

HAISLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2025
Preschool, PreKindergarten, Kindergarten

All book summaries are provided by the publisher or written by committee members.

Any available unabridged edition of a title is acceptable.

- Alary, Laura. *Sun in My Tummy*. Pajama Press, 2022. A colorful, nonfiction picture book about how the sun nourishes us all, introducing the concepts of matter and energy in a child-friendly and lyrical language.
- Ashman, Linda. *I Like This, You Like That*. Abrams Books, 2022. Told in two voices, this sweet rhyming friendship story follows two children as they try to discover what they have in common.
- Bates, Janet Costa. *Time for Bed, Old House*. Candlewick, 2021. At Isaac's first sleepover, he gets to help Grandpop with a very special routine—putting the house to bed—in a story just right for children visiting a new place or adopting a new ritual at home.
- Blackall, Sophie. *If I Was a Horse*. Little, Brown, 2023. A child imagines what life would be like as a horse.
- Boldt, Mike. *Cantaloupe and HoneyDo Ride a Bike*. Dial Books, 2024. Two adventurous fruit friends, Cantaloupe and HoneyDo, have a delightful journey of discovery, friendship, and laughter. *Series*
- Boss, Todd. *The Boy Who Said Wow*. Beach Lane Books, 2024. Ronan has never spoken a word, but when his grandfather takes him to a concert, he is so moved by the music that he speaks aloud for the first time.
- Buchet, Nelly. *Dog vs. Strawberry*. Random House, 2024. When Dog is handed a strawberry from the fruit bowl, she sizes it up, dances around it, and decides she is going to race the Strawberry—and win.
- Bunting, Philip. *The Wonderful Wisdom of Ants*. Crown, 2024. Delivering facts, humor and heart, this nonfiction book takes readers into the world of the ant where they'll see how these tiny creatures can do big things when they work together—just like people.
- Bridges, Ruby. *I Am Ruby Bridges*. Orchard Books, 2022. Ruby Bridges shares her story, told from her 6-year-old self, as she makes history by being the first Black student to integrate an elementary school in the South.
- Cáceres, Andrea. *My Dog Just Speaks Spanish*. Candlewick, 2023. Aurora's dog Nena can only understand Spanish, so Aurora teaches her friends at the park how to use Spanish commands to communicate with Nena.
- Canty, John. *Heads and Tails: Underwater*. Candlewick, 2021. A nonfiction picture book, featuring watercolor illustrations, in which the reader glimpses part of an ocean animal, along with clues about its behaviors and features, and turns the page to see the entire animal revealed.
- Cherrix, Amy. *Animal Superpowers!* Beach Lane Books, 2023. Animals use physical and behavioral traits in amazing ways. Some are expert escape artists while others subdue their prey with electricity or even with bubbles!

