



Books as Gifts



There's nothing better on a chilly winter day than to curl up with a book. In this collection, you'll find stories filled with high adventure, biographies, historical fiction and real life events, Greek myths, stories about kids from around the world, books about all kinds of science (from animals to weather), graphic novels, and so much more. All are made to share. So pick up a book, share a story, learn something new — and enjoy the season!

Books for children 0-3 years old

Aerospace Engineering and Quarks (Baby Loves series)

by Ruth Spiro

There is plenty to engage young children in these simple books (part of the *Baby Loves* series) that introduce basic science ideas and science vocabulary. The book titles are probably more for the adults than the young children for whom these board books are intended!

Black Cat and White Cat

by Claire Garralon

White Cat lives in a black home while Black Cat lives in a white one. They disappear when they visit the other, but find a colorful answer to their dilemma.

Cityblock

by Christopher Franceschelli

Each page turn reveals a particular part of the city. From shoes in which people walk around to a good story at the bookstore, readers can look closely at a vibrant city.

Everyone Says Goodnight

by Hiroyuki Arai

Split pages reveal animals and children, first awake and then asleep, until all are cozily tucked in with a turn of a page. Simple, appealing illustrations and straightforward text complete this bedtime package.

Goose on the Farm

by Laura Wall

Before going on a school trip, Sophie and Goose start with a book, have lunch, then travel to the farm. There they meet fluffy chicks, muddy pigs, and more before returning home. Colorful illustrations use simple line on plain backgrounds and simple language.

My Car/Mi carro

by Byron Barton

Sam is the man who takes good care of his car, driving it to work as a bus driver. In this bilingual version of the book, Sam's simple saga is presented in Spanish and English, equally charming in both languages.

A Number Slumber

by Suzanne Bloom

Different animals have different rituals before bed. From "ten terribly tired tigers" to "one weary wombat" — alliterative language counts down to sleep. The cozy countdown is illustrated with soft lines and comforting colors for a sweet bedtime book.

Sing with Me

by Naoko Stoop

Adults may need to be reminded of standard songs to share with young children all of which are just right to encourage the youngest singer. Imaginative illustrations cover each double page spread in this engaging volume.

Touch Think Learn: ABC

by Xavier Deneux

Feel the raised letters; see where they fit in on the opposing page. Enjoy the bright images as you go through the alphabet accompanied by boldly colored objects that start with each letter.

Whose Shoes: A Shoe for Every Job

by Stephen Swinburne

Some people don't wear any shoes at all. Other people wear special shoes for their work. Take a close look to see if you can identify who wears those shoes! Clear photographs and simple text introduce the notion of special footwear.



Reading Rockets 2016 Holiday Buying Guide

Books for children 3-6 years old

Animals in Winter

by Jenny F. VanVoorst

What do animals do in winter? In simple language and color photographs animal habits are examined. New readers will find the introduction in this series accessible and may use it as a springboard to explore topics in greater depth.

Before Morning

by Joyce Sidman

Scratchboard illustrations accompany an invocation, a poem that invites something to happen. Here a girl wants the world to slow down just a bit so her pilot mother doesn't have to leave. What happens before morning? A huge snowfall slows everything down.

Best in Snow

by April Pulley Sayre

Lyrical rhymes and gorgeous color photographs capture the magic of winter. The combination of image and word also explores the water cycle and animals in the winter.

Emma and Julia Love Ballet

by Barbara McClintock

Julia is a professional dancer; Emma is a young girl taking ballet lessons. Their training and performances parallel until the two meet backstage for a hug after Julia performs on stage. Ballet lovers of all ages will enjoy the detailed illustrations and portraits of two dancers.

Esquivel! Space-Age Sound Artist

by Susan Wood

Meet Juan García Esquivel whose contributions to music can still be heard. From his early days in Mexico, Juan experimented to find just the right sounds for his music. More information is included at the end of this lively picture book biography.

Every Color

by Erin Eitter Kono

A passing seagull gives a polar bear a rainbow in a letter written by a faraway girl. When the polar bear continues to feel sad, he joins up with the girl and together they travel the world, seeing colors all around. The duo is welcomed home by the colors of the aurora borealis and the warmth of friendship from the other animals.

