

Summer Reading Ideas for 3rd Graders

Julie Reimer & Kay Trapp, Library Media Specialists
Turtle Lake Elementary School, Summer 2008



- ***The Brook Book*** by Jim Arnosky – An encounter with a flowing brook brings all sorts of opportunities to explore. What first appears to be clear water is, upon closer examination, filled with life and movement. The author/illustrator treats the book as a field trip experience, taking readers along to explore the creatures and natural elements of a brook and its surroundings.
- ***Paper Trail: History of an Everyday Material*** by Susan Brocker – Before paper, people used things like leaves, clay, pottery, wood, and even rags to express words and images. Over time, paper processing was developed into what we know today. Besides sharing history, this book also shows how to make recycled paper.
- ***Jabberwocky*** by Lewis Carroll - In this newly illustrated version of Lewis Carroll's work, Christopher Myers's artwork transforms the classic poem into an outdoor competition between a tall young man and the enormous Jabberwock on the basketball court.
- ***The Chocolate Touch*** by Patrick Skene Catling – John Midas loves to eat chocolate more than anything else. When a strange and magical force makes everything that touches his lips turn to chocolate, he just might have had enough. Read a version of the King Midas story to compare with this book!
- ***Quirky, Jerky, Extra Perky: More About Adjectives*** by Brian Cleary – Adjectives describe the nouns in our language. They can show movement, color, and extreme. This fun book teaches about many descriptive words.
- ***Dogku*** by Andrew Clements – When haiku poetry and dogs are combined, these carefully constructed syllabic poems that form a story about a canine named Mooch are the result. Mooch's mischievous manners have the family talking about the pound...until they come up with a better solution.
- ***Pleasing the Ghost*** by Sharon Creech – When spirits start visiting nine-year-old Dennis, he is not sure what to think. He really wants to talk with his father's spirit, but it is odd Uncle Arvie and his interesting speech habits who keeps appearing at night. Arvie needs Dennis to help him get a message to Aunt Julia about treasure!
- ***The Race of the Century*** by Barry Downard – When Tom Tortoise and Flashy Harry Hare set off on the biggest race in a century, all sorts of people gather to observe. While Harry is signing autographs and greeting his fans, Tom gains a lead on the race course, bringing him unexpectedly to the finish line first! The hilarious photographs will keep readers laughing and looking at all the details on each page.
- ***Harriet the Spy*** by Louise Fitzhugh – Harriet wants so badly to be an author. She faithfully keeps a detailed journal in which she writes about the people in her life. When her classmates discover her journal, all the secrets she has written about them are revealed, and Harriet is left to figure out how to pick up the pieces.
- ***Lightship*** by Brian Floca – Though lightships no longer patrol the ocean shorelines and the Great Lakes, they were a huge protective force for many years. This book shares the daily life on a lightship with readers and illustrates the perils of ship life.
- ***Bing Bang Boing*** by Douglas Florian – In his typically innovative and creative style, this poet presents poems about all sorts of topics that rhyme and wind their way through the pages of the book. There are poems about creatures, poems about people, poems about situations and concrete poems to make readers think and laugh.
- ***My Side of the Mountain*** by Jean Craighead George – Sam Gribble undertakes a journey to into the Catskill Mountains with his pet falcon. He resourcefully finds a shelter (a burned-out tree), food, and companionship in nature (a weasel!) while learning how to survive and savor his independence.
- ***Moxy Maxwell Does Not Love Stuart Little*** by Peggy Gifford – Assigned to read *Stuart Little* over summer vacation, Moxy does her best to avoid even picking up the book. The book assumes some damage as Moxy's troublesome ways create mischief. The photographs at the start of each chapter enhance the story.
- ***Hiss Me Deadly*** by Bruce Hale – When someone steals his mother's pearls, Chet Gecko is angry. More items turn up missing, prompting Principal Zero to hire Chet to crack the case. Join the reptilian detective as he solves yet another mystery. Check out the author's website for fun writing and comic activities.
- ***Just Grace*** by Charise Mericle Harper – With three other Graces in her class, the narrator of this story becomes Just Grace. Her third-grade school year is filled with amusing incidents (like having grape juice spit upon her at her own birthday party), and Grace's narration makes her believable. There is a sequel called *Still Just Grace*.
- ***The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County*** by Janice L. Harrington – Being the best chicken-chaser ever is the young narrator's objective in this colorful story! Despite her grandmother's warnings, she sets her sights on Miss Hen (who always eludes her). In the end, she discovers it might be better to teach speed to the chickens.
- ***Cave Detectives: Unraveling the Mystery of an Ice Age Cave*** by David L. Harrison – Drawings and photographs show readers a cave is discovered in 2001 near Springfield, Missouri, by a construction crew working on a road. The formations, creatures, and history of the place are unveiled methodically.
- ***Sweet Land of Liberty*** by Deborah Hopkinson – Oscar Chapman grew up in a poor area of Virginia at the beginning of the 20th century. Throughout his life, he worked to fight the injustices against black people. He became Assistant Secretary of the Interior in Franklin Delano Roosevelt's administration and sought ways to bring racial equality to the people of this country. He was responsible for finding a place for Marian Anderson to sing after she was denied a venue at Constitution Hall. That place was the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