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- Cole, Lo. *We Want a Dog*. Sourcebooks, 2021. Humorous rhyming text takes the reader through twenty-seven unexpected varieties of dogs that one could have as a pet.
- Cornwall, Gaia. *Jabari Tries*. Candlewick, 2020. Jabari is making a flying machine all by himself, but when it does not work the way he imagined, he learns about perseverance and problem-solving.
- Cousins, Lucy. *A Good Place*. Candlewick, 2022. Four insects set out to find the perfect home in this sweet story with an environmental message.
- Cummins, Lucy Ruth. *Sleepy Sheepy*. Flamingo Books, 2023. Illustrations and simple, rhyming text follow Sleepy Sheepy, who despite his name, is not sleepy.
- Cutler, Marcus. *I Do Not Eat Children*. Little, Brown, 2024. A misunderstood monster tries to convince others that he is not dangerous.
- Decalf, Jérémie. *The Sky is Not the Limit*. Eerdmans Books, 2023. Beautiful digital illustrations and a poetic narrative describe the journey of the Voyager 2 spacecraft as it travels through space.
- Denise, Christopher. *Knight Owl and Early Bird*. Little, Brown, 2024. Owl, captain of the Knight Watch, is dismissive of Early Bird, an energetic and talkative bird who aspires to be a Knight Owl, until her bravery shines through during a wolf attack. *Series*
- DiPucchio, Kelly. *Becoming Charley*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2023. Unlike all the other caterpillars, Charley sometimes wonders what it would be like to be a fawn or a waterfall, so when the day comes to form her chrysalis, Charley must decide who she will become.
- DiTerlizzi, Angela. *The Curious Why*. Little, Brown, 2024. A magical friend called the Curious Why encourages children's imaginations to fly, as they consider "how, what, where, and when?" in relation to the world around them. *Series*
- Dockrill, Laura. *Gray*. Candlewick, 2024. Poetic words, evocative art, and die-cuts throughout combine to explore a child's moods through color—or the lack of color—and offer a reassuring message of love and acceptance.
- Dominguez, Angela. *I'm Not Sleepy! ;No Tengo Sueño!* Holt, 2023. Birdie is ready to go to bed, but when he approaches Lolo to say goodnight, Lolo isn't tired! Birdie tries everything to help get Lolo ready for bed: reading, snacks, brushing teeth, but Lolo has way too much to do.
- Donaldson, Julie. *Jonty Gentoo: The Adventures of a Penguin*. Scholastic, 2024. Are you ready for a pole-to-pole adventure? Jonty, a plucky little gentoo penguin, is setting off on the adventure of a lifetime. But can he really waddle all the way to Antarctica?
- Dubuc, Marianne. *Everyone Gets a Turn*. Princeton Architectural, 2024. When the precious little egg they found in the woods hatches, four animal friends--Bear, Hare, Turtle and Mouse--take turns caring for the newborn chick in this heartwarming celebration of friendship, resourcefulness, trust and the power of community.

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- Elliott, David. *Color the Sky*. Little, Brown, 2022. A child observes various birds and the many colors they represent as they take flight and “color” the sky.
- Fan, Terry. *Lizzy and the Cloud*. Simon & Schuster, 2022. Lizzy finds out that a cloud is not the easiest pet to manage.
- Fang, X. *Dim Sum Palace*. Tundra Books, 2023. A little girl’s love of dim sum spills over into her dreams, taking her on a fantastical food-filled adventure.
- Ferry, Beth. *The Umbrella*. Clarion, 2023. A little girl and her dog unexpectedly discover a way to spread happiness and light in their dreary, rainy town.
- Flake, Sharon G. *You Make Me Sneeze*. Astra Young Readers, 2024. Best friends Duck and Cat have a problem--Cat makes Duck sneeze! Is Duck really allergic to Cat, or is something else going on?
Series
- Fleming, Candace. *Cubs in the tub: the true story of the Bronx Zoo's first woman zookeeper*. Holiday House, 2020. Helen and Bronx zookeeper Fred Martini couldn’t have children so when Fred brings home a lion cub, Helen cares for it, leading her to become the first female zookeeper.
- Flett, Julie. *Let’s Go!* Greystone Books, 2024. Longing to join the skateboarders in the park, a little boy, when his mom surprises him with her old skateboard, practices everywhere but when it comes to try the skatepark, he must find the courage and confidence to make his debut.
- Freedman, Deborah. *Partly Cloudy*. Viking, 2024. Two bunnies go cloud watching; one sees the science of the clouds and the other sees imaginative forms.
- Frost, Helen. *Wait and See*. Candlewick, 2022. Beautiful pictures of praying mantises hidden in nature are accompanied by lyrical words that invite the reader to be patient to wait – and see these exquisite insects.
- Gehl, Laura. *Frog Can Hop*. Simon Spotlight, 2023. Frog can hop. Pig likes to flop. When Frog makes a big drop, will Pig help?
- Hale, Shannon. *Itty-Bitty Kitty-Corn*. Abrams Books, 2021. Kitty, who looks like a kitten yet feels she is a unicorn, begins to doubt herself as others ridicule her until she meets a unicorn who helps her discover and embrace who she is. *Series*
- Hahn, Sabina. *I Am a Dragon!* HarperCollins, 2023. A squad of frogs is excited when they spot a Very Big Frog in their pond. But when the creature says that he isn’t a frog, the frogs insist that he’s the one who is wrong. What happens when the creature has had enough of the frogs’ quibbling?
- Hare, John. *Duck, Duck, Goose!* Greenwillow, 2024. Duck, Duck, and Goose encounter an interesting and unlikely new friend during their migration south for the winter.
- Harrison, David L. *A Tree is a Community*. Holiday House, 2024. A tree is more than just a plant, but a whole ecosystem hiding in plain sight, on street corners and in backyards everywhere. Discover how one tree provides shelter, food, and clean air to a host of animals and insects.

