



PICTURE BOOK

gift guide

Happy Holidays!

It's picture book gift guide time! I love this project and even though my entire living room is filled with stacks of picture books right now, it's a lot of fun to find the ones that speak to me and hopefully speak to you as well!

In this guide, you'll find just 36 picture books that were published in 2025 that resonated with me whether they made me giggle, sigh, tear up, or just feel good. Are these the best 36 picture books of 2025? I don't know. I just know that of the 150 titles that I read through, these were the ones I felt like I wanted to share the most with you.

If you find a book that works for you and it's not on this list, that okay! There's a reader for every book and a book for every reader. I hope you find the one that best fits what you're looking for whether it's for you or another reader in your life this holiday season!

Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season,

Laura

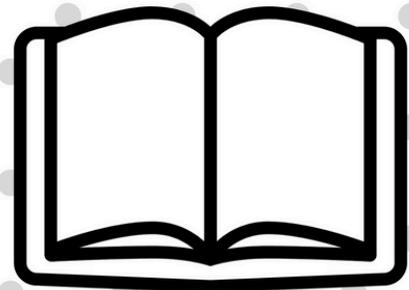
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Looking for fun gifts for readers this holiday season?

My Alphabet
Workbook

Reading
JOURNAL JR.

Reading
JOURNAL



Check out the [Literacious Etsy shop](#)
for holiday gifts for all ages!

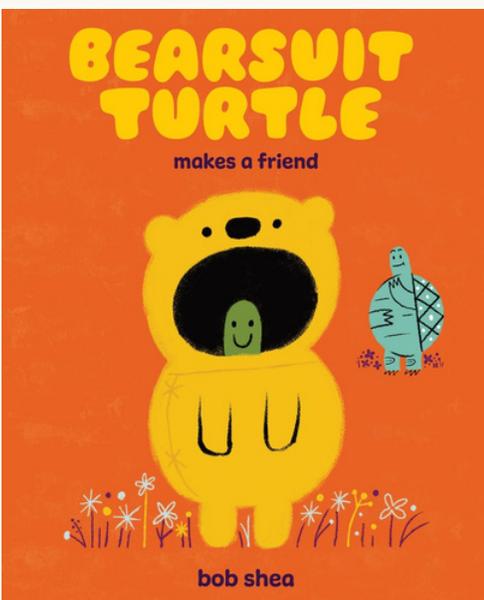
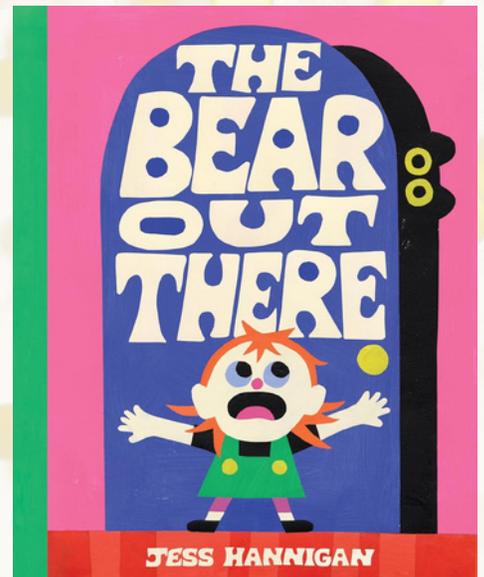


Aggie and the Ghost by Matthew Forsythe

Aggie is very excited to live on her own—until she finds out her new house is haunted. But no fear, the situation is nothing that can't be fixed with a carefully considered list of rules: No haunting after dark. No stealing socks. No eating all the food. But the ghost doesn't like playing by the rules...

The Bear Out There by Jess Hannigan

The signs are clear—there's a BEAR OUT THERE! You're lucky to be safe in this cabin in the woods, with a host who is levelheaded, trustworthy, and smart about bear safety. There's certainly no need to worry about any dark shadows or sneaky schemes in this book...RIGHT?

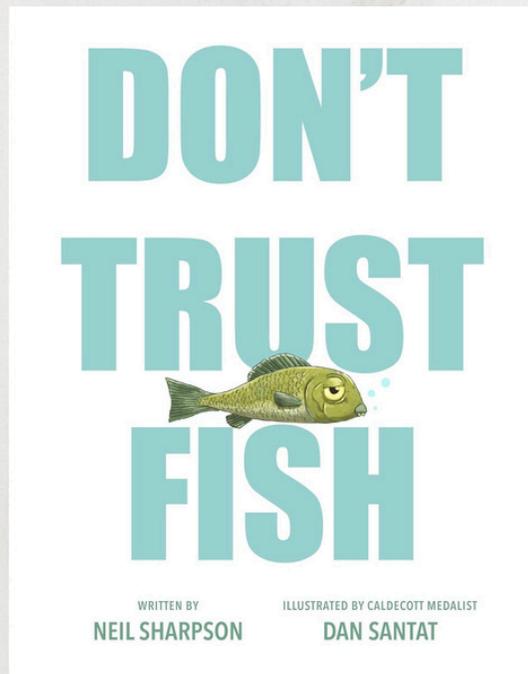
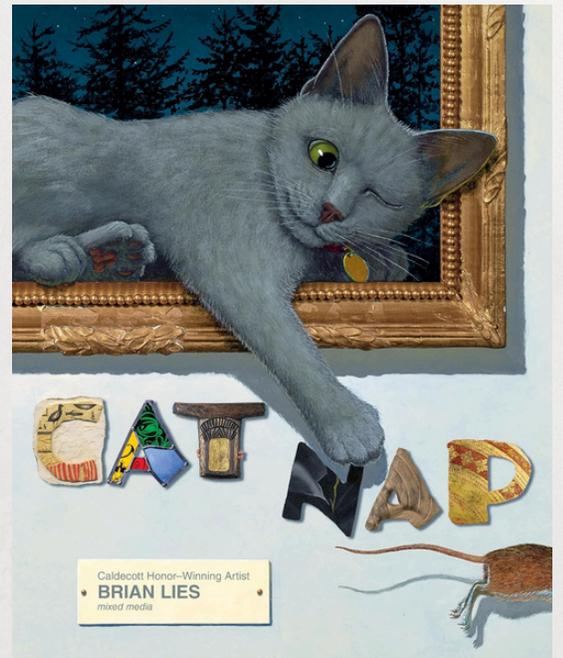


