



Parent Guide to CAT Results



CAT•4

Canadian Achievement Tests

Fourth Edition

PARENT GUIDE

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This *Parent Guide* explains what is involved for students who take the *Canadian Achievement Tests* (CAT) and how parents can make the most of the information that CAT provides about their children's achievement. There is much more in this guide, though, making it a very handy resource for parents. It includes some great tips on how to support children's learning at home and at school, ideas for helping children progress in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics, and The CTC Guide to Children's Reading that recommends some excellent books for students of all ages.



CAT is All-Canadian

CAT provides useful assessment information for a variety of purposes to Canadian school districts, schools, teachers, parents and students. It is built to meet the highest standards of test design and is the only major Canadian-owned and Canadian-designed national achievement test. CAT is closely aligned to the Canadian curriculum, and uses Canadian content and language. The tests in CAT have been field tested with Canadian students, and have involved the input of Canadian teachers at every stage of development.

CAT Assesses Students' Essential Learning

Reading, writing, and mathematics—the keys to school success—are the foundation of 21st century competencies and are critical to the success of students throughout their lives. In all contexts of work and leisure, 21st century learners must be able to clearly and effectively communicate ideas and information, and confidently put math to use. CAT provides a useful snapshot of this core learning, by assessing students' key skills in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics, presenting the results in a clear and useful format, and helping users to interpret the results.

The CAT Experience

- **Students' physical condition**—Parents are informed about the upcoming tests so they can send their children to school well-rested. Students who are ill should not take the tests. Students take the tests at a time of day considered by their teachers to be optimal. Sessions are usually around 60 minutes in length, and shorter for younger students. The conditions in the classroom are made as comfortable as possible, and significant breaks are taken between sessions.
- **Attitude**—Students' attitude is a big factor for success at school. Attitude is each student's responsibility, but teachers, family, and friends have a major influence through their support, respect, advice and role-modelling. Parents' daily encouragement helps children feel hopeful and positive about school, willing to give everything their best shot, and proud of their accomplishments.
- **How important the tests seem**—Students work better on jobs they consider to be important, but may be hampered by stress if the job seems to be extremely important. Teachers help students find the right balance by presenting an appropriate context for the tests and helping students approach them with confidence. Thanks to modern assessment practises, most students appreciate that all activities in the classroom have value, and are used to doing their best, whether the work is “for marks” or not.

- **Being comfortable with the test format**—Students practise using a few sample questions with their teacher before writing the tests to make sure they understand the format and can go straight to the job of showing what they know. Also, while these are timed tests, students who do not work quite as quickly as others may be allowed a few extra minutes at the end of a session, so they are not cut short.

CAT presents students with meaningful questions that are set in realistic contexts. The questions are in a multiple-choice format: students complete each question by selecting the answer they think is correct from four choices, or from three choices for the younger students. For some levels of the spelling tests, the teacher reads the words and students write them.

How to Interpret Your Child's Results

How to Read the Parent Report

CAT generates a Parent Report that shows your child's achievement in Reading, Writing Conventions, and Mathematics. This guide helps you to read and interpret the Parent Report. If you need further assistance, your child's teachers will be able to help you, too.

The report is divided into two parts to provide you with two powerful views of your child's achievement, allowing for a rich interpretation of his or her learning.

Strengths and Needs

This first part of the report is a detailed profile of your child's achievement in key skills for Reading, Writing Conventions and Mathematics. The actual skills shown depend on which grade a student is in. Your child's achievement in each skill will fall into one of three ranges:

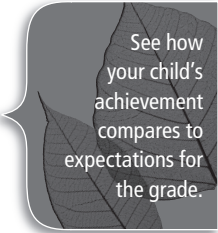
- exceeds expectations for the grade
- meets expectations for the grade
- does not meet expectations for the grade

It is normal for a student to score in one range for one skill and in another range for another skill, depending on where his or her strengths lie.

The following descriptions give a general idea of students' overall achievement when most of their skills fall into the same range:

CAT assesses your child's achievement in Reading, Writing and Mathematics

Students, parents and teachers work together to help students do their best.



Exceeds expectations for most skills

Some students are in this range.

- Students' knowledge and skills are consistently at the mastery level, to the point that they exceed expectations for the grade.
- Exceeding expectations does not mean that students are operating at a higher grade, although they might have the potential to do so.

Meets expectations for most skills

Most students are in this range.

- Students' knowledge and skills are sufficiently solid for them to be successful at the grade and to be ready for the next grade.
- Students most likely have some relative strengths and weaknesses, and may not have consistently mastered everything in the grade.

Does not meet expectations for most skills

Some students are in this range.

- Students have not clearly shown competence at the grade.
- Students may have some isolated areas of competence, but these are most likely not sufficiently widespread for students to be successful without support at the grade.



Parent Report

Student: **MATTHEW LOGAN**
 Teacher: **MS MURIEL STACY**
 Grade: **6.1**
 Level: **15**
 Test Date: **2008/10/10**
 School: **SPRINGFIELD SCHOOL**
 District: **SPRING VALLEY SD**
 Job#: **8752 - 6752**

The Canadian Achievement Tests are standardized tests used widely across Canada. This student was administered these tests recently. For more information about these tests, visit the publisher's website at www.canadiantestcentre.com

simulated data



Strengths and Needs

MATTHEW likely exceeds expectations in the following areas:

Writing Conventions **Sentence Structure** – identify correct use of tense, subject-verb agreement, compound sentences, noun-pronoun agreement

MATTHEW likely meets expectations in the following areas:

Reading **Literary Text** – read and understand a poem and a short story
Informational Text – read and understand an article on a human endeavour topic and an article on a geography topic
Analysis of Text/Graphics – infer; identify word play, mood, cause, organization, character's feelings, motivations and relationships
Central Thought – identify main idea or related details, type of text, purpose and author's worldview and depiction of people

Writing Conventions **Capitalization and Punctuation** – identify correct use of capitals, quotation marks, apostrophes, italics and commas
Paragraph Structure – identify the main idea or a supporting detail of a paragraph; identify effective paragraph organization

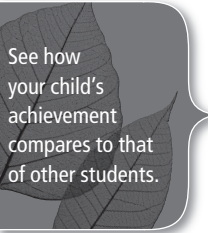
Mathematics **Number Sense** – represent, read, order and locate numbers; solve problems involving whole numbers and decimals
Measurement – measure and calculate perimeter and area; work with money amounts in problem contexts
Geometry and Spatial Sense – identify and use transformations; identify 2D faces on 3D figures; apply their spatial sense
Patterns and Algebra – make predictions and extend numerical and non-numerical patterns; describe rules from number patterns
Data Management – interpret data and make predictions from graphs; select and use data from tables and charts

MATTHEW likely does not meet expectations in the following areas:

Reading **Media Text** – read and understand a cartoon and an article consisting of print text and graphics
Conventions – identify and use font, and text structure and features; use apostrophes and quotation punctuation
Stated/Visual Information – understand words, phrases and abbreviations; locate and make connections among information

Compared to Same-Grade Students Across Canada

	Reading	Writing Conventions	Mathematics
Above Average	9	9	9
	8	8	8
	7	7	7
Average	6	6	6
	5	5	5
	4	4	4
Below Average	3	3	3
	2	2	2
	1	1	1



See how your child's achievement compares to that of other students.

Comparison to Same-Grade Students across Canada

This second part of the report shows how your child's achievement compares to that of students in the same grade across the country.

Scores range from 1 to 9. Over half of students score in the average range, which is between 4 and 6, and over three-quarters score between 3 and 7. Some students score 2 or 8, and very few students score 1 (the lowest score) or 9 (the highest score). It is normal for students to have different scores for the three subject areas.

How to Interpret the Parent Report

CAT results are an important part of an “assessment picture,” made up of many different kinds of information that describe what your child knows and is able to do and how he or she learns. An assessment picture helps you interpret new information as it comes in, helps you better understand your child's learning needs and plan for learning support. The following guidelines help you build an assessment picture of your child and put your child's CAT results to best use.

1. Think about your child's learning in general.

Questions parents can reflect on regarding their children's learning include:

- Do they like to read, write, talk, draw, play with numbers, make things, move?
- Do they think about their learning, learn from their mistakes, plan ahead?
- What are they good at?
- Do they have a good memory?
- Do they like problem solving?
- Do they prefer the big picture or the details?
- What are their interests? Are they curious? Do they have preferred topics to talk, read, or write about?
- What are they knowledgeable about?

2. Think about your child's school learning.

Think about your child's learning in Reading, Writing and Mathematics.

- Does your child prefer one of these subject areas over the others?
- Does homework get done more readily in one of these subject areas?
- What grades does your child typically attain in these subject areas?

Are your child's results lower in some areas than you would have expected? If so, were there any complicating factors on the days the tests were taken—such as your child's physical condition or attitude—that may have negatively impacted the

results? Your child may remember those days and have some insights. If your child has difficulty doing his or her best work under test conditions, what can be done now to assist him or her to do better on future tests?

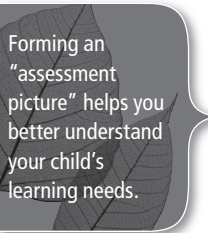
If the results are higher than you would have expected, do they confirm suspicions you might have that your child is stronger in some areas than his or her school marks usually suggest?

3. Decide if the high or low scores require further investigation.

Most students have strengths and needs, but results that are all very high or very low may warrant investigation. If you have concerns or questions about your child's results, be sure to discuss them with the teacher. Perhaps further testing or different teaching and learning strategies need to be considered.

4. Discuss the results with your child.

Your child has insights about his or her own learning. Most students are taught at school to reflect on their learning and to be aware of their personal strengths and needs. Study the results together with your child, as appropriate for his or her age and understanding. Find aspects of the Parent Report that warrant celebration. Where results are low, avoid statements like, “You should have done better here.” Rather, use the results as a prompt to discuss the challenges that your child may be facing and to talk about strategies for improvement in these areas.



Forming an “assessment picture” helps you better understand your child's learning needs.