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- Hartman, Brooke. *All Aboard the Alaska Train*. Red Comet Press, 2024. Five shiny train cars roll down the railroad track, picking up passengers along the way—a porcupine, grizzly bear, caribou, and more. Soon the cars are packed, but now the train must go up a tall mountain. Will the Alaska Train reach its destination?
- Henkes, Kevin. *Finding Things*. Greenwillow, 2024. An invitation to find joy in the simple things that are all around, if you know how to notice them.
- Hest, Amy. *Big Bear and Little Bear Go Fishing*. Holiday House, 2024. An unhurried fishing trip, with blueberry scones in tow, introduces a new bear duo sure to charm fans of *Little Bear and Frog and Toad*.
- Higgins, Ryan T. *We Don't Lose Our Class Goldfish*. Disney-Hyperion, 2023. When Penelope Rex brings home Walter, the class goldfish, for the weekend, she is not sure how to feel, but when Walter goes missing, Penelope searches high and low for her fishy classmate. *Series*
- Hulse, Patrick. *At Our Table*. Little, Brown, 2024. Gratitude, togetherness, and tradition are shared and celebrated at the dining tables of a diverse range of families and communities.
- Hwang, Sarah. *Toasty*. Holiday House, 2021. Toasty, a piece of toast, believes he is a dog deep down, but he soon realizes he is very different from all the other dogs.
- Iwai, Melissa. *Perfect Paper Cranes*. HarperCollins, 2024. While at Japan Festival Day, Gigi volunteers at the origami booth with her Ojiji but soon discovers folding paper is harder than it looks. *Series*
- Kalb, Bess. *Buffalo Fluffalo*. Random House, 2024. A grumpy buffalo tries his hardest to pretend is bigger than he really is but realizes others like him no matter his size. *Series*
- Kousky, Vern. *I See You, Sad Bear*. Roaring Brook, 2023. Bear's friends can't figure out why Bear is so gloomy, but maybe it's okay not to be happy all of the time.
- Laden, Nina. *Seeds of Change*. Roaring Brook, 2024. This rhyming, lyrical picture book about investing in the future of ourselves and our community teaches an invaluable lesson about having the patience to see that, in time, effort will blossom into a more peaceful and loving world.
- LaRochelle, David. *Mr. Fox's Game of "No!"* Candlewick, 2024. Can you beat Mr. Fox at his Game of No? The rules are simple: every time he asks a question, you must respond with 'NO.' If you accidentally say 'YES,' then it's back to the beginning of the book for you, where you must start all over again.
- Lee, Gee Eun. *The Red Fruit*. Levine Querido, 2023. When he gets hit in the head by a delicious red fruit, Baby Bear searches for more of this elusive treat until he finds the biggest red fruit of all, in this delightful story about first discoveries and always landing in a safe place.
- Liu, Linda. *Sour Apple*. Holt, 2024. A picture book about an apple who learns the importance of self-acceptance and patience after being left behind during picking season.