Bearsuit Turtle Makes a Friend by Bob Shea

When a turtle in a bear suit claims he is a “for-real” bear, he must prove himself to another turtle who just so happens to be a for-real bear *expert*. Hilarity ensues as Bearsuit Turtle proves he can climb trees, hibernate, and do other for-real bear stuff . . . like riding bikes, eating ice cream, and smashing pumpkins.

Cat Nap by Brian Lies

When Kitten notices a mouse and dives after it through a framed poster on the wall, an epic chase through time, art, and history ensues. Is it a dream? That's up to the reader to decide, but for the kitten, every leap and bound is full of suspense and makes for a masterpiece.



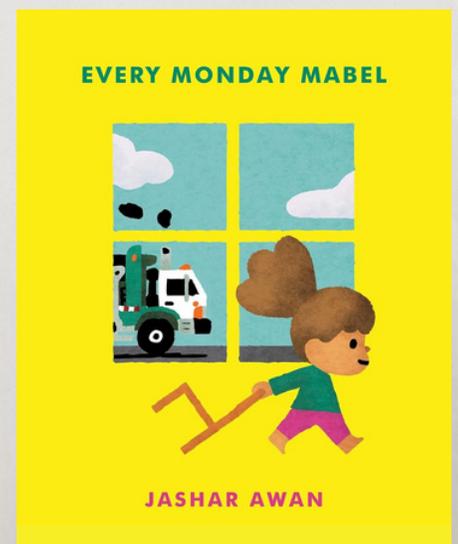
Don't Trust Fish by Neil Sharpson, illustrated by Dan Santat

Why, dear reader, must you NEVER EVER trust fish?

- 1) They spend all their time in the water where we can't see them.
- 2) Some are as big as a bus—that is *not* okay.
- 3) We don't know what they're teaching in their "schools." And so much more!

Every Monday Mabel by Jashar Awan

Every Monday, Mabel wakes up early and peeks out her window to make sure she didn't miss the one thing she's been looking forward to the whole week. She drags her chair down the hallway, past her big sister and Mom and Dad, out the door, and *waits*.



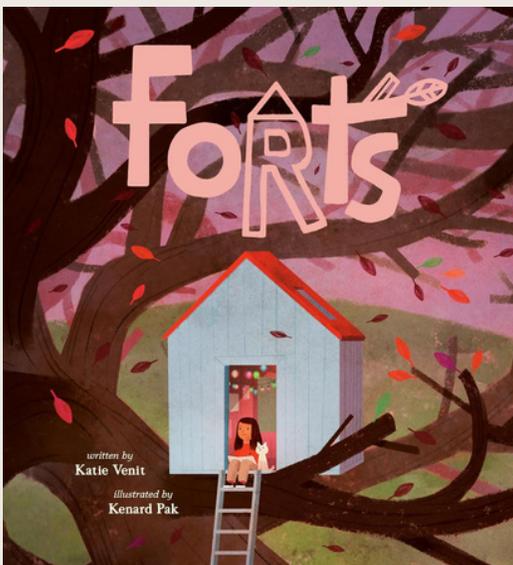
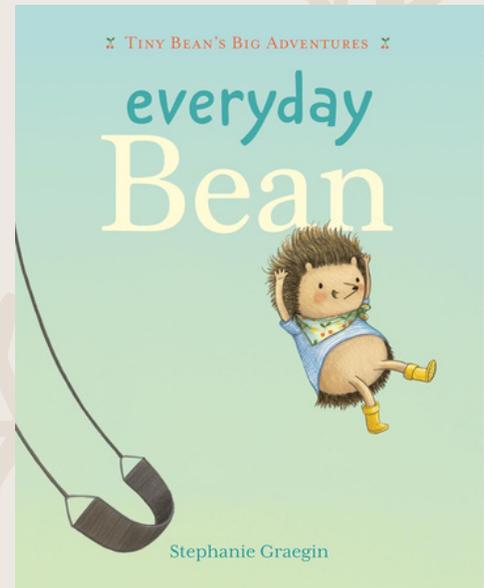


Everybelly by Thao Lam

Thao Lam's celebrated cut-paper collage portrays bellies and bodies of all shapes and sizes - bellies with scars, tattooed bellies, growing bellies, growling bellies, bellies with six-packs, stretch marks, insulin monitors, freckles and more - proving that every belly deserves its place in the sun.

Everyday Bean by Stephanie Graegin

In ten tiny stories we follow Bean and her grandmother through adventures of the everyday. Bean loses her bad mood in a meadow and Grandma thinks she sees a ghost (don't worry it's just Bean!) – and there's even a story with giant strawberries.

