

# *Read-Alouds: For Grades 4-5*

## ***Books to read-aloud to different ages of children and to different grade levels***

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**14 COWS FOR AMERICA** - Carmen Agra Deedy, 2009. Based on a true story – Kimeli Naiyomah leaves his Kenyan Maasai village to become a doctor and study in the U.S. After his studies, Kimeli returns home to his village, where everyone is eager to hear tales of his adventures abroad.

**A PLACE WHERE SUNFLOWERS GROW** - Amy Lee-Tai, 2006. Based on a true story, a young Japanese-American girl must come to terms with her confusion and sadness over her abrupt internment at a relocation center during World War II. She eventually enrolls in an art class, makes a friend and plants sunflowers, then waits for them to grow.

**AKIMBO AND THE LIONS** - Alexander McCall Smith, 2005. A young African boy lives on a farm on the edge of a game park in Africa. When he and his father hear of reported lion attacks on their cattle, they mistakenly capture a lion cub. The boy keeps the cub but as the boy and lion grow, the boy knows he must let his lion friend go.

**ALL ALONE IN THE UNIVERSE** - Lynne Rae Perkins, 1999. A 13-year-old girl must cope with her feelings of abandonment when her best friend starts hanging out with a new friend.

**ARCHER'S QUEST** - Linda Sue Park, 2006. A time-traveling fantasy in which a 12-year old boy needs to help a legendary king of ancient Korea return to his own time.

**BLIZZARD!** - Jim Murphy, 2000. Presenting a history of the massive snowstorm that hit the Northeast in March of 1988, The Newbery Honor Book author uses personal accounts of survivors and newspaper stories to tell the harrowing story of the blizzard that crippled New York City.

**DEAF CHILD CROSSING** - Marlee Matlin, 2002. Based on events from the author's own childhood, this is a story about how friendship grows and adapts between a young girl and the new girl in the neighborhood who happens to be deaf.

**GREEN MANGO MAGIC** - Sylvie Adams Hossack, 1998. In a remote Hawaiian valley, a young girl comes to terms with her mother's death, her father's abandonment and a friend's illness.

**HARRIET THE SPY** - Louise Fitzhugh, 1964. Harriet, the 11-year-old aspiring spy, loves to write down her observations about the comings and goings of her classmates and neighbors alike in a secret notebook. Harriet must cope with the consequences of her notebook finding its way into the hands of her classmates who read her very personal observations out loud.

**HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON** - Cressida Cowell, 2004. Hiccup is a Viking teenager who is ready to join his fellow Viking clansmen, the Hairy Hooligans, but only if he can pass the initiation test – to catch and

train a dragon. Through unconventional ways, Hiccup trains his lazy dragon, Toothless, and both become heroes when their village in danger.

**KNUCKLEHEAD : TALL TALES & MOSTLY TRUE STORIES OF GROWING UP SCIESZKA** – Jon Scieszka, 2008. How did Jon Scieszka get so funny? He grew up as one of six brothers and his tales of Catholic school, lots of comic books, lazy summers at the lake, babysitting misadventures, TV shows, and jokes told at family dinners will make you smile.

**LAY-UPS AND LONG SHOTS** - Joseph Bruchac, 2008. A collection of nine short stories about middle-schoolers and sports. They range from a game of "H-O-R-S-E" to running, ping pong, dirt biking, surfing, place kicking, soccer, and basketball.

**LEGEND OF THE BLUEBONNET: AN OLD TALE OF TEXAS** - Tomie DePaola, 1983. This Reading Rainbow selection is a re-telling of a Comanche folktale about how the bluebonnet became the state flower of Texas.

**LOST!: A STORY IN STRING** – Paul Fleischman, 2000. A grandmother tells a story about a young girl who uses her wits and what is available to her to help her survive when she is lost in the snow. Includes instructions for creating a number of string figures mentioned in the story.

**LUNCH MONEY** - Andrew Clements, 2005. An industrious sixth-grader and his lifelong rival team up to create a series of comic books to sell to their classmates to make money.

