



88 Books That Teach Important Lessons

Books can open up children's eyes to experiences they have never imagined, to discover places they have never been to and to feelings their heart has not yet felt. The very best part is that books are accessible. Books with tough lessons can be shared with a parent at home where answers can be given, feelings reassured, and the story related to the experiences of the reader. Whether these books get shared at home at bedtime, at school, at circle time, or a child reads them alone at quiet reading time they are all filled with valuable lessons.

The books are listed alphabetically by author so it's easy to print out and take to a library and find the books.

1. [A Picture Book of Helen Keller \(Picture Book Biography\)](#) by David A. Adler tells readers that we are all different with different abilities but are all capable of great things.
2. [Dancing in the Wings](#) by Debbie Allen is about more than ballet, it's about overcoming being different, accepting your body and even standing up for yourself.
3. [Parts](#) by Tedd Arnold is a funny book with a great lesson about figures of speech. Young kids are very literal and this book helps kids see that language is not always what it seems.
4. [The Berenstain Bears and the Big Road Race](#) by Stan and Jan Berenstain is about not giving up and playing by the rules.
5. [Calvin Can't Fly: The Story of a Bookworm Birdie](#) by Jennifer Berne is a story about how being yourself is important but also about when to depend on others.
6. [The Snowman](#) by Raymond Briggs is a story about living in the moment and the fleeting nature of life.
7. [The Quiltmaker's Gift](#) by Jeff Brumbeau is a story that teaches children about giving as well as where happiness can really be found.
8. [The Grouchy Ladybug](#) by Eric Carle is great for teaching telling time but it's also a wonderful lesson in not taking the bait when someone wants to fight.
9. [The Great Kapok Tree: A Tale of the Amazon Rain Forest](#) by Lynne Cherry is a beautiful book that teaches children about taking care of the environment.
10. [My Mouth Is a Volcano!](#) by Julia Cook is all about interrupting. This book finds a fun way to teach kids when it's appropriate to speak.
11. [Miss Rumphius](#) by Barbara Cooney is a inspirational lesson about how we can all make the world more beautiful in our own way.
12. [Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type](#) by Doreen Cronin teaches readers about the need for good working conditions, the role of negotiation, as well as the basics of what a strike is.
13. [Duck for President](#) by Doreen Cronin teaches readers that being a leader isn't about being the bossy one but rather having the most responsibility .
14. [Is There Really a Human Race?](#) by Jamie Lee Curtis has a wonderful lesson about what is really important (hint : it's not the rat race) and to stand up for those who can't stand up for themselves.
15. [The Empty Pot](#) by Demi is a lovely book about the importance of honesty.
16. [Grace for President](#) by Kelly DiPucchio doesn't just teach us that girls should run for President it also explains the Electoral College pretty well.
17. [Pink Tiara Cookies For Three](#) by Maria Dismundy is all about friendship and how to make it work when your friends become friends with someone new.
18. [Spaghetti in A Hot Dog Bun: Having the Courage to Be Who You Are](#) by Maria Dismundy is about bullying but it's also about doing the right thing especially when it's hard to.
19. [The Gruffalo](#) by Julia Donaldson is a fairytale like book about problem solving with a creative imagination and intelligence.

