

***Books Build Literacy Skills – Just Like Music  
So Let's  
Scat Like That!***

**Recommended Reading**

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Listen to the music. Sing along. Then follow up with a book. These titles have been chosen to build on some of the ideas presented in the music, to encourage further learning, spark additional interests but mostly to continue the fun.

Don't let the pictures fool you. These are books that can be shared with a variety of ages. Think about ideas that are conveyed in illustrations, how illustrations are created, what you gain from them. Consider how the words are used. Do you think they work together to create an experience for you and the children in your lives? If you don't, put the book down! There are lots to choose from: books with information, stories, poems, jokes, riddles and more.

So, sit back, turn on the music and open a book. A world of listening, sharing, reading, talking, learning and fun is close at hand!

**1. Scat Like That**

*Charlie Parker Plays Bebop* by Chris Raschka (Orchard, 1992)

Charlie Parker's saxophone comes alive with the syncopation of words and music in this rhythmic, jazzy and irresistible book.

*Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuosa* by Andrea Davis Pinkney. Illustrated by Brian Pinkney (Jump at the Sun/Hyperion, 2002)

The Queen of Scat is introduced here in lively language and swirling, color-filled images to create a memorable picture of the woman and the music with which she is identified.

*Hip Cat* by Jonathan London. Illustrated by Woodleigh Hubbard (Chronicle, 1993)

A cool cat follows his dream to become a saxophone-playing jazz musician. Vivid illustrations take the musical text to new heights.

*I See the Rhythm* by Toyomi Igus. Illustrated by Michele Wood (Children's Book Press, 1998)

African American music from spirituals to bebop, R&B to hip hop and more are introduced in energetic words (including select lyrics) and vibrant paintings.

**2. Flip Flapjacks**

*It's Raining Pigs & Noodles* by Jack Prelutsky. Illustrated by James Stevenson. (Greenwillow, 2000)

Master of wordplay, puckish poet Prelutsky tries to tangle tongues and create pictures with words in these sometimes irreverent and very funny rhymes.

*Six Sick Sheep: 101 Tongue Twisters* by Johanna Cole & Stephanie Calmenson. Illustrated by Alan Tiegreen. (HarperCollins, 1993)  
The challenge is in the words (and the line illustrations are fun; too): try to say these lines aloud more than once! The tongue twisters are sure to tangle, tie and tickle tongues.

*Tasty Poems* by Jill Bennett. Illustrated by Nick Sharratt (Oxford University Press, 1998, c1992)  
Poems about food using lots of alliteration may tangle tongues while whetting appetites for more. Silly poems are humorously (and colorfully) illustrated.

*A Twister of Twists, A Tangler of Tongues: Tongue Twisters* collected by Alvin Schwartz. Illustrated by Glen Rounds (Lippincott, 1972)  
Tongue twisters are traditional – and here, tongue twisters old and new have been playfully collected, presented and illustrated.

### **3. I Love Pie**

*Cherry Pies and Lullabies* by Lynn Reiser (Greenwillow, 1998)  
Cherry pies and a lullaby connect girls and women across four generations in this handsomely illustrated story. *Tortilla & Lullabies/Tortillas y canciones* (also by Lynn Reiser, illustrated by Corazone Valientes, 1998) is a bilingual companion volume, in which Hispanic daughters and mothers are unified across generations. And each time they engage in the activity, whether making tortillas or cherry pies, “.it was the same, but different.”

*Children’s Step-by-Step Cookbook* by Angela Wilkes (DK, 2001)  
Follow the directions, choose a dish, put together delicious recipes and make cooking a tradition in your family!

*Gathering the Sun: An Alphabet in English & Spanish* by Alma Flor Ada. Illustrated by Simon Silva (Rayo, 1997)  
The 28 letters of the Spanish alphabet are used as the device to present poems in English and Spanish about agricultural experiences. Vibrant paintings and lyrical language convey the natural beauty.

### **4. A-E and I-O and You!**

*Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman. Illustrated by Caroline Binch (Dial, 1991)  
When Grace puts her mind to it, she can do anything – including being Peter Pan in the class play.

