



June 8, 2011

Dear Lower Elementary Families,

Once again it is summer and time for some wonderful reading! This has been an amazing year, culminating in so many triumphs for the children. So many children are excited about the opportunity to read for the simple enjoyment of it. To that end, here is the Lower Elementary Summer Reading List for 2011. This list is intended to provide an ample array of suggested choices to suit your child's individual reading level and interests.

This is one time of the year when adults as well as children have time to tackle novels, large history books or other volumes that are difficult to focus on during the hectic pace of the school year. When your child sees you reading, your child will see it as an adult thing to do, and so begin to form a habit that can give a lifetime of pleasure. Time away at the beach or in the woods provides opportunities to share a picture book or tackle a chapter book together through reading aloud. As your child reads and rereads favorite books and tackles new ones, s/he is developing reading fluency, and as you discuss your child's reading with him or her, s/he is building important skills in comprehension.

As a way of helping your child build comprehension, ask him or her about what s/he has been reading. Retelling is one effective comprehension strategy. Encourage your child to ask questions about character motivation, and to make connections with other books s/he has read and/or events in his/her own life. Ask the child to predict what s/he thinks will happen next. Finally, ask your child to interpret what s/he thinks the author wants the reader to understand about life and the world at the end.

This year we are adding some books at each level that we hope will help children to build some background knowledge about the peoples of **North and South America and the Polar Regions**, which we will be studying next year. **These titles are in bold.** These suggestions should not by any means be considered exhaustive, but rather a start! Additionally, we have included some guidelines for selecting books and reading with your child that may be helpful to you.

By keeping a reading log (attached), your child can write down the titles and authors of the books they are reading and take pride in his/her accomplishments. Please have your child bring the reading log in on the first day of school in September.

Enjoy your summer, and the adventure of reading with your child!

Sincerely,

Wendy Reveri
Lower Elementary Coordinator

Metropolitan Montessori School Guidelines for Selecting Books and Reading with your Child

Selecting Books: Finding ‘Just Right’ Books:

- 5 Finger Rule
 - Choose a book and open randomly to a page (or use the first and second pages)
 - Hold up a finger for each word you do not know
 - If there are 5 or more words you do not know, try an easier book.
- Have the child read two or three pages and ask him/herself:
 - Do I understand what I am reading?
 - Can I read almost every word?
 - When I read out loud, can I read it smoothly?
 - Does this book seem interesting? (Look for what your child enjoys: mysteries, pirates, fairies, ballerinas, sports...)

Some tips for improving fluency:

- Read and re-read – let your child read a sentence or two once to decode and then a second time to make sense of what they are reading
- Poetry and songs like Dr. Seuss books lend themselves to fluent reading. Allow your child to reread the rhymes until they sound “fluent.”
- Read the sentence first, and then allow your child to read the sentence and attempt to imitate you.
- Read with expression - especially with questions, exclamations and words in italics. (“That was the best party ... *ever!*”) You can also give characters funny voices.
- Occasionally mix in books that seem a bit easy (perhaps let them read to a younger sibling) – this also develops self-esteem and confidence.

Reading With Your Child – When your child gets stuck on a word:

- Help them break it down by syllable
- Help them with the difficult part of the word (“That is a silent ‘k.’ Now try it” or “Did you notice the silent ‘e’ at the end of the word?”)
- Say: “Try sounding it out.”
- Say: “Does it have a pattern you recognize?”
- Say: “You said _____. Does that make sense?”
- Lastly – be patient. It is important to help your child through difficult words so they do not become frustrated. However, allowing them to figure it out on their own leads to more confident readers!

General Tips for Raising Good Readers:

- Bring along a book or child level magazine wherever you go – doctors’ offices, car rides, and airplane trips are great times to sneak in some reading!
- Take a trip to the book store or library. Browse and read. Barnes and Noble has a wonderfully inviting children’s section.
- Read and re-read. Encourage your child to read favorite books over and over; this leads to more fluent readers.
- Ask questions: What has happened so far? Why did Mudge bark like that? What do you think will happen next?
- Set aside a specific time every day for reading – early in the morning is best.
- Write it down! Have your child send a postcard to a relative telling about a book. Have him or her draw a picture of a scene and write a sentence about what happened. Encourage your child to use the letter patterns they have learned in school.
- Reading to a younger sibling makes both kids feel great!

**Metropolitan Montessori School
2011 Lower Elementary Summer Reading List**

Read aloud and picture books

These are books that tend to be beautifully illustrated. The words and the pictures work together to create meaning and build comprehension. They are wonderful for parents and children to read aloud together, often repeatedly.

Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs by Judy Barrett
Books by Graeme Base
The Berenstain Bears series by Stan and Jan Berenstain
Town Mouse, Country Mouse by Jan Brett
Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel by Virginia Lee Burton
***The Great Kapok Tree: A Tale of the Amazon Rain Forest* by Lynne Cherry**
Roxaboxen by Barbara Cooney
Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type by Doreen Cronin
Diary of a Worm by Doreen Cronin
Strega Nona by Tomie DePaola
The Day of Ahmed's Secret by Florence Parry Heide and Judith Heide Gilliland
One Little, Two Little, Three Little Pilgrims by E. G. Hennessy
Henry and the Kite Dragon by Bruce Edward Hall
The Hello, Goodbye Window (Caldecott Medal) by Norton Juster
The Dot and the Line: A Romance in Lower Mathematics by Norton Juster
Otter Nonsense by Norton Juster
***John Henry: An American Legend* by Ezra Jack Keats**
Any books by Robert Munsch
How I Became a Pirate by Melinda Long
***How the Stars Fell into the Sky: A Navajo Legend* by Jerrie Oughton**
***Mariana and the Merchild: A Folk Tale from Chile* by Caroline Pitcher**
Thunder Cake by Patricia Polacco
***New York Is English, Chattanooga Is Creek* by Chris Raschka**
***Cassie's Word Quilt* by Faith Ringgold**
***Tar Beach* by Faith Ringgold**
***The Beautiful Princess Without a Face* by April Robins**
Caps for Sale by Esphyr Slobodkina
***Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message* by Jake Swamp**
Seadogs : An Epic Ocean Operetta by Lisa Wheeler, Mark Siegel
Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst
***Morning on the Lake* by Jan Bourdeau Waboose**
***SkySisters* by Jan Bourdeau Waboose**
Sector 7 by David Wiesner

Tuesday by David Wiesner
The Quarreling Book by Charlotte Zolotow

Poetry

Poetry is also fun to read aloud with a child. It helps the child build fluency through repetition of sounds, and helps him or her develop a love of the descriptive and rhythmic qualities of language in poetry and prose. Here are some suggestions for poetry to share with your children:

Poetry for Young People: Maya Angelou by Maya Angelou
Poetry for young People: American Poetry, John Hollander, editor
Fold Me a Poem by Kristine O'Connell George
Spin a Soft Black Song: Poems for Children by Nikki Giovanni and George Martins
Mary had a Little Jam and Other Silly Rhymes by Bruce Lansky
Please Bury Me in the Library by J. Patrick Lewis
Now We Are Six by A. A. Milne
When We Were Very Young by A. A. Milne
Poetry Speaks to Children, Elise Paschen, Billy Collins, editors
The Frog Wore Red Suspenders by Jack Prelutsky
Scranimals by Jack Prelutsky
Read a Rhyme, Write a Rhyme by Jack Prelutsky
Poetry for Young People: Langston Hughes, David Roessel, Arnold Rampersad, editors
Poetry for Young People: Robert Frost, Gary D. Schmidt, editor
All the World by Liz Garton Scanlon
Poetry for Young People: The Seasons by John N. Serio, editor
Where the Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein
A Light in the Attic by Shel Silverstein
Falling Up by Shel Silverstein
Families: Poems Celebrating the African American Experience by Dorothy S. and
Michael R. Strickland

Beginning Readers

Initially, children need books to read both independently and to adults that allow them to practice and celebrate the phonetic sounds they are learning or have mastered. These books are for very beginning readers and should be used in addition to the reader that is sent home at the end of the year by your child's teacher.

The Usborne Phonics Readers by Phil Roxbee Cox

Fun with Phonics Series by Sue Graves

Scooby-Doo Phonics Set by Frances Ann Ladd

Readers Clubhouse Level 1 Readers (followed by Level 2 Readers)

Emerging Readers

These books will be readable independently by most of the extended day children going into first grade.

Brand New Readers Series by Staff of Candlewick Press

"I Can Read Books," especially those by

- Arnold Lobel
 - Frog and Toad series
 - *Mouse Tales*
 - *Little Pig*
 - *Owl at Home*
- Bernard Wiseman (Morris and Boris Series)
- Nathaniel Benchley (**Small Wolf Series**)

Bread and Jam for Frances by Russell Hoban

Little Bear series by Else Holmelund Minarik

Danny and the Dinosaur by Syd Hoff

George and Martha: The Complete Stories of Two Best Friends by James Marshall

Fox and his Friends series by Edward Marshall

Just me and my ___ series by Mercer Mayer

Fancy Nancy series (I Can Read Book 1) by Jane O'Connor

Poppleton series by Cynthia Rylant

Oliver and Amanda Pig series by Jean Van Leeuwen

Amelia Bedelia series by Peggy Parish

Henry and Mudge series by Cynthia Rylant

Sleepy Dog (Step into Reading Books Series: A Step 1 Book) by Harriet Ziefert

Harry the Dirty Dog by Gene Zion

Intermediate Readers

These books will be readable independently by most of the first grade children going into second grade. Most are I-Can-Read books, but the degree of difficulty can vary somewhat among them, so please look at them with your child. If s/he stumbles over five words on a page, the book is too difficult for him/her to read independently.