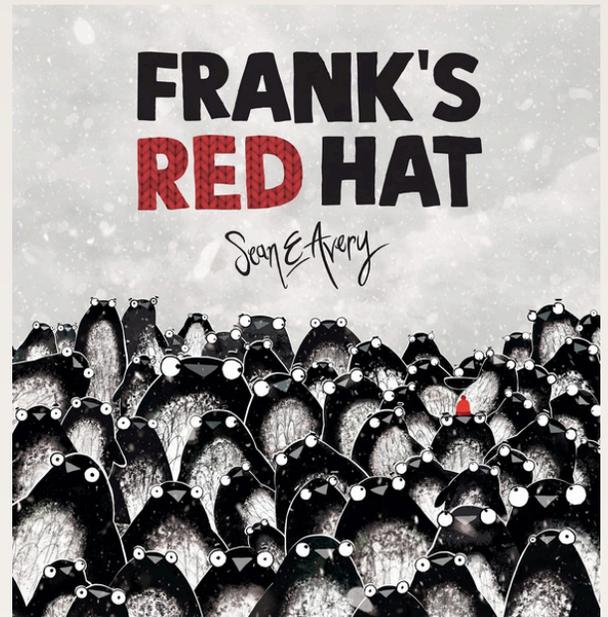


Forts by Katie Venit, illustrated by Kenard Pak

The world is filled with forts. Tiny worlds within this world, safe as coat pockets. Everyone needs a room of their own. A place to hide and play, ponder and dream. Whether it's a tree house in the backyard or a blanket fort inside, a fort is a magical place filled with imagination and wonder.

Frank's Red Hat by Sean E. Avery

Frank is a penguin with ideas. Mostly terrible ones. That's why his fellow penguins are nervous when he shows them his strange new creation. It was something they'd never seen or expected to see in their cold and colorless Antarctic world—a red hat.



Go, Sloth, Go! by Toni Yuly

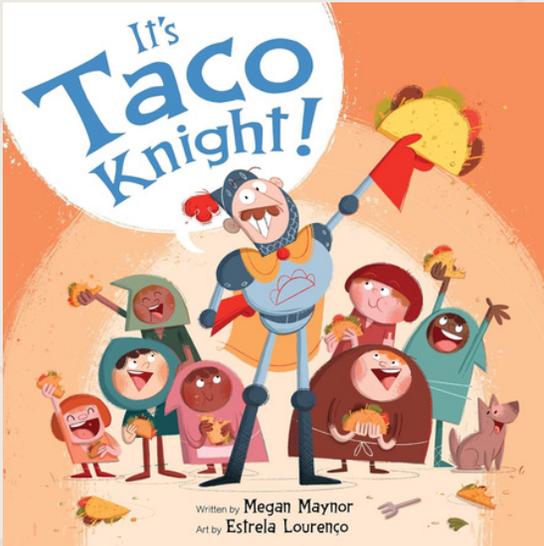
After some sleep, sloth is ready to eat. Go, Sloth, go!
In a world where the pressure to speed ahead seems relentless, now is the time to take a trip to the rainforest and cheer for the slowest mammal on Earth—a hungry sloth—who takes her time moving through thicket and vine in search of the tastiest leaves.



It's Fall! by Renée Kurilla

Break out your fuzzy socks and cozy scarves! Bring on the doughnuts, cider, and pies! It's time for corn mazes, trick-or-treating, and all the Thanksgiving food you can eat.... It's fall!





It's Taco Knight! by Megan Maynor, illustrated by

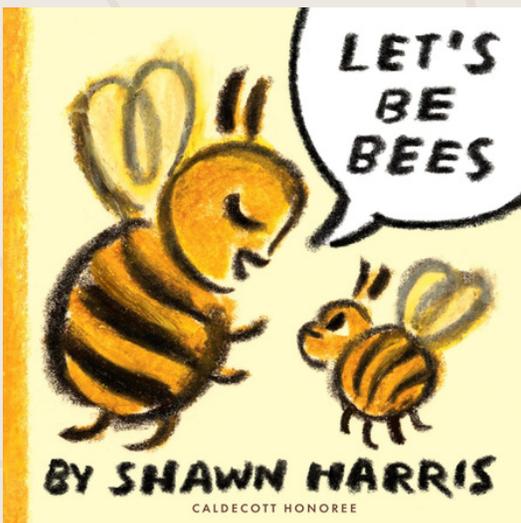
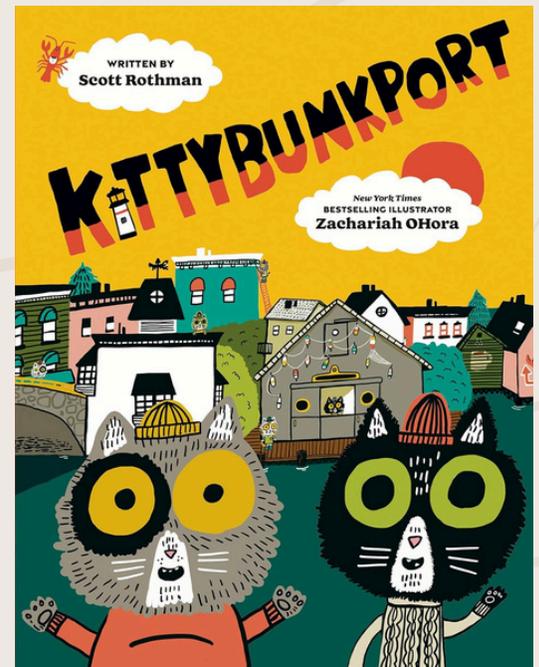
Estrela Lourenço

The Knights of Dinner make sure the villagers are well fed. It could be Pizza Knight or Noodle Knight, Dumpling Knight, even New Recipe Knight! No knight is everybody's favorite, but every knight is somebody's favorite. That is . . . until Taco Knight comes to town—and tries to turn every night into taco night.