Ideas for Supporting Your Child's Learning

Strategies for Supporting Your Child's Learning

Throughout the years of basic education, what happens at home has a tremendous influence on what happens at school. Parents are children's first teachers and their primary source of support and encouragement. Parents help their children form their first views of the world, their values, and their approaches to learning. Family involvement in a child's education is one of the biggest factors behind a positive attitude and a successful experience at school. Family, school and the community form partnerships that together create students' context for learning. Students' success is highest when these partnerships are strong.

The following strategies are widely accepted and can be highly successful in helping students fulfill their potential and achieve success in their learning.

1. Show your child how much you value school.

Going to school is important work—help your child realize this by showing a lot of interest in what goes on there.

- **Starting with “How was your day?” is fine, but don't stop there!** Expect a meaningful reply and make sure you have the time to hear it. Ask questions that encourage discussion. Remember what you discussed about school yesterday, and follow up on that. Schools are busy places, and children spend a lot of time there, so they should have lots to say about their day!
- **Be familiar with your child's timetable so you can ask specific questions about various classes.**
- **Talk about upcoming events—check the school calendar and website.** Read the information about events with your child, so that you all know what's going to be happening.
- **Read, sign and return permission forms that come home as quickly as possible.** Discuss them with your child. Try to free up some time to attend school or classroom events.
- **Let your child hear you tell others about the interesting things happening at school.** Your child will notice that you have been listening closely, and that you value what he or she said.

2. Talk about the future with your child.

School is all about learning that is meaningful and engaging every day. It is also about looking to the future, full of hope, confidence and big plans!

- **Talk with your child about goal-setting—for the next day, week, month or year.** It is important for children to take ownership of their own learning, to realize that they are responsible for it, and to see themselves as capable of setting and achieving goals.
 - **Talk about logistics.** When is an assignment due? How long will it take? What commitments are coming up this week that may conflict with homework? How can schoolwork, sports and other pursuits be balanced?
 - **Especially with older children, talk about different jobs that interest them.** The possibilities for careers are almost endless. The challenge is discovering what those possibilities are. Use the Internet or access career counseling to find out more.
 - **Make connections between learning at school and future careers.** Help your child gain a realistic picture of the educational requirements for different jobs.
3. **Encourage your child in his or her interests and activities.**

Learning is a lifelong venture, and does not all take place in a formal school setting. Encourage your child to be learning everywhere and in different ways.

- **Children often adopt their parents' preferences for interests and activities.** That's great, because it provides more opportunities for the family to do things together. Still, keep an open mind to your child acquiring interests that you have never had and to developing ambitions that are new to you!
 - **Acquiring skills and knowledge requires effort and self-discipline—even when it's fun!** Encourage your child to stick with it when learning something new, or aiming for personal or team goals.
 - **Encourage exploration and some healthy risk-taking.** Being curious about many new ventures and being prepared to invest some time in them, even if they don't work out, is a normal part of growing up.
 - **Go with your child to places of interest in your community.** Big cities and small towns all have fascinating things going on that will spark your child's interest. These places don't have to be officially labeled as “entertainment.” A bakery, a print shop and a post office can be fascinating places to learn.
4. **Encourage your child to be open-minded about school.**
- School is about opening doors to learning, not closing them. Help your child “seize the day.”
- **Help your child keep an open mind to all subjects and to different ways of learning and showing his or her learning.**
 - **If your child liked a subject last year but doesn't like it this year, help him or her explore why that might be and to find some ways of overcoming the obstacles.**

What happens at home has a tremendous influence on what happens at school.

Learning is a lifelong venture. Help your child “seize the day.”

- **Listen carefully when your child talks of challenges or achievements at school, and about what he or she likes or doesn't like to learn.** Preferences might be easily distinguishable by subject, but it is often likely to be topics he or she finds interesting and that you could help him or her continue to pursue. Or, perhaps your child prefers certain types of activities or ways of learning—such as group work, making things, or using technology—that could turn out to be real strengths now and in the future.
- **Encourage your child to join school clubs and to be part of extra-curricular activities, where possible.**
- **If there was a subject in school that you felt you were not good at, don't let your child conclude that he or she has "inherited" a trait from you that will prevent him or her from being good at this subject, too.**

5. Make your home a place of learning.

One of the best ways to make it easy for your child to learn at home is to make it a place where everyone learns. It's too hard for most children to study when everyone else is watching TV, for example.

- **Let your child see you learning.** It's fine to reminisce about "the old days" when you were at school. While it's important for your child to remember that you were a child once, it might be even more important to see that you are a lifelong learner, still acquiring new skills and knowledge!
- **If you are taking courses, share and discuss your study strategies with your child.**
- **Ensure that there is quiet time and space to read, to study or to complete assignments.**

6. Involve your child in the community and the world.

- **Discuss local, national and international events with your child.** While maintaining your family's values, try together to appreciate differing points of view.
- **Involve your child in community action or volunteer work.** Sometimes school can be an excellent setting for social action, such as supporting a charity or cause.
- **As appropriate for your child's age, let him or her observe civic life in action, such as public meetings or a small claims court.**
- **Consider taking your child to work.**

Strategies for Improving Reading, Writing, and Mathematics

Supporting Your Child's Learning in Reading and Writing

Reading and writing are very different skills and, to the observer, students are clearly doing something quite different when they are reading or writing. However, these two skills are also closely related, because they both focus on the same thing: print text. The writer and reader "share" the text and both attend to the same characteristics of it. These characteristics are clustered by CAT into four groups, which you can find in the Parent Report:

Conventions—The conventions of print text include spelling, capitalization, punctuation, sentence structure, paragraph structure, text/graphic features and structure, and the patterns for different types of text. Of course, readers and writers use the same conventions, helping to make communication clear.

Stated/visual information—Print text has content in the form of ideas and details. The writer creates or selects the information that forms the text. The reader locates this information and gradually builds an understanding of the text as he or she moves through it.

Analysis of text/graphics—Most writing, whether it is a story or an article, has a beginning, a middle and an end. Within that basic shape, the text can be organized in many different ways. The writer tries to make the organization obvious by grouping ideas together and connecting them. The reader knows where he or she is in the text and navigates through it, understanding each part in the context of the whole thing.

Central thought—A print text has a point or point of view. At times, writers say what that is, spelling it out in a title or introduction, while at other times, the central thought of a text is implied, or gradually becomes apparent as the reader reads. To attend to the central thought or main idea, the reader must identify the biggest idea in the text that is an umbrella for all the smaller ideas and details that make up the content.

Reading involves much more than "decoding" written words. Although we cannot read without doing this, we are not reading if this is all we do. Readers make meaning. Much of the meaning the reader gains is a reconstruction of the meaning that the author wished to convey—that is, reading is an act of communication. But, readers also construct their own meaning, in light of what they have read before, and their personal knowledge, experience, preferences, and points of view.

Writing involves much more than printing, handwriting or word processing. Writers write with a purpose, such as to amuse, inform, persuade, explain, apologize, request, reflect, agitate, console, and so on. They meet their purpose by organizing ideas and details, such as the characters and events in a story, or the opinions and supporting details of an essay, in a way that will make sense to readers. They use the conventions of print text that everyone agrees upon to make the text as clear as possible.

Since reading and writing are two sides of the same coin, it is not surprising that children can develop their writing skills while reading. For example, they might encounter new words or ideas while reading that they will later use in their own writing. As well, children can develop their reading skills while writing. For example, they might read their work to someone or they might read a draft themselves a few days later after writing and decide that some of it needs improvements. Reading and writing are practised hand-in-hand when a child corresponds with someone, such as emailing, texting or leaving notes for each other on the fridge. Of course, in the case of a diary or journal, the writer and the reader are one and the same person!

There have been major advances in the teaching of reading and writing in recent years, resulting in methods that are quite different to those used when we were in school. Teachers create authentic contexts for students, so that they can write for a purpose. Students have choices about what they read, and progress through levels of reading difficulty at their own rate, rather than all reading at the same level. A balanced approach to reading instruction means that students are taught a variety of strategies, including phonics as well as many others, so that they have a toolkit of skills from which to draw.

The following strategies will help you encourage your child as a reader and a writer, and support the learning he or she is doing at school. Your child's teacher is the best person to ask if you would like to learn more about how to help. Teachers will sometimes send home strategies for parents to use at home or post them on the school website.

1. Read together.

It is critical to find a time each day—or at least most days—when you can have a shared reading experience with your child. When it comes to helping your child to read and to love reading, there is probably nothing more important than this.

- There are many ways to read together: you read, your child reads, you take turns reading, or you listen to an audio book together.
- Relax together and each read your own books.

- If English is not your first language and you do not feel comfortable reading to your child, read together in your first language.
- Read the same books separately and discuss them together after.
- Encourage older children to read to their younger siblings.

2. Find good books.

For great reading, consult The CTC Guide to Children's Reading in this Parent Guide. It contains over 500 carefully selected titles to engage students of all ages. There are so many "reading roads" to travel on the way to becoming an accomplished reader:

- Find more books on the same topic or by the same author.
- Explore other books in the same genre, such as adventure or fantasy.
- Read books related to current studies at school.
- Read both fiction and nonfiction.
- Return your child to old favourites—even those that are very easy for your child to read.
- Venture into books with more challenging words and ideas.
- Browse the shelves at the library and borrow books that look interesting.
- Ask friends, family, teachers and librarians for recommendations.
- If you enjoyed the movie, get the book.

3. Make your home a place for reading and writing.

Have books and other print text easily accessible:

- Put books and magazines in reach. Leave a few on the counter or table, and change them frequently.

Make writing tools easily available:

- Leave paper, stickies and pencils out.
- Have reading and writing programs readily accessible on the computer. Ask the school for recommendations—there are many free programs on the Internet.

Find real reasons to read and write:

- Read for information, such as school newsletters, the newspaper, fliers or about a movie before seeing it.
- Write notes to each other, write letters to people, make lists or write down plans for the weekend.
- Write to the editor or the author of an article/book.

Reading is much more than saying the words. Writing is much more than making words.

The teaching of reading and writing today is quite different to how many of us were taught.

4. Make reading a pleasant experience together.

- Go to the public library—most have big easy chairs to relax in and quiet spots for reading together.
- Combine reading with another pleasant experience, such as enjoying some milk and cookies.
- Read together at the end of the day in the comfiest spot you can find.

5. Talk about what you read.

You may not know what your older children are reading. Ask them!

