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ABSTRACT

To update the California State Department of Education's recommended list of books for children ages two through seven (most books on the present list were published before 1990), this annotated bibliography reviewed current books recommended by the National Council of Teachers of English, the International Reading Association, and literature journals, and added 20 titles to each of the four categories listed in the original "Read to Me" list. Categories in the bibliography are: The Child; The Child's Home and Family; The Child's Community; and The Child's World. All the books in the updated bibliography were published between 1993 and 1995. (NKA)

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# Read to Me

MILDRED R. DONOGHUE

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In March 1996, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) issued its list of 12 *Standards for the English Language Arts*, the second of which states that students should read a wide range of genres from many periods to develop their understanding of human experience. Four months later, the California State Department of Education published its latest framework, *Teaching Reading*, which mandated both directed skills instruction and literature-based integrated instruction. The framework also stressed student reading outside of school time.

Thus, it was time to review the one CDE framework of recommended literature for children ages two through seven: *Read to Me*. Since 93 percent of those titles were published before 1990, it became imperative to librarians and other educators to become acquainted with more recent books. This writer, therefore, examined current books recommended by NCTE, the International Reading Association, and literature journals (e.g., *Horn Book*, *BookLinks*), and added 20 titles to each of the four categories listed in the original *Read to Me* list.

## I. The Child

- Bernhard, Durga. *Alphabeasts: A Hide & Seek Alphabet Book*. Holiday House, 1993. One animal is named for each letter of the alphabet and that animal is camouflaged in its natural surroundings. At the end, two large pages hide all 26 animals and letters for the reader to find.
- Buehner, Caralyn. *A Job for Wittilda*. Illustrated by Mark Buehner. Dial, 1993. A witch named Wittilda needs a job so she can feed all her cats. She finally wins a job delivering pizza. The illustrations are humorous and creative.
- Cech, John. *Django*. Illustrated by Sharon McGinley-Nally. Four Winds, 1994. A young boy named Django lives in northern Florida. He learns to play the fiddle and

develops a magical gift through his music: he can attract the animals from the swamps around his home. He becomes a legend after a fierce storm during which he saves the animals.

- Climo, Shirley. *The Korean Cinderella*. Illustrated by Ruth Heller. HarperCollins, 1993. In this version of the familiar story, a frog, an ox, and some sparrows replace the traditional fairy godmother. They are, however, just as successful in helping Pear Blossom gain happiness. The striking illustrations are based on ancient and authentic Korean patterns.
- Cooper, Helen. *The Bear under the Stairs*. Dial, 1993. William fears the hungry bear that he imagines lives in the closet under the stairs. He believes he must feed it every day to keep it happy. When Mother notices the terrible smell creeping out from under the door, William shares his fear with her. Together they overcome it. The illustrations are soft-hued and gentle.
- de Beer, Hans. *Little Polar Bear/El osito polar*. North-South, 1994. During a storm a young polar bear becomes separated from his father and ends up in the tropics. A friendly hippopotamus arranges a trip back north on the back of an orca whale.
- Grimm, Jacob, and Wilhelm Grimm. *The Golden Goose*. Illustrated by Uri Shulevitz. Farrar, Straus, 1995. Anyone who touches the golden goose gets stuck and must follow the simple-minded owner. The more persons who get stuck, the sillier the parade. The unusual illustrations by a Caldecott Medal-winning artist fit the ridiculous story very well.
- Grimsdell, Jeremy. *Kalinzu: A Story from Africa*. Kingfisher, 1993. A buffalo calf named Kalinzu gets separated from her mother, Amani, and must find her way back to the herd. A pesky oxpecker helps her learn about survival in the East Africa grasslands.
- Hess, Debra. *Wilson Sat Alone*. Illustrated by Diane Greenesid. Simon & Schuster, 1994. Wilson is a lonely child who never gets involved with his classmates. One day, however, a new girl in the class shows him how to join in the fun with the other children.

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California State University, Fullerton.