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- Long, Loren. *The Yellow Bus*. Roaring Brook, 2024. A forgotten school bus finds joy and purpose in the most unexpected places.
- Mack, Jeff. *Scaredy Cats*. Holiday House, 2023. Three kittens discover a gift-wrapped present and let their imaginations run wild as they wonder what might be inside.
- Madan, Vikram. *Owl and Penguin: Here and There*. Holiday House, 2024. Despite their differences, two unlikely friends flock together like birds of a feather.
- Más Davidson, Rachel. *The Helping Sweater*. Little, Brown, 2024. It's finally cold enough for Maya to wear her favorite sweater, but it quickly unravels when her cat pulls a thread loose. Heartbroken but short on time before school, Maya soon realizes that her sweater might help others—and that's when the magic begins!
- McAnulty, Stacy. *Our Planet!: There's No Place Like Earth*. Holt, 2022. Earth, also known as “Planet Awesome”, explains how the climate crisis is putting all its wonderful attributes in danger and offers tips for humans to ensure Earth remains awesome. *Series*
- Mensah, Bernard. *Jollof Day*. Dial Books, 2025. A father and son joyfully make Jollof, a traditional West African dish, for the family.
- Moon, Emily. *Drop: An Adventure through the water*. Dial Books, 2021. Learn fun facts about the water cycle and take an adventure with Drop, a friendly water drop.
- Napoli, Donna Jo. *Words to Make a Friend: A Story in Japanese and English*. Random House, 2021. This bilingual book features two girls who speak different languages but connect and create a friendship over their love for the snow.
- Naylor-Ballesteros, Chris. *Frank and Bert*. Nosy Crow, 2023. This laugh-out-loud picture book follows best friends Frank and Bert as they play hide-and-seek, but when Bert isn't so good at hiding (despite thinking he is), Frank must decide between winning or making Bert happy.
- Otis, Chad. *The Bright Side*. Rocky Pond Books, 2023. An unhoused boy faces some struggles as he enters school for the first time but discovers his resilience and imagination, learning to define “the bright side” for himself.
- Paul, Chris. *Basketball Dreams*. Roaring Brook, 2023. From NBA All-Star Chris Paul comes a book about chasing your basketball dreams and the lessons he learned both on and off the court from his beloved grandfather Papa Chilly.
- Perkins, Mitali. *Between My Hands*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2024. Maya is bored at the beginning of her summer vacation, so she goes on a quest to discover the ways her neighbors give back and how she can also namaste the world.
- Peterson, Ellie. *How to Hug a Pufferfish*. Roaring Brook, 2022. In this picture book, the topics of respecting boundaries and finding alternate ways to show affection are handled in a lighthearted manner and with a cast of characters including Pufferfish and his ocean friends.

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- Preller, James. *Two Birds...and a Moose*. Simon Spotlight, 2024. A determined moose attempts to bounce, float, and climb to new heights while two birds observe from their perch.
- Raczka, Bob. *You Are a Story*. Holiday House, 2023. This book explores the characteristics that make us who we are and the possibilities of who we can be.
- Raúl the Third. *¡Vamos! Let's Go Read*. Versify, 2023. Little Lobo and his friends are going to the Guadalupean Library book festival and find special books and activities that inspire them to read.
- Rex, Michael. *Wants vs. Needs vs. Robots*. Nancy Paulsen, 2023. Colorful, amusing robots help illustrate the difference between a want and a need and the importance of balancing both. *Series*
- Reynolds, Peter H. *Our Table*. Orchard Books, 2021. When Violet realizes that technology is isolating them instead of connecting her family, she works to solve the problem and reunite them.
- Richardson, Julia Marie. *Let's Build a Little Train*. Sleeping Bear Press, 2022. A simple rhythmic book about how a steam train is built and the teamwork involved in the process.
- Rinker, Sherri Duskey. *Construction Site: Taking Flight!* Chronicle Books, 2023. Six truck friends travel to the airport to build a new terminal, expanding the airport for both planes and travelers. *Series*
- Robinson, Robin. *This Book is My Best Friend*. Simon & Schuster, 2023. When Sunny and Aarush reach for the same book at the library, they try to resolve the conundrum by searching through the stacks to find something else for the others to read, but maybe what they find instead is even better.
- Rylant, Cynthia. *Hornbeam All In*. Beach Lane Books, 2023. Three short chapters about Hornbeam the moose in which he goes on a picnic with his best friend Eureka, sleeps over his friend Cuddy's house and learns how to swim with Adorabelle.
- Salas, Laura Purdie. *Zap! Clap! Boom!* Bloomsbury, 2023. What starts as a blue-sky day begins to turn into rolling thunder as a storm brews.
- Saltzberg, Barney. *A Delicious Story*. Hippo Park, 2023. This delightful book, ideal for beginning readers, follows a small mouse on a quest to find a story, only to discover a new friend along the way.
- Sanchez, Anita. *Hello, Puddle!* Clarion, 2022. The seasons are explored through this introduction to a puddle as a habitat whose visitors include birds, insects, mammals, plant life, and more.
- Silverman, Buffy. *Starlight Symphony*. Millbrook, 2024. This charming book uses rhyming text and vivid animal photos to compare the nighttime sounds on a peaceful pond to orchestra instruments, with additional details in the back matter.
- Sima, Jessie. *Perfectly Pegasus*. Simon & Schuster, 2022. Nimbus, a lonely Pegasus, searches for a fallen star to wish for a friend and meets a unicorn named Kelp along the way. *Series*
- Smith, Lane. *Stickler Loves the World*. Random House, 2023. Stickler is a woodland creature who reminds us to appreciate the everyday wonders we often ignore. *Series*