20. [Everybody Cooks Rice](#) by Norah Dooley is a great lesson in subtle similarities amidst more obvious differences.
21. [Her Mother's Face](#) by Roddy Doyle teaches readers that grief isn't something we deal with one time and move on.
22. [The Sissy Duckling](#) by Harvey Fierstein teaches us that all people are unique and to respect everyone for that uniqueness not for their ability to fit some societal mold.
23. [Imogene's Last Stand](#) by Candace Fleming is well loved at my house for its love of history and for its lesson about standing up for something when you can see it's value even when others do not.
24. [Whoever You Are](#) by Mem Fox. This book is all about finding the similarities in all people which is a grand lesson in empathy.
25. [The Princess Knight](#) by Cornelia Funke teaches readers that sometimes the only person who can save you is you.
26. [Something From Nothing](#) by Phoebe Gilman is a lesson in resourcefulness, something in today's disposable culture should be taught to every child!
27. [Rosa](#) by Nikki Giovanni is a book about Rosa Parks it's written beautifully to teach another generation about how one person can make a huge difference.
28. [All the Colors of the Earth](#) by Shelia Hamanaka does not have a subtle lesson you will have to dig for, its lesson is simple and upfront. Children come in all different colors.
29. [Most Loved in All the World](#) by Tonya Cherie Hegamin is a touching story that introduces children to the underground railroad as well as to sacrifices that parents make for the sake of their children.
30. [Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse](#) by Kevin Henkes teaches children about taking responsibility for our actions and forgiveness.
31. [Shelia Rae, The Brave](#) by Kevin Henkes teaches us that it's OK to let someone help you when you need it.
32. [Monsters Don't Eat Broccoli](#) by Barbara Jean Hicks is a really cute book about why trying new things is a good thing
33. [Brontorina](#) by James Howe has a beautiful message about inclusive environments and respecting people for who they are not for who we think they should be.
34. [The Year of the Perfect Christmas Tree: An Appalachian Story](#) by Gloria Houston is a lesson in what makes Christmas special and more than any preachy book this story drives this lesson home.
35. [Ben's Trumpet](#) by Rachel Isadora is a wonderful book with a lesson in following your dreams even when you are the only one who can see that they are attainable.
36. [Mama, Do You Love Me?](#) by Barbara M. Joosse is all about security and how children need to know that no matter what children do their parents will love them all the same.
37. [My Princess Boy](#) by Cheryl Kilodavis teaches kids that when other people express who they are it's not up to us to decide if it's OK or not just because it may not fit into our narrow expectations.
38. [The Paper Princess \(Picture Puffins\)](#) by Elisa Kleven has a great lesson that imperfection is not a flaw and it shows us that in subtle ways page after page
39. [Leo the Late Bloomer](#) by Robert Kraus is one of my favorite books to turn to when kids feel like they just can't keep up with their peers
40. [The Biggest Snowman Ever](#) by Steven Kroll teaches kids to embrace competition but to know when cooperation is a better choice.
41. [The Story of Ferdinand](#) by Munro Leaf is about being who you are no matter what environment you are in.
42. [Hooway for Wodney Wat](#) by Helen Lester teaches children to tolerate differences in others and how sometimes what we feel most vulnerable about isn't all bad.
43. [Fish Is Fish](#) by Leo Lionni is a cute book about change and the way true friendships can withstand change.
44. [It's Mine!](#) by Leo Lionni is one of my favorite books to pull out when I hear those words... a great lesson in sharing and working together.
45. [Swimmy](#) by Leo Lionni is one of my favorite books about bravery and teamwork.
46. [Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon](#) by Patty Lovell teaches kids to be proud of who they are just as they are.
47. [The Pirate of Kindergarten](#) by George Ella Lyon is an unexpectedly tender look at being different at school.
48. [Mr. Peabody's Apples](#) by Madonna is an important lesson about how rumors can spread and words can really hurt people.
49. [Hugo and Miles In I've Painted Everything](#) by Scott Magoon is about creativity and how it never really runs out.
50. [Dinosaur Woods](#) by George McClements is about about conservation and teamwork.

