then, when they are in danger, the little fish shows just how big it really can be.

READER JIN

Maillard, Kevin. “And They Walk On” 2025

Where do our loved ones go when they walk on, and what does that mean for those who miss them? This poignant meditation on loss centers on the household that a grandmother leaves behind as life goes on. As the family packs up her home, each chore offers an opportunity to ponder what she’s doing elsewhere, earthly tasks made magnificent by the wonders of an unknowable beyond — perhaps she waters a garden, growing titanic sequoias or herbaceous jungles; perhaps she’s fishing, nabbing a dinnertime catch with the help of a friendly whale. All the while, her grandchild moves through their previously shared space, navigating death’s contradictions and confronting tensions between the permanence of loss and the material proof of life interrupted.

PTS E MAILLARD

Preller, James. “Two Ballerinas . . . and a Moose” 2025

Moose wants to dance gracefully like the two ballerinas he meets. He may not have ballet slippers, but he will not give up! Find out how he makes it work in this delightfully silly story about a moose on a mission.

READER PRELLER

Reidy, Jean. "Bob Is the Biggest, Strongest, and Smartest" 2026

Bob the bear is the biggest, strongest, and smartest – according to himself. He never misses a moment to sing his own praises when he comes across other animals in the forest. When Bill, an affable badger, moves in, instead of talking about himself, he asks questions of others. Bill's genuine interest in getting to know his new neighbors leads him to make many friends, while Bob's bragging ways only isolate the ursine egotist. As Bob watches Bill engage in conversations, always driven by earnest curiosity, it leads Bob to ask Bill a question of his own. When that question leads Bill to ask Bob about himself, he shows Bob the magic of thinking of others. As Bob begins to ask questions of Bill, and later the other animals, he becomes less boastful and more likable and considerate. This delightfully funny picture book gently shows young readers that getting to know others rather than showing off is the way to make friends.

E REIDY

Sala, Felicita. "Bored" 2026

A very bored girl becomes less so when she starts to imagine all the bored people in the world floating away together to boredom-fueled adventures.

E SALA

Sandberg, Erin. "Never Give a Baby a Library Card" 2025

A baby, his mother, and his grandmother arrive at their public library and request a library card for the baby. Just as the librarian is handing him his card, a crotchety old man shouts out a warning and follows up with protests about giving library cards to babies. He pleads his dubious case through opinions such as "Ideas come from books, and too many of those / can lead to big problems, as everyone knows!" Other bystanders express their concerns about babies using books to learn how to cook, cut hair, and drive cars. But when two kids speak up, talking sensibly about the value of books for children, even the man who first complained backs down from his original position. It's a close call, but good sense defeats strong opinions in this amusing picture book exploring the value of books for all.

E SANDBERG

Sanders, Rob. "A Family of Readers" 2025

One sunny day at the local library, a family of readers rushed in the front door. To read and enjoy. To search and explore. This book celebrates the library as a vibrant community hub where every visitor – young and old – can explore, learn, and connect.

E SANDERS

Sarda, Julia. "The Witch in the Tower" 2025

Feeling excluded by her friends, a melancholy youngster sets out on a walk-in search of solitude – and finds herself along the way. Happening upon a lone tower, Carmela becomes bewitched by its denizen, a heavily mascaraed hag with a propensity for mind-reading and a welcome

tinged with menace. As the pair busy themselves brewing an elixir meant to heal Carmela's heartbreak, the girl hesitates. This recipe feels familiar. A grand tour of the tower's turret, too, inspires a sense of possibility. By the time the duo opens their doors to a coven of similarly kooky misfits, it's wildly apparent that this space – be it physical, spiritual, or something else entirely – is where she belongs, and where she can create space for others, too.

E SARDA

Smith, Jennifer. "A Cure for the Hiccups" 2025

When Max gets a persistent case of the hiccups, she tries everything to make them go away. She tries to hold her breath. She tries to drink water upside down. She tries standing on her head and doing somersault, but nothing works. "The only way to get rid of the hiccups is to wait," says her grandmother. But Max doesn't have time to wait! Soon, her imagination ran wild. What if she sets a record for the longest case of hiccups?