Ask different kinds of questions about the books your children are reading. For example:

- Who did what? How do you know? Where or when does this take place?
- What does this part make you think of from your life? How is this character the same as or different than you?
- What might happen next? What makes you think that?
- What pictures do you see in your head as we read this part?
- What are some important points to remember from this page/chapter/section?
- At what point did the story stop being funny and become more serious?
- What would be the equivalent of that event or situation in modern times?
- What is the moral of the story?
- What are some other books you've read that are similar to this book? How are they alike?
- Would you recommend this book to me? How about to your sister?

6. Make the most of the pictures.

Pictures are part of the book, so use the information in them and enjoy them.

- What part of the story is depicted in the illustration? Does the graph provide the same information as the paragraph that refers to it?
- Encourage your early-reading child to find clues in the pictures that will help him or her decode the words. This is an important reading strategy, so don't cover up the pictures!

7. Explore the text that is around you.

When you are in a town or city, you encounter text almost everywhere you go: on billboards, street signs, stores and businesses, as well as fliers that are delivered to your home.

- Question the grammar and the spelling in advertisements and business names. Do you see examples of different rules than those in more formal writing? Why do you think the writers did that?
- Discuss the messages and the logic in advertisements. Perhaps they want you to buy something, but how are they trying to convince you to do that?

8. Play with language.

Have fun with language!

- Read aloud in different voices.
- Make up word plays, jokes, songs and poems about the things around you: the weather, the people, the buildings, etc.
- Play board games and online games that involve words.

9. Go easy on the struggling or reluctant reader.

Much as we want our children to “get it,” turning reading into an anxiety-laden chore is not going to help.

- Let them choose their books. Encourage them to enjoy easier chapter books from a series. As their confidence improves, they will venture out into other books!
- Put the challenging read down if it's getting tiring and read something easier—even books the child read a long time ago.
- Give encouragement, but make it realistic.
- A lot of people prefer nonfiction over fiction. Find some informational books with grabby titles like *The Most Dangerous Animals Ever!* Use the photographs, captions, and illustrations that often appear in such writing as a support for understanding.
- For older or reluctant readers, let them see that you need to read in every job. Bring home some of the reading you do at work.
- Don't be overly corrective...it's more important to get the gist of a story than to wrestle with every word.

10. Focus first on the ideas, and later on the conventions of writing.

Give your children feedback on how well you understood the ideas in their writing. Ask questions about the details and the organization of the story, report or essay, and help them clarify their thinking. You might say things like:

- “That's a great beginning! I know exactly what you're writing about after reading your first few sentences.”
- “Your story opening tells me about your character and the problem she's having. I'm excited to read more!”
- “Your report includes some important facts. Are there more facts you might include in the second paragraph?”
- “How might you tell more about your character's thoughts and what happens to him when he's lost to make the story more interesting?”

Encourage your children to write lots and to “clean it up later.” Focusing on spelling and punctuation before a story or an essay is finished is like painting a wall before sanding the plaster—it's not time, yet. You might say things like:

- “That’s a super word to use! Spell it your way so you don’t lose your train of thought and we’ll edit together when you’re all done. You can underline it so we remember to look back at that word later.”
- “You’ll need the word ‘because’ in many of your sentences. I’ll write it on the corner of your page and you can find it there when you need it.”

Once the writing is good to go, then it’s time to work on the conventions, such as spelling and punctuation.

11. Make conventions make sense!

Like the rules of the road, the conventions of print text are an agreement between writers and readers. Things go smoothly when everyone uses them! Writers can also think of conventions as a gift to readers that helps them navigate smoothly through the text. When conventions are not used correctly, readers waste their time trying to decipher the message, and may even misunderstand it. Still, overemphasizing errors discourages children from writing, and distracts them from the main task of putting together ideas. The following strategies help maintain a balance.

- With younger writers, focus on one convention at a time after the writing has been completed. For example, change incorrect spellings during the first read-through, look for missed capital letters during a second read, and search for missed punctuation on a third read.
- Try not to take all the responsibility for editing your children’s writing. Help them retain ownership by allowing them to reread their own writing. This is especially effective when they return to their own writing after a day.
- Encourage children to read their writing aloud...they are much more likely to spot their own errors this way than if they read silently.
- Encourage children to maintain a personal spelling dictionary that lists the words that give them most trouble. For younger children, print and post words on a convenient spot, such as a notice board. You can change the words as new ones are needed and take down those that have been mastered.
- Leave some incorrect spellings untouched. An eight-year-old who picks the word “atrocious” has shown a lot of skill in word choice. If he or she spells it “atroshus” it’s well worth leaving it like that until the writing has been completed. Fixing too many of these creative spellings may quell a young writer’s use of interesting and challenging words.

12. Show how much you love reading and writing!

If you don’t, then you may need to practise changing your mind!

- Read anything: fiction or nonfiction, books, magazines, store catalogues, etc.
- Find reasons to write: notes to self or others, greeting cards, lists, plans, etc.
- Let your children catch you reading and writing.
- Be creative: write a poem or a short story, write a letter to the newspaper, etc.

Supporting Your Child’s Learning in Mathematics

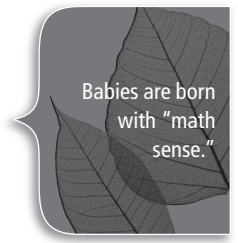
Thanks to brain research, advancements in our understanding of how children learn, and discoveries about the nature of math, we now know that babies are born with “math sense.” Their brains are geared to viewing and understanding the world in many ways, including mathematically. As they grow, they observe, experiment, play, and interact with everything and everyone around them and come to understand their environment at home and in the community. By the time they arrive in kindergarten, children already know a lot of math.

Modern math classrooms are quite different from when we went to school. Nowadays, students at all grades:

- focus on thinking and reasoning rather than memorizing and using automatic shortcuts
- explore and learn math concepts through problem solving
- find multiple ways to solve problems and search for multiple solutions
- experiment with math and are curious about math
- stick with a problem even when the solution is not immediately evident
- apply their math skills and concepts in daily activities
- view wrong answers as learning opportunities
- explain how they solved a problem and communicate this to others
- do mental math

Every child can learn math and does so as he or she participates in daily explorations of math concepts. A child who has a positive attitude toward math is more likely to develop a “can do” attitude and persist when faced with a challenging situation.

The following guidelines help you support your child’s learning of math—any time, any place. As well, there are some special strategies that you can use to support your child when he or she is doing homework.



1. Look for math around you.

Math is a way of looking at the world. When you put your “math glasses” on, you will see that math is everywhere!

- **Patterns**—You know you are looking at a pattern if you can predict what the next number or thing is going to be. For example, 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3, 1... is a pattern, and so is 1, 2, 3, 4.... A phone number is not a pattern. A checkers board is a pattern, because you can predict the colour of the next square. Explore patterns that involve numbers, such as on calendars and in charts. Look for patterns in the windows on buildings, the cars in a parking lot, in clothing and on floors. Look for patterns in nature, too, such as the petals on a flower.
- **Numbers**—Numbers are used for naming, such as phone numbers and house numbers, and for counting, such as the number of marbles in a bag. Look for numbers around the house or on the highway, and discuss how they are being used. Use numbers with your child when shopping, planning a trip, or attending a sports event. Zero is a number, too. Use it to describe none or nothing.
- **Shapes and solids**—Shapes are two-dimensional, such as squares; solids are three-dimensional, such as cubes. Look for shapes and solids everywhere and try naming them using math terms, like cylinder, sphere, and pentagon. Identify shapes on objects, such as the rectangle on the side of a block. How many sides does the rectangle have? How many faces does the block have? How is a square like a rectangle? How is it different? How is a square different from a circle? Which rectangle is the smallest? Compare different shapes and solids.

2. Count everything!

Counting backwards is a prerequisite for subtracting and dividing, count backwards as often as you count forwards, for example, forwards going up the stairs AND backwards going down.

Start or stop at 0 rather than 1 to remember that zero is a number.

Skip count, forwards and backwards

- by 2's. Start at 1 to count odd numbers, and at 2 to count even numbers.
- by 5's and 10's. Start at any number from 1 to 9.
- by 3's, 4's, and 25's. Start at multiples of each. For example, some multiples of 3 are 3, 6, and 9.
- Count money.

3. Estimate everything!

About how many steps will it take to get from ___ to ___? About how many shovels of sand will I need to fill this dump truck? About how many raisins are in your cookie? Do we have enough bread for breakfast? About how much is $26 + 38$ or $56 - 39$? Verify estimates when possible, by measuring, calculating or counting.

4. Explore collections.

Explore collections of objects, such as buttons, stamps, tools, and kitchen items.

- Sort them in different ways, such as colour, shape, size, or function.
- Compare collections. Do these two collections have the same number of objects? Does one set have more or fewer than the other? How do you know?

5. Find out how other people use math.

It's important for children to realize that people use math. Older children, especially, need to know that math is more than a subject—it's a critical tool for daily life, including work life. People do many different kinds of math, including estimating, counting, measuring, comparing, and calculating, and for so many purposes, such as to play games, to plan projects, and to keep track of things.

- Encourage your child to ask people how they use math in their work.
- Watch people as they work and discuss how they might be using math.
- In the evening, discuss how everyone in the house used math that day.
- Find out what math courses are prerequisites for post-secondary training or for various jobs.

6. Look for math in books, games and activities.

- **Books and stories**—Check out the fun books recommended in The CTC Guide to Children's Reading that are designed to help children understand math. As in real life, many books and stories contain math concepts. When you're reading together, notice the numbers, patterns, shapes or comparisons in the story or article as well as in the illustrations. Create your own math story books together, such as counting books. Take digital photos, draw or paint to illustrate situations that can be described using math.
- **Games**—There isn't a card game or board game—from Snap to Monopoly®—that doesn't involve some kind of math. Your child will want to learn in order to play the game. Talk about the math strategies that are used to play. Talk about probability when playing cards, such as the chances of turning over a king, a heart or a red card.
- **Music**—There are many songs that help children learn math, such as counting songs. Alphabet songs are proof that singing is a great way to learn. Make up songs together to learn about math. Of course, nearly all music has repeating patterns in the melody, the words, or the rhythm. Use percussion instruments to create and copy those patterns. For a child who is learning English, this is a great way to learn about patterns while taking a break from language.