- Johnson, Paul. *The Cow Who Wouldn't Come Down*. Orchard, 1993. Gertrude the cow decides to fly although everyone knows that cows can't. Her owner tries many ways to get the cow down. Finally she makes a cow-shaped cushion on which Gertrude can land safely.
- Johnston, Tony. *The Iguana Brothers*. Illustrated by Mark Teague. Scholastic, 1995. Two iguanas named Dom and Tom follow their search for identity, friendship, and food. The illustrations show the bright colors of Mexican life, including plants, buildings, and clothing. Spanish words are used meaningfully throughout the book.
- Martin, Jane, and Patricia Marx. *Now Everybody Really Hates Me!* Illustrated by Roz Chast. HarperCollins, 1993. Patti is sent to her room for hitting her brother and other fussing during his birthday party. There she fantasizes about escaping until her parents carry her back for cake and ice cream. The illustrations are comical and appropriate.
- Metaxas, Eric. *The Birthday ABC*. Illustrated by Tim Raglin. Simon & Schuster, 1995. When the animals from Alligator to Zebra come together for a birthday party, each recites a short rhyme to celebrate his/her birthday. The humorous verses will help children appreciate language and sound patterns.
- Miller, Margaret. *My Five Senses*. Simon & Schuster, 1994. A simple text and straightforward photos make this book a pleasant teaching tool. Basic concepts related to how we use our senses in the world around us are reinforced.
- Pinkney, Brian. *JoJo's Flying Side Kick*. Simon & Schuster, 1995. Although JoJo's Tae Kwon Do teacher says that JoJo is ready to try for her yellow belt, JoJo herself is doubtful. Family and friends help her overcome her fears.
- Pomerantz, Charlotte. *Halfway to Your House*. Illustrated by Gabrielle Vincent. Greenwillow, 1993. Whimsical times in the life of a young child are described in 30 short, appealing poems. The illustrations add to the warmth of the book.
- Rogers, Jacqueline. *Best Friends Sleep Over*. Scholastic, 1993. This animal fantasy concerns a group of large jungle animals that have a slumber party. Away from home for the first time is Gilbert Gorilla, who receives the support of his friends and has a memorable evening.
- Simard, Remy. *The Magic Boot*. Illustrated by Pierre Pratt. Annick, 1995. This is a legend about the origins of Italy. A young boy with extraordinarily large feet is given a pair of magical boots that grow larger every time they touch water.
- Waber, Bernard. *Lyle at the Office*. Houghton Mifflin, 1994. This is another adventure with Lyle the crocodile, who lives with his mother in the Primm household. Mr. Primm refuses to let Lyle's picture be used on a cereal box promoted by his marketing firm, although Lyle loves the product.
- Wood, Audrey. *The Napping House Wakes Up*. Illustrated by Don Wood. Harcourt, 1994. A sequel to *The Napping House*, this cumulative story in a pop-up book describes the napping house occupants as they wake up. The illustrations move from blue to yellow as the sun rises.

## II. The Child's Home and Family

- Beard, Darleen. *The Pumpkin Man from Piney Creek*. Illustrated by Laura Kelly. Simon & Schuster, 1995. In 19th century rural America, young Hattie lives on a pumpkin farm and wants very much to carve her favorite pumpkin into a jack-o'-lantern. She gets her wish and a recipe for pumpkin pie as well.
- Best, Carl. *Taxi! Taxi!* Illustrated by Dale Gottlieb. Little, Brown, 1994. Tina's father (who does not live with her and her mother) drives a taxi. The picture book describes one Sunday outing that the two share through the city and out to the country. Some Spanish words and phrases are included in the story.
- Bunting, Eve. *Flower Garden*. Illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt. Harcourt, 1994. An African American family in the inner city purchases flowers at a local market to plant in its apartment flower box. The story ends with a present and cake for the working mother's birthday.
- Calmenson, Stephanie. *Hotter Than a Hot Dog*. Illustrated by Elivia. Little, Brown, 1994. On a very hot summer day in a large city, a little girl and her grandmother take the train to the beach. The pictures and story combine to show the warm relationship during the family outing.
- Ernst, Lisa. *The Luckiest Kid on the Planet*. Bradbury, 1994. Lucky Morgenstern thinks he is indeed the luckiest kid until he learns one day that his real name is Herbert. His luck seems to change until he discovers the one thing in his life that does make him especially lucky — his grandfather, who is his best friend.
- Franklin, Kristine L. *The Shepherd Boy/El nino pastor*. Illustrated by Jill Kastner. Atheneum, 1994. A Navajo boy must tend a flock of 50 sheep for the summer. One day a lamb is missing and the boy must find it before nightfall. The paintings provide understanding of the Navajo people.
- Hartmann, Wendy. *All the Magic in the World*. Illustrated by Niki Daly. Dutton, 1993. Set in South Africa, the story is about children at play, especially Lena and her friends who learn the magic of play from an odd-job man named Joseph. It conveys the universal message about human relationships.
- Hausherr, Rosemarie. *What Food Is This?* Scholastic, 1994. Different foods and their sources are shown, each with a photograph and a simple question followed by an accompanying page of explanation.
- Henkes, Kevin. *Owen*. Greenwillow, 1993. Owen is a mouse who is truly attached to his yellow, fuzzy blanket. As preschool is about to start for Owen, his parents try very hard to rid him of the blanket. Finally a solution is found that satisfies everyone.
- Johnson, Angela. *Julius*. Illustrated by Dave Pikey. Orchard, 1993. Maya receives an Alaskan pig as a gift from her granddaddy. She includes Julius in her daily activities and even teaches him manners. Fabric designs are used as borders and backgrounds.

