

Best Books For Libraries 2022 - Elementary School

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Early Reader Books

Barnett, Mac. ***Jack Gets Zapped.*** (Grades K-3)

Meet Jack: He lives in a tree house. His interests include snacks, petty theft, and lipstick graffiti. Jack also loves his friends; he just has a funny way of showing it sometimes. A perfect read-aloud with snappy, rhythmic text, this series will bridge the gap between picture books and chapter books and fill the Elephant-and-Piggie-shaped hole in young readers' hearts. A *How to Draw Jack Gets Zapped* included at the end of the book.

Chang, Maggie. ***Geraldine Pu and Her Lunchbox Too.*** (Grades K-3)

Geraldine Pu's favorite part of school is lunch. She loves her lunch box, which she calls Biandang. She also loves the food her grandmother packs inside it. A new boy at school makes fun of her food, calling it stinky, which makes Geraldine sad. What will she do? With easy to follow panels and challenging vocabulary words and sentence structure, this level three ready-to-read graphic will be a sure hit with students.

Ruzzier, Sergio. ***Fish and Sun.*** (Grades K-3)

One morning Fish is bored with the deep dark sea and travels to the surface of the ocean where he meets Sun. They play all day long together and become great friends. As the day draws to an end, Sun begins setting and has to go away which makes Fish very sad. Back down in the deep dark ocean, his mother comforts him and he goes to bed only to wake up and meet his friend Sun again. This beginner comic reader is a perfect story of friendship, great for emergent readers and developing visual learners.

Picture Books

Anand, Shelly, ***Laxmi's Mooch***. (Grades K-2)

When Laxmi and her school friends, Zoe & Noah, are playing farm animals at recess, Zoe asks Laxmi to be the cat, because she has a mustache that looks like whiskers. Laxmi becomes self-conscious for the rest of the day, until she is home sharing the experience with mom and dad. Her parents explain how everyone has hair all over their bodies and many men and women have mustaches and thick eyebrows. The next day, Laxmi notices Zoe also has a mustache, but Noah doesn't, so she offers to draw one on him so he doesn't feel left out. Then everyone in the class wants one! This book is a well written, cute story about inclusiveness and accepting the special parts about yourself.

Battersby, Katherine. ***Trouble***. (Grades K-2)

When a very large bear moves in next door, Squirrel is sure he can only be trouble for her and her beloved pet mouse, Chamomile. He has terrible teeth and sharp claws - at least that is how Squirrel sees him. But where Squirrel sees trouble, Chamomile sees a new neighbor just trying to be friendly. A story with an important message about prejudices and making assumptions.

Beaty, Andrea. ***Aaron Slater, Illustrator***. (Grades 1-4)

The fourth book in the Questioneers series, this story focuses on Aaron Slater, who has trouble reading, but has no shortage of stories inside of him. He loves drawing, especially flowers. However, he has trouble reading, eventually trying to "blend in" at school because he cannot stand out without feeling ashamed. When he has to read a written story to the class, nerves abound, but he illustrates a story that leaves both students and his teacher impressed! The book is set in the Dyslexie font, making it easier for reluctant readers or readers who have trouble reading print text. Big and bright illustrations will inspire students to create their own stories through art!

Corchin, DJ. ***I Feel Anxious & I Feel Meh***. (K-2)

These two books are part of a larger series, focusing on the emotions we are aware of, but maybe don't know how to communicate to ourselves or to others yet. Bright illustrations and clear text will help children not only understand what they are feeling, but be able to read visual cues. These titles help children put words to those feelings, so they can communicate them, whether positive or negative, to others.

Feder, Tyler. ***Bodies Are Cool***. (Grades K & Up)

Until recently, diverse bodies have long been missing in children's picture books. This one blows them all out of the water, showing many, if not all, body types in such a positive way. We're so used to seeing images of an "ideal" (that's airbrushed and edited - completely unrealistic) and told to strive for it, sacrificing physical, emotional, and mental health to do so. Feder's illustrations enthusiastically celebrate the skin we're in, no matter what it looks like. The accompanying text is simple and descriptive, making it easy for younger kids to grasp. This is a message that needs to be spread far and wide and over and over and over again to **all** ages.