- **Hobbies and crafts**—Create or copy patterns, shapes, solids, and structures with available materials, such as beads, dough, clay, wood, fabric, stamps, stickers, blocks, paint, dry pasta, or interlocking blocks. Use math words together to describe what you're doing.
- **Daily chores**—Explore measurement and fractions while baking, patterns while setting the table, matching while sorting laundry, measurement and spatial reasoning while rearranging furniture or tidying a room, or estimating and calculating while grocery shopping.
- **Physical activities**—Count things, such as steps or turns, when jumping rope, dancing or doing soccer drills. Create or copy patterns, such as strategic plays in sports or dance routines. Small children can use their bodies to show high and low, near and far, or up and down. If you have a pedometer, create questions or make predictions about distances or numbers of steps between things. Gather sports data, like baskets, shots on net, or best times. Use the data to calculate totals and averages, to look for patterns and make predictions. Organize the data in graphs or tables.

7. Practise mental math.

Practise making mental calculations with your child whenever possible. Once people are good at it, it can be faster than using a calculator. Use mental math strategies to represent:

- addition, such as combining two groups: How many do we have now?
- subtraction, such as separating: How many do we have left?
- comparing: How much more or less?
- part-part-whole: There are three in one hand and seven altogether. How many are in the other hand?

Use a calculator to help solve problems that require large numbers or many calculations, but always check the answers to make sure they are reasonable.

8. Think aloud.

Describe your thinking as you engage in problem solving and ask your child to do the same.

- Ask questions: How many? Why? How do you/I know? What is your/my strategy? What if...?
- Talk about why a strategy, an answer or a solution makes sense or not.
- Treat errors as learning opportunities, not failures. Everyone makes errors—talking about what didn't work is a great way to learn.

9. Measure things.

There are many types of measurements to be made in and around the house, such as length, weight, area, capacity and time, using “standard units,” such as centimetres, kilograms, square metres, millilitres, and seconds.

- Use the measuring devices you have available—such as a ruler, tape measure, weigh scale, measuring cup, or stopwatch—to measure things.
- Estimate quantities, and then measure them.
- Take measurements and then calculate quantities that are difficult to measure directly, such as area.

There are many measurement activities that do not involve standard units. Explore questions such as the following:

- Is this toy longer or shorter than this one? Will this pail hold more sand than this cup? Is this puzzle piece bigger or smaller than this one? Does this stone feel heavier or lighter than this one?
- How many paper clips long is this drinking straw? How many pieces of macaroni weigh as much as this apple?

10. Explore money.

Working with money is a worthwhile life skill and a great way to work with numbers.

- Examine utility bills. Create and solve questions based on the information, such as the cost per unit of power, or the daily consumption of water.
- Exchange money. For example, exchange a bill for coins. Make change.
- Estimate and calculate totals for purchases.

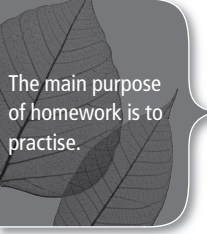
11. Use online resources.

For other ideas and activities to engage your child in mathematics visit:

- The National Council for Teachers of Mathematics at <http://www.nctm.org> and select Lessons and Resources, and then Family Resources.
- Figure This! at <http://www.figurethis.org>
- Illuminations at <http://illuminations.nctm.org/>, and select Activities
- National Library of Virtual Manipulatives at <http://nlvm.usu.edu> and in French at Bibliothèque virtuelle en mathématiques at <http://nlvm.usu.edu/fr>
- Stats Canada at <http://www.statcan.gc.ca> and select Students and Teachers, then by School Subjects, and then Mathematics; similarly in French.

Strategies for Helping Your Child with Math Homework

The purposes of homework vary. Sometimes, the purpose is to do something that is more easily done at home, such as gathering labels from food containers, or to finish something that would take too long to do at school, such as an essay. The main purpose of homework, however, is to practise or consolidate skills and concepts that should already have been learned at school. If you find yourself having to teach your child something that he or she really doesn't understand, you may want to discuss your child's learning needs with the teacher. Usually, however, your role is to support and encourage your child as he or she practises.



The main purpose of homework is to practise.

1. Be positive.

Be positive about math at all times, and particularly about your own math abilities. Avoid statements such as, "I didn't like math," or "Math is hard," or "I didn't do well in math."

2. Be ready to support new ways of doing math.

Your child may be using strategies that are new to you, such as multiplying from left to right rather than starting at the right and "carrying." High school students may also use this left-to-right strategy in algebra to multiply polynomials. It is completely acceptable to arrive at solutions in different ways. However, if you suggest a strategy to your child and he or she says, "We didn't do it this way in class," you may want to talk to the teacher or attend a parent information session to learn about some of the new methods. Never impose your way of doing math.

3. Focus on understanding.

Understanding is more important than quickly finishing work, even if it means that homework is not completed. So don't do the work for your child, and avoid those quick short cuts that we all used to use. They "get the job done," but they are ultimately confusing and will interfere with deep learning.

4. Listen and use guiding questions.

Listen to what your child is saying or asking as he or she works. Learners will often sort out a problem themselves as they think aloud. It is important that your child solves problems using strategies that make sense to him or her. Guide your child to think by asking questions such as:

- What do you need to solve?
- What are the instructions?
- Are there words that you don't understand?
- What if you do a similar problem using smaller numbers?
- Can you represent your thinking with a picture or a diagram?
- What is your thinking?

The CTC Guide to Children's Reading

There are so many great books available for your child to read, or for you to read together. The difficult part, sometimes, is finding them! The CTC Guide to Children's Reading is a great way to do that. Among the top quality titles in this Guide, you are bound to find some great reading for your child.

Most of the books are fiction. Markers in the margin make the nonfiction titles easy to find. There are also markers for two other kinds of interesting catches:

- Graphic novels—written like extended comic strips, and very popular with some readers
- Mathematics—a whole new genre of fun reading that helps readers think about math

Books have been selected because they are well-written and of high interest. To ensure that the content is appropriate for your child, however, we recommend that you review books first.

The list is organized into age groups, based on reading difficulty and content. As well, within each age group, you will find books for you to read to your child, books for your child to read alone, and some more challenging selections for strong readers. Of course, you can always select from recommendations from a younger or an older age group if something catches your eye or your child's eye.

There are many ways to access the books in this list: borrow from the school or public library, buy new or used, buy online or from a bookstore, or read online.

For many listings, other books by the same author have also been recommended for you to explore. This guide could be the beginning of a great reading adventure!

Books to Read to Four- to Six-Year-Olds

Andreae, Giles (2001) *Giraffes Can't Dance*. New York: Orchard Books. Gerald is a clumsy giraffe with two left feet. Other giraffes make fun of him until he proves them wrong. Other recommended books by the same author: *Rumble in the Jungle*, *Commotion in the Ocean*

Atwood, Margaret (2002) *Princess Prunella and the Purple Peanut*. Bolton: Key Porter Kids. Who knew being selfish could cause you to have a purple peanut at the end of your nose?

Bemelmans, Ludwig (2000) *Madeline*. New York: Penguin Young Reader Group. Set in Paris, a little girl shows her bravery when going to the hospital. Other recommended books by the same author: *Madeline's Christmas*, *Mad About Madeline*

Camon, Ann Edwards (2001) *I Know What You Do When I Go to School*. Layton: Gibbs Smith Publishers. At school, Howie imagines the fun his mom and little brother are having at home. Mom has a solution for this!

Carle, Eric (1985) *The Very Busy Spider*. New York: Penguin Reader Group.
Having been blown into a farm, this busy spider continues to spin her web despite the many temptations from the animals.
Other recommended books by the same author:
The Very Busy Cricket, The Very Lonely Firefly

Conrad, Pam (1998) *Rooster's Gift*. New York: Harper Trophy.
This rooster believes he makes the sun rise by "cot ca-toodle tooing." One day he oversleeps...

Cottin, Menena and Faria, Rosana (2008) *Black Book of Colors*. Toronto: Greenwood Books.
Colours are beautifully described through words. Illustrations are black and can only be seen through touch.

Dewdney, Anna (2005) *Llama Llama Red Pajama*. New York: Penguin Young Reader Group.
It is bed time and Baby Llama panics when his mama leaves the room.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Llama Llama Misses Mama, Llama Llama Mad at Mama, Llama Llama Holiday Drama

Fleming, Denise (2006) *The Cow Who Clucked*. New York: Scholastic.
A cow wakes up and is clucking! She has lost her "moo" and is on a search to find it.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Beetle Bop, Mama Cat has 3 little Kittens, Lunch, The First Day of Winter

Gilman, Phoebe (2004) *Jillian Jiggs*. New York: Scholastic.
Meet a little girl with non-stop energy and a thirst for fun!
Other recommended books by the same author:
This is one book of four in this series, Little Blue Ben

Hughes, Shirley (1988) *Out and About*. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books.
Enjoy the pleasures of the outdoors in all four seasons in this rhyming story.
Other recommended books by the same author:
The Snow Lady

Keats, Ezra Jack (1996) *The Snowy Day*. New York: Viking. Originally published in 1962.
Peter wakes up to find a blanket of snow has covered the city. Delighted, he spends the day exploring and playing.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Whistle for Willie, The Little Drummer Boy, Dreams

Kraus, Robert (1986) *Whose Mouse Are You?* New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing. Originally published in 1970.
This little mouse needs to find some unique solutions to reunite his family!
Other recommended books by the same author:
Leo the Late Bloomer, Herman the Helper

Lionni, Leo (1996) *It's Mine*. New York: Dragonfly Books.
Three small frogs spend their days claiming what is theirs until disaster almost strikes. They realize ownership is not important.
Other recommended books by the same author:
A Color of His Own, Swimmy

Mathematics

MacDonald, Suse (2009) *Shape by Shape*. New York: Little Simon.
Mathematics. Brightly coloured shapes on each page that begin to turn into...a creature from long ago!
Other recommended books by the same author:
Alphabetics, Sea Shapes

Martin Jr., Bill (2000) *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*. New York: Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing.
Brilliant colours fill the pages as the alphabet is on an adventure to reach the top of the coconut tree.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Chicka Chicka 123, Brown Bear, Brown Bear, Panda Bear Panda Bear What Do You See?

