

Summer Reading Ideas for 1st Graders

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- **Nothing** by Jon Agee – Otis, an antique dealer, is sweeping his empty shop one day when the richest lady in town arrives to purchase something. Imagine his surprise when he tells her he has nothing, and she wants to buy it! The craze sweeps through the town, and people get rid of all their somethings in order to make room for nothing! Only when that same woman returns to Otis's shop to buy something to fill her nothing-filled space do things take a turn. This is a creative story with bright illustrations.
- **Manners** by Aliki – “Manners are the way people behave,” says the narrator of this helpful book. And though some people use manners all the time, some people do not seem to know the polite and considerate ways to behave. From greeting people to interrupting others to apologizing, the characters in this book help teach good manners.
- **Everybody Needs a Rock** by Byrd Baylor – The simple text in this book guide readers to choose the perfect rock! Use it as you look for interesting rocks on your summer travels.
- **Throw Your Tooth on the Roof: Tooth Traditions from Around the World** by Selby Beeler – Did you know that a lost tooth in Chile is turned into a charm? This book shares the fascinating customs associated with lost teeth from cultures and countries all over the world.
- **At Night** by Jonathan Bean –The little girl in the story cannot sleep, and when she feels the breeze through her window, she takes some of her favorite things to the rooftop and forms a makeshift bed there under the stars with her cat. The smaller size of this book makes it the perfect one to read with someone you love just before bedtime, and the illustrations are beautiful!
- **Dolley Madison Saves George Washington** by Don Brown – As First Lady, Dolley Madison was popular with the citizens and her capital city peers. Everybody liked her bright smile and outrageous gowns and headdresses. Though she did not save George Washington's life, she did save a life-size likeness of him! Read all about it!
- **Outside the Lines: Poetry at Play** by Brad Burg – The concrete poems in this collection are all about the games and fun activities children enjoy. Follow the lines along a game of tic-tac-toe, a paper airplane's flight, a game of catch, the building of sandcastles, kite-flying, and so much more. Then, write concrete poems of your own!
- **Welcome to the Bed and Biscuit** by Joan Carris – The Bed and Biscuit is an animal shelter tended by Grampa Bender. The animals love their shelter but are jealous when Grampa returns with a Scottie puppy abandoned in a fire. The short chapters and illustrations are perfect for first grade readers.
- **Fishing in the Air** by Sharon Creech – This picture book is about more than catching fish! The boy and his dad leave in the dark of dawn on their excursion, but they bring in pieces of the day by visiting memories together as they enjoy nature and each other's company. Take this with you on a summer fishing trip for discussion.
- **Diary of a Fly** by Doreen Cronin – From the lady who wrote about what it is like to be a worm and a spider comes a book from a fly's perspective. This fly wants to be a superhero, and its amazing abilities (think of seeing in all directions at the same time!) might raise it to that level. Add to that the excitement of fleeing from 327 brothers and sisters, and a true adventure awaits you as a reader. This book will certainly make you think twice before dragging out the flyswatter!
- **If You Were a Synonym** by Michael Dahl – The synonyms in this book are big, bold, huge, and large. Animals tell about the words that “change and still mean the same thing.” Rhyming text present descriptions of the artwork, and smaller sentences present the facts about synonyms. Check out the other books in this series to learn about different parts of speech and word types.
- **The Magic Tapestry** by Demi – The old woman weaver in this Chinese story works years on a special tapestry, despite the pleas of her older sons that she work to sell something. When the tapestry is complete, it is whooshed out with the wind. Her tricky older sons want to keep riches for themselves, but her youngest seeks the tapestry, finding it at a palace where it is being copied by princesses. Amazingly, the tapestry brings the son a surprise!
- **Tomie dePaola's Favorite Nursery Tales** – Beginning with the famous Henry Wadsworth Longfellow poem “The Children's Hour,” this collection of stories is meant to be shared by adults and children. From the familiar stories like “The Frog Prince” to the Norwegian tale “Johnny and the Three Goats,” the 28 tales and fables included in the collection will engage readers and listeners alike.
- **The Hatseller and the Monkeys** by Baba Wague Diakite – If you love the classic story *Caps for Sale*, then this version from Mali will make you laugh. BaMusa is a hatseller who falls asleep under a mango tree. The monkeys steal his carefully crafted hats and bombard him with mangoes! Only when he takes time to eat some of the fruit can he make a good decision to reclaim his hats. The traditional artwork is bold and bright!
- **Penguin** by Polly Dunbar – When Ben opens a gift, he is elated to see a penguin in the box, but no matter what he does, the penguin will not talk or make a sound. Tickling, funny hats, silly faces, head stands, and dances bring about no response. Only when Lion gets involved does Penguin make his voice heard!
- **Trouble With Twins** by Martha Freeman – Holly's three-year-old twin brothers are cute, but they can also cause some problems. When Holly decides to throw a birthday party for them, she does not anticipate the trouble that will arise. This chapter book will make you laugh along with Holly's family.