Ho, Richard. ***The Lost Package***. (Grades K-2)

Simple text and expressive watercolor illustrations tell how a package gets from one place to another, even with some bumps along the way. The story begins with a young girl preparing to mail a package to her friend. As the story continues, the reader gets a behind the scenes look at the post office and what it takes for mail to get to its destination. But when the package is accidentally lost, a tale of kindness unfolds when a young boy picks up the package and gets it to its destination. Kids will enjoy the expressive illustrations and have fun learning about the post office!

Khiani, Darshana. ***How to Wear A Sari***. (Grades K-2)

One day, a little girl plays in her mother's closet. Tired of being treated like a little kid, she pulls a sari out and guides the reader through putting it on. Humor, high-impact text, and colorful illustrations make this book accessible and enjoyable for all ages. A surprise (and literal!) twist at the end will leave readers smiling and chuckling in equal parts.

Mitchell, Malcolm. ***My Favorite Book in the Whole Wide World***. (Grades K-3)*

(*star review) Super Bowl champion Malcolm Mitchell shares how he struggled with reading and how he solved this problem. He begins with the assumption that everyone else has about him - that he doesn't like reading. BUT, the truth was that either the books were too wordy, too many hard words, boring, too many sentences on a page, etc... When his teacher assigned the class to bring in the book they most liked to read, he began searching everywhere for one he could choose. After searching the library, the bookstore and at home, his mom comments about "how the best stories are the ones within us". He decides to write and illustrate his own book to bring into class to share. The whole class cheered for him when he was done!

O'Neill, Diane. ***Saturday at the Food Pantry***. (Grades K-3)

Molly and her mom don't always have enough food, so one Saturday they visit their local food pantry. Molly's happy to get food to eat until she sees her classmate Caitlin, who's embarrassed to be at the food pantry. Can Molly help Caitlin realize that everyone needs help sometimes? A beautiful story dealing with food insecurity, acceptance and the importance of helping others.

Rouanzion, Taylor. ***Rainbow Boy***. (Grades K-2)

This colorful book asks a time-honored question - what is your favorite color? A young boy responds "How can I choose just one?" Instead, he takes us through his week, telling us what he loves about each color, creating a rainbow of activities (including ballet, coloring, basketball, drawing, and more). When the question of his favorite color arises again, he is sad because he doesn't want to choose just one. The story ends with his mother encouraging him to love all the colors - his heart is a rainbow. The illustrations are bright, cheerful, and the final page is heartwarming and memorable.

Thomas, Sarah. ***Kalamata's Kitchen***. (Grades K-3)

The story begins with a relatable topic - school and food! Kalamata is scared about her first day of school, so she sits under the kitchen table, while her mom cooks family favorites...her imagination sores. She begins to remember her trip to India and how she was brave when she and her family explored the busy city markets. She remembers the comfort and warm feelings she has when she eats her favorite dishes and how each scent makes her feel more confident in herself and more self assured. When she comes out from under the table, she is ready to not only go to school but to share who she is with her new friends.

Wade, Steff. ***Q & U Call It Quits***. (Grades K-2)

Brightly illustrated, this funny picture book combines letter blend play with a story about friendship (and how it feels to be left out). What happens when best friends Q and U quarrel? It's a real quandary, since they have always been quality friends—a true quad. But sometimes, U wants some time to herself—even though Q is lonely because he doesn't always fit in with the other letters without her. When the rest of the alphabet notices the split, they decide they want to do the same, which causes major problems. Can Q and U help bring the letters together again?