McBratney, Sam (1994) *Guess How Much I Love You*. London: Walker Books Ltd.
Little Nutbrown Hare keeps being outdone when trying to describe to Big Nutbrown Hare how much he loves him.
Other recommended books by the same author:
You're All My Favorites, Just You and Me, Yes We Can

Numeroff Joffe, Laura (1985) *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*. New York: HarperCollins.
Who knew that a mouse would have so many demands if you gave him a cookie? This boy certainly didn't!
Other recommended books by the same author:
If You Take a Mouse to the Movies, If You Give a Pig a Pancake, If You Take a Mouse to School, If You Give a Moose a Muffin

Potter, Beatrix (1986) *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. New York: Puffin Books. Originally published in 1902.
Peter is a mischievous bunny who ignores his mama's warnings to stay away from Mr. McGregor's garden.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Tale of Benjamin Bunny, Peter Rabbit: Where is Peter?

Reid, Barbara (1994) *Two by Two*. New York: Scholastic.
Accompanied by beautiful plasticine illustrations, this counting book tells the tale of Noah.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Perfect Snow, Sing a Song of Mother Goose

Root, Phyllis (2004) *Rattletrap Car*. Somerville: Candlewick Press.
A family decides to go for a ride and finds unique ways to fix the car along the way.
Other recommended by the author:
Looking for a Moose, The Pig in the Pond, Kiss the Cow

Sendak, Maurice (1988) *Where the Wild Things Are*. New York: HarperCollins. Originally published in 1963.
When Max is sent to bed with no supper, he imagines sailing to a forest where "wild things" make him king.
Other recommended books by the same author:
In the Night Kitchen, We are All in the Dumps with Jack and Guy

Shannon, David (1999) *David Goes to School*. New York: Scholastic.
David is a mischievous boy who finds trouble. After an eventful school day, he finally earns a star.
Other recommended books by the same author:
David Gets in Trouble, Oh David, It's Christmas David

Stinson, Kathy (1992) *Red is Best*. New York: Annikins.
This toddler is sure that everything red is better! A classic story about a little girl's stubbornness for her favourite colour.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Big or Little? Those Green Things, Mom and Dad Don't Live Together Any More

Stoll Wosh, Ellen (1995) *Mouse Paint*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
Three white mice have a lot of fun with huge jars of red, yellow and blue paint.
Other recommended books by the same author:
For Pete's Sake, Mouse Shapes

Tankard, Jeremy (2007) *Grumpy Bird*. New York: Scholastic.
Bird wakes up very grumpy and is determined to keep his foul mood. Will his day turn around?
Other recommended books by the same author:
Boo Hoo Bird

Tololwa, M. Mollé (1996) *Big Boy*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Oli wants to be as big as a mountain so he can go hunting. Who knew his wish could come true!
Other recommended books by the same author:
Subira Subira, Ananse's Feast: An Ashanti Tale

Willems, Mo (2004) *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children.
After a trip to the Laundromat, Trixie and her dad leave something very special behind.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Knuffle Bunny Free: An Unexpected Diversion

Books to Read to Six- to Eight-Year-Olds

Carrier, Roch (1985) *The Hockey Sweater*. Toronto: Tundra Books.
A boy is expecting a Montreal Canadiens hockey jersey in the mail, but he has a disappointing surprise.
Other recommended books by the same author:
The Flying Canoe, The Basketball Player

Cleaver, Elizabeth (1988) *The Loon's Necklace*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press. The retelling of a favourite Aboriginal west coast legend accompanied by memorable collages.

Cooper, Susan (1994) *Matthew's Dragon*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing. Matthew embarks on an enchanted journey at bedtime as the dragon in his book comes to life!
Other recommended books by the same author:
Silver Cow, The Selkie Girl

Gilman, Phoebe (1993) *Something from Nothing*. New York: Scholastic Press. In this traditional Jewish folktale, Joseph's grandfather makes him a special blanket which turns into many different things.
Other recommended books by the same author:
The Balloon Tree, Grandma and the Pirates

Henkes, Kevin (2007) *Chrysanthemum*. New York: Greenwillow Books. Chrysanthemum loves her unique name until some girls at school start making fun of it.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Owen, Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse

Lester, Alison (1993) *Imagine*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Set in exotic locations, meet every species you could ever dream of!
Other recommended books by the same author:
Magic Beach

Lottridge, Celia (2007) *Ten Small Tales*. Toronto: Groundwood Books. Read classic tales that are famous around the world: Russia, Malaysia, India and more!
Other recommended books by the same author:
One Watermelon Seed

Mathematics

Pallotta, Jerry (2001) *Underwater Counting: Even Numbers*. Watertown: Scholastic Inc. Mathematics. Learn about the life that exists underwater while counting by even numbers.
Other recommended books by the same author:
The Crayon Counting Book, The Ocean Alphabet Book, The Icky Bug Counting Book

Scieszka, Jon (1996) *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*. New York: Penguin Young Reader Group. It is time to hear the perspective of this popular fairy tale straight from the wolf's mouth!
Other recommended books by the same author:
Stinky Cheese Man, Welcome to Tricktown

Thomson, Sarah L. (2005) *Imagine a Day*. New York: Atheneum. Imagination at its best! Surreal illustrations and beautiful descriptions of dreams in daylight!
Other recommended books by the same author:
Imagine a Night, Imagine a Place

Viorst, Judith (1972) *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing. Alexander is having a horrible day! Children will identify with him and learn how to cope with their own bad days.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Alexander Who Used to be Rich Last Sunday; Alexander Who's Not (Do you Hear Me? I Mean it!) Going to Move!

Watt, Melanie (2009) *Chester*. Toronto: Kids Can Press. Chester the cat is covering the book with his red marker while Melanie the author tries to tell her story.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Chester is Back, Scaredy Squirrel

Young, Ed (1996) *Lon Po Po*. New York: Penguin Young Reader Group. In this Chinese version of Little Red Riding Hood, three sisters home alone encounter a wolf disguised as their grandmother.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Seven Blind Mice

Books for Six- to Eight-Year-Olds to Read by Themselves

Easy, beginning-to-read books, with or without help.

Books marked with an asterisk are also recommended for older children at a beginning reader level.

Beecroft, Simon (2008) *Watch Out for Jabba the Hutt!** (Star Wars: Clone Wars; DK Readers). Toronto: DK Publishing. High interest books! Read about the different adventures Star Wars characters have.
Other recommended books:
Many books in this DK series at varying reading levels, starting at pre-reading.

Nonfiction

Carney, Elizabeth (2009) *National Geographic Readers: Frogs!** Nonfiction. Des Moines: National Geographic Children's Books. High interest information about animals, with beginning vocabulary.
Other recommended books in the same series:
Penguins, Bats

Mathematics

Crew, Donald (1994) *Ten Black Dots*. New York: Mulberry Books. Mathematics. Who would think that simple black dots could make a sun, two fox eyes or eight train wheels?
Other recommended books by the same author:
Truck, Freight Train

Dr. Seuss (1957) *Cat in the Hat*.* New York: Random House Children's Books. Two children are bored on a rainy day until a giant cat shows up to take them on a crazy adventure!
Other recommended books by the same author:
There are numerous Dr. Seuss books, including: *Cat in the Hat Comes Back**; *Fox in Socks*; *Dr. Seuss's ABC*; *Green Eggs and Ham*; *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish*; *The Five Hundred Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins**

Eastman, P.D. (1961) *Go Dog Go!** New York: Random House Children's Books. With repetitive and rhythmic text, this loved book introduces colours and prepositions in a silly but meaningful way!
Other recommended books by the same author:
Are You My Mother?

Landers, Ace (2008) *Hot Wheels Off-Roading** New York: Scholastic Inc. Books about cars for beginner readers.
Other recommended books in the same series:
Hot Wheels – To the Extreme

Minarik, Else Holmelund (1978) *Little Bear*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers. This is the first I Can Read Book in a series about an understanding mother and her young bear. Perfect for the beginning reader.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Kiss for Little Bear, Little Bear's Friend, Father Bear Comes Home

Mathematics

Nagel, Karen (2009) *Shapes That Roll*. Maplewood: Blue Apple Books. Mathematics. Simple rhyming that explores different shapes and where you might find them.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Our Silly Garden

Books for readers

Alexander, Lloyd (1997) *The Fortune-Tellers*.* New York: Penguin Young Readers Group. A seedy fortune-teller preys on villagers desperate for a bright future. Amazingly, one prediction comes true. Coincidence?
Other recommended books by the same author:
How the Cat Swallowed Thunder

Almond, David (2010) *The Boy Who Climbed into the Moon*. Sommerville: Candlewick Press.

An unadventurous boy decides to set off one day to touch the sky!

Amery, Heather (2004) *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. Newmarket: Usborne Books.

These traditional fairy tales are written for beginning readers.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Little Red Riding Hood, The Story of Rumpelstiltskin, Cinderella

Applegate, Katherine (2008) *Roscoe Riley Rules #1: Never Glue Your Friends to Chairs*. New York: HarperCollins.

Roscoe is a lively first-grader who always seems to find himself in mishaps.

Other recommended books by the same author:

There are seven books in this series.

Bourgeois, Paulette (1987) *Franklin in the Dark*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Franklin the turtle learns to deal with many problems with support from his family and friends.

Other recommended books by the same author:

There is a series of stories about Franklin.

Cleary, Beverly (1999) *Ramona Quimby Age 8*. * New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

Ramona feels grown up now that she is eight. Read about the misadventures of this quirky little girl!

Other recommended books by the same author:

This book is one of a series. Other series: *Henry Huggins**, *Ralph S. Mouse**

Nonfiction

Dane Bauer, Marion & Tekliela, Stan (2008) *Some Babies are Wild*. Cambridge:

Adventure Publications.

Nonfiction. Beautiful illustrations and text explore the loving relationships between baby animals and their moms.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Baby Bear Discovers the World

Nonfiction

Davies, Nicola (2006) *Extreme Animals: The Toughest Creatures on Earth*. * Sommerville: Candlewick.

