

Summer Reading Ideas for 2nd Graders

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- ***Working With Fractions*** by David A. Adler – Fractions are a way of dividing whole things into various-sized parts. This book helps you see the fractions spread throughout the world in everyday experiences. Whether it is counting money, dividing a pizza or pie, or playing a game, fractions are handy! Practice them with this book!
- ***Crinkleroot's Guide to Knowing Trees*** by Jim Arnosky – Use this guidebook to identify bark, leaves, and trees as you travel through the woods and forests. The book also shares information about how animals use trees.
- ***The John Hancock Club*** by Louise Borden – Third grade means more challenges than second grade, and one of them is learning cursive writing. Sean's teacher, Mrs. Tovani, wants all her students to become members of the John Hancock Club when they have mastered cursive skills. Examples of cursive writing are included, as well as a copy of the Declaration of Independence.
- ***Clarice Bean Spells Trouble*** by Lauren Child – Clarice returns in this chapter book to share her worries about the upcoming spelling bee and her excitement about being part of the cast for the production of "The Sound of Music" (which she hopes will help her be discovered as a star).
- ***Slide and Slurp, Scratch and Burp: More About Verbs*** by Brian Cleary – Verbs are parts of speech that express action. This rhyming book about them will make readers smile. The author has written other parts of speech books.
- ***A Million Dots*** by Andrew Clements – Beginning with a single dot, this book shows just what one million looks like. The author helps readers consider a million in relation to things they have done and witnessed, like how long it is from one birthday to the next in minutes, or how many hours a bird might spend in flight. There are actually one million dots in the entire picture book. Try counting the things in your world with the ideas in the book.
- ***Young Pele: Soccer's First Star*** by Lesa Cline-Ransome – Growing up in Brazil, Edson was the smallest student in his class, and while others listened to the teacher and memorized letters, he thought about soccer games. Soon, children started calling him Pelé, and the nickname stuck. With hard work, dedication, help from others, and support from his family, he became the greatest soccer player in the world.
- ***If You Were a Palindrome*** by Michael Dahl – Palindromes are words, numbers, or groups of words that are read the same backwards and forwards. The characters in this book help share palindromes in all forms, as well as characterizing them in short sentences. They are distinguished in the text by their big size.
- ***White Owl, Barn Owl*** by Nicola Davies – The author of this terrific book is a zoologist, so her books are filled with facts about the creatures she loves. In this book, a grandfather and grandson make a nesting box in the barn to lure owls. The larger font tells the story of their discoveries, and the handwritten font tells facts about owls.
- ***The Strongest Man in the World: Louis Cyr*** by Nicholas Debon – The Canadian who was the champion strongman of the world tells his daughter of his accomplishments of strength in enormous proportions! He could twist iron bars, lift humongous draft horses, and heft huge boulders onto his shoulders. It is told like a graphic novel and contains an afterword about Cyr's life.
- ***26 Fairmount Avenue*** by Tomie dePaola – This Newbery Honor Book introduces readers to the famous author/illustrator's early life. Growing up in Meriden, Connecticut, Tomie was excited to draw on the walls of his new home before they were painted and to attend school (though he had to wait to learn to read).
- ***Mee-An and the Magic Serpent*** by Baba Wague Diakite – In this West African folktale from Mali, the main character learns about judging people based on their looks. Mee-An wants a perfect husband with no scars or blemishes, and she thinks she has found just such a man. But alas, it is a serpent disguised as this man to lure her into marriage.
- ***Mary and the Mouse, the Mouse and Mary*** by Beverly Donofrio – In a small door along the floorboards in Mary's house lives a mouse, and after Mary accidentally drops something during dinner, she spies it. The mouse, too, drops things during dinner in order to view Mary's activities. When circumstances change, the connection between them continues through their children. The detailed illustrations add to the story's charm.
- ***The Luck of the Loch Ness Monster: a Tale of Picky Eating*** by Alice Weaver Flaherty – On a voyage to visit her grandmother in Scotland, a girl tosses her unwanted oatmeal overboard. Things get interesting as a sea worm gobbles her meal and quickly increases in size. After many such oatmeal snacks, the creature grows and makes its way up the River Ness!
- ***Glass Slipper, Gold Sandal: A Worldwide Cinderella*** by Paul Fleischman – There are more than a thousand versions of the Cinderella story around the world, and it most likely originated in China in the 9th century. In this version, the author takes bits and pieces of all those versions and combines it into one wonderfully woven tale.
- ***Knock, Knock!*** by Saxton Freymann and others – Fourteen children's illustrators help tell "knock, knock" jokes in this picture book. The joke is on one page, and the punch line can be found by turning the page. At the end of the book, each artist humorously tells who they would want knocking on their doors.
- ***The Twelve Dancing Princesses*** by the Brothers Grimm, illustrated by Rachel Isadora – The king's twelve beautiful daughters are locked in a room each night, but somehow, their shoes show signs of being worn! To discover what they are doing each night, the king issues a contest. The resulting circumstances explain it all.
- ***How to Save Your Tail*** by Mary Hanson – This book's subtitle ("** if you are a rat nabbed by cats who really like stories about magic spoons, wolves with snout-warts, big, hairy chimney trolls...and cookies, too") provides a glimpse into what one rat will do to save himself from felines. He bakes cookies! He tells stories! He saves himself.