Wheeler, Lisa. ***Someone Builds the Dream***. (Grades K-2)

This book opens up the world around children to expose them to thinking beyond what they see in their surroundings. It tells the story of who builds, what they use to build, where it is being done, when is the timeline and how it gets built. Illustrator Loren Long uses crisp full page watercolor pictures to empathize what it is that each person or persons are building and what supplies are critical to the completion of it. Great critical thinking skills are reinforced as well as getting young children to expand and explore their environment.

Yuskel, M.O. ***In My Mosque***. (Grades K-3) Kellyanne

An especially relevant book that introduces children (and adults!) to Islam, Arabic, and the rituals taking place in a mosque. It shows the mosque as a community center and as a religious center, with the poignant line “we pray for peace, love, and joy, just like my friends who worship in churches, temples, and synagogues.” People may have different rituals and celebrations, but in the end, they all have the same goals. Kids will enjoy and do a double-take at the colorful, detailed illustrations and Arabic written words within the text and embedded in the illustrations.

J Fiction Books

Anderson, Jodi Lynn. ***Thirteen Witches***. (Grades 4-6)

Twelve-year-old Rosie Oaks's mom is missing whatever it is that makes mothers love their daughters. All her life, Rosie has known this...and turned to stories for comfort. Then, on the night Rosie decides to throw her stories away forever, an invisible ally helps her discover the *Witch Hunter's Guide to the Universe*, a book that claims that all of the evil in the world stems from thirteen witches who are unseen...but also unstoppable. One of these witches—The Memory Thief—holds the power to steal our most precious treasures: our memories. And it is this witch who has cursed Rosie's mother. In her quest to save her mom—and with her wild, loyal friend “Germ” by her side—Rosie will find the layers hidden under the reality she only thought she knew: where ghosts linger as shades of the past; where clouds witness the world, and a ladder dangles from the moon leading to something bigger. Here, words are weapons against the darkness, and witch hunters are those brave enough to wield their imaginations in the face of the unthinkable. The knowledge of her beloved stories is an arsenal in this world, but to unlock their power, Rosie must dare to have hope and believe in herself in the face of daunting odds.

Braden, Ann. ***Flight of the Puffin***. (Grades 4-8)

Four strangers have one common link - a card with a hopeful message. It first starts with Libby, a girl who's expected to be a bully just like the rest of her family. and in a way, is pushed to be one when her classmates make fun of her and the teachers don't support her expression of art on the school walls. One day, she draws on an index card and writes the words “*You are amazing.*” She sends it off to a stranger, Vincent, after she finds out he is being bullied at his school for wearing a puffin shirt every day. After seeing another boy his age, Jack, being bullied over his innocent defense of his rural school, Vincent sends the postcard to him, adding a reassuring note and telling him about his friend, T, a nonbinary, homeless youth. Jack, after writing a letter of courage both defending his school and recognizing the need for change and to make all students feel safe, sends them to T, who finally is comforted and feeling safe enough to contact his family. Kids will see that small kindnesses and reassuring words can make all the difference in someone's life.

Cypress, Leah. ***Thornwood***. (Grades 4-6)

This middle grade debut is Sleeping Beauty like you've never seen it before, about a girl who lives in the shadow of her older sister and the curse that has haunted her from birth. For years, Briony has lived in the shadow of her beautiful older sister, Rosalin, and the curse that has haunted her from birth--that on the day of her sixteenth birthday she would prick her finger on a spindle and cause everyone in the castle to fall into a 100-year sleep. When the day the curse is set to fall over the kingdom finally arrives, nothing--not even Briony--can stop its evil magic. When Briony finally wakes up, it's up to her to find out what's really going on, and to save her family and friends from the murderous Thornwood. But who is going to listen to her? This is a story of sisterhood, of friendship, and of the ability of even little sisters to forge their own destiny. The first in a three-book series of fairy tale retellings, these are the stories of the siblings who never made it into the storybook.