Kittybunkport by Scott Rothman, illustrated

Zachariah O'Hora

Chowder and Crackers live in the quiet, coastal town of Kittybunkport. Until one day the town's lighthouse—rumored to be haunted—suddenly goes dark. When Chowder and Crackers are sent to fix the problem, will the two scaredy-cats be able to save Kittybunkport?

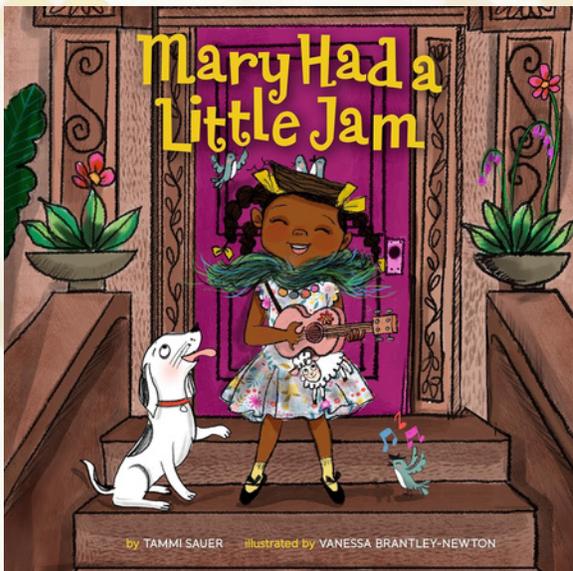
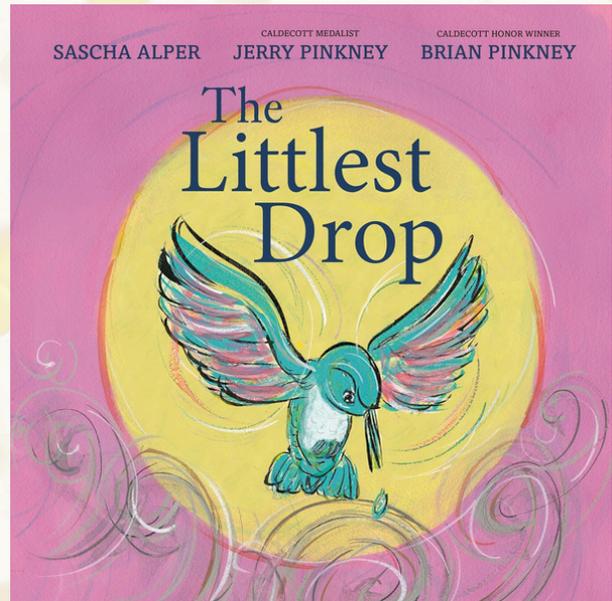


Let's Be Bees by Shawn Harris

The only thing better than playing make believe is playing make believe with your favorite grown-up! Especially when that grown-up's imagination is as big as yours, and you both get to make all kinds of funny sounds.

The Littlest Drop by Sascha Alper, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney and Brian Pinkney

When a fire starts near their home, all of the animals—from the largest elephant to the smallest ant—are too scared to do anything but watch. All, that is, except for one tiny hummingbird. She knows she must do something to save her nest. She must do what she can.



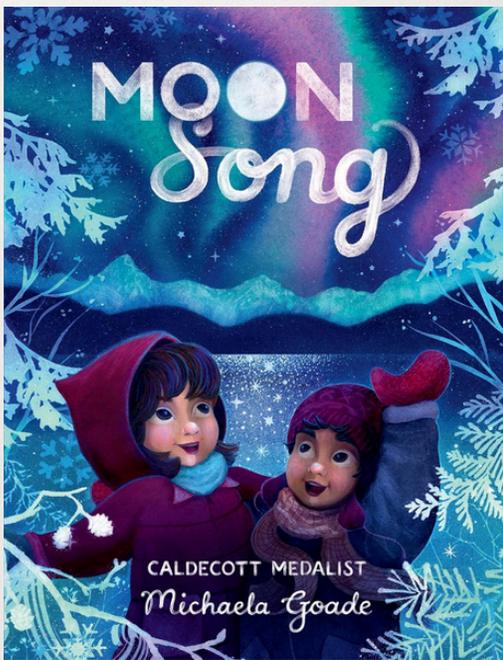
Mary Had a Little Jam by Tammi Sauer, illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton

*"Mary had a little jam
while sitting on her stoop.
She felt the music fill her bones.
"I think I need a group."*

Millie Fleur Saves the Night by Christy Mandin

Each night when the sun went down, all the lights in town turned on. The houses shone like the noon sun. Every house except for Millie Fleur La Fae's, of course. Millie Fleur knows there are enchanting things that can only be glimpsed in the dark.