E SMITH

Song, Mika. "Night Chef" 2025

An industrious raccoon helps wherever she's needed. Living in a restaurant, where she cooks creatively and continuously after hours, the pointy-faced Night Chef savors what she can of her life, but hers is a solitary existence. When she unexpectedly becomes caretaker for a baby crow, she decides to find the hatchling's family. While searching, she lands at a tiny riverside diner run by a mole, staffed by frogs, and patronized by a panoply of animals. Thrilled to discover this small community, she dives right into helping prepare meals. Unfortunately, the restaurant is being terrorized by a frenzied owl, whose attacks threaten to shut down the whole cozy, companionable operation. Night Chef continues her journey to find the young crow's family, stopping at an empty diner to whip up a meal for a group of hungry fellow raccoons and leaping aboard a train car filled with barking dogs, but she soon returns to defend her newfound culinary home against their owl attacker by drawing on community connections, culinary skills, and a healthy heap of bravery.

J GN SONG

Woehling, A.T. "May's Too-Big Pizza" 2025

May has a big family. And when they decide to make homemade pizza together, it keeps getting bigger. Can May and her brothers and sisters solve their pizza problem?

READER WOHLING

NONFICTION

Bailey, Jenn and Sherry Bushue. "The Not So Quiet Life of Marcel Marceau" 2026

Get a glimpse into the challenging childhood and adolescence of the famous French mime. Marcel Marceau was born Marcel Mangel in Strasbourg, France, in 1923. His parents were Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, and his father worked as a kosher butcher. The boy was especially fond of Charlie Chaplin's silent movies and took to imitating his idol, as well as "birds, people, plants, and even the wind." As antisemitism spread throughout Europe and a second world war seemed likely to break out, the Mangels fled their home on the German border for Limoges. Marcel briefly studied art and then joined his older brother in the French Resistance, applying his skills to forge identity cards and save lives — including his own.

J BIO MARCEAU

Clarkson, Giselle. "Omnibird: An Avian Investigator's Handbook" 2025

A charming oversized field guide that aims to transform young readers into "omnibird" detectives, encouraging them to investigate the fascinating world of birds through observation and deduction. What sets this guide apart is its perfect balance of scientific accuracy and playful humor. The book's detective framework cleverly reframes birding as puzzle-solving rather than memorization, making it equally appealing to dedicated young ornithologists and reluctant nature observers.

J 598 CLARKSON

Fong, Pam. "The Clock" 2025

With arresting majesty, a huge, ornately wrought golden clock presides like a mechanical sun over this Parisian tale of urban growth, change, and renewal. Hung on the high glass-and-steel wall of the Gare d'Orsay, which opened in 1900, the clock remains a fixture as bustling train travelers in finely detailed period dress pass below – with many a small incident and encounter that reward close examination by readers. Years tick by, trains (as Fong explains in her afterword) become too long to fit, and the station has been abandoned for decades to darkness and rubbish. But ultimately, flashlights pierce the gloom; crews of workers follow, and today the space shines once more, brightened and remade. Refurbished, the magnificent clock presides from its high perch over a "world-class art museum" as new crowds of visitors gather beneath to look up in wonder.

J 681.113 FONG

Kurtz, Jane. "Mary Morland in the Time of Dinosaur Discovery" 2026

Before the word dinosaur existed, a young female fossilist helped identify the creatures. How can a biographer truly know a subject's unrecorded emotions? With this immediate and engaging account, Kurtz solves that problem by asking readers how they might feel were they

to experience what Mary Morland (1797-1857) went through, like being expected to sit decorously in a parlor rather than go outside exploring or being sent to live with friends after her mother's death. Immersing readers in historical context, Kurtz also challenges the conventions of the time by posing cheeky questions about whether Mary met these social expectations, then answering confidently in the negative. Instead, Mary collected shells and fossils, illustrated books by her husband, fossilist William Buckland, and traveled Europe with him, meeting scientists and visiting fossil sites. In Kurtz's perky prose, Mary springs to life as independent, curious, and relatable.