- ***Monarch and Milkweed*** by Helen Frost – Monarchs depend on the milkweed plant for a place on which to lay their eggs. Once hatched, the caterpillars feed on the leaves and eventually spin their chrysalises, fully camouflaged and protected. The softly colored artwork accompanying the text of this information book is lovely.
- ***Meerkat Mail*** by Emily Gravett – Where Sunny lives in the Kalahari Desert with his close-knit family, it is very hot. Sunny thinks things would be much better if he found somewhere else to live, so he heads off for his cousin Edward's farm, his cousins Mildred and Frank's home in the rainforest, and other interesting places. At each location, he sends a glossy postcard to his family...until circumstances force him to go home.
- ***You Read to Me, I'll Read to You: Very Short Stories to Read Together*** by Mary Ann Hoberman – Share the reading of these 13 stories as you take turns reading the words in specific colors from the left or right side of the page, and read together the words in the center column. The rhythms are terrific, and the stories are humorous!
- ***You and Me Together: Moms, Dads, and Kids Around the World*** by Barbara Kerley – The moms, dads, and children featured in this book are photographed doing all sorts of things together. Share in their experiences of telling jokes, sitting in the shade, taking a ride, playing music, taking a walk, and so much more. Make your own book about spending time together as parents and children!
- ***Funny Frank*** by Dick King-Smith – Frank is a baby chicken who wishes he could be a duck. His young owner, Jemima, does everything she can to help him, even going so far as to making him a rubber suit and flippers. The illustrations that accompany the text in this funny chapter book will make readers smile.
- ***Sheep in Wolf's Clothing*** by Helen Lester – Ewetopia, the main character in this story, does not like her own wool and spends a great deal of time and money on her clothing. When she has the opportunity to dress up for a costume ball, all the other sheep think her costume is ridiculous, but a certain creature in a sheep costume thinks Ewetopia looks delicious! The puns and funny words will keep readers thinking!
- ***Little Lost Bat*** by Sandra Markle – When a baby Mexican free-tailed bat is orphaned, it is adopted by a mother who has lost her own bat. Facts about bats are found at the end of the book.
- ***How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin?*** by Margaret McNamara – Mr. Tiffin uses pumpkins to teach his students about counting by 2s, 5s, and 10s, making estimations, and understanding the growth process. Try similar activities at home with summer fruits and vegetables!
- ***Not a Stick*** by Antoinette Portis – Just like its predecessor, *Not a Box*, this book challenges the thinking of the reader. While one character asks another what he is doing with that stick, the other replies that it is "not a stick" and proceeds repeatedly to show what that stick-like thing can really do and be (a conductor's baton, a paintbrush, and much more). Enjoy the creativity and think outside the box to determine other uses for a stick.
- ***Artful Reading*** by Bob Raczka – This is one terrific book to read and view. The author's text about reading is paired with famous paintings that depict people reading. A Manet painting is accompanied by the caption "Reading while you wait for your train to come in." The following painting, by Johannes Vermeer, has the caption "Read to find out how somebody's been." This book is masterful in selection and in its art!
- ***Pssst!*** by Adam Rex – On a visit to the zoo, the main character hears "pssst!" numerous times from various animals. Each one wants help with something else, and somehow, she manages to find everything requested by the animals! The end is a huge surprise! And when she visits the circus, the same thing begins again!
- ***Rattletrap Car*** by Phyllis Root – When Poppa and his three children head to the beach in their old jalopy of a car, things are bound to break down. Each time something goes wrong, the sounds (lots of onomatopoeia to share and imitate!) and disasters (think car trouble at its worst) will make readers giggle at the solutions concocted. The family's beach trip is filled with humor and rhythm, and the artwork is dazzling for a summer's day.
- ***This is New York*** by Miroslav Sasek – Learn all about the city nicknamed "The Big Apple" through the bold artwork and interesting text of this book. First published in 1960, it guides readers through the streets of one of America's most famous cities and introduces travelers to the neighborhoods, architecture, and sights that make New York memorable. An afterword tells of the changes in New York City since the original edition was published.
- ***Where in the Wild?: Camouflaged Creatures Concealed...and Revealed*** by David M. Schwartz and Yael Schy – This incredible book features "camouflaged animals photographed in their natural habitats." The opposite page presents a poem about the creature hiding in the photograph. The photograph page is a flap that, when lifted, filters the rest of the image and highlights the animal. Facts about that creature are on the back of the flap!
- ***Maybelle in the Soup*** by Katie Speck - Maybelle is a cockroach who is entirely bored of eating her food from the floor. She wants to try something fresh, and when she ventures to the dinner table of the Peabody household, her quest lands her in a bowl of soup! From there, her adventure includes being snatched by the cat and taking a journey. This short chapter book is sure to make readers smile.
- ***I Don't Like Gloria*** by Kate Umansky – Calvin is perfectly happy to be the only dog (and the only pet) in his home. When the family brings home a cat named Gloria, everything Calvin has loved changes. No one pays attention to him anymore, and his routines are upset. Only when another pet comes to the family do Calvin and Gloria see nose-to-nose.
- ***Duck Soup*** by Jackie Urbanovic – In this humorous sequel to *Duck at the Door*, Maxwell Duck is in the process of making soup. When he discovers he is missing an ingredient, he goes to the garden to search. Meanwhile, his friends appear and think the feather floating there means Max is in the pot! Enjoy the colorful artwork along with a fun story.