Young Cam Jansen series by David Adler

The Very First Americans (All Aboard Books) by Cara Ashrose

20,000 Baseball Cards Under the Sea by Jon Buller

The Golly Sisters series by Betsy Byars

The Friendship Tree by Kathy Caple

Minnie and Moo: The Case of the Missing Jelly Donut by Denys Cazet

The Josephina Story Quilt by Eleanor Coerr

Life in Colonial America by Peter F. Copeland

My Big Lie by Bill Cosby

Get Ready for Second Grade, Amber Brown and others in this (A is for Amber) series

by Paula Danziger -- Puffin Easy to Read Level 2

The Secret of Foghorn Island series by Geoffrey Hayes

The Charlotte Stories by Teddy Jam

A Girl Named Helen Keller (Hello Reader! Series) by Margo Lunde

An Angel for Solomon Singer by Cynthia Rylant,

Mr. Putter and Tabby series by Cynthia Rylant

Kirsten Learns a Lesson: A School Story (American Girls Collection) by Janet Beecher Shaw

Nate the Great series by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat

Lyle, Lyle Crocodile by Bernard Waber

Ira Sleeps Over by Bernard Waber

Intermediate Plus

These books will be independently readable by most of the second year children going into third grade and some of the first year children going into second grade.

Cam Jansen series by David Adler
Ivy and Bean series by Annie Barrow and Sophie Blackall
The Stories Julian Tells by Ann Cameron
Magic School Bus picture books AND chapter books by Joanna Cole
Jenny Archer series by Ellen Conford
Sports books by Matt Christopher
Amber Brown series by Paula Danziger
A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever by Marla Frazee
26 Fairmount Avenue (and sequels) by Tomie de Paola
My Father's Dragon by Ruth Stiles Gannett and sequels (*Elmer and the Dragon, The Dragons of Blueland*)
The Hundred Dresses by Eleanor Estes
Dance with Rosie series by Patricia Reilly Giff
Make Way for Dyamonde Daniel and *Rich: A Dyamonde Daniel Book* by Nikki Grimes
Runaway Radish by Jesse Haas
B is for Betsy series by Carolyn Haywood
Busybody Nora by Johanna Hurwitz
Wild Willie mysteries by Barbara Joosse
Horrible Harry series by Suzy Kline
The Magic Tree House series by Mary Pope Osborne
***Kids Who Walk on Volcanoes* by Paul Otteson**
Junie B. Jones series by Barbara Park
The Littles series by John Peterson
Julie and the Unicorn and *Julie and the Unicorn 2* by Cynthia Marie Rizzo
Cobble Street Cousins series by Cynthia Rylant
Encyclopedia Brown series by Donald Sobol
Doctor DeSoto by William Steig
Brave Irene by William Steig
The Geronimo Stilton Series by Geronimo Stilton
The Boxcar Children series by Gertrude Chandler Warner
More Comfy Cozy Tales: The Silver Lake Champ by Lauren L. Young

Challenging

These are books that more advanced readers will enjoy. The language tends to be more advanced as well as the expectations about background knowledge.

Mr. Popper's Penguins by Richard and Florence Atwater

***The Indian in the Cupboard* by Lynne Reid Banks**

***Crazy About Canada!: Amazing Things that Kids Want to Know* by Vivien Bowers**

Mad Scientists' Club series by Bertrand R. Brinley

Henry and Ribsy by Beverly Cleary

Ellen Tebbits by Beverly Cleary

Ramona series by Beverly Cleary

Ralph the Mouse by Beverly Cleary

Matilda by Roald Dahl

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane by Kate DiCamillo

Tale of Despereaux by Kate DiCamillo

The Hardy Boys mystery series by Franklin Dixon

The Marvelous Inventions of Alvin Fernald by Clifford B. Hicks

Nancy Drew mystery series by Carolyn Keene

Anastasia Krupnik by Lois Lowry

Pippi Longstocking by Astrid Lindgren

Homer Price by Robert McCloskey

The Time Warp Trio series by Jon Scieszka

***Kids Book of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada* by Diane Silvey**

***The Sign of the Beaver* by Elizabeth George Speare**

Little House series by Laura Ingalls Wilder

Christopher Mouse: The Tale of a Small Traveler by William Wise

Dear America series (authors vary)

Chapter Books and Folk Tale Collections for Read Aloud

These are books and story collections to enjoy reading aloud with your child. They are great for bedtime read-aloud!

Latin American Folktales: Stories from Hispanic and Indian Traditions by John Bierhorst

The Naked Bear: Folktales of the Iroquois by John Bierhorst

The Wizard of Oz series by L. Frank Baum

The BFG by Roald Dahl

The Wolves in the Walls by Neil Gaiman

James Houston's Treasury of Inuit Legends by James Houston

A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle

Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery

Mayan Folktales by James D. Sexton

Charlotte's Web by E. B. White

Cherokee Animal Stories Published by Harper Collins

Let's-Read-and-Find-Out Science Series (Stage 2) Published by Harper Collins

Note: **Bold** items will provide background for next year's geographical focus on North and South America and the Polar Regions.