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Sterer, Gideon. *Treehouse Town*. Little, Brown, 2024. A child explores the magical world of Treehouse Town—from Sap Street to Willow Way—where all children and animal inhabitants work together and have fun.

Stewart, Melissa. *Shape Search*. Reycraft Books, 2024. Readers are invited to look closely at various shapes found in nature and to extend their curiosity by hunting for more shapes both in the book and in their own world.

Straub, Emma. *Very Good Hats*. Rocky Pond Books, 2023. An engaging picture book that redefines what makes a good hat when using your imagination.

Syed, Anoosha. *That's Not My Name!* Viking, 2022. Mirha questions her name after her classmates continually mispronounce it at school but her mother helps her see how special her name is and that she should be proud of it.

Tabor, Corey R. *Ursula Upside Down*. Greenwillow, 2024. Ursula is a happy catfish, swimming through a shimmering river with weeds waving above and a sky full of scrumptious bugs below. Then one question turns her world upside down. Is left right? Is right wrong? Which way even is up?

Taltec, Olivier. *A Better Best Friend*. Gecko, 2024. Squirrel and a Mushroom explore the forest through the seasons, show each other special trees, build snow mushrooms, and share the good times and bad. Then spring arrives, and so does a new friend. And then another. This raises a profound question for an overthinking squirrel: should we have just one best friend?

Tatsukawa, Maya. *Mole is Not Alone*. Holt, 2023. Mole is invited to a party, but he worries as he travels through the tunnels about whether or not he can overcome his shyness.

Tillotson, Carrie. *B is for Bananas: A Going Bananas Alphabet Book*. Flamingo Books, 2023. B is for bedtime, but Banana has other ideas as he hilariously revises all of the bedtime-related words into more lively words in this amusing alphabet book.

Varchol Perron, Lisa. *All the Rocks We Love*. Rise x Penguin, 2024. A lyrical and informative celebration of ROCKS and why we love them.

Vo, Young. *Gibberish*. Arthur A. Levine, 2022. When Dat starts school in a new country, the language sounds like gibberish but a classmate helps him make sense of his new world.

Wallace, Chelsea Lin. *Dare to Be Daring*. Abrams Books, 2024. From tasting a new food to a trip to the dentist this picture book is an invitation to be brave in the face of what feels scary.

Ward, Jennifer. *Sleepy: Surprising Ways Animals Snooze*. Beach Lane Books, 2024. Using rhyming couplets paired with informational text, this book describes the different ways animals sleep.

Weeks, Sarah. *Sketty and Meatball*. HarperCollins, 2024. After a fun day at a dog show making new friends, Meatball and Sketty curl up for a nap under their favorite tree.

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Wiley, DeAnn. *Homegrown*. Holt, 2024. A young Black girl, with the help of her Mama and Granny, learns that home isn't just a place but rather a reflection of people who support and love one another.

Willems, Mo. *Are You Big?* Union Square Kids, 2024. Are YOU Big? A simple question sends readers to the far reaches of the universe.

Wilson, Rachel Michelle. *How to Pee Your Pants: The Right Way*. Feiwel and Friends, 2024. A light-hearted, humorous look at how to get through the embarrassing moment of peeing your pants.

Wong, Jack. *All that Grows*. Groundwood Books, 2024. In a delightful, nuanced story about cultivating patience and letting knowledge grow, a boy discovers how vast the universe is and how much there is to learn ... until he resolves to let his knowledge grow in its own way and time, just like the mysterious plants he has decided to nurture in the garden.

Yoon, Salina. *Penguin and Penelope*. Bloomsbury, 2022. Penguin does everything he can to help his new friend, an elephant named Penelope, find her family after she is left behind.

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