- **Mostly Monty** by Johanna Hurwitz – Monty is a first grader with a passion for reading. Even though he is challenged by a nasty disease (asthma), he learns to make friends while discovering all sorts of things about the world. There are many wonderful characters like Monty in the author's other books.
- **Dogs and Cats** by Steve Jenkins – Read in one direction, this book is all about canines, but flipped over, it is all about felines. The facts about each are interesting, and each page includes information about the other animal that will make readers think. The author's cut-paper illustrations are incredibly intricate!
- **A Cool Drink of Water** by Barbara Kerley – All around the world, people need water, and they draw it from all sorts of locations and in various ways. The photographs and simple text in this inclusive book help readers see the world-wide perspective of what we often take for granted: that cool glass of water. Wonderful facts are included at the end.
- **Stone Age Boy** by Satoshi Kitamura – When a boy trips in the woods on a walk, he ends up in a totally different place with a girl named Om. Her family's camp has only wood, animal skins, and stone, and Om teaches him much about her people. When attacked by a bear in a cave, he falls and finds himself back at home – with a painting of himself in a present-day cave! Facts and timelines about civilizations and cave paintings are included.
- **The Tree Farm** by Chuck Leavell – When a grandfather takes his grandson on a walk through the tree farm, they talk about all the things the trees can become (toys, instruments, furniture, and more).
- **So Said Ben** compiled by Michael McCurdy – This book is a collection of some of the more famous proverbs Benjamin Franklin published in his *Poor Richard's Almanack*. He hoped by sharing them with the citizens, the United States of America would be a united and hard-working society. After each of the proverbs, the author shares some history of Franklin's life, accompanied by one of the McCurdy's famous etchings.
- **No Boys Allowed: Poems About Brothers and Sisters** by John Micklos – The siblings in this book experience the age-old dilemmas of sharing bathrooms, wanting privacy, and dealing with different kinds of family situations. Consider the similar situations in your world and write a poem to share!
- **Little Red Riding Hood** illustrated by Jerry Pinkney – Revisit this classic tale that has been newly illustrated by Caldecott-winning artist Jerry Pinkney. His lush watercolor paintings bring a fresh perspective to the familiar story. Check out the view of the forest and cottage on the end pages as you savor the thought of raisin muffins.
- **Ginger and Petunia** by Patricia Polacco – Based on the author's good friend, the main character of this story is a pianist with an extraordinary wardrobe, a passion for make-up, and a spoiled pig named Petunia. When the pig is left alone accidentally, she steps in for her owner in various social settings, all the while missing her mudhole!
- **How to Paint the Portrait of a Bird** by Jacque Prevert – The child painter in this picture book awakes one morning to paint various summery things on his canvas: a tree, a perch, the breezes. Soon, a bird comes to nest in the painting, allowing him to witness the glorious songs of the bird. The gorgeous illustrations encourage painting.
- **Patterns in Nature** by Jennifer Roy – The amazing photographs in this book help reinforce math concepts and point out the patterns in butterflies, plants, and other common things. Use the ideas to develop a plan for pattern-searching in the places and things in your world.
- **Alligator Boy** by Cynthia Rylant – After visiting a natural history museum, the boy in this story decides he wants to be an alligator, and he completely acts the part with the help of an alligator head from his aunt. His parents, of course, are worried, and they take him to the vet. One benefit to being an alligator boy is scaring bullies at school!
- **This is Hong Kong** by Miroslav Sasek – First published in 1965, this book takes readers through the beautiful island located south of China on the coast. In 1965, there were rickshaws for transportation, floating schools, and 19 morning papers. The book highlights the traditions of the culture and the beauty of the island. "This is Hong Kong...Today!" tells about the things that characterize Hong Kong in the 21st century.
- **Ballet of the Elephants** by Leda Schubert – Back in 1942, many people came to see the lions, trapeze artists, clowns, and animals of the circus at Madison Square Garden in New York City. But it was the elephants that captured the most attention. They performed a ballet composed by Igor Stravinsky and choreographed by a famous dancer. This fascinating story is based on real events, and the "About This Book" pages describe it in detail.
- **Where I Live** by Eileen Spinelli – This novel is told in poem-like format and tells the story of a girl whose family must move from their home to her grandfather's home. No matter where she might live, she learns the importance of her family. The illustrations are soft and perfect for the text.
- **Riding to Washington** by Gwenyth Swain – A girl from Indianapolis boards a bus with her dad in 1963 and travels with hundreds of others to Washington, D.C. where they join Dr. King and thousands in the march for Civil Rights. Along the way, she witnesses segregation and injustice as they stop to eat and use restrooms.
- **The Girl's Like Spaghetti: Why, You Can't Manage Without Apostrophes** by Lynne Truss – Just as the subtitle suggests, this book is all about the important role apostrophes have in our language. It can show where words have been left out and help us see ownership. Double-page spreads feature the same sentence written with different punctuation, creating two different meanings. The illustrations show those meanings!
- **Mary Smith** by Andrea U'Ren – Mrs. Mary Smith had a most unique job in times past in England. She was a "knocker-up" whose job it was to wake up the townspeople each morning. She even uses a pea-shooter to hit their windows. Historical notes tell about the real Mary Smith and her work.
- **Papa and the Pioneer Quilt** by Jean Van Leeuwen – Because her father longs to travel west across the country, Rebecca has not lived in one place for long. As her family crosses from Missouri to Oregon, Rachel picks up scraps to sew into a quilt. Each piece represents a section of their journey. The illustrations are lovely, and the author's note shares information about the quilt pattern, now called "Turkey Tracks."