*McBroom’s Wonderful One-Acre Farm* by Sid Fleischman. Illustrated by Quentin Blake (HarperCollins, 1997 ed.)  
Practice long and short vowels as you laugh (ha, ha & hee, hee) your way through this funny tall tale in which McBroom finds that his many acres are piled one on top of the other!

*Old MacDonald Had a Farm* illustrated by Glen Rounds (Holiday House, 1990 ed.)  
A crusty old farmer introduces his musical menagerie in this funny interpretation of a familiar song,

## 5. 50 States

*Celebrate the Fifty States!* By Loreen Leedy (Holiday House, 1999)

This playful hodgepodge is perfect for browsing and learning tidbits about the United States. Both text and illustration are funny and informative.

*Scrambled States of America* by Laurie Keller (Holt, 1998)

Bored with the same old arrangement, the states decide to visit each other and so make a scrambled mess of America. This is a quirky and fun way to travel the states!

*Quilt of States* by Adrienne Yorinks (National Geographic, 2005)

Eye-catching quilts combine with stories to engage and inform, revealing aspects of each state and how it became a part of the union.

*Train of States* by Peter Sis (Greenwillow, 2004)

An elaborately illustrated circus car for each state (with Washington DC as the caboose) creates the train which introduces each state and its symbols (bird, flower and more) in the order of admission to the union. .

## 6. The Limerick Song

*The Hopeful Trout and Other Limericks* by John Ciardi. Illustrated by Susan Meddaugh (Houghton Mifflin, 1989)

Travel to outer space or into Sue's room in these engaging limericks illustrated with a light touch.

*Lots of Limericks* collected by Myra Cohn Livingston. Illustrated by Rebecca Perry (McElderry, 1991)

A wide range of limericks sure to entertain and absorb are presented in one accessible collection.

*There Once Was a Very Odd School and Other Lunch-Box Limericks* by Stephen Krensky. Illustrated by Tamara Petrosino (Dutton, 2004)

In this zany school, there's recess all day and lots of limerick laughs.

## 7. A Pirate's Life

*Do Pirates Take Baths?* By Kathy Tucker. Illustrated by Nadine Bernard Wescott (Whitman, 1994)

These roughnecks make pirating look like great fun as their adventures unfold in rhyming text and comic illustrations.

*Everything I Know About Pirates* by Tom Lichtenheld (Simon & Schuster, 2000)

When the author started wondering about the whys of pirates, he came up with an imaginative, irreverent "reference" book filled with laughs.

*How I Became A Pirate* by Melinda Long. Illustrated by David Shannon (Harcourt, 2003)

Jeremy's fantastic, funny, and ultimately satisfying adventures with pirates on the high seas begin while he builds a sand castle and his parents are occupied with other things.

## **8. Pig Latin Polka**

*The Cat's Elbow & Other Secret Languages* collected by Alvin Schwartz. Illustrated by Margot Zemach (Farrar, 1985 ed)

Kids have always been attracted to secret languages. Learn pig Latin and other coded ways to talk covertly with friends and family.

*Once Upon MacDonald's Farm* by Stephen Gammell (Simon & Schuster, 2000, c1981)  
Old MacDonald did have a farm but he wasn't much of a farmer. But this take off on the well known song is as funny as trying to speak in pig Latin!

*Pig Latin--Not Just for Pigs* by Kate McMullen. Illustrated by Bill Basso (Grossett & Dunlap, 2005)

This latest installment in the Dragon Slayers' Academy series features a pig Latin speaking swine, an inept wizard and lots of laughs.

*Runny Babbit: A Billy Sook* by Shel Silverstein (HarperCollins, 2005)

Mixing up the beginning of words makes for a funny and interesting way to communicate as this collection of Silverstein poems posthumously published proves.

## **9. Dagnabbit!**

*Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* by Judith Viorst.

Illustrated by Ray Cruz (Atheneum, 1972)

Everyone has had a day like Alexander's rotten day. But things always improve and it seems that it's all in how it's handled!

*Angry Dragon* by Thierry Robberceht. Illustrated by Pilippe Goossens (Clarion, 2003)

The young narrator becomes a dragon unable to speak when he gets angry. Like this boy, however, anger subsides and his parents assure him of their love.