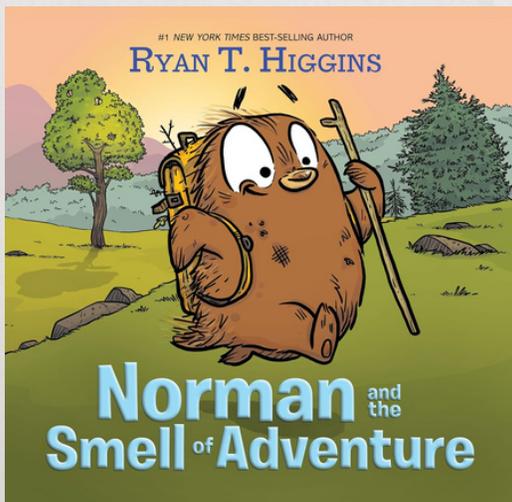
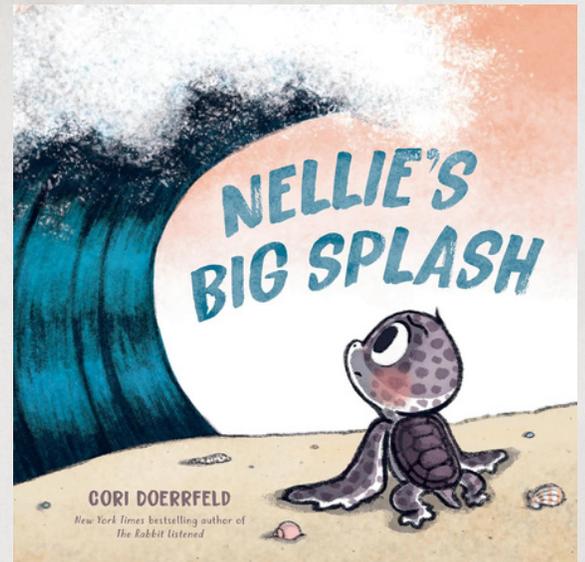


Moon Song by Michaela Goade

On an island at the edge of a silvery sea, when the moon rises and night falls, a girl spins a story for her worried cousin to help him find comfort in the wintry dark. In the dark of the night, the whole world sings.

Nellie's Big Splash by Cori Doerrfeld

When Nellie the sea turtle hatched, she was on a beach surrounded by lots of her brothers and sisters. Soon all the other turtles joyfully ran into the ocean and swam away, but Nellie? She was too scared.



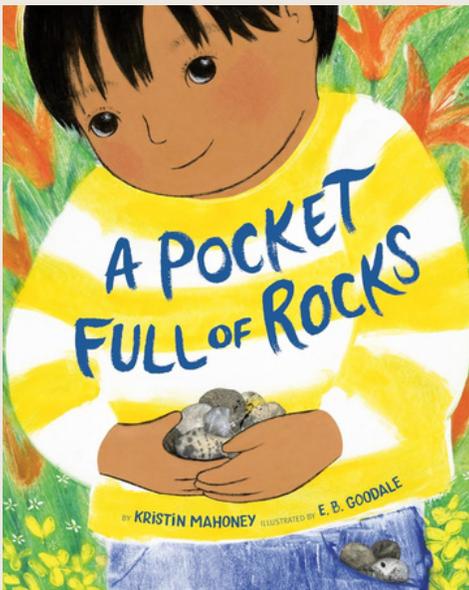
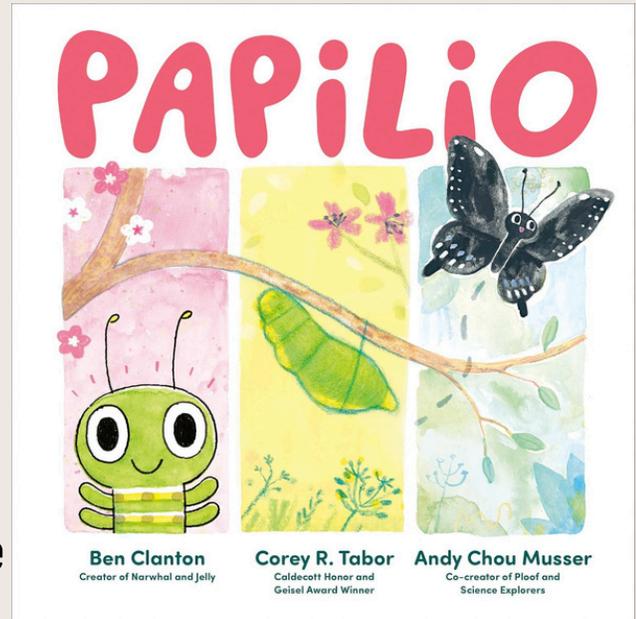
Norman and the Smell of Adventure by Ryan T.

Higgins

When Norman wakes one morning and wants to try something new, he's frustrated to learn that Mildred, his best friend, has other plans. So Norman storms off. On his own. Without Mildred. Can their friendship survive?

Papilio by Ben Clanton, Corey R. Tabor, and Andy Chou Musser

Growing up is a complicated work in progress, and Papilio encounters some hiccups as she learns to fly, fall, and feed. While avoiding foes and making friends, she transforms from caterpillar, to chrysalis, to butterfly...and most importantly, learns to believe in herself along the way.



