

Parents
10 BEST
CHILDREN'S
BOOKS

2017

This Year's Winning Reads

We consulted with children's librarians plus parent and kid testers to create our highly anticipated annual list. Help us spread the word about **#ParentsBestBooks**.

by **KAREN CICERO**
photographs by **YUNHEE KIM**



BOARD BOOK

When Your Lion Needs a Bath

by Susanna Leonard Hill, illustrated by Daniel Wiseman
Toddlers roared with laughter as they listened to this tale about a boy who tries and tries to coax his smelly pet lion into the tub, finally casting him in on a fishing line. "My 2-year-old pointed out the silly illustrations, like the lion tangled in yarn," says one mom. If the bath struggle is real with your kid, the last page may help him take the plunge. Ages 1 to 3, \$8

Kid testers worshipped the warthog!



SANTA SEES YOU WHEN YOU'RE READING! FIND THE MERRIEST NEW BOOKS AT PARENTS.COM/HOLIDAYBOOKS.



NUMBERS BOOK

Warthog: A Counting Adventure

by Birdie Black, illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw
With the highest rating among preschool testers of any book on our list, this tale focuses on a cute warthog who wanders far away from home. The counting begins on his journey as he encounters one scoop of honey, two angry bees, and so forth until reaching ten footprints. Some numbers are behind sturdy flaps that testers loved to open. Ages 3 to 6, \$15

ALPHABET BOOK

Alphamals A-Z

by Big Picture Press, illustrated by Graham Carter
You'll want to hold onto this book long after your child masters his ABCs. Each letter corresponds with an animal—an armadillo, a zebra, and even a quoll (native to Australia). The uppercase letter, animal name, and a nonfiction poem face a full-page art-deco-style illustration. There's a lot of text, so focus on a few letters a day. Ages 3 to 8, \$18

BEDTIME STORY

All My Friends Are Fast Asleep

by David Weinstone, illustrated by Magali Le Huche
It has everything you'd want for a nighttime read: dark (but not scary) illustrations; short, lyrical text; and a beloved character to help ease your child to dreamland. "My boys, ages 2 and 4, liked how the boy tried to imitate the way his animal friends slept to make himself tired, and eventually it worked," says one mom reviewer. Ages 2 to 6, \$18

PICTURE BOOK

Fairy Tale Pets

by Tracey Corderoy, illustrated by Jorge Martin
Kids got caught up in the twisted storyline: A boy and his dog start a pet-sitting service, but they're surprised when baby bear, three billy goats gruff, and the wolf that blew down the pigs' house show up at the door. Several smaller illustrations per page match up with dialogue to help beginning readers follow along. "My favorite part was when the baby bear yelled, 'Waaa!' after he broke the bed," said a 5-year-old reviewer. A clever ending involving another famous fairy-tale character may, um, sprout a sequel. Ages 4 to 8, \$17



NONFICTION BOOK

Shark Lady: The True Story of How Eugenie Clark Became the Ocean's Most Fearless Scientist

by Jess Keating, illustrated by Marta Álvarez Miguéns
This biography rose to the top because it tells Clark's story—from her childhood fascination with sharks to becoming a scientist who was able to train them—without overwhelming kids with text. "After I read this book with my 6-year-old daughter, she told me that she wanted to be a scientist," beamed one dad. Ages 5 to 10, \$18

EARLY READER

Charlie & Mouse

by Laurel Snyder, illustrated by Emily Hughes
This collection of four short stories about two friends "evokes the feeling of Frog and Toad," says Betsy Bird, a youth-materials specialist at Evanston Public Library, in Illinois. Kid reviewers reread their favorite passages, especially the one about the party at the playground. Ages 5 to 7, \$15

BEGINNING CHAPTER

BOOK SERIES

Hilde Cracks the Case

by Hilde Lysiak with Matthew Lysiak, illustrated by Joanne Lew-Vriethoff
Written by a 10-year-old who started her own neighborhood newspaper, this series will appeal to both boys and girls who like a good detective story. "I loved uncovering clues with her," said a 7-year-old reviewer. The first two installments, *Hero Dog!* and *Bear on the Loose!*, are out now, with two more slated for 2018. Ages 6 to 10, \$5 in paperback

GRAPHIC NOVEL

Real Friends

by Shannon Hale, illustrated by LeUyen Pham
The author's memoir nails what it's like to navigate elementary-school friendships. "Things that happened to Shannon have happened to me too, like I've thought I was friends with somebody and then the next day she didn't want me to be part of her group," says an 11-year-old reviewer. Most kids finished the book in a day and came away with new ideas about how to handle their own friendship dramas. Ages 7+, \$13

OLDER-KID CHAPTER BOOK

Beyond the Bright Sea

by Lauren Wolk
Kid testers relished the plot twists in this book about 12-year-old Crow's quest to find her birth parents. "I was so excited when she learned more about her past, especially that her real name is Morgan," says a reviewer of the same age. Ages 10+, \$17

The 3 That Almost Made It

We liked these books nearly as much as our winners:

Her Right Foot

by Dave Eggers, illustrated by Shawn Harris
Cool facts about the Statue of Liberty plus a heart-tugging ending made this book tough to cut. It's lengthy, so split it into two nights.

Ages 6+, \$20

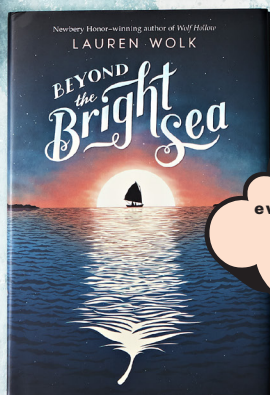
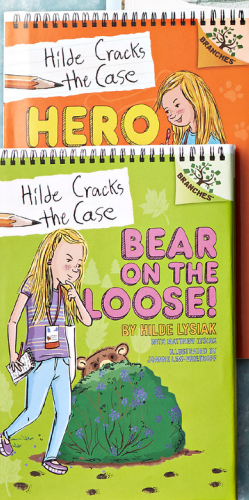
7 Ate 9: The Untold Story

by Tara Lazar, illustrated by Ross MacDonald
When the number 6 can't find 9, he hires a "Private I" to find out what's going on. Many puns later ("I hope so," said 6.

"I feel like my days are numbered"), there's a twist ending. A lot of the references flew over the heads of young kids, but we were laughing out loud. Read it to older kids who will get more of the jokes. Ages 6+, \$18

Pigeon P.I.

by Meg McLaren
Kids went crazy for comic-book-like illustrations and text bubbles in this funny story, which focuses on a pigeon private investigator that comes out of retirement to help locate the "feather thief." Ages 4 to 8, \$17



Nearly every librarian chose this book.