*How Are You Peeling? Foods With Moods* by Saxton Freymann & Joost Elffers (Scholastic, 1999)

Expressive fruits and vegetables illustrate moods and emotions ranging from anger to elation. After all, once the feeling is identified, it's much easier to discuss!

## **10. A Riddle in the Middle**

*Funny You Should Ask: Making Up Jokes & Riddles with Wordplay* by Marvin Terban.

Illustrated by John O'Brien (Clarion, 1992)

Words can sound the same but have different meanings and spellings. This book proves that the more you know, the funnier it gets with riddles and puns and even a riddle in the middle!

*Riddles and More Riddles* by Bennett Cerf. Illustrated by Debbie Palen (Random House, 1999 ed.)

Easy to read riddles (but harder to answer) and groaners are presented here with bubbly, comic illustrations.

*Walking the Bridge of Your Nose: Wordplay Rhymes Poems* selected by Michael Rosen. Illustrated by Chloe Cheese (Kingfisher, 1999)

Become baffled, bamboozled, bewildered and beguiled with this playful, illustrated collection of rhymes, tongue twisters, poems and more.

## **11. Black Socks**

*Fox in Socks* by Dr. Seuss (Random House, c1993, 1965)

Whose socks? Knox or Fox? What and where kind of socks, did you say? Predictable, repeating words are used in this humorous saga featuring Seussain classics, Fox and Knox in, on, and over socks (or sox).

*Sock Monkey Boogie Woogie: A Friend is Made* by Cece Bell (Candlewick, 2004)

Sock Monkey needs a partner for the Celebrity Dance but not just anyone will do. Laugh with the cheeky adventures of this sock guy and his partners as they dance the night away.

*Timothy Cox Will Not Change His Socks* by Robert Kinerk. Illustrated by Stephen Gammell (Simon & Schuster, 2005)

What, Timothy Cox wonders, would happen if he didn't change his socks for a month? The odiferous, chaotic results are presented in rhyme accompanied by vivacious and hilarious illustrations.

## **12. Is Not, Is Too**

*The Golly Sisters Go West* by Betsy Byars. Illustrated by Sue Truesdell (HarperCollins, 1989)

May-May and Rose, sisters and friends, head West in a covered wagon and entertain folks and readers along the way in this first tale of the silly sisters.

*The Pain and the Great One* by Judy Blume. Illustrated by Irene Trivas (Doubleday, 1984, c1974)

Having a younger brother can be a pain, realistically captured here with verve and humor.

*Stories Julian Tells* by Ann Cameron. Illustrated by Ann Strugnell (Random House, 1981)

Julian narrates these engaging family stories in which he and his younger brother Huey sometimes get along well, sometimes not.

## **13. It Only Takes A Minute**

*Family Pictures/Cuadros de Familia* by Carmen Lopez Garza. (Children's Book Press, 1990)

The author/artist's recalls the warmth and love of her Mexican American family. Bilingual text and warm paintings convey the love and joy in the daily activities.

*In Daddy's Arms I Am Tall* collected and illustrated by Javaka Steptoe (Lee & Low, 2001)

Stunning illustrations and short poems celebrate the roles that African American fathers play and the ways they show love for their children.

*Love Is...* from the King James Bible and illustrated by Wendy Anderson Halperin (Simon & Schuster, 2001)

Highly detailed illustration place Paul's letter to the Corinthians in a contemporary setting to demonstrate what love means in this context.

#### **14. IM4U**

*CDB* by William Steig (Simon & Schuster, 2000, c1968)

Coded language (CDB = See The Bee) and cartoon illustrations challenge creative thinking skills while tickling funny bones.

*CDC?* By William Steig (Farrar, 1986)

This companion to *CDB* is similarly formatted, equally funny and just as engaging with clues provided in the humorous drawings.

*I Spy: An Alphabet Book in Art* by Lucy Micklethwait (Greenwillow, 1992)

Classic works of art are perfect to create puzzling puzzlers, calling on readers to find objects that begin with successive letters of the alphabet. Decoding skills are much needed here!