Nonfiction. Learn about animals that are surviving in some of the toughest conditions on Earth.

Other recommended books by the same author:

White Owl, Barn Owl, Bat Loves the Night: Read and Wonder

Franco, Betsy (2009) *Messing Around on the Monkey Bars: And Other School Poems for Two Voices*. * Sommerville: Candlewick.

A collection of nineteen poems all about school. Read them by yourself or in pairs!

Other recommended books by the same author:

A Curious Collection of Cats

Garland, Sherry (2001) *The Lotus Seed*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

A Vietnamese girl finds a lotus seed and carries it with her through the many trying times of her life.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Song of the Buffalo Boy, Indio

Mathematics

Goldstone, Bruce (2006) *Great Estimations*. New York: Henry Holt Books.

Mathematics. How many jelly beans are on the front cover? Don't count. Learn to estimate and have fun doing it!

Other recommended books by the same author:

Beastly Feast

Nonfiction

Hansen, Rosanna (2007) *Caring for Cheetahs: My African Adventure*. * Honesdale: Boyds Mill Press.

Nonfiction. The author describes the important work she and others are doing to protect cheetahs.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Panda: A Guide Horse for Ann, Caring Animals and Animal Rescuers

Hoffman, Mary (2007) *Amazing Grace*. London: Frances Lincoln.

Grace finds she can do many things if she tries. She may even be the first black Peter Pan.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Bravo Grace, Encore Grace

Kennemore, Tim (2005) *Alice's Shooting Star*. London: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers.

A girl tries to convince her parents that her younger sister's stories are creative tales rather than lies.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Alice's Birthday Pig, Alice's World Record

Leblanc, Louise (1993) *Maddie Wants Music*. Halifax: Formac.

Always wanting her own way, Maddie makes wrong choices. She ends up with a lesson in honesty.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Maddie's Millionaire Dreams

Maddox, Jake (2009) *Free Climb*. * Mankato: Stone Arch Books.

Amir loves climbing! When his friend is in danger, will Amir know enough about climbing to save him?

Other recommended books by the same author:

Muscle, Open Air, Adrenaline

Moore, Eva (2000) *The Magic School Bus Chapter Book #1: The Truth about Bats* * New York: Scholastic.

Each book takes the kids on an adventure learning about an aspect of science, such as bats.

Other recommended books in the series:

The Wild Whale Watch, Butterfly Battle

Munsch, Robert (1992) *The Paper Bag Princess*. Toronto: Annick Press.

Elizabeth is about to marry her prince when a dragon ruins everything! Read about how her bravery and smarts fix the situation.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Mortimer, We Share Everything

Osbourne, Mary Pope (1992) *Magic Tree House #1: Dinosaurs Before Dark*. * New York: Random House Publishing.

Jack and Annie take a trip in a magic tree house to a land far away and learn about prehistoric times!

Other recommended books by the same author:

This book is one in a series of more than forty books.

Park, Barbara (2003) *Junie B First Grader Toothless Wonder*. New York: Random House Books for Young Readers.

Junie is super excited to be the first in her class to lose her tooth. Her only worry... the tooth fairy is a witch!

Other recommended books by the same author:

There are twenty-four books in this series. They are great as early chapter books.

Pilkey, Dav (2000) *Ricky Ricotta's Mighty Robot*. * New York: Scholastic Inc.

Ricky is a small mouse who has a gigantic friend – a flying robot! A simple chapter book.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Ricky Ricotta's Mighty Robot vs. The Mutant Mosquitoes From Mercury

Stilton, Geronimo (2007) *Thea Stilton and the Mystery in Paris*. * New York: Scholastic Inc.

When Thea and her friends set off to Paris, who knew they would be solving a mystery of stolen clothing designs?

Other recommended books by the same series:

Thea Stilton and the Cherry Blossom Adventure

Mathematics

Tang, Greg (2004). *Math Fables*. * New York: Scholastic Press.

Mathematics. Animals introduce counting and grouping while demonstrating the importance of friendship and appreciation.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Math Appeal, Math Potatoes

Graphic Novel

Warner, Gertrude Chandler (2009) *Boxcar Children Graphic Novel Series: Season One Box Set Vo1-6*. New York: Albert Whitman & Company.
Graphic Novel. The Alden orphans find an old boxcar that they decide to live in. Join them in solving mysteries that come their way.

Challenging Books

Gardiner, John Reynolds (1983) *Stone Fox*.^{*} New York: HarperCollins.
Willie's attempt to save the farm through winning a dog sled race is exciting.
Other recommended books by the same author:
General Butterfingers, Top Secret

Graphic Novel

Holm, Jennifer and Holm, Matthew (2005) *Babymouse, Book #1: Queen of the World!*^{*} Random House for Young Readers.
Graphic Novel. Baby mouse just wants to fit in! Will she get invited to the exclusive slumber party?
Other recommended books by the same author:
This is the first book in a series of thirteen.

Hughes, Ted (1999) *Iron Giant*.^{*} New York: HarperCollins.
A giant robot roams the land at night, destroying everything. Hogarth is the only one brave enough to help.
Other recommended books by the same author:
The Iron Woman, The Iron Man

Mazer, Anne (2000) *Amazing Days of Abby Hayes, Book #1: Every Cloud Has a Silver Lining*. New York: Scholastic Paperbacks.
Abby is a spunky heroine who is looking for her talent among her superstar family. Written primarily in journal entries.
Other recommended books by the same author:
This is the first book in a series of twenty.

McFarlane, Sheryl (2002) *Waiting for the Whales*. Victoria: Orca Book Publishers.
A grandfather shares his love of the land and sea with his granddaughter.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Eagle Dreams

Mathematics

Scieszka, Jon (1995) *Math Curse*. New York: Viking.
Mathematics. When a class is told that almost everything is a math problem, one student becomes very anxious.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Science Curse, Knucklehead Tall Tales and True Stories of Growing Up

Takashima, Shizuye (1992) *A Child in Prison Camp*. Toronto: Tundra Books.
The author's personal story as an eleven year-old Japanese-Canadian living in an internment camp during World War II.

Books for Eight- to Eleven-Year-Olds to Read by Themselves

Easy Books

Many books read by some children at an earlier age are good for beginning readers over eight. The books and series marked with an asterisk in the six-to-eight section are particularly recommended. More mature children who find the easier books that follow too juvenile should try the books listed as easy books in the eleven-to-fourteen section.

Books for Readers

Avi (2008) *The Seer of Shadows*. New York: HarperCollins.
It is 1872 and the dead daughter of the woman whose photograph is being taken is showing up. A mystery.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Poppy, The Crispin: Cross of Lead

Byars, Betsy Cromer (1996) *The Midnight Fox*. New York: Puffin Books.
Tommy discovers foxes while staying with relatives and is determined to save the animals from being killed by his uncle!
Other recommended books by the same author:
The Summer of the Swans

Collins, Suzanne (2005) *Gregor the Overlander*. Waterville: Thorndike Press.
Eleven year-old Gregor and his sister are dragged into an underground world to face battle with both man and beast.
Other recommended books by the same author:
This is the first book in a series of five.

Dahl, Roald (2004) *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. New York: Puffin Books. Originally published in 1964.
Finding the golden ticket means passing through the gates of the famous Wonka Chocolate Factory. A chance of a lifetime!
Other recommended books by the same author:
James and the Giant Peach, Matilda

Danziger, Paula (2007) *Amber Brown Goes Fourth*. New York: Puffin Books.
Who knew a fourth-grader could have so many problems? Upbeat Amber is determined to solve them.
Other recommended books by the same author:
This is one of fifteen Amber Brown books.

Farley, Walter (1998) *The Black Stallion*. New York: Random House. Originally published in 1941.
A seventeen-year-old befriends a wild stallion, trains him and rides him in a match race.
Other recommended books by the same author:
This is the first book in a series of three.

Nonfiction

Farnsworth, Philo (2009) *The Boy Who Invented TV: The Story of Philo Farnsworth*. West Minister: Knopf Books for Young Readers.
Nonfiction. Standing in a field in 1920, a fourteen-year-old boy has an idea to "make pictures fly through the air."

Feig, Paul (2008) *Ignatius MacFarland*. New York: Little Brown.
Twelve-year-old Iggy is bullied and wishes he could travel to another planet to escape. Does he get his wish?
Other recommended books by the same author:
Ignatius MacFarland 2: Frequency Freak-out!

Fox, Paula (2000) *One Eyed Cat: A Novel*. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks.
Ned is haunted by the fact that it may have been his gun that wounded the one-eyed cat!
Other recommended books by the same author:
The Stone-faced Boy, Portrait of Ivan

George, Jean Craighead (2003) *Julie of the Wolves*. New York: Harper Teen.
When Julie runs away from her unhappy life, she finds herself lost in the tundra with a pack of wolves.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Julie

Henry, Marguerite (2000) *Misty of Chincoteague*. New York: Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers. Originally published in 1947.
Phantom, part of a band of wild ponies, is spotted by two children who decide they cannot live without her!
Other recommended books by the same author:
Stormy, Misty's Foal, Album of Horses

Graphic Novel

Kibuishi, Kazu (2008) *Amulet Book One, The Stonekeeper*. New York: Graphix.
Graphic Novel. Emily and Navin move into their great-grandfather's house where a creature has captured their mom.
Other recommended books by the same author:
The Stonekeeper's Curse, The Cloud Searchers

Kinney, Jeff (2007). *Diary of a Wimpy Kid #1: Greg Heffley's Journal*. New York: Amulet Books.

Greg journals his and his best friend Rowley's sixth-grade experiences. Who knew grade six could be so tough?

Other recommended books by the same author:

Diary of a Wimpy Kid Book #4: Dog Days; Diary of a Wimpy Kid Book #3: The Last Straw

Korman, Gordon (2008) *Swindle*. New York: Scholastic Press.

A sixth-grader gets swindled out of a valuable baseball card. His plan: get it back!

Other recommended books by the same author:

This is one book in a series of three.

Nonfiction

Langley, Andrew and Salariya, David (2000) *You Wouldn't Want to Be a Viking Explorer!* Danbury: Grolier Publishing Co. Inc.

Nonfiction. Through humour and unusual facts, this book explores the darker side of being a Viking.