Giles, Chrystal D. ***Take Back the Block***. (Grades 3-6)

Wesley has lived in the Kensington Oaks neighborhood all his life. Big developers want to gentrify his neighborhood with condos that will entice upper middle class home buyers. In doing so they are buying out lower income families that live there. One by one his best friend group began moving out. His friend Mya, the lightest black skinned friend out of the group, moved into an all white neighborhood with a lot of perks. However, she sooned tired of being seen for her uniqueness of a person of color and not for who she was as an individual. What started as a school assignment on social justice for Wesley and his close friends from the neighborhood, ended up with getting his neighborhood designated an historical place, stopping the condos from being built, after he learned it was founded by the first black owned lumber mill. Wesley learned how the moral arc bent towards justice, but not without consequences of one of his closest friends Kira feeling displaced and others feeling forced to move from the close knit community they loved. This is written in the author's own black voice and is her debut novel.

Greenburg, Dan. ***Why I Was Late for School***. (Grades 1-3)

In this hilarious chapter book, Daniel faces a series of comedic obstacles on his way to get to class on time. Daniel has to navigate the streets of Chicago to get to school and meets one antagonist after another on his way. A group of hungry zombies needs directions, a troll in Lincoln Park needs help getting herself reassembled and some pirates in Belmont Harbor need career advice. Daniel's constant tardiness issues a warning from his mother that if he's late again she will have to meet with his teacher and principal. How will Daniel justify his lateness? A must have for young readers who will enjoy this book's silly antics and funny names. Great as a read aloud or an independent reading selection.

Fipps, Lisa. ***Starfish***. (Grades 3-6)*

Written in verse, a debut novel and in the author's own voice. Ellie learns, during her 5th birthday, what each member of her family thinks of her being overweight. Her sister nicknames her Splash after she made a big splash in the family pool. A name everyone in her school call her. Her older brother blames her for their parents arguing about how to find help for her weight; Her dad loves her unconditionally and her mom bullies her with her words and actions, making her feel ashamed of who she truly is. Dad sets her up with a child therapist who teaches Ellie how to find her own voice, how to respond to all the bullies in her life and how to replace all her untrue negative thoughts with true, positive ones. With the support of her 2 best friends, her therapist and her dad, she succeeds in confronting her mom and her school bullies in a controlled way that makes a big impact on all. This book is relatable for anyone who is part of a family and goes to school. There is something for everyone to learn from it. Each page has a title theme at the top, yet it is one fluid story. Easy to read and then re-read again.

Gold, Hannah. ***The Last Bear***. (Grades 3-6)

April and her dad are off to live on Bear Island (a real place), while her dad records temperatures at an Arctic outpost, for 6 months. April is allowed to explore the island as her dad works during the day. She discovers one lone polar bear, starved from lack of food and starved from lack of support and love from his family. Since April is alone and the bear is alone, they sense each other's need for companionship. April entices the bear with peanut butter to come to her and soon "Bear" allows her to climb on top of his back. They learn about each other and how Bear came to be stranded on the island. April figures out that, since the ice has melted, and Bear's mom died, as her mom had, he could not swim the long distance to where the other polar bears now live. April tries to ask her dad for help, but he is too busy with work. April tries to bring Bear to his family by boat, but gets capsized and Bear saves her. In the end, her dad realizes he has not been the dad she needs, helps her get Bear to his family, and April and her dad renew their father/daughter bond. Engaging read!

Holm, Jennifer. ***The Lion on Mars***. (Grades 3-6)

Bell has spent his whole life--all eleven years of it--on Mars. But he's still just a regular kid--he loves cats and any kind of cake, and is curious about the secrets the adults in the US colony are keeping. Like, why don't they have contact with anyone on the other Mars colonies? Why are they so isolated? When a virus breaks out and the grown-ups all fall ill, Bell and the other children are the only ones who can help. It's up to Bell--a regular kid in a very different world--to uncover the truth and save his family...and possibly unite an entire planet.