**MOLLY MOON'S INCREDIBLE BOOK OF HYPNOTISM** - Georgia Byng, 2002. Molly Moon is a lonely little girl growing up in a dreary English orphanage until she discovers a hidden talent for hypnotism that changes her life.

**NIAGARA FALLS...OR DOES IT?** (Hank Zipzer Series) - Henry Winkler, 2003. Fourth-graders Hank, Ashley, and Frankie are excitedly preparing for a magic show at the Rock'N Bowl when Hank's creative alternative to an English essay lands him in detention and grounded for the week of the show.

**ONE VOICE, PLEASE** – Sam McBratney, 2008 - How does a money hat work? How does a stone make soup? Why doesn't the hound catch the hare? Find the answers to all of these questions and more in this collection of short tales from past and present, near and far.

**NUBS: THE TRUE STORY OF A MUTT, A MARINE & A MIRACLE** - Brian Dennis, 2009. The true story of Marine Major Brian Dennis and the wild dog he befriended in the deserts of Iraq. When the two get separated because Dennis's unit moves locations, Nubs treks seventy miles over two days to be reunited with his friend.

**RESCUES!** – Sandra Markle, 2006. Markle relates the stories of individuals who survived various disaster scenes and the efforts of their rescuers. Situations described include an avalanche, a coal-mining accident, a capsized sailboat, stranded mountain climbers and more.

**ROLL OF THUNDER, HEAR MY CRY** - Mildred Taylor, 2001. This Newbery Medal winner is the story of an African-American family struggling to stay together despite racism, violence and poverty in 1930's Mississippi.

**SAD UNDERWEAR AND OTHER COMPLICATIONS** (poetry) - Judith Viorst, 1995. A collection of child-friendly poems that examines a wide variety of feelings and experiences.

**SCARY STORIES TO TELL IN THE DARK** – Alvin Schwartz, 1981 - Filled with folktales of eerie horror and dark revenge, this collection contains stories about skeletons that roam the Earth; a ghost who takes revenge on her murderer, and a haunted house where a head falls down the chimney each night.

**SEEKER OF KNOWLEDGE: THE MAN WHO DECIPHERED EGYPTIAN HIEROGLYPHS** - James Rumford, 2000. A biography of Jean-François Champollion, the first scholar to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphs and make the study of ancient Egypt possible.

**TALES OF THE SHIMMERING SKY** – Susan Milord, 1996. Presents folktales, background information, and activities related to beliefs of peoples around the world about heavenly bodies, the seasons, and the weather. Includes colorful illustrations.

**THE ARTSY SMARTSY CLUB** - Daniel Pinkwater, 2005. Three New Jersey kids and their giant chicken go looking for some summer fun and stumble upon mysterious sidewalk art that opens up their appreciation for art, in all its forms.

**THE BIRTHDAY ROOM** - Kevin Henkes, 1999. For his 12th birthday, Ben, a budding artist, receives an invitation to visit his estranged uncle. Ben travels to Oregon to visit his uncle and gets caught up in the strained relationship between his mother and his uncle, while coming to terms with his artistic ability.

**THE FAMILY STORYTELLING HANDBOOK** – Ann Pellowski, 1987. Discusses storytelling as a form of family entertainment, offers suggestions on how and when to tell stories, and includes examples of stories for family members to tell.

**THE GOLDEN HOUR** - Maiya Williams, 2004. A time-traveling adventure awaits 13-year-old Rowan and his younger sister Nina when they visit their great aunts in a coastal Maine town.

**THE GREAT SERUM RACE**: Blazing the Iditarod Trail - Debbie S. Miller, 2007. A story detailing the history of how the Iditarod dog sled race was started because of a deadly outbreak of diphtheria in Alaska in 1925.

**THE HUNTER: A CHINESE FOLKTALE** - Mary Casanova, 2000. The story takes place in a small village in the mountains of China, where a hunter goes into the forest to hunt for food to feed his starving village. On his journey, he saves a snake from the clutches of a crane and the snake grants him one wish that the hunter may not reveal to anyone. The hunter chooses to be able to communicate with animals to make him a better provider for his village. When the hunter hears from the animals of an impending flood that will destroy his village, he must make a difficult decision.

