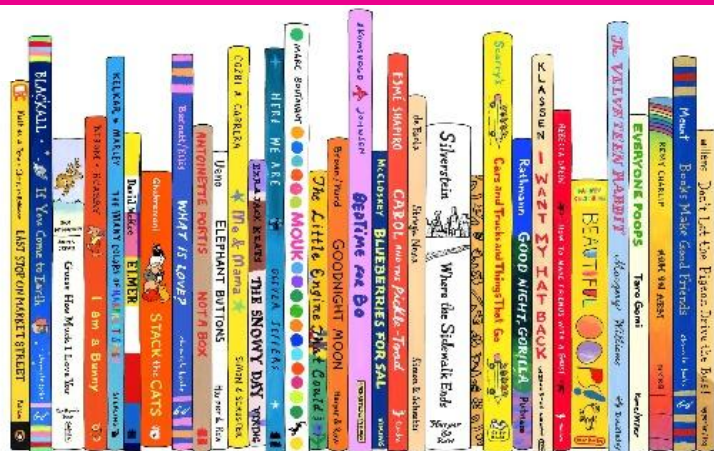


the st. Mary's



Good reading Guide



For rising preschool,
prek, & kindergarten
SUMMER 2025



Hello!

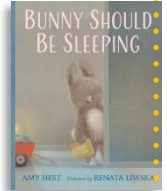
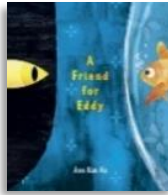
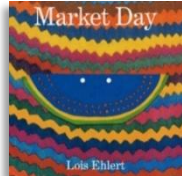
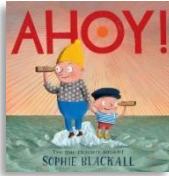
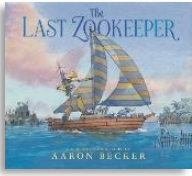
Thank you *so much* for taking a moment to read this little note from me to you on building the happy habit of reading to and *with* your children. We all know that these early years are foundation-building and that developing good habits *now* is crucial for success *later*.

Reading builds a solid foundation for a child's intellectual and emotional growth, and it encourages that most amazing thing... *curiosity*! All at once, you're introducing children to the shapes and sounds that make up language as well as to the thoughts and emotions that make up being human. All this while encouraging them to *want* to know more! Reading takes us on amazing adventures, introduces us to unforgettable characters, and unlocks doors to wonder and joy. It enables us to learn about the world around us—the glory of God's creation!

Getting children excited about reading is part of what we do at St. Mary's because that will help them get excited about learning. I know I don't need to remind you, but reading with your children really is vital for your own family bond as well as for your kiddo's future. Here are some great books that will help get children excited about reading, and also pass the summer months most pleasantly. Enjoy!

--mrs. england-burnside, may 2025

Some Super Picture Books!



The Last Zookeeper

Aaron Becker

A wordless retelling of the Noah's Ark story by SMES favorite, Becker. This time, Noah is 'NOA', a robot that does its best to help the animals.

Ahoy!

Sophie Blackall

A delightful way to celebrate play! When you're stuck inside like this poor kid, best to use your imagination and turn that couch into a ship, the rug into an ocean! Ahoy!

Market Day

Lois Ehlert

One of the joys of summer is getting to explore Farmer's Markets and seeing what's new and fresh. Join in the delight of a family as they load their truck for market!

A Friend for Eddy

Ann Kim Ha

Eddy the fish is all alone in his bowl, day after day. Until...a friend on the other side! Eddy takes a mighty leap to meet his new friend...a cat?!?!?!?

Spider in the Well

Jess Hannigan

The town well is dry! When the newspaper boy investigates, he learns there's more to the story—good for critical thinking and deductive reasoning skills.

The Good Shepherd and the Stubborn Sheep

Hannah E. Harrison

Harrison, an Oklahoma author/illustrator and SMES favorite, has just released this new book on God's love for us and how He is the shepherd we all need.