- ***Living Color*** by Steve Jenkins – Typically, camouflage is the protection creatures have from their natural predators. This vibrantly colored book shows how vivid hues can also protect an animal in nature. The cut-paper illustrations, facts, and glossary add to this book's success.
- ***The Incredible Book-Eating Boy*** by Oliver Jeffers – Though some people love books, Henry devours them. Literally. He loves to eat books, and amazingly, the more books he consumes, the smarter he becomes. Eventually, all those words become mixed-up in his brain, and Henry must wean himself from his book diet. The illustrations are amazing!
- ***Do Unto Otters: A Book About Manners*** by Laurie Keller – Mr. Rabbit's new neighbors are otters, and he frets about getting along with the pesky creatures. He decides to take the Golden Rule to heart and considers the ways he would want to be treated by others (and otters). This is a fabulous, funny book about manners!
- ***Measure Up!: Experiments, Puzzles, and Games Exploring Measurement*** by Sandra Markle – The experiments in this book focus on measuring size, distance, weight, volume, quantity, temperature, perimeter, and area. Each section includes examples of things to measure and suggests ways to begin measuring at home. The answers to each of the measuring questions and puzzles are found in detail at the back of the book.
- ***Tuttle's Red Barn: the Story of America's Oldest Family Farm*** by Richard Michelson – When John Tuttle's family arrived in New Hampshire in 1632, he built the first family farm that would remain (with improvements and additions) to the present day. From selling produce to protecting escaped slaves, the family has done well!
- ***Lewis and Clark and Me: a Dog's Tale*** by Laurie Myers – Accompanying Meriwether Lewis and William Clark on their exploration of the west was Seaman, a beautiful Newfoundland dog belonging to Captain Lewis. Through his eyes, various adventures from the journey are told in this beautifully illustrated book.
- ***Genies, Meanies, and Magic Rings*** by Stephen Mitchell – Three favorite stories from *The Arabian Nights* are cleverly told and accompanied by fabulous artwork in this wonderful book. Read about the "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves" and experience the adventure of sword fights! Read about "Abu Keer and Abu Seer" and the deception between supposed friends. Experience "Aladdin and the Magic Lamp" as told from a Chinese perspective.
- ***Gentle Ben*** by Walt Morey – When Fog Benson mistreats a brown bear in Alaska, a young boy named Mark Anderson begins hanging around that bear, determined to make certain it gets proper care. Eventually, he is able to purchase the bear, and their adventures together begin.
- ***Dear Whiskers*** by Ann Whitehead Nagda – In Jenny's fourth grade class, each student must write to a second grader, which would not be bad, except that she has to pretend to be a mouse! When her second grade buddy does not even reply, Jenny is mad...until she discovers the reason for her penpal Sameera's silence.
- ***Half and Half*** by Lensey Namioka – Fiona Cheng has a unique mixed ancestry. Her first name comes from her Scottish mother, and her last name comes from her Chinese father. Both sides of her family want her to celebrate their traditions, and during the town's folk festival, Fiona is faced with a big decision!
- ***The Borrowers*** by Mary Norton – Pod, Homily, and Arietty Clock live under the floorboards of an old house, thanks to their small stature. To survive in life, they borrow all sorts of things from the "human beans" who live above them. Only when a boy moves into the house and discovers their borrowing do things get interesting.
- ***How to Steal a Dog*** by Barbara O'Connor – After Georgina's family is evicted from their apartment, they live in an abandoned car. She devises a plan to get some money by stealing someone's dog and then bringing it to the person when a reward is offered. Her plan doesn't quite work because her conscience gets in the way.
- ***The Lemonade Club*** by Patricia Polacco – Fifth graders Traci and Marilyn are best friends, and they love their teacher, Miss Wichelman. When Marilyn starts to lose weight and is diagnosed with leukemia, Traci does her best to help her friend. She even encourages the class to wear hats and shave their heads in Marilyn's honor!
- ***Balls!*** By Michael Rosen – The history behind various sports' balls, the uses for them, the "inside scoop" on each, and wonderful facts and trivial tidbits fill this book. Basketballs, soccer balls, footballs, tennis balls, handballs, golf balls, volleyballs, table tennis balls, and many more odd balls bounce and roll through the pages.
- ***This is San Francisco*** by Miroslav Sasek – Originally published in 1962, this book is a wonderful way to introduce yourself to the sights and history of San Francisco. The cable car's incline on the book's cover sets the stage for a ride through one of our country's most interesting cities. Visit the crookedest street (Lombard), Chinatown, the Golden Gate Bridge, and more. An update at the book's end tells of things that have changed since the first publication.
- ***Summerhouse Time*** by Eileen Spinelli – Every August, Sophie's extended family gathers at the beach for days and nights of companionship and memorable times. This year feels different, however, and her favorite cousin is not acting so kind anymore. Enjoy the verse-like text and soft illustrations in this summery story.
- ***Nothing But Trouble: the Story of Althea Gibson*** by Sue Stauffacher – As the biggest and wildest tomboy in Harlem, Althea Gibson began playing street tennis with a wooden paddle. With the help of tennis professionals who believed in her and financial supporters who paid for her training and equipment, Althea became the first African American tennis player to win Wimbledon Tennis Championship in 1957.
- ***Trees of Minnesota: Field Guide*** by Stan Tekiela – This terrific guidebook will assist you in identifying 93 tree species in our state. Learn about tree families, origins, habitats, and age. Take it with you when you step out into the natural places in Minnesota and use it to keep a tree journal.