Other recommended books in the same series:

You Wouldn't Want to Be a Medieval Knight!; You Wouldn't Want to Live in a Medieval Castle!

Law, Ingrid (2008) *Savvy*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.

It is Mibs' thirteenth birthday and she is waiting for her magical power. Will it be a curse or a blessing?

Other recommended books by the same author:

Scumble

Lee Ingrid (2008) *Dog Lost*. New York: Scholastic.

This pit bull had a home but now lives on the streets. His brave deeds surprise those who feared him.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Dustbin Cat

Lewis, C.S. (2004) *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. New York: HarperCollins. Originally published in 1950.

Lucy and her siblings walk through her wardrobe into a magic kingdom and encounter the White Witch.

Other recommended books by the same author:

This book is part of the *Narnia* series of eight books.

Little, Jean (2005) *Mama's Going to Buy You a Mockingbird*. Toronto: Penguin Books Canada.

Jeremy learns the sad news that his dad has terminal cancer. Witness Jeremy's struggle to understand and accept.

Other recommended books by the same author:

One to Grow On, Look through My Window

Lowry, Lois (1998) *Number the Stars*. New York: Laurel Leaf.

Fictionalized from a true story, a ten-year-old girl hides her Jewish best friend during the Danish resistance.

Other recommended books by the same author:

The Giver

Nonfiction

Macaulay, David (2008) *The Way We Work*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Nonfiction. This book explains how the human body works!

Other recommended books by the same author:

The New Way Things Work

Montgomery, L.M. (1997) *Anne of Green Gables*. New York: Laurel Leaf. Originally published in 1908.

A high-spirited orphan is sent to live with an elderly couple on Prince Edward Island.

Other recommended books by the same author:

This is the first book in a series of eight.

Norton, Mary (2003) *The Borrowers*. London: Sandpiper. Originally published in 1953.

The small Clock family live below ground and outfit their home with tidbits left over from "human beans."

Other recommended books by the same author:

This is the first book in a series of five.

Orgel, Doris (2004) *The Devil in Vienna*. New York: Speak.

Set in Vienna, a Jewish girl and a member of the Hitler Youth try to maintain their friendship during World War II.

Peterson Haddix, Margaret (2008) *Found*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Chip and Jonah were among thirty-six babies found on a plane; but, when they are thirteen, they receive messages that they were among the missing!

Other recommended books by the same author:

Sabotaged, Sent

Raskin, Ellen (2011) *The Mysterious Disappearance of Leon (I mean Noel)*. New York: Puffin Books.

Mrs. Carillon's husband is missing! She is off to find him with the help of orphan twins.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Figgs and Phantoms, The Westing Game

Riordan, Rick (2005) *The Lightning Thief*. New York: Miramax Books.

Percy finds out he is half Greek god, half human! Joining other demigods, he is on a quest to prevent war!

Other recommended books by the same author:

This is the first book in a series of four.

Rowling J.K (1997) *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. London: Bloomsbury.

An orphan finds out he has magical powers and is taken to Hogwarts School where many adventures ensue.

Other recommended books by the same author:

This is one book in a series of seven.

Sands, Emily and Steer, Duglad (2004) *Egyptology: Search for the Tomb of Osiris*. Cambridge: Candlewick Press.

Filled with typed entries, postcards and ticket stubs, the book is set up like an Egyptologist's travel journal from 1926.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Pirateology, Dragonology

Graphic Novel

Selznick, Brian (2007) *The Invention of Hugo Cabret: A Novel in Words and Pictures*.

New York: Scholastic Press.

Graphic Novel. Will Hugo, a twelve-year-old orphan who repairs clocks in a train station, have his secret revealed?

Stewart, Trenton Lee (2007) *The Mysterious Benedict Society*. New York: Little Brown.

Four children are chosen to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very

Enlightened: a place with no rules!

Other recommended books by the same author:

This is one book in a series of three.

Nonfiction

Turner, Pamela S (2009) *The Frog Scientist*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Nonfiction. An exploration of the effects pesticides have on frogs...and us!

Other recommended books by the same author:

Hachiko: The True Story of a Loyal Dog; Gorilla Doctor

White, E.B. (2001) *Charlotte's Web*. New York: HarperCollins. Originally published in 1952.

Determined to save her friend Wilbur, Charlotte the spider comes up with a brilliant plan.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Stuart Little, The Trumpet of the Swan

Challenging Books

Colfer, Eoin (2006) *Artemis Fowl*. New York: Hyperion Books.

Artemis, a twelve-year-old millionaire and criminal mastermind, never imagined the results of kidnapping a fairy.

Other recommended books by the same author:

This is one book in a series of seven.

Cooper, Susan (2007) *Dawn of Fear*. London: Sandpiper.

A group of boys living just outside London in World War II watch the air raids with fascination while creating a secret camp.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Victory, King of Shadows

Funke, Cornella (2005) *Inkheart*. New York: Scholastic Inc.

Meggie discovers that her dad has magical powers and is in grave danger. It is up to her to save him.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Thief Lord, DragonRider

Gordon, Roderick (2008) *Tunnels*. New York: Scholastic Inc.

Will's dad has gone missing and he is determined to find out what happened. His discovery... a secret subterranean society!

Other recommended books by the same author:

This is the first book in a series of four.

Kelly, Jacqueline (2009) *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*. New York: Henry Holt Books for Young Readers.

Calpurnia explores the natural world with her grandfather and finds out what it means to be a girl in the 1800's.

L'Engle, Madeleine (2007) *A Wrinkle in Time*. New York: Square Fish. Originally published in 1962.

The Murray family comes down for a midnight snack and discovers a stranger. Read about their adventure through space and time.

Other recommended books by the same author:

An Acceptable Time, Many Waters

Lowry, Lois (1993) *The Giver*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell.

Everything is under control in Jonas's world until he turns twelve. It is time to learn the truth.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Messenger, Gathering Blue

Paolini, Christopher (2005) *Eragon*. Vancouver: Random House Children Books.

Eragon believes that he is a normal boy living on a farm...until he finds out he is a Dragon Rider!

Other recommended books by the same author:

This is the first book in a series of three.

Paterson, Katherine (2004) *Bridge to Terabithia*. New York: Harper Teen.

Two best friends create a magical kingdom where they can go together until tragedy strikes and they are separated forever.

Other recommended books by the same author:

The Great Gilly Hopkins, Jacob Have I Loved

Nonfiction

Simpson, Kathleen (2008) *National Geographic Investigates: Extreme Weather: Science Tackles Global Warming and Climate Change*. Des Moines: National Geographic.

Nonfiction. Hurricanes, blizzards and droughts; extreme weather is everywhere. Join scientists as they explore, explain and predict climate changes!

Other recommended books by the same author:

National Geographic Investigates: The Human Brain: Inside Your Body's Control Room

Nonfiction

Sloan, Christopher (2005) *How Dinosaurs Took Flight: The Fossils, The Science, What We Think We Know, and Mysteries Yet Unsolved*. Des Moines: National Geographic.

Nonfiction. A Tyrannosaurus with feathers? This book explores the connection between birds and dinosaurs!

Other recommended books by the same author:

SuperCroc and the Origin of Crocodiles

Graphic Novel

Tan, Shaun (2009) *Tales From Outer Suburbia*. New York: Arthur A. Levine Books.

Graphic novel. This book contains fifteen extraordinary illustrated stories.

Other recommended books by the same author:

The Arrival, The Lost Thing

Books for Eleven- to Fourteen-Year-Olds

Easy Books

Armstrong, William Howard (1972) *Sounder*. New York: Harper Colling.

The heartbreaking story of an African boy in the nineteenth century American South.

Barry, Dave and Pearson, Ridley (2010) *Science Fair*. New York: Disney Editions.

The President of Kprshstskan wants to take over America and is planning to do it at a school science fair.

Other recommended books by Dave Barry:

Peter and the Sword of Mercy

Cleary, Beverly (1983) *Dear Mr. Henshaw*. New York: HarperCollins.

Leigh is only a kid, but he has many problems to deal with. Writing to his favourite author provides some surprising answers.

Other recommended books by the same author:

The Mouse and the Motorcycle

Colfer, Eoin (2007) *Half Moon Investigations*. New York: Hyperion Books.

Fletcher, though young, has always had a knack for sniffing out mysteries. Who knew he would find so much trouble?

Hinton, S. E. (1989) *Rumble Fish*. New York: Random House Children's Books. Originally published in 1967.

The world falls apart for a tough teen after an explosive chain of events.

Other recommended books by the same author:

The Outsiders; Tex; That Was Then, This is Now

Horowitz, Anthony (2004) *Falcons Malteser*. New York: Penguin Young Reader Group.

An untalented detective is given a package worth three million pounds. The heat is on. What should he do?

Other recommended books by the same author:

Three of Diamonds, Public Enemy Number Two

Patneaud, David (2003) *Haunting At Home Plate*. Parke Ridge: Albert Whitman.

Nelson just wants to play baseball, but when mysterious messages start appearing in the dirt at home plate, the game changes.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Thin Wood Walls

Books for Readers

Bauer, Joan (2005) *Backwater*. New York: Speak.

Ivy's calling is to be a historian. While researching the family history, she meets her dysfunctional aunt and learns about herself.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Close to Famous, Stand Tall

Bell, William (1999) *Forbidden City: A Novel*. Toronto: Doubleday Canada.

Alex, a seventeen-year-old Canadian, finds himself in the middle of the Tiananmen Square protest. Can he escape?

Other recommended books by the same author:

Stones

Castelucci, Cecil and Rugg, Jim (2008) *Plain Janes*. New York: DC Comics.

A story of four unpopular girls named Jane who create a secret art gang to paint the town.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Rose Sees Red

Colfer, Eoin (2009) *Airman*. New York: Hyperion.

Conor has been thrown in jail after intervening in a conspiracy to kill the King. The only way to escape: fly!

Other recommended books by the same author:

Artemis Fowl, And Another Thing

Cooper, Susan (2007) *The Grey King*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing.

With a final battle coming, Will sets out to find help with only a riddle. Can he conquer the Grey King?

Other recommended books by the same author:

This is one book in a series of three.