- MacLachlan, Patricia. *What You Know First*. Illustrated by Barry Moser. HarperCollins, 1995. Sadly, a young girl prepares to leave her prairie home for a new home on the coast. She recollects her present life because her father reminds her that "what you know first stays with you."
- Mitchell, Rita. *Hue Boy*. Illustrated by Caroline Binch. Dial, 1993. This Caribbean story tells the efforts of a young boy to grow taller. He is teased for being too short, but no solution seems to work until his father returns home and Hue Boy learns to walk tall with the confident guidance of his family.
- Paulsen, Gary. *The Tortilla Factory/Tortilleria*. Illustrated by Ruth W. Paulsen. Harcourt, 1995. The picture book describes the making of a tortilla and links it to the colors of the human family.
- Russo, Marisabina. *Trade-In Mother*. Greenwillow, 1993. Max is frustrated because he cannot get his way with his mother, so he outlines all the mothers who could replace her. She deals with this common dilemma wisely and calmly. Realistic illustrations help the story and reveal the mother's love.
- Snyder, Carol. *God Must Like Cookies, Too*. Illustrated by Beth Glick. Jewish Publication Society, 1993. An introduction to Jewish traditions through the story of a Jewish grandmother and her young granddaughter. They prepare the traditional Friday meal and attend synagogue services together.
- . *One Up, One Down/Una arriba, uno abajo*. Illustrated by Maxie Chambliss. Atheneum, 1995. Until the twins arrive, Kathie is an only child. Now she becomes the big sister and her parents praise her for helping out. The title refers to the twins: When one is awake, the other is asleep.
- Thomson, Peggy. *Siggy's Spaghetti Works*. Illustrated by Gloria Kamen. Morrow, 1993. Schoolchildren are given a tour of a large spaghetti factory. There are diagrams, balloon captions, and information all in a picture book format.
- Torres, Leyla. *Subway Sparrow/Gorrion del metro*. Illustrated by author. Farrar, Straus, 1993. A sparrow is trapped in a New York subway, and two teenagers and two adults join together to rescue it. This multicultural picture book includes a few sentences in Spanish and Polish.
- Wells, Rosemary. *Lucy Comes to Stay*. Illustrated by Mark Graham. Dial, 1994. Mary Elizabeth is the heroine who learns how to care for a newborn puppy named Lucy. There are mini-chapters with appealing titles and beautiful illustrations.
- Zalben, Jane. *Pearl Plants a Tree*. Simon & Schuster, 1995. Pearl plants an apple seed, as her immigrant grandfather had done. Later Grandpa helps her plant her small tree and they picnic nearby, thinking of future generations. Included are a summary of tree-planting holidays around the world, including the Jewish New Year of Trees; and directions on how to grow a tree.
- Barbour. HarperCollins, 1995. Fifteen free-verse poems explore the life and adventures found on city streets. Each new page has a different and exciting color scheme.
- Bunting, Eve. *Cheyenne Again*. Illustrated by Irving Toddy. Clarion, 1995. Young Bull is taken to a Native American reservation school where nothing familiar is left to him. He learns to cope by retaining the Cheyenne ideals inside while appearing to have changed on the outside.
- Finchler, Judy. *Miss Malarkey Doesn't Live in Room 10*. Illustrated by Kevin O'Malley. Walker, 1995. A first grader is shocked when his teacher moves into his apartment building as he had believed that teachers live at school. A humorous story with colorful and comical illustrations that describe teachers' real and imagined after-school lives.
- Hill, Susan. *Beware. Beware*. Illustrated by Angela Barrett. Candlewick, 1993. This rhymed story is about a young girl whose curiosity leads her to explore the world beyond her front door. The book involves the need for adventure and the desire for safety.
- Jacobs, Leland. *Is Somewhere Always Far Away? Poems about places*. Illustrated by Jeff Kaufman. Holt, 1993. These 25 poems concerns special places at home, in the city, and in the country, The rhyme is metered and the bright collages are cut-and-dyed paper.
- Kastner, Jill. *Snake Hunt*. Four Winds, 1993. Granddad tells of his adventure wrestling a rattlesnake and eating it in a stew. So his granddaughter wants to go snake hunting also. A day in the woods develops special bonding between the two characters. The book is a good read-aloud.
- Krull, Kathleen. *Maria Molina and the Days of the Dead*. Illustrated by Enrique Sanchez. Macmillan, 1994. Maria and her family celebrate the Days of the Dead. When the family moves from Mexico to the U.S., their customs are compared with American Halloween customs.
- Littlesugar, Amy. *Josiah True and the Art Maker*. Illustrated by Barbara Garrison. Simon & Schuster, 1995. A woman artist travels from community to community, painting portraits. Young Josiah is inspired when she stays at his home. Later she gives him his own paintbrush to encourage his career.
- Lucas, Barbara. *Snowed In*. Illustrated by Catherine Stock. Bradbury, 1993. Luke, Grace, and their parents are snowed in on their Wyoming farm during the winter. This seasonal event requires months of preparation and points out differences in lifestyles.
- Martin, Billy Jr. *Old Devil Wind*. Illustrated by Barry Root. Harcourt, 1993. This cumulative ghost story involves brooms, candles, stools, etc., until the wind blows everything and everyone away. The book would be useful for storytelling and for choral speech.
- McDonald, Megan. *Insects Are My Life*. Illustrated by Paul Johnson. Orchard, 1995. Amanda develops a strong interest in bugs, which gets her into trouble at home and at school. However, she soon finds a friend who is also fascinated by an unusual hobby — reptiles!
- McPhail, David. *Santa's Book of Names*. Little, Brown, 1993.