A Pocket Full of Rocks by Kristin Mahoney,

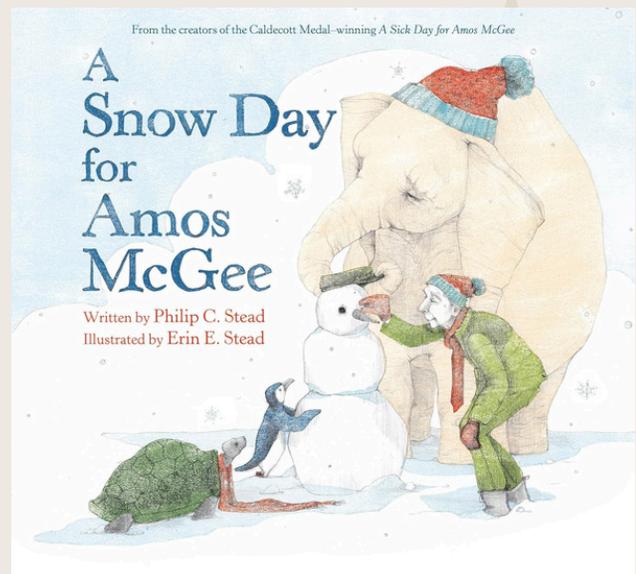
illustrated by E. B. Goodale

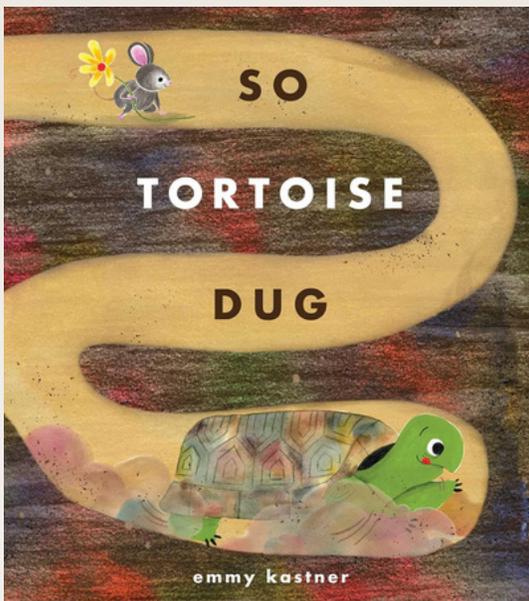
You can do a lot with a pocket full of rocks... And so the rocks pile up... Until the season turns and you need to make room for pockets full of petals. And shells. And acorns!

A Snow Day for Amos McGee by Philip C. Stead,

illustrated by Erin E. Stead

Amos McGee loves spending time with his good friends no matter the season. When overnight a surprise snowfall blankets the town in fluffy white, what shall his lovable squad of animals do?



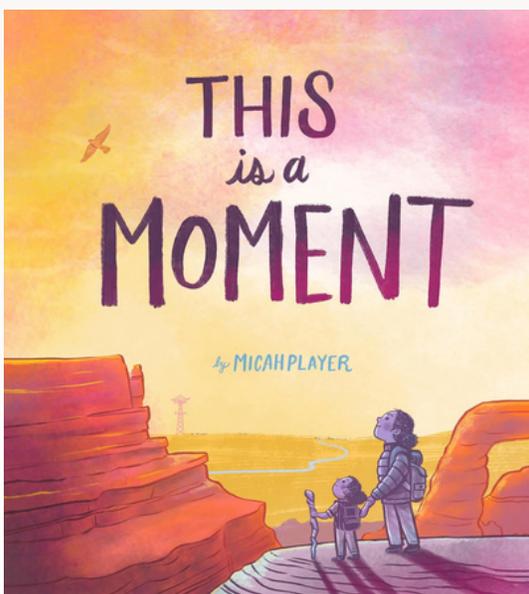
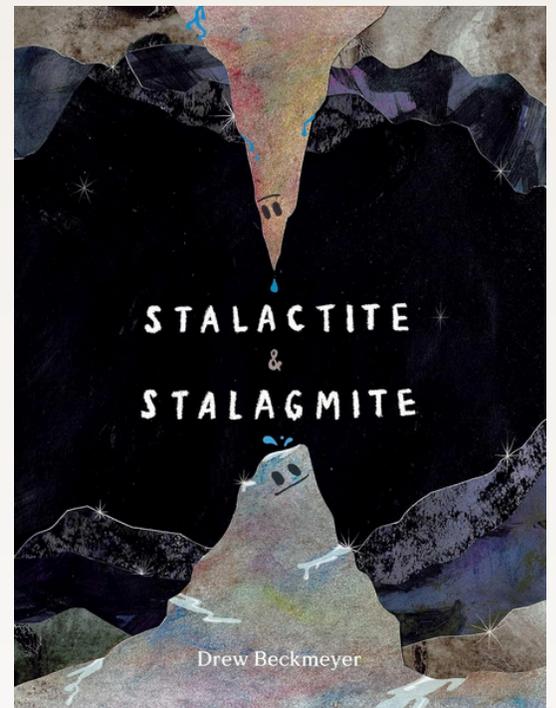


So Tortoise Dug by Emmy Kastner

Tortoise and Mouse are more than just friends and burrowmates. They are *best* friends and *best* burrowmates. When their home gets flooded, however, it's up to Tortoise to dig them a new place to live. And so she digs a room of her own and a room for Mouse. But where is Mouse?

Stalactite & Stalagmite by Drew Beckmeyer

Time flies for two charming little cave nubs, Stalactite and Stalagmite. When you are an ageless rock formation, it's nice to have a friend who's always there. But what will happen when the two nubs grow enough to finally touch?