**THE INDIAN IN THE CUPBOARD** - Lynne Reid Banks, 1980. Omri receives several unusual birthday gifts – a plastic indian, an old cupboard and a key from his mother – which come together to change his life.

**THE JANITOR'S BOY** - Andrew Clements, 2000. Jack starts to have trouble at his new school when his classmates find out that his dad is the janitor. Jack takes his embarrassment out on his father which backfires, and his punishment is to become the janitor's assistant. Jack learns to appreciate his father for who is he and realizes he is more than just the janitor.

**THE KING'S SECRET: THE LEGEND OF KING SEJONG** - Carol J. Farley, 2001. A re-telling of a Korean folktale about how King Sejong, the King of Korea during the 15th century, created the Korean phonetic alphabet and introduced it to his people so that they could read and write in their own language.

**THE MAGICIAN'S NEPHEW** - C.S. Lewis, 1994. The first book in the classic Chronicles of Narnia series takes you back to the beginning when the beasts in Narnia first talked and humans first visited. This story explains how all the other Narnian adventures began.

**THE SWEETEST FIG** - Chris Van Allsburg, 1993. Monsieur Bibot, a dentist, is given two magical figs as payment from an impoverished patient. While the doctor is skeptical, after eating one of the figs he realizes they truly are magical. He makes plans to use the second fig to make him the wealthiest man in the world, but his plans are ruined when his dog eats it instead.

**THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX** - Kate DiCamillo, 2004. In this tale of bravery, forgiveness and redemption, one small creature teaches a kingdom that it takes only a little light to show the truth: what you look like doesn't equal what you are.

**WARLORD'S PUZZLE** – Virginia Walton Pilegard, 2000. Hoping to avoid punishment for breaking a beautiful tile that was his gift to a Chinese warlord, an artist suggests that the warlord hold a contest to see if anyone can mend it.

**THE WIDOW'S BROOM** - Chris Van Allsburg, 1992. A widow, Minna Shaw, finds a witch's worn-out broom in her vegetable garden one morning. When she catches it sweeping all on its own, she trains it to do other household chores. However, her neighbors decide the broom is wicked and dangerous.

**THE WONDERFUL STORY OF HENRY SUGAR** - Roald Dahl, 2001. Henry needs to decide whether to use his gift of being able to see with his eyes closed for the common good or for personal greed.

**THE WRECKERS** - Iain Lawrence, 1998. In this novel set in 1799, a 14-year-old boy is shipwrecked during a terrible storm and finds himself stranded on an English beach filled with danger and secrets.

**TOP SECRET: A HANDBOOK OF CODES, CIPHERS, AND SECRET WRITING** - Paul B. Janeczko, 2004. This is a handbook for the aspiring spy with its codes, ciphers, hiding techniques, spy stories and some history.

**TUCK EVERLASTING** - Natalie Babbitt, 1975. The Tuck family is confronted with an agonizing situation when they discover that a ten-year-old girl and a malicious stranger now share their secret about a spring whose water prevents one from ever growing old.

**TWO WAYS TO COUNT TO TEN! A LIBERIAN FOLKTALE** - Ruby Dee, 1988. A retelling of an African folktale that has King Leopard creating a competition to help him choose who will marry his daughter and succeed him as King when he is no longer able to rule the jungle.

**WHERE THE RED FERN GROWS** - Wilson Rawls, 1996. Billy trains his two hounds to be the finest hunting team in preparation for the annual coon-hunt contest in the hills of the Ozarks of northeastern Oklahoma.

**ZATHURA** - Chris Van Allsburg, 2002. Two brothers stumble across a box in the park and take it home. The box turns out to be a board game with two separate boards. One has a jungle theme and one has a space theme. The youngest brother is looking over the space themed board when the game begins on its own. Watch out for the meteor shower!