J BIO MORLAND

Lacika, Jenny. "Talking Books: Audiobook Inventor Dr. Robert B. Irwin and a New Way to Read" 2026

Lacika's picture-book biography sheds light on the inventor of the audiobook, Dr. Robert B. Irwin, who developed visual impairment after a childhood illness. Irwin found reading via Braille to be frustratingly slow and later discovered that few blind people could even read Braille, depending instead on others to read aloud to them. Throughout his storied career advocating for the blind, Irwin sought accessibility for all, as well as the technology to make "talking books" a reality. The author focuses on Irwin's desire to help others and his dogged determination to achieve his goals despite challenges.

J BIO IRWIN

McGuire, Erin. "The Spy in the Museum: How Rose Valland Saved Art from the Nazis" 2025

An unlikely spy sets out to save priceless stolen artwork from the Nazis. Rose Valland, curator at Paris' Jeu de Paume Museum, especially loves modern art for its departure from convention and expectation. To Adolf Hitler, however, modern art is "contaminated" and "degenerate." As World War II spreads through Europe, Hitler helps to pay for his expensive war by stealing and selling valuable artwork. Upon arriving at Rose's museum, soldiers order everyone out except for Rose, who stays on as manager. Little do they know that she secretly speaks German and listens in on their nefarious plans. Unwittingly, Rose becomes a spy. As the Nazis catalogue and hide their treasures, Rose documents the movements of every piece of art she can, passing information to the French Resistance and putting her own life in grave danger. Richly detailed, painterly illustrations highlight the gravity of Rose's work and some of the lesser-known struggles and losses of World War II.

J 940.5344 MCGUIRE

Peters, Lisa Westberg. "We Can Hear Without Ears: And Other Things You Didn't Know We Plants Could Do" 2026

Without plants none of us would survive. "You think we plants do nothing — just stand around all day with our roots stuck in the ground. We're like green lampposts, right? Well! We'd like to

set a few things straight.” Speaking on behalf of tulips and sunflowers, willows and pine trees, the carnivorous Venus flytrap, and more, a chatty, slightly sarcastic collective narrator argues that plants are crucial. They address their complaints to a variety of creatures, from mice and lizards to seagulls and gardeners. Along the way, they declare that “making food is our superpower” and that they can block enemy insects with sap and, in the case of the tomato plant, release a chemical to attract a wasp to eat a caterpillar munching on its leaves: “Those tomato plants are like a dinner bell. Ding, ding, ding! Come and get it!” They explain the symbiotic relationship between plants and fungi and how they communicate to help one another out in times of distress. An enchanting mix of whimsy and well-delivered facts, Peters’ portrait of community and cooperation among plants offers a model for us “nonplants” to consider if we, too, want a successful future, from being more attentive to our surroundings to using more renewable energy. Ridolfi’s enticing mixed-media collages blend earthy, energetic botanical sketches with woodblock-style prints to depict a variety of landscapes showcasing plant power. A delightful, humorous journey that will have youngsters regarding flora with a newfound respect.

J 580 PETERS

Pfister, Marcus. “My Friend the Paintbrush: The Colorful World of Marcus Pfister” 2026

In this unique, interestingly straightforward picture book, celebrated artist Pfister addresses readers directly, using rhymed couplets to explain how he uses his paintbrushes to bring his beloved characters to life. Audiences will readily recognize Rainbow Fish and Penguin Pete and be treated to a retrospective of Pfister's additional work, highlighting 17 titles produced over the past 30 years. Effortlessly translated from the original German, the first half of the book talks about "my friend" and its amazing capabilities. Pfister's friend – his paintbrush – can be smooth or rough, clumsy or graceful, and use black and white or be full of color (each statement supplemented by an illustration demonstrating various painting styles), but it must always be held by hand and never be digital. The second half highlights selected excerpts from Pfister's books and offers brief comments about how and why he incorporated special techniques into specific illustrations. Examples include the foil stamping in “The Rainbow Fish,” the split pages in his Milo series, and the fabric backgrounds in “Bertie at Bedtime.” In his closing comments, Pfister expresses his hope that readers will discover their own creative innovations.