King, SJ. ***The Secret Explorers and the Missing Scientist***. (Grades 2-4)

The secret explorers are back in a new action-packed adventure, heading up to the Arctic to rescue a missing scientist and save a trapped research ship. After Kiki, the group's Engineer Explorer and Connor, the Marine Explorer, jump into Beagle, their go-kart, they arrive in the Arctic to complete their mission. Packed with almost as much STEM as action, this title keeps readers turning pages. Scientific concepts, like snowmobile engineering and polar bear biology, are illustrated through the easy to read narrative, making science fun and memorable. Great for fans of The Magic Tree House series.

Shen, E.L. ***The Comeback***. (Grades 3-5)

Written in the author's own voice as an Asian American. This story flows beautifully from start to finish, keeping the reader wanting to know how the main character Maxine pushes forward in her quest to become an Olympic figure skater. Her Chinese parents have worked hard to financially, emotionally and physically support Maxine ever since she was a little girl dreaming about figure skating. They both watch to see if she is getting overwhelmed with school and practice. More than once they have told her she can take a break at any time. At school, however, she is faced with a bully who continually points out her Asian characteristics in a negative way in front of her classmates. She freezes everytime and doesn't know how to "come back" to his mean words and actions towards her. It affects her skating too. Meanwhile new skater Hollie is a white, more experienced skater who yearns for a friend. Maxine is threatened by Hollie in the beginning, but when they get to know each other, they learn they have so much in common and Maxine becomes Hollie's confidant when she is thinking about stopping skating

because of the pressure. Hollie and Maxine’s parents help Maxine learn to be strong in the face of her school bully and she has a true “comeback” moment on and off the skating rink with success!

Stroker, Ali & Davidowitz, Stacy. ***The Chance to Fly***. (Grades 3-6)

Ali Stroker of *Oklahoma!* fame pens a musical story about Nat, a girl who has just moved from San Francisco to New Jersey who adores musical theater and dreams of performing. However, she is held back by her overprotective parents because she is in a wheelchair. Forging her own path, Nat auditions for the local production of *Wicked* and is cast in the ensemble. But she finds that the theater makes no accommodations — her director cuts her from dance scenes, a bus to a weekend retreat doesn’t have a wheelchair lift, a theater lacks an elevator or a ramp, etc. When a fire burns down the theater and indefinitely postpones the show, Nat leads the charge in finding another space and the funding to go on with the show. A supporting and supportive cast of characters don’t shun Nat, but rather help her adapt and push back against the adults’ preconceptions about people in wheelchairs — translating dances, making simple accommodations, creating a heartwarming and theatrically memorable story.

Woltz, Anna. ***Talking to Alaska***. (Grades 4-8)

Parker is adjusting to the fact that she had to give away her beloved dog, Alaska, not to mention dealing with the emotional fallout of her family falling victim to an armed robbery. Sven is adjusting to his epilepsy diagnosis, his new assistance dog (aka the beast), and a new school. When Parker learns that Sven’s assistance dog is none other than Alaska, she decides to sneak into Sven’s house to steal her dog back. A tentative friendship is born when Parker sneaks into Sven’s house to get Alaska back. Originally written in Dutch, this newly translated novel tells the story of two kids turned enemies to friends all because of a dog.

J Non Fiction Books

Gorman, Amanda. ***Change Sings***. (K-2)*

National Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman writes an anthem of hope and courage to young children, with easy, gentle rhyming, large text, and stunning illustrations. The book offers encouragement for kids and tells them that change is inside of them and to let it sing.

Lapin, Joyce. ***The Little Spacecraft That Could***. (Grades 2-5)

Illustrator Simona Cessarelli combines her artistic talents with her educational background in science to bring the text to life. I know students who read through this book will want to open it again and again to look at the lifelike illustrations! The story is the real life journey of the New Horizons spacecraft that traveled to Pluto to gather data and photos of the dwarf planet, as well as data on so much more in our solar system and beyond. This book grabs the attention of the reader right off the bat with the universal countdown of the take off. The yellow text boxes share

information on her journey about planets, gravity and the spacecraft itself, then the text on the pages themselves share more detailed information. There is an extensive glossary along with sites to see live footage of the New Horizons spacecraft and further reading suggestions.