51. [Have You Filled a Bucket Today?](#) by Carol McCloud has such an important lesson about kindness to others and the importance of treating all people with respect.
52. [I Love You Stinky Face](#) by Lisa McCourt isn't just about unconditional love it's also about meeting the needs of those you love.
53. [The Monster Princess](#) by D.J. McHale is filled with lesson about doing what is right even when we are angry and hurt, discovering that what we dream about being may not be all it's cracked up to be as well as my favorite message that there are "All kinds of special."
54. [Elmer](#) by David McKee is all about self acceptance even when that means we must accept that we are very different.
55. [How the Ladies Stopped the Wind](#) by Bruce McMillan is all about problem solving and that there is power in numbers.
56. [Mole Music](#) by David McPhail tells us that the arts are vital and can nourish great things.
57. [The Mighty Street Sweeper](#) by Patrick Moore teaches readers that you don't have to be the best at everything to still be proud of your hard work.
58. [Tomas and the Library Lady](#) by Pat Mora is about how one person can make a profound impact on a child's life and the power of books.
59. [Makeup Mess](#) by Robert Munsch teaches kids that they are beautiful just the way they are.
60. [The Paper Bag Princess](#) by Robert Munsch isn't just about girl power it's also about being resourceful and using your brain not brawn to win.
61. [Zoom!](#) by Robert Munsch is not a preachy book. It's lesson is that kids that use wheelchairs aren't helpless and can save the day!
62. [Enemy Pie](#) by Derek Munson teaches children that enemies might just be friends you haven't made yet.
63. [The Only One Club](#) by Jane Naliboff has a great message that we should celebrate our diversity and tell our kids it's not a bad thing to be unique.
64. [The Family Book](#) by Todd Parr has a lesson I have been teaching my 3 year old lately, that all families may not look alike but all families are made with love.
65. [The I'M NOT SCARED Book](#) by Todd Parr teaches kids it's OK to have fears and that they can overcome them.
66. [The Kissing Hand](#) by Audry Penn is an absolute favorite book that teaches children that it's OK to separate from their parents because their love goes with you wherever you go.
67. [Zip, Zip...Homework](#) by Nancy Poydar is a book about telling the truth at home and school.
68. [Have You Seen My Duckling?](#) by Nancy Tafuri is a great book that can open up a dialog about getting lost or separated from a parent.
69. [Let Them Play](#) by Margot Theis Raven is a tough story to read because the lesson it teaches is that there is injustice in this world and kids aren't immune.
70. [Ish](#) by Peter H. Reynolds is a wonderful book about the beauty of imperfection and creativity. A must read for all perfectionists.
71. [A Very Big Bunny](#) by Marisabina Russo teaches kids about being different and how it can feel to be singled out by adults as well as kids.
72. [The True Story of the Three Little Pigs](#) by Jon Scieszka is a great book to teach children about point of view and to always look at both sides of every story.
73. [Where the Wild Things Are](#) by Maurice Sendak to me is a lesson in unconditional love. You can always come home where you are loved best of all.
74. [A Bad Case Of Stripes](#) by David Shannon teaches children to not change themselves for others but to just be who they are.
75. [No, David!](#) by David Shannon teaches young kids that there are consequences but that even when they mess up they are still loved.
76. [The Giving Tree](#) by Shel Silverstein is all about entitlement and can be a great tool for teaching children about what makes a bad friend.
77. [Tallulah's Tutu](#) by Marilyn Singer has a great lesson about effort and achievement and how sparkly beautiful things don't usually come without it.
78. [Thanksgiving on Plymouth Plantation \(Time-Traveling Twins\)](#) by Diane Stanley is included in this list because it's a bang on book about the history behind Thanksgiving. I think it's vital for kids to know this when it's something celebrated year after year.
79. [Amos & Boris](#) by William Steig is a lesson about the power of friendship and how when a friend needs help nothing including being small can stop you from helping them.

80. [The Lorax](#) by Dr. Seuss teaches children about the importance of taking care of their environment.
81. [Leap Back Home to Me](#) by Lauren Thompson teaches kids that it's OK to go out and explore but not to forget where home is.
82. [Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day](#) by Judith Viorst is the ultimate lesson about how everything won't always go your way.
83. [Owl Babies](#) by Martin Waddell is about patience and separation anxiety. It is a good lesson for kids that those feelings are normal but that those who love them will come back.
84. [Scaredy Squirrel Makes a Friend](#) by Melanie Watt is hilarious but has a great lesson about taking risks too.
85. [Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!](#) by Mo Willems teaches kids that even throwing a fit won't change the fact that they just aren't allowed to do some things.
86. [Apple Pie Fourth of July](#) by Janet S. Wong is about living in two cultures at one time. A wonderful read for all children to better grasp what being part of an immigrant family is like.
87. [All the Way to America](#) by Dan Yaccarino is a good book to talk about how people came to the United States and why people move from country to country.
88. [Not All Princesses Dress in Pink](#) by Jane Yolen teaches kids that even princesses don't fit into a simple mold.