Summer Song

Kevin Henkes

A celebration of all that summer is—warm breezes, fireflies zinging past, even sneaking drinks from the hose! The fourth in Henkes' quartet of seasons books.

Bunny Should Be Sleeping

Amy Hest

A future classic, celebrating the rituals that make up a child's days and nights. When dad doesn't come to tuck Bunny in, Bunny goes off to find him. A sweet treasure!



Grumpy Monkey: Mom for a Day

Suzanne Lang

The latest in the favorite series about Jim Panzee and his life in the jungle. This time, he helps the moms in the jungle with funny but happy results!

Saturday

Oge Mora

A sweet look at a mom and daughter as they go about their Saturday routine. When things go awry, they scramble to make the best of it and it turns into a great day!

Get the Giggles

Andy J. Pizza

This is in board-book format but has lots to love even for older kids. Laugh, guffaw, chuckle, giggle, and snort your way through this joyful book!

Heatwave

Lauren Redniss

Such a hot, hot, hot day...it seems like the weather is just stuck until...could that be the pitter-patter of rain, coming to relieve everyone? Read and see!

Junia: the Book Mule of Troublesome Creek

Kim Michele Richardson

From the author of *Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* comes a children's book celebrating one of the main characters—Junia, the pack mule who takes the librarians all up and down the hollers of Kentucky, bringing joy and relief to hundreds of souls in the form of library books.

The Most Boring Book Ever

Brandon Sanderson

You think librarians on horseback is exciting—just wait until you read this...very boring book. (don't worry, it's actually not one bit boring...it just has a silly title.) Read this very funny, interesting book!

Love, the Earth

Frances Stickley

A sweet reminder, told from the Earth itself, of all its awe-inspiring wonders! Be reminded of the glory of creation in the happy illustrations and loving message.

Ursula Upside-Down

Corey R. Tabor

Come swim along with Ursula and cool off, but be prepared to swim upside down as some catfish do. An interesting look at animals' unique habits.

In My Garden

Charlotte Zolotow

Originally published in 1961, this reissue with new illustrations by Philip Stead recaptures the excitement and joy felt in a garden—watching with wonder the change, growth, and beauty!



and last but not least, the one to remember for its great message:

Read to Your Bunny

by Rosemary Wells

An SMES favorite and an ode to the joys of reading *together*.

Some Favorite Authors, Old and New!

This is by NO MEANS a complete and exhaustive list, but it's a good start for when you're going to the library catalog looking for some good books.

Jon Agee	Taro Gomi	Faith Ringgold
Jose Aruego & Ariane Dewey	Hannah E. Harrison	Christian Robinson
Molly Bang	Chris Haughton	Amy Krouse Rosenthal
Bonny Becker	Kevin Henkes	Cynthia Rylant
Margaret Wise Brown	Ryan T. Higgins	Dan Santat
Mac Barnett	Eric Hill	Tammi Sauer
Judi & Ron Barrett	Tad Hills	Allan Say
Byron Barton	Trina Schart Hyman	Richard Scarry
Graeme Base	Molly Idle	Jon Scieszka
Sophie Blackall	Jory John	Rob Scotton
Sandra Boynton	Crockett Johnson	Maurice Sendak
Jan Brett	William Joyce	David Shannon
Marcia Brown	Ezra Jack Keats	Bob Shea
Peter Brown	Steven Kellogg	Peter Sis
Eric Carle	Leo Lionni	Janet Stevens
Lauren Child	Arnold & Anita Lobel	Jeremy Tankard
Lucy Cousins	James Marshall	Mark Teague
Doreen Cronin	Robert McCloskey	Jan Thomas
Drew Daywalt	Bill Martin, Jr.	Deborah Underwood
Tomie DePaola	Oge Mora	Tomi Ungerer
Anna Dewdney	Robert Munsch	Chris Van Allsburg
Leo & Diane Dillon	Jane O'Connor	Martin Waddell
Julia Donaldson	Todd Parr	Rosemary Wells
Laura Dronzek	Bill Peet	Vera Williams
Candace Fleming	Andrea Davis Pinkney	David Wiesner
Denise Fleming	Brian Pinkney	Jane Yolen
Mem Fox	Jerry Pinkney	Harriet Ziefert
Marla Frazee	Patricia Polacco	Gene Zion
Jackie French	Peter Reynolds	Charlotte Zolotow

Concept Books!