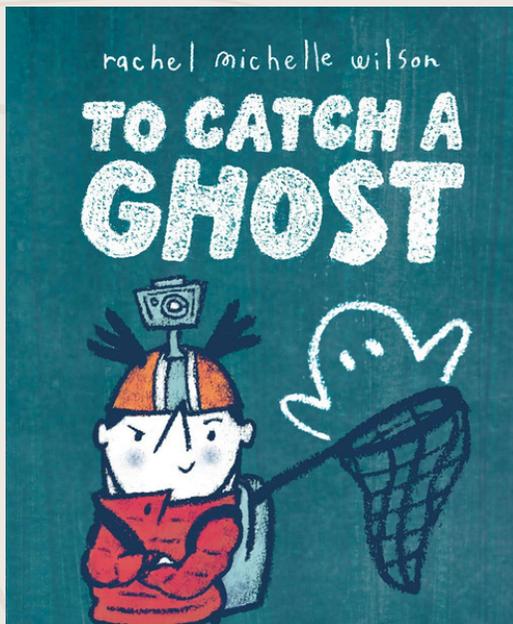
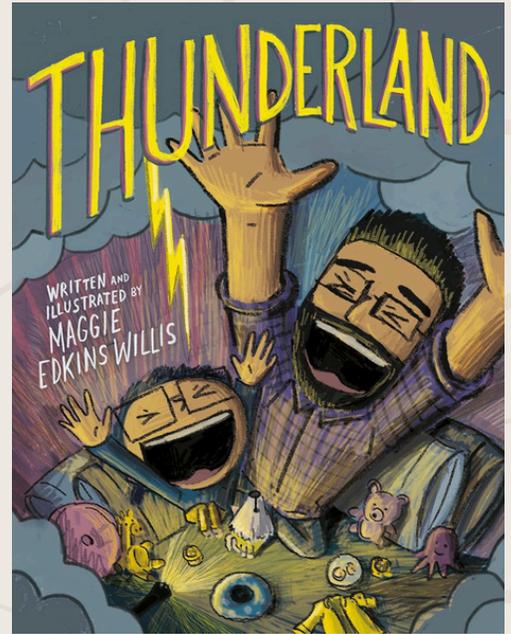


This Is a Moment by Micah Player

"A moment is made when everything that came before meets what is happening now. Each moment is new. It's a song and how you hear it. It's a sunny day and how you feel it."

Thunderland by Maggie Edkins Willis

Storms can be scary. All those CRACKS and CRASHES and RUMBLES! So, one young girl does what anyone would do—hides under the kitchen sink, of course. Until her dad shows her there's somewhere even better to go. Thunderland!



To Catch a Ghost by Rachel Michelle Wilson

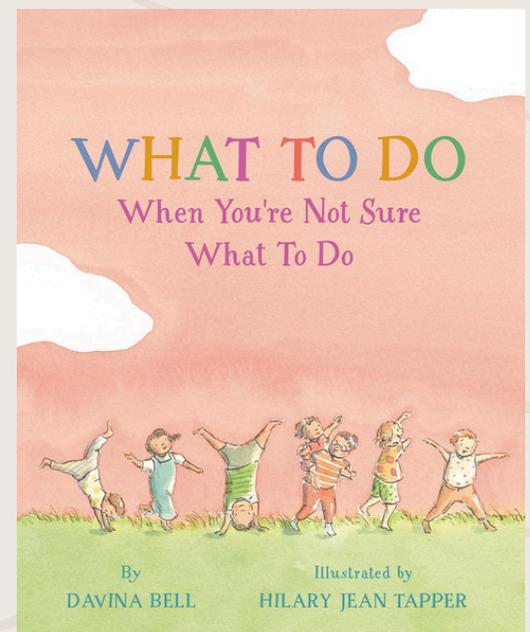
Bringing nothing to show and tell is like wearing shoes without socks. It stinks. So, when all you got is nothing, you need to catch yourself a something. And if you've got gumption, that something could be a ghost.

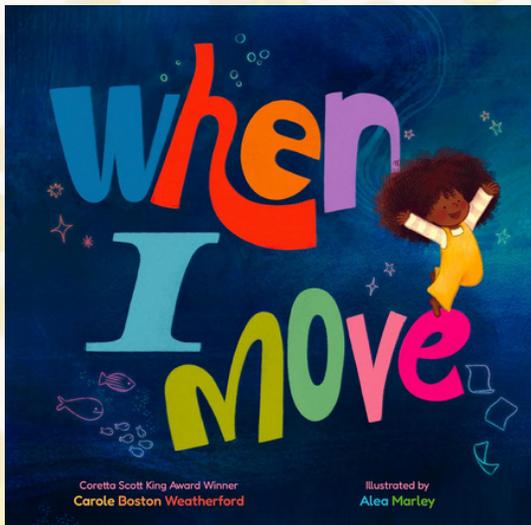
What To Do When You're Not Sure What to Do by

Davina Bell, illustrated by Hilary Jean Tapper

“Just take the first step. A smile can make somebody's day. Make the leap.”

Sweet and spare lines of loving guidance offer instructions on how to live, paired with touching illustrations that invite readers to imagine the story behind the advice.