First Snow

by Bomi Park

A young child hears something outside — “pit; pit; pit against the window.” It's the first snow! She dons her clothes and goes out to play. In a dreamlike sequence, she and other children make snowmen before the girl returns to her own backyard.

The Friend Ship

by Kat Yeh

Lonely Hedgehog builds a boat to look for the elusive friend ship. As Hedgehog travels, other animals fill the boat. A wise elephant teaches Hedgehog and the others that friendship was on board all the time.

Giant Squid

by Candace Fleming

Dramatic illustrations and an equally dramatic narration combine to present the giant squid. Just as quickly as the squid emerges from its dark world to feed, it is gone. The stunning images and rich language to move this intriguing book quickly, swimmingly along.

Grumbles from the Town: Mother Goose Voices with a Twist

by Jane Yolen and Rebecca Kai Dotlich

Children familiar with traditional rhymes will enjoy these take-offs, while those who don't know them will enjoy the sound of the poetry read aloud. Humorous illustrations echo the tone of the poetry in this playful collection.

A Hat for Mrs. Goldman

by Michelle Edwards

When Sophie was born, her neighbor made Sophie a hat. Now that Sophie is big, she makes pom-poms for Mrs. Goldman's hats. Sophie then makes a very special hat for Mrs. Goldman especially for when they walk the dog, Fifi. Hat-making instructions are included in this charming story of friendship.

Hotel Bruce

by Ryan Higgins

Bruce the bear and parent to four young geese returns from his migration trip ready to rest at home. He's not ready, however, for his den to turn into Hotel Bruce, filled with animals of all types and stripes. Equally funny as the first book, *Mother Bruce*, this is sure to delight adults and children.

Imagine a City

by Elise Hurst

Join a mother and her children on an imaginative journey to places where bears ride bicycles and wear scarves, lions read books, and buses are fish that fly through the clouds. Highly detailed, inventive black and white illustrations with splashes of red move the journey along until the very satisfying conclusion.

(Continued on next page)



Reading Rockets 2016 Holiday Buying Guide

Books for children 3-6 years old

Little Penguins

by Cynthia Rylant

When the little penguins see snowflakes, they wonder how many? There are many! They dress for the weather and go play in the snow, tired and content when it's time for bed. This is a charming, whimsical, wintery tale.

Look Up!

by Jung Jin-Ho

Look over the ledge with the child watching other kids play far below. What does she see? When they look up and see her, she joins them below with the promise of friendship. Aerial views and limited text make this visual experience memorable, especially when we see the child who watched from above; her wheelchair does not impede her at all.

Madeline Finn and the Library Dog

by Lisa Papp

Madeline Finn likes many things but reading aloud is not one of them. That is until she meets a big white dog named Bonnie at the library. Reading to Bonnie helps Madeline to read aloud capably in front of her classroom. Soft pastel illustrations depict a timid reader and a patient dog and how the mild canine boosts Madeline's confidence and gives her a surprise.

Marta! Big and Small

by Jen Arena

Marta is a little girl who is learning that it's all in how you look at things! To a roaring lion, "Marta is *tranouila*. Quiet. Very quiet." But "To a rabbit, Marta is *ruidosa*! Loud. Very loud." Opposites are presented in simple English and Spanish.

Mister Pip

by Thereza Rowe

After a busy night in the neighborhood, Mr. Pip, the cat, tries to find a quiet place to sleep. That's easier said than done! Vacuum cleaners, canoodlers, and more make noises that keep the poor feline awake! Stylized illustrations in rich colors and lots of alliterative language create an irresistible tale.

Rudas: Niño's Horrendous Hermanitas

by Yuyi Morales

Niño is back and is hard to defeat — except when the horrible little girls don't play by the rules! Almost surreal illustrations add humor and surprise as they roll across the pages to a cozy conclusion. Spanish and English are used throughout for a vivacious romp.

Sound of Silence

by Katrina Goldsaito

When Yoshio opens his door, the sounds of Tokyo surround him. Where would he find silence? Not at home or in school or in the forest. No, Yoshio finds silence "between and underneath every sound." Detailed illustrations show the contemporary Japanese city.

There Is a Tribe of Kids

by Lane Smith

A colony of penguins, a pod of whales, a formation of rocks, and other groups of animate and inanimate things bring a lonely child to his own group. The joyful reunion creates a family. Stylized illustrations are rich with humor and liveliness, deserving of many readings.