Concept books are fabulous for reinforcing those ideas that children sometimes pick up on their own but sometimes need examples to see, like colors, shapes, numbers, letters, sizes and their relationships, textures, etc.

Some favorite concept book authors

Alan Baker

Donald Crews

Pat or Hazel Hutchins

Bill Martin

Dr. Seuss

Keith Baker

Lois Ehlert

Marthe Jocelyn

Richard Scarry

Ellen Stoll Walsh

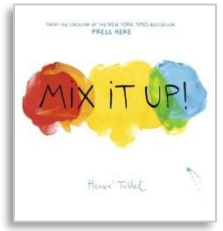
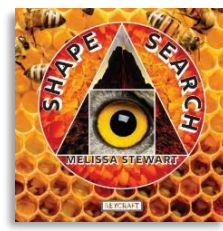
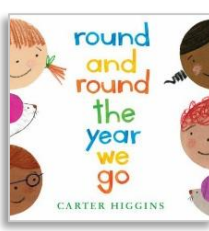
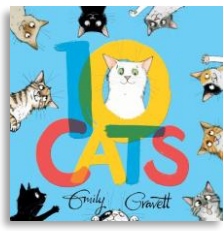
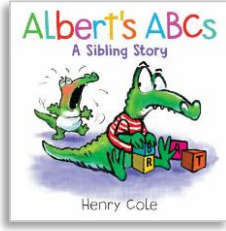
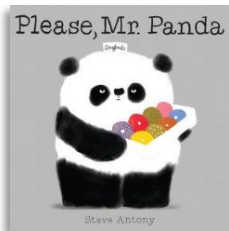
Sandra Boynton

Tana Hoban

Ann Jonas

Laura Vaccaro Seeger

Harriet Ziefert



Please, Mr. Panda

Steve Antony

In the first of a series of books on manners and social interactions, young ones begin to understand the importance of showing respect and kindness to others.

Albert's ABC's: a Sibling Story

Henry Cole

In this clever “abecedarium” (a book using only words in ABC order to tell the story), Albert must deal with tantrum-y little bro Baxter until Grandma saves the day!

10 Cats

Emily Gravett

A fun introduction to numbers and colors, as told through ten mischievous but adorable kitties!

Round and Round the Year We Go

Carter Higgins

What a fun, swingy & rhyme-y way to help with the challenging concept of time! As the story builds, it refers to earlier parts which reinforces the idea of months all around.

Shape Search

Melissa Stewart

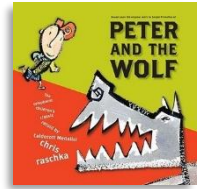
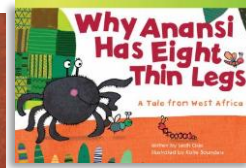
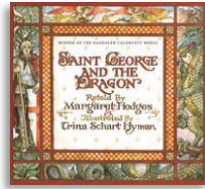
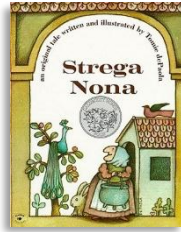
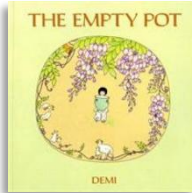
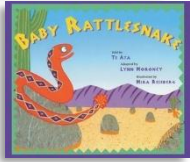
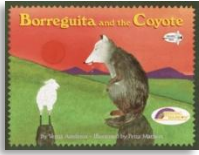
Go on a hunt for shapes while enjoying cool photos of nature and rhyming text that helps you to identify what you're looking at.

Mix It Up!

Hervé Tullet

From SMES favorite, Tullet, comes another fun and interactive book. This time it's adventure in color—primary colors, but especially what happens when you mix two or a few together!