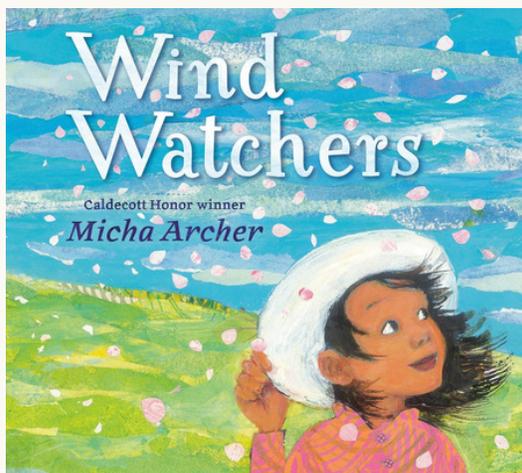
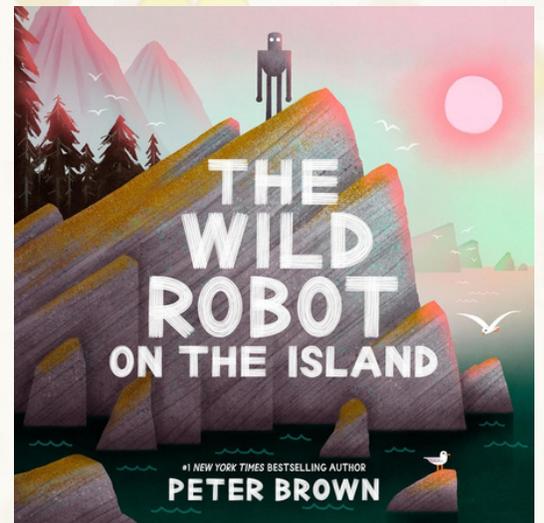


When I Move by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Alea Marley

Simple, engaging rhymes will inspire little ones to jump, run, and explore the limitless possibilities of their imagination in this energizing ode to movement

The Wild Robot On the Island by Peter Brown

Roz is not where she's supposed to be. You see, the robot wasn't designed to live in the wilderness. But when she washes up on an island, she must learn from the animal inhabitants and adapt to her new, natural surroundings, and before long, the island begins to feel like home.

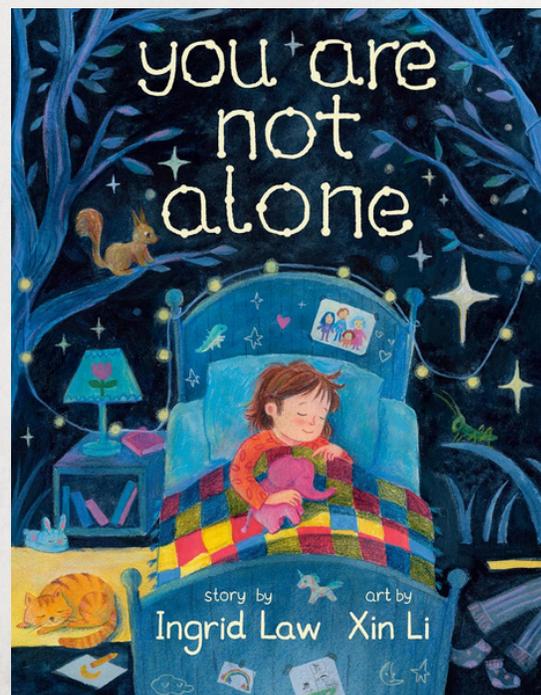


Wind Watchers by Micha Archer

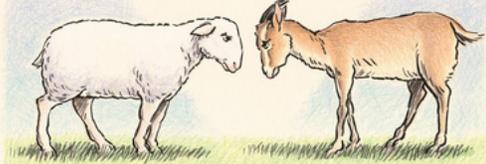
Seasons come and go, and the wind wafts its way through them all. This delights a family of children, and when they ask the wind, "How will you blow today?" they get a kick out of not knowing what answer they'll get.

You Are Not Alone by Ingrid Law, illustrated by Xin Li

Sometimes bedtime feels like a dark cave in the gloomy woods—like it's about to be you and no one else until morning. But this gentle, lovely book helps children remember that they are never alone.



ZIP ZAP Wickety Wack



A STORY ABOUT SHARING

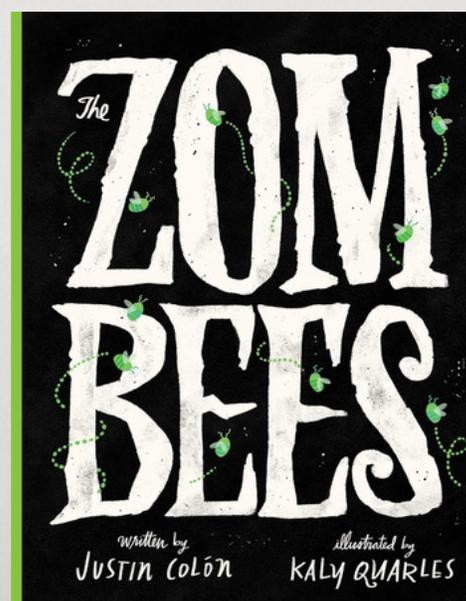
Written and Illustrated by Matthew Diffee

Zip Zap Wickety Wack: A Story About Sharing by Matthew Diffee

The cow says “moo.” The horse says “neigh.” Everyone can agree on these. But when the sheep says “baa,” the goat cuts in. The goat also says “baa.” Now what? No one wants to share their sound!

Zombees by Justin Colón, illustrated by Kaly Quarles

When these undead insects invade, they send everyone fleeing in fright. Are they hunting for a snack? Do they like the taste of veins? Have they come to eat your brains?! Find out in this rhyming Halloween tale with an unexpected twist!



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6. *Every Monday Mabel* by Jashar Awan
7. *Everybelly* by Thao Lam
8. *Everyday Bean* by Stephanie Graegin
9. *Forts* by Katie Venit, illustrated by Kenard Pak
10. *Frank's Red Hat* by Sean E. Avery
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