A Unicorn Named Sparkle

by Amy Young

The unicorn that Lucy got for 25 cents isn't the special Sparkle she had envisioned. This unicorn resembles a speckled goat plus he's got fleas and is quite naughty. Lucy considers returning Sparkle but discovers that she loves him in spite of his peculiarities.

Who What Where?

by Olivier Tallec

Who did what? What did they do? Where did they do it? A question is asked on each horizontal page; the answer is on the next page — but a keen eye is needed to figure it out by looking carefully at a line-up of suspects. The characters are comical in recognizable situations. (Happily, a key to the right answers appears at the very end.)

The Wish Tree

by Kyo Maclear

Charles' brother and sister told him there was no such thing, but the little boy and his sled set out to find the wish tree. In this sensitive story, a boy's conviction and kindness are rewarded in kind.

You Are Not a Cat!

by Sharon Flake

Duck likes to assume different roles (he meows or quacks on different days), frustrating his friend Cat. This simple picture book uses conversation bubbles, comical illustrations, and broad humor, sure to delight young readers.



Reading Rockets 2016 Holiday Buying Guide

Books for children 6-9 years old

Antsy Ansel: Ansel Adams, a Life in Nature

by Cindy Jenson-Elliott

The best thing to calm Ansel down was the outdoors. The story of how a fidgety boy evolved into a celebrated nature photographer is told in textured collages and lively text. Additional information about Adams and some of his iconic photographs conclude this engaging book.

Coyote Moon

by Maria Gianferrari

She's a coyote looking to feed her cubs as she travels across a recognizable landscape: a golf course and suburban houses. As the sun rises, before she heads back to feed her cubs, she looks up to see a child watching her from the safety of his bedroom. Luminous illustrations from varied perspectives heighten the drama of the coyote's journey.

The Deadliest Creature in the World

by Brenda Guiberson

Spectacular, realistic illustrations accompany a chatty and surprisingly nonthreatening description of deadly creatures from around the globe. Which is the deadliest? Is it the toxin-changing geographic cone snail or could it be a short-tailed shrew that delivers venom through grooved teeth? Readers of all ages will be fascinated by this book from the same team who gave us *The Most Amazing Creature in the Sea*.

Dining with Dinosaurs: A Tasty Guide to Mesozoic Munching

by Hannah Bonner

Lots of different types of "vores" lived during the Mesozoic era: insectivores, piscivores, even dinovores. The names suggest what each type of creature ate in this informal look at the different types of eating habits. Cartoon illustrations make this an informative, entertaining first look at the period and its inhabitants.

Fascinating: The Life of Leonard Nimoy

by Richard Michelson

Leonard Nimoy's friend, an author and poet, presents a biography of the Star Trek hero for young readers. Young Leonard, known as Lenny, aspired to become an actor. His father told him that actors starve; musicians will always eat. The straightforward text concludes with an author's note and a photo of the writer and his friend.

Hippopotamister

by John Patrick Green

"The old City Zoo was falling apart." So Red Panda and his friend, Hippo, get jobs among humans. Hippo excels at all of his work as Hippopotamister, but he finds he's happiest when he can be himself! This graphic novel is fresh and funny and sure to engage young readers.

Lucy

by Randy Cecil

The story of a small dog, the girl who loves her, and the girl's struggling father come together in four acts. Detailed, black and white illustrations that appear as though in a spotlight effectively convey the daily intersections of these lives.

Mad Scientist Academy: The Weather Disaster

by Matthew McElligott

Factual information about weather and the water cycle is embedded in the comic graphic novel. Welcome to the Mad Scientist Academy, where slapstick humor and fast-paced action come together in a silly but engaging romp.

Miss Paul and the President: The Creative Campaign for Women's Right to Vote

by Dean Robbins

In 1918, young woman named Alice Paul and the National Women's Party convinced President Woodrow Wilson to support women's right to vote. Still, women would not get the vote for two more years! Alice's story is told for younger readers in translucent watercolors and a lighthearted narrative.

Penguin Problems

by Jory John

A dour little penguin has problems. He doesn't like snow (it's too bright). He can't fly. And he's hungry. A wise walrus reminds him of the beauty all around ... but does this appease the penguin? Understated humor in simple, textured illustrations and the penguin's narration create a sophisticated and very funny book.