Nonfiction

Deem, James (2008) *Bodies from the Ice: Melting Glaciers and the Recovery of the Past*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Books for Children.
Nonfiction. Mummified remains in glaciers are the focus. Fascinating illustrations and text about the most famous discoveries of all time.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Bodies From the Ash: Life and Death in Ancient Pompeii

Gaiman, Neil (2010) *The Graveyard Book*. New York: HarperCollins.
When a baby wanders into a graveyard, it is up to the ghosts to raise and protect him.
Other books recommended by the author:
Coraline

Gilbert Murdock, Catherine (2011) *Dairy Queen*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
Trying to find out who she is and how to be heard is fifteen-year-old DJ's struggle.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Princess Ben, The Off Season

Hale Shannon & Dean (2008) *Rapunzel's Revenge*. New York: Bloomsbury USA.
In a twisted take on this fairy tale, Rapunzel turns out to be a feisty heroine ready for adventure!
Other recommended books by the same author:
Princess Academy

Holm, Anne (2003) *I Am David*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
After spending his entire twelve years of life in a prison camp, David escapes. Witness his extraordinary journey.

Horowitz, Anthony (2007) *Ark Angel*. New York: Penguin Young Reader Group.
Alex Rider is a kid spy and is needed when the son of one of the world's richest men has been kidnapped!
Other recommended books by the same author:
Snakehead, Eagle Strike

Hughes, Monica (2009) *Golden Aquarians*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishers.
Walt is pitted against his technology-obsessed father in a race against death.
Other recommended books by the same author:
The Promise, Hunter in the Dark, Invitation to the Game

Johnston, Julie (2003) *Hero of Lesser Causes*. Toronto: Tundra.
World War II is over and Keely can conquer anything until her brother is stricken with polio. Can she save him?
Other recommended books by the same author:
Suzanna's Quills

Kadohata, Cynthia (2006) *Kira Kira*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing.
Katie's sister Lynn has a special way of seeing the world. Can Katie continue this optimism when her sister gets ill?
Other recommended books by the same author:
Million Shades of Gray, Weedflower

Konigsburg, E.L. (2005) *Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing.
After being rescued from camp, Margaret Rose is shocked to find out the magnificent towers made by her uncles may be demolished!
Other recommended books by the same author: From the Mixed-Up Files of *Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler, The View from Saturday*

Korman, Gordon (2008) *Schooled*. Toronto: Scholastic Canada.
Cap has been home-schooled his entire life. When he is forced to attend school, he has some interesting experiences.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Framed, Zoo Break

Landry, Derek (2008) *Skulduggery Pleasant*. Toronto: HarperCollins Canada.
Skulduggery, an undead wizard who resembles a skeleton, befriends Stephanie and helps battle the nasty villains in her newly inherited house.
Other recommended books by the same author:
This is the first book in a series of six.

Lowry, Lois (2007) *A Summer to Die*. New York: Random House Children's Books.
Meg and her sister don't get along. Is it too late to show her how she feels when her sister becomes sick?

Nonfiction

Metselaer, Menno (2009) *Anne Frank: Her Life in Words and Pictures from the Archives of the Anne Frank House*. Flash Point.
Nonfiction. The story of Anne Frank is told with never-before-seen snapshots and photos of the diary.

Graphic Novel

Moore, Alan (1995), *Watchmen*. New York: DC Comics.
Graphic Novel. Follow the fall of superheroes as they are stalked by an assassin.
Other recommended books by the same author:
V for Vendetta

Nonfiction

Mortenson, Greg (2009) *Three Cups of Tea: Young Readers Edition*. New York: Penguin Young Reader Group.
Nonfiction. The true story of a man who made a commitment to a small Pakistani village to someday build them a school.

Mull, Brandon (2007) *Fablehaven*. New York: Aladdin Books.
All mythical creatures are kept in Fablehaven to prevent extinction. Kendra and her brother are just a little too curious.
Other recommended books by the same author:
This is one book in a series of five.

Oppel, Kenneth (2004) *Dead Water Zone*. Toronto: HarperCollins Canada.
Set in the future, Paul is searching for his brother who has gone missing near toxic waters.
Other recommended books by the same author:
The Live Forever Machine

Paulsen, Gary (2007) *Dogsong*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing.
Russell longs for the old ways of the North. He sets out with a team of dogs on an extraordinary journey.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Hatchet, The Winter Room, The Foxman

Pearce, Philippa (1992) *Tom's Midnight Garden*. New York: HarperCollins.
When Tom is shipped off to his relatives, he thinks he will be bored. Instead, he finds a magical adventure.
Other recommended books by the same author:
The Squirrel Wife

Nonfiction

Pobst, Sandy (2008) *National Geographic Investigates: Animals on the Edge: Science Races to Save Species Threatened with Extinction*. Des Moines: National Geographic Children's Books.
Nonfiction. Scientists describe endangered species, the degree of threat of extinction and the importance of taking an active role in preservation.

Rex, Adam (2008) *The True Meaning of Smekday*. New York: Hyperion.
Gratuity receives an assignment for the National Time Capsule contest. Her stories are anything but ordinary.

Sachar, Louis (2008) *Small Steps*. Toronto: Doubleday Canada.
The only person who believes in Armpit is his disabled neighbour, Ginny. Together, they take steps toward the right path.
Other recommended books by the same author:
Holes

Scott, Michael (2008) *Alchemyst: Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel*. New York: Delacorte Books for Young Readers.
Nicholas was born 700 years ago. His secret to longevity is in the book he protects: the Book of Abraham the Mage.
Other recommended books by the same author:
The Necromancer, The Magician

Skelton, Matthew (2007) *Endymion Spring*. London: Puffin UK.

Two parallel stories—one in the present day and the other in 1452—merge because of one wordless book entitled *Endymion Spring*.

Other recommended books by the same author:

The Story of Cirrus Flux

Nonfiction

Skurzynski, Gloria (2004) *Are We Alone? Scientists Search for Life in Space*.

Des Moines: National Geographic Children's Books.

Nonfiction. This book describes the efforts scientists are making to find and detect life on other planets.

Other recommended books by the same author:

This is Rocket Science: True Stories of the Risk-Taking Scientists Who Figure Out Ways to Explore Beyond Earth

Smith, Roland (2008) *Peak*. New York: Harcourt Paperbacks.

Fourteen-year-old Peak finds himself being shipped off to his father for training to climb Mount Everest!

Other recommended books by the same author:

Tentacles, Sasquatch

Twain, Mark (2008) *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. London: Oxford Press. Originally published in 1876.

Share in Tom's adventures along the banks of the Mississippi. A classic book for all!

Voigt, Cynthia (2002) *Dacey's Song*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing. Dacey is trying to create a new life now that she and her younger siblings finally have a home.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Homecoming, The Runner

Weston, Robert Paul (2008) *Zorgamazooby*. New York: Penguin Young Readers Group.

A girl and a creature join forces to explore both the real world and the fantasy world of Zorgamazoo.

Wynne Jones, Dianna (2007) *The Pinhoe Egg*. New York: HarperCollins.

Full of magic, this story centres around the discovery and hatching of an egg!

Other recommended books by the same author:

Howl's Moving Castle, Enchanted Glass

Challenging books

Alcott, Louisa May (1983) *Little Women*. New York: Bantam Classics. Originally published in 1868.

Spend time with four sisters as they go through the joys and challenges of life in the nineteenth century.

Boyne, John (2007) *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*. New York: Random House Children Books.

Surrounded by the cruelties of war, two boys from different worlds strike up a secret friendship through a barbed wire fence.

Cooney, Caroline (2008) *Enter Three Witches: A Story of Macbeth*. New York: Scholastic Inc.

Lady Mary has lost both her mother and father and is trapped in a castle with the murderous Macbeths!

Other recommended books by the same author:

Diamonds in the Shadow

Dashner, James (2010) *The Maze Runner*. New York: Random House Children's Books.

Trapped in the Glades, Thomas has no idea how he got there or if he will ever leave.

Other recommended books by the same author:

The Scorch Trials

DuPrau, Jeannie (2004) *The City of Ember: The First Book of Ember*. New York: Yearling. Imagine living with no natural light and resources are diminishing. Can the townspeople figure their way out?

Other recommended books by the same author:

People of Sparks

Nonfiction

Frank, Mitch (2005) *Understanding the Holy Land: Answering Questions about the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. New York: Viking.

Nonfiction. Organized in a question-and-answer format, the conflict is explained in a non-prejudicial way.

Garcia, Kami (2010) *Beautiful Darkness*. New York: Little Brown Books for Young Readers. Who knew that a small town could have so many secrets? Ethan is now trapped in the dark side of Gatlin.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Beautiful Creatures

Halse, Anderson (2010) *Chains*. New York: Atheneum.

Isabel and her sister become property of cruel owners. Convinced to spy, she learns information that may help her gain freedom.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Forge

London, Jack (2001) *White Fang*. New York: Apple Paperbacks. Originally published in 1906.

An abused wolf dog finally finds kindness living in the harsh North.

Other recommended books by the same author:

The Call of the Wild

Pullman, Philip (2001) *The Golden Compass*. New York: Yearling.

Travel with Lyra and her daemon, as she tries to solve the mystery of disappearing children.

Other recommended books by the same author:

The Ruby in the Snow, Shadow in the North, Tiger in the Wall

Graphic Novel

Shelley, Mary (2008) *Frankenstein: The Graphic Novel: Original Text US Ed: Original Text*. Berkeley: Classical Comics. Originally published in 1818.

Graphic Novel. A mad scientist experiments with the creation of life in this classic.

Stiefvater, Maggie (2010) *Shiver*. New York: Scholastic Press.

Sam is human by summer and wolf by winter. One girl is close to learning his secret.

Other recommended books by the same author:

Linger, Forever

Tolkien, J.R.R. (1998) *The Hobbit*. New York: HarperCollins. Originally published in 1923. Bilbo Baggins abandons his peaceful life as he is swept into a dangerous adventure full of magical creatures and treasure.

Other recommended books by the same author:

The Lord of the Rings

Twain, Mark (1994) *Huckleberry Finn*. Mineola: Dover Publications. Originally published in 1885.

Huck and an escaped slave raft down the Mississippi running into adventure, danger and a slew of interesting characters.

