



# 2025 RECOMMENDED READING LIST

## AGES 4–8

While we have made an effort to suggest titles on this list with few, if any, objectionable elements, BJU Press does not hold an exclusivist position on objectionable elements in books. Instead, we evaluate their presence based on the criteria of gratuitousness, explicitness, and moral tone. As we read, we ask ourselves: does the objectionable element serve a purpose within the story; is the description more detailed than is necessary; and does the author condemn, shrug off, or promote sinful actions? Each title on this list has been reviewed according to these guidelines; however, we believe that parents/guardians are the best judges of what is appropriate for their children. We encourage everyone to use discernment when selecting reading material. If you'd like a more thorough explanation of our position, please see chapter four of [Handbook of Christian Education](#).

Some of the titles below may be out of print. Look for them in your local library or request them through an interlibrary loan service. You may also find some titles in used bookstores or online. A good online resource for out-of-print books is [bookfinder.com](#).

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### ABBREVIATION KEY

**B** Biography   **ER** Early Reader   **F** Fiction   **GN** Graphic Novels   **NF** Nonfiction   **P** Poetry   **PB** Picture Books

Titles in green are published by JourneyForth.

**AdoraBULL** (PB)

ALISON DONALD

When Alfred the bull overhears his best friend Tom say that he needs a new pet, an “absolutely, totally adorable” pet, he sets out to prove that bulls can be adorable too.

**Alexander Graham Bell** (B)

ELIZABETH RIDER MONTGOMERY

This is an easy-to-read story about Alexander, his brother, and their “talking machine” invention.

**Bears in the Night** (ER)

STAN and JAN BERENSTAIN

The bear cubs are tucked in bed when they hear a noise out their window and decide to investigate.

**Bear’s Scare** (PB)

JACOB GRANT

Bear keeps a tidy home, so he is shocked to discover a sticky web attached to one of his books. He and his teddy bear Ursa search high and low for the intruder until they discover that, perhaps, this spider can be a friend instead.

**The Biggest Bear** (PB)

LYND WARD

Johnny Orchard sets out to bring back the biggest bear in the forest, but instead he comes home with a very little bear, which becomes a general nuisance to everyone.

**Billy and Blaze series** (PB, 8 books)

C. W. ANDERSON

Billy receives a beautiful pony for his birthday and the two of them have many adventures together.

**Blue Sky White Stars** (PB)

SARVINDER NABERHAUS

Using sparse text, Naberhaus, who immigrated to the US when she was four, explores the similarities between the American flag and the country and people it represents.

**Blueberries for Sal** (PB)

ROBERT MCCLOSKEY

Sal and her mother enjoy picking blueberries. While on a berry-picking excursion, they encounter a mother bear and her cub also gathering blueberries for the coming winter.

**Brave Ballerina: The Story of Janet Collins** (PB)

MICHELLE MEADOWS

Told in verse, this story follows Janet Collins from learning to dance as a child to becoming the first African-American prima ballerina at the Metropolitan Opera.

**Bug in a Vacuum** (PB)

MÉLANIE WATT

A bug trapped inside a vacuum cleaner experiences the five stages of grief in this witty tale.

**Bug in the Bog** (ER)

JONATHAN FENSKE

Tension mounts as an oblivious bug is stalked by a hungry frog.

**Buttercup Hill** (PB)

EILEEN M. BERRY

Mrs. Bunny Fleet and her son Hopkin try to bring sunshine to their lonely neighbors. Will Mrs. Harebell Flop and Droopy accept their friendship?

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### ***The Captain's Hat*** (F)

ANITA WILLIAMS

Pedro and Spud explore the Big River and romp through the tangled green jungle.

### ***Captive Treasure*** (F)

MILLY HOWARD

After she is taken during an attack on her family's wagon train, Carrie Talbot learns to rely on God for protection.