Taylor, Barbara. ***Inside Animals***. (Grades 3-6)

A beautifully illustrated book with 100 cross sections of different birds, bugs and beasts in the animal kingdom. Each animal is shown visually from the inside out on a two page spread throughout the book with lots of interesting and unusual facts. A table of contents, glossary and index are included to help students navigate the different animals in the book.

McAnulty, Stacy ***Mars! Earthlings Welcome***. (K-1)

The fifth book in McAnulty's *Our Universe* series. *Mars* is another well-illustrated book filled with humor and fun facts about the red planet. Learn how far Mars is from the Earth and the Sun, and how long a martian day is. Meet Phobos and Deimos, its satellites (moons, not potatoes!), and learn all about what scientists have found out about our neighboring planet so far. Children will enjoy the illustrations and teachers & librarians will have a lot of fun reading the text aloud during storytimes!

J Biographies

Gottesfeld, Jeff. ***Twenty-One Steps; Guarding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier***. (Grades 3-5)

Illustrator Matt Travares created beautiful watercolor artwork that powerfully brings the words of author Jeff Gottesfeld to life. These large illustrations take up most of the page, with text either on the opposite page or within the drawings. This book takes the heartbreaking reality of the death of many unknown soldiers, and puts it in an easy to understand story, written from the soldier's perspective. It brings these unknown soldiers to life in that they fought for our country, they were part of a family and how our government has shown respect to all of them. It shows how the highest military honor of the 21 gun salute is given at the tomb of the Unknown soldier. The unknown soldier tells the reader what this means to be unknown. The soldier shares that this honor is recognized and it makes all the buried soldiers feel loved and cared for.

Marinov, Isabelle. ***The Boy Whose Head Was Filled With Stars: A Life of Edwin Hubble***. (Grades 2-5)

This elementary biography is a stellar introduction to the life of Edwin Hubble, the man that inspired the creation of the Hubble Space Telescope. Interested in outer space and the stars, Edwin's curiosity was encouraged by his grandfather, who gave Edwin his first telescope when he turned eight. Though his interest never waned, his father insisted that he study law at Oxford. After his father's passing, he returned to the University of Chicago to study astronomy. Shortly after completing his degree, his first job was at the Mount Wilson Observatory in California. There he began studying stars and nebulae, learning whether or not they were a part of our galaxy or separate galaxies. Because of his work, NASA's largest telescope is named after him. The Hubble Space Telescope is fully active today after its launch in 1990, sending back images

of the universe to astronomers and scientists around the world. Children, especially those that enjoy learning about space, will enjoy this biography of a man that impacted our perception of the galaxy.

Messner, Kate. ***Dr. Fauci: How a boy from Brooklyn became America's doctor.*** (Grades K -3)
With the love and support of his family, Anthony Fauci asked a lot of questions about life and it's wonders. As a child and teen, Anthony naturally was a good listener, a team player whom everyone liked and problem solver - mostly with school work. After graduating 1st in his class in college and becoming a medical doctor, Dr. Fauci became part of a team of doctors that identified what made people sick and solutions to treat them. He listened to protestors and sufferers of illnesses, like AIDS, to help him develop successful treatments. This book ends with Dr. Fauci's 5 tips for future scientists, photos, information about how vaccines work and lots of resources. Alesandra Bye's colorful illustrations are crisp and engaging.