Piper Green and the Fairy Tree: The Sea Pony

by Ellen Potter

Piper Green lives off the coast of Maine on Peek-a-Boo Island. Could it be the fairy tree that grows in her front yard that brings her the pony? This latest story about Piper and her life on the island is as satisfying as the others in the cheery series but can be read as a stand-alone.

(Continued on next page)



Reading Rockets 2016 Holiday Buying Guide

Books for children 6-9 years old

A Poem for Peter: the Story of Ezra Jack Keats and the Creation of The Snowy Day

by Andrea Davis Pinkney

Ezra Jack Keats may be best known as the creator of the 1963 Caldecott Medal winning *The Snowy Day* which featured a little brown boy named Peter. In lyrical language, Keats' life and inspirations are revealed, complemented by lush collage and acrylic illustrations that evoke Keats' work. Included on selected pages are images of the real Peter and paintings by Keats. An author's note completes the homage to Keats and his legacy.

Preaching to the Chickens: the Story of Young John Lewis

by Jabari Asim

As a child, John Lewis always practiced his deep religious convictions, even with his much loved chickens. Based on the childhood of the Civil Rights exemplar and U.S. Congressman, this story of faith and intelligence comes to life in dramatic, light-filled watercolors and poetic text.

The Real Poop on Pigeons

by Kevin McCloskey

When a couple complains about pigeons in the park, two children in pigeon costumes come to give them the real story about pigeons. Done in an open comic book format, this easier-to-read book is sure to entertain as well as inform.

Rockets

by Jenny Fretlad VanVoorst

In this Space Explorers series, topics of interest to younger readers are introduced in clear color photographs and accessible, logically presented text. "Activities and Tools" to extend each subject are included in an index, along with suggestions for finding additional information.

Six Dots: A Story of Young Louis Braille

by Jen Bryant

This fictionalized account of how young Louis Braille lost his eyesight is told through his voice. It is realistic but with lighter touches as well as insight into what inspired him to invent a way for blind people to read. Illustrations augment the information and tone to engage and enlighten readers.

Solar Power

by Rebecca Pettiford

In this Green Planet series, topics of interest to younger readers are introduced in clear color photographs and accessible, logically presented text. "Activities and Tools" to extend each subject are included as is an index and where to go for additional information.

They All Saw a Cat

by Brendan Wenzel

As a cat walked through the world, "with its whiskers, ears, and paws..." a child, a mouse, a dog, and others see the cat — each from its own unique perspective: the mouse sees all claws and teeth, the worm sees echoes in the ground, and so on. The repeating refrain combines with original and stunning illustrations to create a book to examine multiple times.

The Three Lucys

by Hayan Charara

While visiting relatives in Beirut, the 2006 war begins between Hezbollah and Israel. Luli and his family are displaced by the constant month-long bombings, unable to return to their home. When they do, their house is in ruins and Luli's cats are missing. Lucy the Fat and Lucy the Skinny find their way back, but there is comfort only in the memory of Lucy Lucy. Though a story of war, this personal and hopeful story will resonate with young readers.

A Voyage in the Clouds: The (Mostly) True Story of the First International Flight by Balloon in 1785

by Matthew Olshan

Imagine flying between countries in a hot air balloon. What would you take? What would you leave behind when it becomes too dangerous to hold onto everything? Might you discard even your clothing? Join the English Dr. John Jeffries and his French pilot, Jean-Pierre Blanchard, for just such a trip. Humor and hijinks make their unforgettable trip positively joyful.

Wonderful Winter: All Kinds of Winter Facts and Fun

by Bruce Goldstone

Winter is a season of questions and of waiting. How do animals live during the cold winter? How do snowflakes form? What is it we wait for in the winter? But all the waiting and wondering come to an end and "wonderful winter makes way for ... spectacular spring." Photographs and an informal text plus a few activities just right for the season make this a cozy book.



Reading Rockets 2016 Holiday Buying Guide

Books for children 9-12 years old

Apollo: The Brilliant One (Olympians series)

by George O'Connor

The Greek muse, Polyhmnia, invites readers into a story of the gods of Olympus focusing on the flawed hero, Apollo. Dramatic sequential art and rich language are used in this retelling of Apollo's successes and failures. Back matter completes this attractive and compelling addition to the series.