### ***Carolina's Courage*** (F)

ELIZABETH YATES

Carolina Putnam's family is moving by covered wagon from New Hampshire to Nebraska. Although space in the wagon is very limited, Carolina is permitted to take her beloved china doll, Lydia-Lou. When the trail becomes dangerous, Carolina's treasure becomes the key to her family's safety.

### ***The Case of the Dognapped Cat***

(F)

MILLY HOWARD

Dogs have been mysteriously disappearing from Mark Conley's small town. The newly formed Crimebusters—Mark and his two best friends—take the case. But their clues lead nowhere, and their carefully planned stakeout turns into a disaster. The Crimebusters' adventures continue in *The Case of the Sassy Parrot*.

### ***A Child's Garden of Verse*** (P)

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Full of childhood imaginings, these verses are as fresh as ever.

### **Choose Your Journey series**

(F, 4 books)

ELIZABETH RAUM

Imagine you meet Jesus during His earthly ministry. What would you do? Step into the

lives of three fictional children in each book and choose how the stories end.

### ***Cinder Edna*** (PB)

ELLEN JACKSON

Like her neighbor Cinderella, Edna is forced to serve her wicked stepmother and stepsisters, but the similarities end there in this fractured fairy tale.

### ***Corduroy*** (PB)

DON FREEMAN

Corduroy the teddy bear lives in a toy department, but longs to be owned and loved. Unfortunately, a missing button on his overalls makes him a "poor purchase" until a little girl named Lisa comes along.

### ***Cowboy Small*** (PB)

LOIS LENSKI

Cowboy Small takes good care of his horse and the Bar S Ranch. Illustrations of equipment are labeled for reference and a glossary of cowboy terms is included.

### ***The Cranky Blue Crab*** (PB)

DAWN L. WATKINS

Crusty the Crab leaves the sea hoping to live a perfect life on land.

### ***The Crayon Man*** (B)

NATASCHA BIEBOW

Inventor Edwin Binney had an idea; could he combine color pigments with his new wax crayon and make art supplies that were safe for children? This colorful picture book biography tells the story behind the invention of Crayola crayons.

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***Donut Feed the Squirrels*** (GN)

MIKA SONG

After accidentally burning their pancake breakfast, squirrels Norma and Belly discover the delights of a doughnut truck.

***Eats: Poems*** (P)

ARNOLD ADOFF

This is a delightful book of clever poetry about food. Children will enjoy the humor and unusual arrangements of the poems.

***The End of the Beginning*** (F)

AVI

A snail and a misinformed ant go on an epic adventure across a tree branch. Fans of wordplay will especially enjoy it.

***Escape*** (F)

MONA DUNCKEL

A young missionary kid in Africa uses an unusual bead to escape from a dangerous situation.

***Everyday Animals*** (NF)

GERTRUDE ALLEN

This informational book reveals fascinating details about the cottontail rabbit, chipmunk, white-footed mouse, striped skunk, porcupine, and gray squirrel.

***Farmer Dillo series*** (PB, 3 books)

JESSE ADAMS

Farmer Dillo teaches numbers, colors, and shapes while searching for his chickens, painting his barn, and fixing things up around his farm.

***Farmer John's Tractor*** (PB)

SALLY SUTTON

When a flood traps a family's car, multiple types of vehicles come to the rescue, but none of them can reach the family. Will Farmer John's tractor be able to help?

***The Gardener's Gold Ring*** (PB)

NANCY BOPP

When a gardener loses his wedding ring, he plans another way to show his wife how much he loves her. His actions lead to a wonderful surprise for both of them.

***Grandpa's Gizmos*** (PB)

JOHN MENKEN

A young boy learns about sharing during a visit to his grandparents' house.

***The Great Monster Hunt*** (PB)

NORBERT LANDA

Animal friends work together to discover the source of the strange sound coming from underneath Duck's bed.

***Haiku on Your Shoe*** (F)

EILEEN M. BERRY

After Jeremy befriends Taka, a new boy from Japan, he learns about origami, Japanese poetry, and friendship.