Edward cannot read, so when Santa leaves his "Book of Names" at Edward's house, the boy must use his letter and phonics skills to help Santa. Edward's success in signaling Santa and then decoding the names of the children and their presents should encourage other nonreaders to learn.

Moore, Lillian. *I Never Did That Before*. Illustrated by Lillian Hoban. Atheneum, 1995. These 14 poems are linked to the theme of discovery — a child doing something for the very first time. The illustrations are whimsical and warm.

Pinkney, Andrea. *Seven Candles for Kwanzaa*. Illustrated by Brian Pinkney. Dial, 1993. The simple text incorporates Swahili words and describes a family's daily candle-lighting ritual for the seven principles of Kwanzaa.

Pinkney, Gloria. *The Sunday Outing*. Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Dial, 1994. Every Sunday Ernestine and her great-aunt go to the station to watch the trains. She wants to visit her birthplace in North Carolina, and her African American family helps make her wish come true.

Robins, Deri, Kate Crocker, and Meg Sanders. *Kids Can Do It Book*. Illustrated by Charlotte Stowell. Kingfisher, 1993. This alphabet book describes numerous crafts, recipes, experiments, and games with simple directions. Children can work alone or in a group.

Sabuda, Robert. *The Christmas Alphabet*. Orchard, 1994. This pop-up alphabet book has delicate paper sculptures that unfold like Christmas cards. Each letter appears on a colored card that opens to a cut Christmas shape (e.g., A — angel).

Stickland, Henrietta. *The Christmas Bear*. Illustrated by Paul Stickland. Dutton, 1993. Santa gives a polar bear cub a tour of his establishment and finally presents him with a special gift. The bear is happy but glad to get back home with the "best presents of all," his parents.

Stutson, Caroline. *By the Light of the Halloween Moon*. Illustrated by Kevin Hawkes. Lothrop, 1993. This cumulative poetic story begins with a toe, a cat, and a witch who tries to grab the cat that tries to catch the toe. Rhythmic patterns and exciting watercolors help make it a good read-aloud.

Zalben, Jane. *Happy New Year, Beni!* Holt, 1993. The family prepares for and celebrates the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah. Two cousins, Beni and Sara, quarrel but finally make up. A point of interest is that the book concerns a bear family.

#### IV. The Child's World

Arnosky, Jim. *I See Animals Hiding*. Scholastic, 1995.

Watercolor illustrations depict animals camouflaged to blend in with their habitats. Animal adaptation and survival are presented and discussed.