As Brave As You

by Jason Reynolds

11-year-old Genie and his soon-to-be-14-year-old brother, Ernie, travel from their home in Brooklyn to spend the summer in rural Virginia with their grandparents. The boys are in for lots of surprises; they learn that their grandfather is blind, that there is no Internet, and more. Characters are distinct and vividly depicted as Genie narrates his satisfying story.

Beetle Boy

by M.G. Leonard

When Darkus' entomologist father disappears, the boy moves in with eccentric Uncle Max. There, Darkus meets an extraordinary rhinoceros beetle (who he names Max), foils a plot by the evil Lucretia Cutter and her inept minions, and forges friendships. The fast pace unfolds with humor, ends with an entomologists' dictionary, and will ultimately continue in another book.

Best Man

by Richard Peck

Archer has been in two weddings. He looks back on the first one — a disaster for the then six-year old boy. At least Archer met Lynette Stanley, starting a friendship that has stuck. Now in 6th grade, Archer confronts bullies and what it means to be a man as he matures. Quirky characters combine with poignant and laugh-out-loud scenes in this memorable and ultimately touching novel.

Brave Like My Brother

by Marc Tyler Nobleman

Charlie writes to his older brother, Joe, who is a soldier during World War II. Though Cleveland, Ohio, feels like a long way from the war, there are things in common. Action and activities on both sides of the Atlantic are revealed through the brothers' letters and provide an accessible introduction.

Full of Beans

by Jennifer Holm

Times are tough for Beans and his family in Key West during the Great Depression. Can Beans and his friends trust the New Dealers who say that they have come to Florida to make their small, poor town a tourist destination? Bean's saga is both humorous and poignant in his satisfying story.

It Ain't So Awful, Falafel

by Firoozeh Dumas

Zomorod Yousefzadeh prefers to be called "Cindy" (as in one of the Brady Bunch). She lives with her Iranian-born family in California where her father works. Their life, however, changes when a group of Iranian students take over the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. The issues of the 1970s come into sharp focus (and are surprisingly timely) through Cindy's often funny, sometimes insightful, always plausible narration.

Jason and the Argonauts: The First Great Quest in Greek Mythology

by Robert Byrd

There is just no pleasing all of the ancient Greek gods. When Jason gathers 50 men on a quest to find the Golden Fleece and regain his throne, he does so with the help of Medea ... but not without consequences. An accessible retelling in a large format with detailed illustrations makes an exhilarating version of an old myth.

The Land of Forgotten Girls

by Erin E. Kelly

Soledad and Ming have migrated to Louisiana from the Philippines. Their father has returned to their homeland leaving the girls with Vea, the girls' unhappy, mean-spirited stepmother. As their world expands and fact and fantasy collide, the real world, friendships, and understanding also expand.

Let Your Voice Be Heard: The Life and Times of Pete Seeger

by Anita Silvey

Pete Seeger lived a long life sharing his music and his convictions about equality with literally millions of people all over the world. He is presented here in well-researched, clearly documented and understandable language punctuated with photographs. Seeger's life presents a glimpse at the history of the United States, ranging from Civil Rights to workers' rights.

(Continued on next page)



Reading Rockets 2016 Holiday Buying Guide

Books for children 9-12 years old

Misunderstood: Why the Humble Rat May Be Your Best Pet Ever

by Rachel Toor

"For three and a half years, I was in love with someone the size of a hot dog bun [named Iris]. She was a rat." Literally, a rodent. Part memoir, part science, this look at life with a pet domesticated rat, their habits and more are presented in chatty text. From the charming cover to the informative text, even the most skeptical reader will recognize the humble rat's worth (and character).

Moo: A Novel

by Sharon Creech

Reena, her younger brother Luke and their parents leave New York City behind for a new life in Maine. The first summer in their new home, the siblings are asked to help old Mrs. Falala and her animals. Both the old lady and each of her four-legged charges have distinct personalities with unanticipated results for the children and parents. Humor and more serious topics unfold in gentle verse in an open format.