***Honeybee: The Busy Life of Apis Mellifera*** (NF)

CANDACE FLEMING

A poetic presentation of the life-cycle of a honeybee with gorgeous illustrations.

***How Science Saved the Eiffel Tower*** (PB)

EMMA BLAND SMITH

In order to save his tower from its scheduled demolition, Gustave Eiffel must find a way to make it valuable to Parisian officials.

***I Like Trains*** (NF)

CATHERINE WOOLLEY

This informational book tells about freight trains, passenger trains, and express trains.

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## ***I Talk Like a River*** (PB)

JORDAN SCOTT

A young boy who struggles with a stutter gains confidence from trips to the river with his dad. Based on the author's childhood.

## ***If Everybody Did*** (PB)

JO ANN STOVER

What would the world be like if everybody picked the buds off flowers, left their toys on the stairs, and always stayed up late? These are just a few of the wacky scenarios in this concept book on manners and consequences.

## **Janette Oke's Animal Friends series** (F, 11 books)

JANETTE OKE

Each title features an animal that learns an important life lesson.

## ***Johnny Appleseed*** (B)

STEVEN KELLOGG

This biography of John Chapman, better known as Johnny Appleseed, describes his love of nature, his kindness to animals, and his physical fortitude.

## ***A King for Brass Cobweb*** (F)

DAWN L. WATKINS

Chipmunk leaves home to find a king for the Kingdom of Brass Cobweb—a king who is wise and brave and true.

## ***Knight Owl*** (PB)

CHRISTOPHER DENISE

Owl's dreams come true when he joins the Knight Night Watch. Then one night he meets an intruder who'd like to make Owl his midnight snack. Owl's adventures continue in *Knight Owl and Early Bird*.

## ***The Lighthouse Book*** (NF)

MICHAEL BERENSTAIN

This simple book with readable text and intriguing illustrations describes several well-known lighthouses, various methods of illumination, and the automated structures used today.

## ***Lindbergh: The Tale of a Flying Mouse*** (PB)

TORBEN KUHLMANN

Translated by DAVID HENRY WILSON

A young mouse emerges from his studies to discover that all the other mice have fled across the sea to America to escape the dangers of mousetraps. With the docks controlled by cats, the only way the intrepid mouse can join his friends is to build a flying machine. Richly illustrated by the author

## ***Little Bear*** (F)

ELSE HOLMELUND MINARIK

This anthology of several short stories centers on an imaginative, lovable bear cub. Little Bear plays in the snow, celebrates his birthday, and takes an imaginary trip to the moon.

## **Little Bear Adventure series**

(PB, 6 books)

KATHLEEN ALLAN-MEYER

Little Bear learns about family, friendship, and more.

## ***The Little Engine That Could*** (PB)

WATTY PIPER

The engine of a train carrying food and toys for the children on the other side of the mountain breaks down. Will any of the passing engines stop to help?

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### ***The Little House*** (PB)

VIRGINIA LEE BURTON

In this well-loved Caldecott Medal-winner, a small house faces the challenges imposed by the city growing around it.

### ***Looking for Home*** (F)

EILEEN M. BERRY

After living in the country, Micah and Liz find it hard to be quiet and follow all the rules of their new apartment complex.

### ***Make Way for Ducklings*** (PB)

ROBERT MCCLOSKEY

After a long search for the perfect place to raise their family, Mr. and Mrs. Mallard decide to make their home on the island in the city park.

### ***Mice of the Herring Bone series***

(F, 5 books)

TIM DAVIS

The adventures of two brave mice who sail the world on behalf of their queen and outwit a crew of pirate sea dogs.

### ***Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel*** (PB)

VIRGINIA LEE BURTON

Mike Mulligan and his steam shovel Mary Anne race to dig the basement of Popperville's town hall before the sun sets.

### ***Millions of Cats*** (PB)

WANDA GAG

When an older couple decides they want a cat for a pet, the man finds millions of them. He cannot decide which one to take home.