Moss, Marissa. ***Boardwalk Babies.*** (Grades 2-5)
Have you ever heard about "The Child Hatchery"? This beautifully illustrated biography is of Dr. Martin Couney, a doctor who helped the inventor of the incubator (Dr. Budin), showcase these life saving boxes. Dr. Budin sent Martin, with the incubators, to become an exhibit at The Berlin Expo of 1896, The Pan-American Expo of 1901 as well as a fixed exhibition at Coney Island Boardwalk - with real babies inside them! They stayed at Coney Island for 40 years, acting as a make-shift hospital for babies who would have otherwise died. People from all over loved seeing the little babies thrive and grow bigger each time they visited the exhibition. People from all over brought their premature babies to them, all weighing under 2 lbs, including Martin's own premature daughter Hildegard. Martin and the incubators saved 6,500 babies over these 40 years before hospitals started using the incubators, and The Child Hatchery was closed. Large 2 page illustrations with text down one side. Children will enjoy learning how lives were saved along a boardwalk of rides and games!

Rockliff, Mara. ***The Girl Who Could Fix Anything: Beatrice Shilling, World War II Engineer.*** (Grades 2-5)
Beatrice Shilling, or "Tilly", as some called her (after the utility trucks used in WWII), because she was small but strong, was a pioneering female engineer from England. She is an example of not being afraid to be different, not being afraid to fail, and holding strong to her convictions to become educated in a male dominated profession. Her story is about how she was a mechanical engineer fixing fighter planes during the war, and invented the restrictor - a little piece that expels excess fuel, so planes would not stall in midair. She married a fellow engineer. An inspirational story.

Williams Alicia D. ***Shirley Chisholm Dared: The Story of the First Black Women in Congress.*** (Grades K-3)

A beautifully illustrated picture book biography of the first Black woman elected to Congress. Here is the story of an outspoken little girl who studied hard, fought for what she believed in, and grew up to become a trailblazer for women and African Americans.

J Graphic Books

Brockington, Drew. ***Waffles and Pancake: Planetary-Yum.*** (Grades 1-3)

One very special Saturday, Dad-Cat decides to take Waffles and his sister Pancake to the big city to go to the science museum. While they're there, the kittens see extraordinary things, like dino-cats, hairballs in 4D, and even the planetarium. But as the kittens learn about constellations and Neil Pawstrong, they get separated from Dad-Cat. Oh no! Will the kittens be able to find their (possibly invisible) Dad-Cat? Or will they get stuck living in the museum and eating star tots and tuna melts fur-ever?! This early graphic novel series is chock-full of educational facts about space—perfect for young readers.

Lloyd, Megan Wagner. ***Allergic.*** (Grades 2-5)

Right off the bat, this book is relatable with illustrations depicting various typical neighborhood daily activities - playing ball, dogs, cats, sprinklers, baby pools, sitting on porches, etc... It's Maggie's 10 birthday and her parents finally said they can get a puppy for the family! She has been dreaming of this day forever; picturing herself with a canine buddy to offset the family dynamics. Her younger twin brothers have themselves to play with and her parents are preoccupied with the new baby arriving any day. However, with an itchy rash and constant sneezing, Maggie quickly finds out she is allergic to dogs. Maggie becomes friends with a boy named Sebastian at school who is allergic to eggs. She and her new neighbor/best friend Claire hatch a plan to secretly buy a pet mouse and keep it in her closet, but soon allergy symptoms begin to appear in Maggie even though she is getting allergy shots, and the mouse has to go. In the end Maggie learns how to become a much needed and loved big sister to all 3 of her younger siblings, replacing the loneliness with love and compassion for others. This book is easy to read and offers a broader perspective of how allergies affect our everyday lives.

Venable, Colleen. ***Katie the Catsitter.*** (Grades 3-6)

Katie is a twelve year old girl who wants to save up enough money to go to camp for the summer with her friends. She tries odd jobs like plant sitting and carrying groceries in the apartment building she lives in, but fails miserably. Then she gets a job as a cat sitter for Mrs. Lang's 217 cats and things get interesting! A huge mouse-known as the Mousetress is committing crimes all around New York City and Katie is beginning to think it is Mrs. Lang. It is up to Katie to deal with the crazy cats, save a friendship and solve the biggest story in the city's history. Fans of Raina Telgemeier will love this graphic novel full of friendship woes, mystery and humor.

