



Read-Aloud Book List

Note: Books and topics will change either partly or completely every year depending on students and structure.

Spring 2026

February — Animals & Daily Care

- **Echo** by Pam Muñoz Ryan
- **The Crossover** by Kwame Alexander (novel in verse)
- **Where the Red Fern Grows** by Wilson Rawls
- **Charlotte's Web** by E.B. White

February — Soil, Compost & Preparing the Land

- **Esperanza Rising** by Pam Muñoz Ryan
- **Seedfolks** by Paul Fleischman (multiple-perspective epistolary)
- **Missing May** by Cynthia Rylant
- **The Secret Garden** by Frances Hodgson Burnett

March — Gardening Basics

- **Brown Girl Dreaming** by Jacqueline Woodson
- **The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind** by William Kamkwamba
- **Where the Watermelons Grow** by Cindy Baldwin
- **Sarah, Plain and Tall** by Patricia MacLachlan

March — Seeds, Planting & Growth

- **All Thirteen** by Christina Soontornvat
- **Inside Out and Back Again** by Thanhnhà Lai (novel in verse)
- **Up from the Blue** by Andrea Davis Pinkney
- **The Secret Garden** by Frances Hodgson Burnett

April — Bees & Pollinators

- **The Thing About Bees** by Shabazz Larkin
- **Honey** by Sarah Lariviere (graphic novel)
- **Where the Lilies Bloom** by Vera and Bill Cleaver
- **The Beekeeper's Apprentice** by Laurie R. King

April — Poultry & Eggs

- **Year of the Dog** by Grace Lin
- **Unusual Chickens for the Exceptional Poultry Farmer** by Kelly Jones (epistolary letters)
- **Moon Over Manifest** by Clare Vanderpool
- **Charlotte's Web** by E.B. White

May — Food From the Land

- **The Birchbark House** by Louise Erdrich
- **Illegal** by Eoin Colfer (graphic survival/foraging story)
- **Where the Red Fern Grows** by Wilson Rawls
- **My Side of the Mountain** by Jean Craighead George

May — Outdoor Cooking

- **When You Trap a Tiger** by Tae Keller
- **Hatchet** by Gary Paulsen (survival novel)
- **Christy** by Catherine Marshall
- **Little House in the Big Woods** by Laura Ingalls Wilder

Winter 2026

September — Harvest & Preservation

- **Esperanza Rising** by Pam Muñoz Ryan
- **Seedfolks** by Paul Fleischman
- **Where the Watermelons Grow** by Cindy Baldwin
- **Sarah, Plain and Tall** by Patricia MacLachlan

September — Seed Saving

- **Inside Out and Back Again** by Thanhhà Lai
- **One Crazy Summer** by Rita Williams-Garcia (letters/diary style)
- **Missing May** by Cynthia Rylant
- **The Secret Garden** by Frances Hodgson Burnett

October — Fall Harvest (Pumpkins, Apples, Gourds)

- **When You Trap a Tiger** by Tae Keller
- **Pumpkinheads** by Rainbow Rowell (graphic novel)
- **The Year the Stars Fell** by Vicky Shiefman
- **Charlotte's Web** by E.B. White

October — Autumn Celebrations

- **Ghosts** by Raina Telgemeier (Día de los Muertos)
- **The Graveyard Book** by Neil Gaiman
- **Moon Over Manifest** by Clare Vanderpool
- **The Legend of Sleepy Hollow** by Washington Irving

November — Forest & Woodland

- **Wishtree** by Katherine Applegate (tree narrator)
- **Wildwood** by Colin Meloy (illustrated novel)
- **Where the Watermelons Grow** by Cindy Baldwin
- **My Side of the Mountain** by Jean Craighead George

November — Decolonized Thanksgiving / Indigenous Harvest

- **The Birchbark House** by Louise Erdrich
- **Indian No More** by Charlene Willing McManis & Traci Sorell (epistolary/diary style)
- **Soft Rain: A Story of the Cherokee Trail of Tears** by Cornelia Cornelissen
- **Sign of the Beaver** by Elizabeth George Speare

December — Winter Preparedness

- **Julie of the Wolves** by Jean Craighead George
- **The Wild Robot** by Peter Brown (illustrated survival)
- **Missing May** by Cynthia Rylant
- **Hatchet** by Gary Paulsen

December — Holiday Traditions

- **Mañanaland** by Pam Muñoz Ryan
- **The Night Diary** by Veera Hiranandani (epistolary diary)
- **Christmas in the Mountains** by Ruth Bell Graham
- **A Christmas Carol** by Charles Dickens

How We Use These Books

Each month explores topics connected to simple living, farm life, forest school, and homestead skills. Teachers will select **2–4 novels per month** to read aloud from the books listed under that month's topics, depending on class sizes, ages, reading levels, and student interests.

Our selections include:

- **Diverse novels** that reflect a variety of voices and experiences
- **Appalachian titles** that honor our regional heritage
- **Traditional and classic literature** that has shaped children's literature
- **Books in unique formats** (verse, letters, graphic novels, multiple perspectives) that supplement our English Language Arts lessons

Books written in experimental formats offer rich learning opportunities. For example, novels in verse teach poetry, rhythm, and expressive language, while epistolary novels (written as letters or diary entries) provide models for letter writing, reflective writing, and narrative structure.

All selections are appropriate for older elementary through high school students and support our mission of blending literature, hands-on learning, and cultural exploration in an outdoor setting.