### ***Mole Had Everything*** (PB)

JAMISON ODOE

Mole is content until a friend suggests that he needs more stuff. Mole goes scavenging

for more things, but he learns that having a lot of material possessions adds a burden to his life that he did not expect.

### ***Mumsi Meets a Lion*** (PB)

KIM STEGALL

Mumsi has been taught what to do if he ever meets a lion. Will he remember it on the most terrifying night of his life?

### ***My Creation Bible*** (NF)

KEN HAM

The story of Creation, the flood, the Tower of Babel, and the birth and death of Christ is told in simple verse.

### ***Nine Months: Before a Baby is Born*** (NF)

MIRANDA PAUL

In child-friendly text and exquisite, actual size illustrations, this book describes a baby's growth from day seventeen to delivery.

### ***No Pets Allowed*** (PB)

MORGAN REED PERSUN

Percy's apartment building doesn't allow pets, but that doesn't stop him from wanting one. One day the animals on his spelling list appear in his bedroom.

### ***Noah's Ark*** (NF)

PETER SPIER

With the exception of a poem at the beginning, this is a wordless book giving a pictorial story of Noah and the ark. Readers of all ages will find the detailed illustrations appealing.

### ***Old MacDonald Had a Zoo*** (PB)

IZA TRAPANI

Chaos ensues as Farmer MacDonald's farm is overrun with escaped zoo animals.

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### ***The Old Woman and Her Pig*** (PB)

PAUL GALDONE

This folktale tells of the creative plan a little old woman must implement in order to coax her pig over a stile and to bring him safely home.

### ***On Yonder Mountain*** (F)

MILLY HOWARD

As her first year of school approaches, Sarah hopes for another girl to play with. But when she reaches the one-room schoolhouse on Yonder Mountain, she finds nothing but boys.

### ***Once in Blueberry Dell*** (PB)

DAWN L. WATKINS

The moles of Blueberry Dell try to outdo each other in preparing for the visit of the High Prince.

### ***Pelts and Promises*** (F)

NANCY LOHR

When a schoolroom prank goes wrong, Willie B. and Jamie land into big trouble. They promise to make things right, but that promise seems impossible to keep. Will they be able to pay the cost and keep their word?

### ***Petunia, I Love You*** (PB)

ROGER DUVOISIN

Petunia, a clever goose, must avoid all of Raccoon's attempts to eat her.

### ***Pippa's Jumping Shoes*** (F)

JOYCE MAGNIN

Pippa, a small frog, is already stressed about the jumping contest at Mulberry Pond's upcoming Summer's End Celebration. When the community receives a mysterious challenge from their neighbors, the stakes get even higher.

### ***Pocket Change: Five Small Fables*** (PB)

DAWN L. WATKINS

A collection of fables featuring a bobcat who makes a bargain with the rabbit he wants to eat for dinner, a disobedient beaver who wrestles with his conscience, a wealthy cheetah and a disfigured elephant who learn the nature of true riches, a monkey who challenges a lion to a riddle contest, and an old turtle who would help the younger animals live comfortably through a summer drought—if they would listen.

### ***Prairie Anna*** (F)

PEGGY HOUSE

Anna, the middle daughter in a struggling immigrant family, must decide what to do with the one choice she is given.

### ***Pulling Together*** (F)

DAWN L. WATKINS

After a fierce storm ruins his family's farm, Matthew takes a big risk to keep their horses from being sold.

### ***A Question of Yams*** (F)

GLORIA REPP

When Kuri's father chose to trust God for the success of his yam crop and rejected the pagan traditions of their village, the Head Men said something terrible would happen to them. Who is right?

### ***The Rag Coat*** (PB)

LAUREN MILLS

Minna wants very badly to attend school, but she doesn't have a coat, and her family cannot afford one. A group of ladies get together to make her a unique coat that eventually becomes appreciated by all.