The Music in George's Head: George Gershwin Creates Rhapsody in Blue

by Suzanne Slade

Illustrations in blues and grays combine with words to flow across the pages of this handsome look into the music and life of an American artist. Fully researched and creatively presented, this is a brief glimpse at the life and contributions of a musical great.

One Half from the East

by Nadia Hashimi

Obeyda becomes a *bacha posh* (a girl who assumes the role of a boy) named Obeyd when she and her family leave Kabul to be nearer to family in the country. As *bacha posh*, Obeyd has much more freedom and is sure to bring luck to the family since her policeman father could no longer support his family after he lost a leg in a car bombing. This story of contemporary Afghanistan is compelling and illuminating.

The School the Aztec Eagles Built: A Tribute to Mexico's World War II Fighters

by Dorinda M. Nicholson

A little known history of the Aztec Eagles, the Mexican Expeditionary Air Force created during World War II, is presented in photographs and crisp text. It is also the story of Sargent Ángel Bocanegra del Castillo who made certain that a school was built in his hometown in Mexico. This is a unique and well-presented bit of history sure to inspire and inform.

Secret Coders

by Gene Luen Yang and Mike Holmes

Hopper's new school, Stately Academy, is more creepy than scholarly as the 12-year-old girl soon learns. But with her new friends, they discover the school's secrets and address them through computer coding. The adventures of this multicultural cast of kids continue in *Paths and Portals* as the series goes on.

Shakespeare Retold

by E. Nesbit

Handsome illustrations accompany English writer E. Nesbit's (Edith Nesbit Bland) dramatic retellings of seven plays by William Shakespeare. While the narratives introduce the plays, they read aloud well as sophisticated short stories. Additional information about Shakespeare and the times in which he lived are included.

Some Writer! The Story of E.B. White

by Melissa Sweet

Charlotte, the spider, wrote of her porcine friend Wilber, "SOME PIG". The life of the creator of *Charlotte's Web*, E.B. White, is presented in an enthralling format featuring watercolor and collage illustrations. The readable text makes this handsome, authorized biography of White — who was truly "SOME WRITER" — worth examining again and again.

Ugly

by Robert Hoge

When he was born, he had a face that even his mother had trouble loving. But Hoge eventually came home, survived multiple operations, and gained a strong sense of self. This is a touching, true story told by the Australian who has gone on to lead a successful and full life. It is told with humor, pathos, and an appreciation of what is truly important.

Ultimate Explorer Field Guide: Rocks and Minerals

by Nancy Honovich

Look closely: you may see goethite, limonite, fluorite ... they can be quite beautiful and each has an interesting story to tell. But what differentiates minerals and rocks? Why explore them? What are the tools of a rock hunter? This accessible and attractive pocket-sized handbook will appeal regardless of wherever rocks are explored.

When Mischievous Came to Town

by Katrina Nannestad

Inge Maria leaves her beloved Copenhagen to live with Dizzy, her seemingly stern grandmother. But Inge Maria brings mischief, laughter, and warmth to Bornholm, her new island home. The tale unfolds through Inge Maria's naïve and good-natured voice.



Reading Rockets 2016 Holiday Buying Guide

Audiobooks to share with kids

The Case of the Weird Blue Chicken: The Next Misadventure (The Chicken Squad, Book 2)

by Doreen Cronin, narrated by Adam Grupper and Michele O. Medlin

The Chicken Squad is back, here for another funny mystery just right for younger listeners.

Clementine

by Sara Pennypacker, narrated by Jessica Almasy

Meet Clementine, a 3rd grader with enough energy to land her into trouble with great frequency. Her everyday adventures continue in other books.

Ghost

by Jason Reynolds, narrated by Guy Lockard

Sophisticated listeners will enjoy the story of a track-running boy and his new team with runners from very different backgrounds.

The Princess in Black Takes a Vacation (Princess in Black, Book 4)

by Shannon Hale and Dean Hale, narrated by Julia Whelan
Younger children will enjoy the latest adventure of the mask wearing, monster fighting princess who attempts to take a restful vacation.

When the Sea Turned to Silver

by Grace Lin, narrated by Kim Mai Guest

Children of all ages will enjoy the story of Pinmei and her quest to find her grandmother, the storyteller. Inspired by Chinese folklore, this stand-alone tale is a companion to the author's *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* and *Starry River of the Sky*.



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