Baker, Alan. *White Rabbit's Color Book*. Kingfisher, 1994. A white rabbit discovers the fun of playing with primary colors, mixing them and becoming immersed. The impressive watercolor art is important to the concepts.

Casey, Denise. *Weather Everywhere*. Photographs by Jackie Gilmore. Macmillan, 1995. Simple, clear text together

with diagrams and photographs introduce the many factors that create weather and climate everywhere.

Dugan, Barbara. *Leaving Home with a Pickle Jar*. Illustrated by Karen Lee Baker. Greenwillow, 1993. A child, his mother, and his sister must move from an urban neighborhood to a Minnesota country home. He takes along a grasshopper in a pickle jar to help him adjust to the new environment.

Evans, David, and Claudette Williams. *Color and Light*. Photographs by David Pangbourne. Scholastic, 1993. An activity book, it introduces the properties of color and light to preschool and primary children. Color photographs give visual directions for completing experiments based on daily experiences.

Falwell, Cathryn. *Feast for 10*. Clarion, 1993. In preparation for a feast, the family goes grocery shopping and the readers can count along. The illustrations include collage and color.

Franklin, Kristine L. *When the Monkeys Came Back/El aullido de los monos*. Illustrated by Robert Roth. Atheneum, 1994. When some Central American woodlands are cut down, the monkeys disappear, so a mother and her children spend a lifetime restoring the forest.

Garland, Sherry. *The Summer Sands*. Illustrated by Robert J. Lee. Harcourt, 1995. This book relates how Christmas trees are recycled to restore sand dunes destroyed by storms. Community efforts, particularly those of one family, are described.

Hansard, Peter. *A Field Full of Horses*. Illustrated by Kenneth Lilly. Candlewick, 1994. During a walk on a farm, the narrator offers interesting facts about horses. Helpful captions accompany the pictures, which will appeal to young children.

Havill, Juanita. *Sato and the Elephants*. Illustrated by Jean and Mou-Sien Tseng. Lothrop, 1993. Sato wants to become a master ivory carver until he finds a bullet lodged in a piece of ivory on which he is working. This text looks at endangered species and environmental issues.

Hirschi, Ron. *A Time for Babies*. Photographs by Thomas Mangelsen. Dutton, 1993. The text focuses on the critical time when animal babies are born, including the role of the parents. Captioned color photographs of several birds and mammals enhance the facts.

———. *A Time for Sleeping*. Photographs by Thomas Mangelsen. Dutton, 1993. Sleeping habits of animals are conveyed in simple text and color photographs.

Jackson, Woody. *Counting Cows*. Harcourt, 1995. Counting cows while riding begins with 10 cows. By the time there are zero cows, vocabulary such as *holsteins*, *cattle*, and *heifers* has been introduced, as well as the math concepts.

Ling, Mary. *Penguin*. Photographs by Neil Fletcher. Dorling Kindersley, 1993. The one-sentence text and the photography enhance the full-spread depictions of the stages of penguin growth from hatching to adulthood. Good choice for early research by young children.

Machotka, Hana. *Outstanding Outsides*. Morrow, 1993. Each close-up photo asks the reader to guess the ani-

- mal from its body covering. The following page then shows the entire animal and offers simple information about that covering.
- Orie, Sandra DeCoteau. *Did You Hear the Wind Sing Your Name? An Oneida Song of Spring*. Illustrated by Christopher Canyon. Walker, 1995. A question format with full-spread illustrations explores the sights and smells of a day and evening in spring among the Oneida people.
- Rocklin, Joanne. *Musical Chairs and Dancing Bears*. Illustrated by Laure de Matharel. Holt, 1993. The story is set at a birthday party. Ten bears dance the polka, counting backward as they are eliminated from a game of musical chairs.
- Stolz, Mary. *Say Something*. Illustrated by Alexander Koshkin. HarperCollins, 1993. A prose poem about nature, suggesting comments and queries that encourage young children to reach their own conclusions. The illustrations are both imaginative and realistic.
- Taylor, David. *Nature's Creatures of the Dark*. Dial, 1993. This pop-up book glows in the dark. A small, folded flap on the right of each spread gives the creature's name and some interesting facts about it and then unfolds to more pictures.
- Wise, William. *Ten Sly Piranhas: A Counting Book in Reverse*. Illustrated by Victoria Chess. Dial, 1993. Ten piranhas in South American jungles/ rivers gradually disappear. As the subtitle indicates, it is a "tale of wickedness" told in verse as well as in reverse. •

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