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***Rain School*** (PB)

JAMES RUMFORD

Thomas's first lesson at his school in Chad, Africa is how to make mud bricks for a schoolhouse. Soon the school is built, and his encouraging teacher fills his mind with knowledge.

***Red Sky at Night*** (PB)

ELLY MACKAY

MacKay accompanies this collection of weather sayings with beautiful photographs of her paper dioramas.

***Rodney Robbins and the Rainy-Day Pond*** (PB)

KIM STEGALL

Every time it rains, the street in front of Mr. Hamilton's house becomes a pond. So Rodney Robbins and Mr. Hamilton decide to fix it themselves—in a very unusual way.

***Rosa la Osa*** (PB)

ANNA TURNER and BETH KITCHING

In this Spanish-English book, a game of Sardines turns into a wonderful chance for Rosa to make a new friend.

***Sarah Whitcher's Story*** (F)

ELIZABETH YATES

After young Sarah becomes lost in a thick New Hampshire forest, settlers come from all across the countryside to help find her. None of them expected the role a bear played in her rescue.

***Seven Silly Eaters*** (PB)

MARY ANN HOBERMAN

The children in the Peters family each have a food they like the best—and will eat nothing else!

***Snail Crossing*** (PB)

COREY TABOR

In this tale of friendship, Snail is crossing a road to get to his dinner when he encounters ants, a hungry bird, cars, and a rainstorm.

***Sticky Flies, Whirling Squirrels, and Plucky Ducks*** (F)

EILEEN M. BERRY

A collection of fables gathered from all around the world.

***Sydney and Taylor series***

(F, 3 books)

JACQUELINE DAVIES

Two best friends star in this set of early chapter books. Sydney is a skunk who enjoys staying at home in his cozy burrow. Taylor is a hedgehog who gets big ideas like exploring the whole wide world, flying, and making more friends.

***The Tale of Peter Rabbit*** (PB)

BEATRIX POTTER

Peter, a feisty little rabbit, disobeys his mother and gets caught in Mr. McGregor's garden.

***These Are My People*** (B)

MILDRED HOWARD

When war between China and Japan breaks out, missionary Gladys Aylward trusts God as she takes the many orphans in her care over the mountains to safety.

***They Didn't Use Their Heads*** (PB)

JO ANN STOVER

This amusing and rhyming tale makes an unforgettable case for good behavior.

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***Through the Wardrobe: How C.S. Lewis Created Narnia*** (PB)

LINA MASLOW

Learn how a boy named Jack grew up to write one of the most famous fantasy books for children.

***Thy Friend, Obadiah*** (PB)

BRINTON TURKLE

This story is about Obadiah, a little boy of colonial America living on Nantucket Island, and his friend, a sea gull.

***The Treasure Keeper*** (F)

ANITA WILLIAMS

Marco searches for the secret to growing big and finds many treasures along the way.

***The Treasure of Pelican Cove*** (F)

MILLY HOWARD

Jimmy and his dog Blackie visit his grandmother at Land's End and learn about a hidden treasure. His adventures continue in *The Mystery of Pelican Cove*.

***Very Like a Star*** (PB)

DAWN L. WATKINS

A little bee who's smaller than the rest finds out that she really is like her namesake star.

***Welcome Home, Mouse*** (PB)

ELISA KLEVEN

Stanley accidentally ruins Mouse's house, but he creatively uses everyday household items to build Mouse another home.

***What's the Big Idea, Molly?*** (PB)

VALERI GORBACHEV

Molly and her friends want to give Turtle a present for his birthday, but they all have the same idea. Then Molly has a really big idea that allows each of her friends to work together to create something extra special.

***Zap! Clap! Boom!: The Story of a Thunderstorm*** (PB)

LAURA PURDIE SALAS

Three children and a mother goat with her kids are playing around their island home when a summer storm pops up. This book features rhyming text and vivid illustrations by Elly MacKay.

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