Favorite Folktales!



Borreguita and the Coyote

Verna Aardema

A retelling of a funny and charming Mexican folktale in which little lamb must figure out a way to keep coyote from eating her. What to do? Trick the coyote, of course. And again and again!

Baby Rattlesnake

Te Ata

When Baby Rattlesnake sees his siblings enjoying rattles, he wants one, too. Based on a Chickasaw tale, this reminds us that it helps to be ready for a big responsibility before we get it.

Strega Nona

Tomie dePaola

In this retelling of an old Italian tale, Strega Nona (or, Grandma Witch) is so busy helping her village, she decides to hire an assistant, Big Anthony. The first of a beloved series.

The Empty Pot

Demi

This retelling of a Chinese tale tells of courage and honesty. The emperor needs an heir, so devises a test to determine a worthy successor—a sneaky test involving seeds and a pot. Will it work? .

Saint George and the Dragon

Margaret Hodges

A retelling of part of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* in which Saint George, the 'Red Cross Knight', must slay the dragon that has been terrorizing people for years. A true classic!

Why Anansi Has Eight Thin Legs

Leah Osei

Anansi stories have spread from West Africa to points all over the globe. Here, he attaches strings to his legs to alert him when food is ready...quite a funny dilemma when they all twitch at once!

Peter and the Wolf

Christopher Raschka

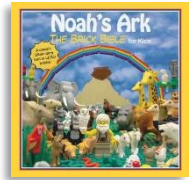
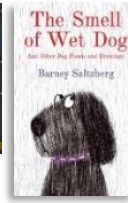
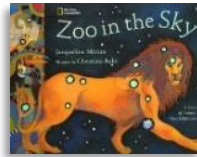
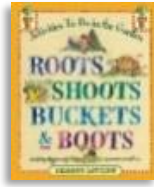
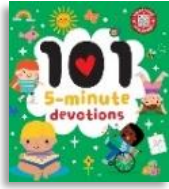
Raschka's retelling of Sergei Prokofiev's classic story is bright and colorful. Be sure to listen to the orchestral piece as you read it to help you know the pieces of an orchestra better! A childhood *must*!

This is the House That Jack Built

Simms Taback

The classic cumulative tale of how one thing leads to another and another and another...super fun to read aloud!

Nifty Nonfiction!



Let's Fly a Plane! : Launching into the Science of Flight with Aerospace Engineering Chris Ferrie
Ferrie has written so much to excite and entice children into learning about all areas of STEM and this one might help nervous flyers be more at-ease with how big metal tubes zoom in the air!

A Summer Treasury of Recipes, Crafts, and Wisdom Angela Ferraro-Fanning
Making a repeat appearance is this nifty book full of ideas for things to do, to make, to be on the lookout for...all excellent ways to pass the summer season. Look for all the other seasons, too!

101 5-Minute Devotions published by Broadstreet Publishing/Make-Believe Ideas
Such a sweet and deceptively simple book that invites readers to pause and take a moment to consider all of God's gifts in focused ways.

Roots, Shoots, Buckets & Boots Sharon Lovejoy
This classic will always be on this list because there is *always* a place for gardening in a young one's life! Get your hands dirty and grow something fun!

Zoo in the Sky: A Book of Animal Constellations Jacqueline Mitton
Be sure to take some time to lie on a blanket under the stars, watching fireflies and stars go by! Grab a hand-held telescope to see the animals hidden amongst the stars.

The Smell of a Wet Dog Barney Saltzberg
A collection of funny and relatable poems on 'man's best friend'; the amazing, the stinky, and everything in between! Cat-lovers will enjoy this, too!

Fish Farts : and Other Amazing Ways Animals Adapt Joanne Settel
Your eyes will open wide (& you may also gag) at some of the weird but wonderful ways that animals have learned to adapt and survive.

Noah's Ark Brendan Powell Smith
A clever retelling using LEGO of one of the first stories of the Bible—a story of devotion amidst a time of trial and God's love for us coming full circle.