J BIO PFISTER

Pimentel, Annette Bay. “How a Bear Became a Book: The Collaboration That Created Winnie-The-Pooh” 2026

This picture book with its provocative title is as much a celebration of collaboration as the story it tells--how A.A. Milne and Ernest Shepard created Winnie-the-Pooh. Pray's soft, luminous illustrations echo the familiar style of the Hundred Acre Wood, with Pooh emerging from faintly

lettered shadows until, as his voice grows, he becomes fully formed on the page. Words and images shift across the spreads, reflecting the innovative pairing of text and art that made the original book so memorable. Back matter expands the history of the book, highlighting the editors, designers, and printers who shaped its publication. Readers learn that “When We Were Very Young” sold out on its first day of release and that the publisher pioneered the use of offset printing – allowing words and pictures to appear together on the same page. Many contributors of this book are introduced, reminding readers of a book's creation is rarely the work of just two people.

J 823.912 PIMENTAL

Poliquin, Rachel. “This is Orange: A Field Trip Through Color” 2025

Poliquin’s epic journey opens, naturally, with an orange. Fast facts and anecdotes follow; though presented seemingly randomly, they coalesce into a rich exploration of the color through the lenses of culture, history, and nature. The rooster from “The Canterbury Tales,” “dreaming of a fox whose ‘colour was betwixe yellow and reed,’” precedes a spread about how oranges originated in India and southern China, accompanied by an illustration of the fruits traveling to Europe. Next, the author tracks the evolution of the word orange from the Tamil word *naru*, which means “fragrant.” The tidbits in this quirky “field trip” bounce around, referencing Mark Rothko’s painting “Orange and Yellow,” the “International Orange” of American astronauts’ space suits, the orange T-shirts Canadian youngsters wear annually to remember Indigenous children sent to government schools, Buddhist monks’ robes, monarch butterflies, and marigolds in an Indian market.

J 535.6 POLIQUIN

Rosenstock, Barb. “Houdini's Library: How Books Created the World's Greatest Magician” 2026

Houdini is the world's most beloved magician, and he became famous for all of the amazing tricks he accomplished. Houdini knew just how to captivate his audience, whether it was leaping from a bridge or freeing himself from a straitjacket. But in true magician fashion, he kept a secret so great that not many people knew about it, and that was his love for books! As a young boy in Budapest, Harry learned to read at his father's knee. After the family emigrated to America, Harry grew up to be the amazing Houdini – but never lost his love of reading. He spent the rest of his life collecting all kinds of rare and unusual books, almost entirely about magic. With warm, inviting text and astounding art with miniature models constructed from paper, this extraordinary book opens a new page on the story of Harry Houdini.

J BIO HOUDINI

Smith Jr., Charles R. "Through the Telescope: Mae Jemison Dreams of Space" 2025

How far to the stars? This is what a little girl named Mae Jemison wonders as she peers through her telescope and dreams of space. Someday she will make it there, but for now she wonders, learns, and is inspired by the vastness of the universe. Astronaut, physician, and engineer Mae Jemison's passion would eventually lead to her becoming the first Black woman in space! "Through the Telescope" focuses on what first inspired a young Mae Jemison to reach for the stars. Perfect for kids who love space exploration and for readers of "Hidden Figures" and "The Undefeated."

J BIO JEMISON

Technoscienza, "The Many Ways to Be a Family: Learning from Animals" 2025

Animal families are varied and incredible. This book is the latest addition to a much-loved series about learning from animals. In these pages, children will explore how, even in wild, nature families are all different. From extended families to adopted children and unconventional couples, this book has it all!

J 590 MANY

Young, Emma. "What if Every Volcano Erupted at Once?" 2025

Prepare to learn all about the Earth – from rocks to rivers and countries to climate – in this engaging question-and-answer book. This is not your average science book. Kids will be drawn into each topic with one of 33 fun questions that are guaranteed to make kids think about our planet in a whole new way. Author Emma Young explains the answers with humor and plenty of science facts that kids will be racing to share with friends and family.

J 550.2 YOUNG