



Picture Books for Older Readers

The books on this list are all in picture book format (generally 40 pages or fewer in length). All of the books on this list have been selected for older children. Many of the following authors have written numerous picture books for an older audience, so be sure to check out other titles.

Picture Books for Older Readers located in the Juvenile Easy Book (E) Collection:

Adler, David A. – Mama Played Baseball

Young Amy helps her mother to get a job as a player in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League while Amy's father is serving in the army during World War II.

Agee, Jon – Terrific

"Terrific," says Eugene when he wins an all-expenses-paid cruise to Bermuda. "I'll probably get a really nasty sunburn." But Eugene's luck is much worse than that. His ship sinks, and he ends up stranded on a tiny island.

Alley, Zoë B. – There's a Wolf at the Door

E OVERSIZE ALLEY, ZOE

As his plans are spoiled over and over again, the wolf keeps trying to find his dinner, in this retelling of five well-known stories and fables.

Anderson, M.T. – Strange Mr. Satie

Introduces the life of the French composer, Erik Satie, who spent his entire career challenging established conventions in music.

Bildner, Phil – Twenty-One Elephants

Eight-year-old Hannah, upon completion of the Brooklyn Bridge, enlists the help of P.T. Barnum and his twenty-one elephants to prove to her father and all of Brooklyn that the bridge is safe.

Blue, Rose and Corinne J. Naden – Ron's Big Mission

One summer day in 1959, nine-year-old Ron McNair, who dreams of becoming a pilot, walks into the Lake City, South Carolina, public library and insists on checking out some books, despite the rule that only white people can have library cards. Includes facts about McNair, who grew up to be an astronaut.

Bower, Tamara – How the Amazon Queen Fought the Prince of Egypt

Serpot, ruler of a land where women live free, without men, leads her Amazon warriors in battle against Prince Pedikhons of Egypt, who has come to see for himself if women can equal men, even in battle. Includes notes about Assyrian and Egyptian culture and hieroglyphics.

Brown, Jeff. Flat Stanley

A picture book version of the story in which a bulletin board falls on Stanley while he is sleeping, and he finds that being flat has its advantages.

Bunting, Eve – One Green Apple

While on a school field trip to an orchard to make cider, a young immigrant named Farah gains self-confidence when the green apple she picks perfectly complements the other students' red apples.



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Bunting, Eve – Pop's Bridge

Robert and his friend Charlie are proud of their fathers, who are working on the construction of San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge.

Costanza, Stephen – Mozart Finds a Melody

Wolfgang Mozart finds the inspiration to compose a new piano concerto from his pet starling and the sounds heard through the streets of eighteenth-century Vienna, Austria.

Crew, Gary – The Watertower

On a scorching hot summer day in Preston, Australia, Spike and Bubba go for a swim in the old water tower which casts a long dark shadow across everything in the area.

Deedy, Carmen Agra – The Yellow Star: the legend of King Christian X of Denmark

Retells the story of King Christian X and the Danish resistance to the Nazis during World War II.

Egan, Tim – Roasted Peanuts

Sam the horse gets picked to be on the local baseball team, but unfortunately his friend Jackson the cat, despite being a good thrower, is not selected.

Faulkner, Matt – The Pirate Meets the Queen

When the son of notorious Irish pirate queen Granny O'Malley is captured by the English, Granny tries to meet with Queen Elizabeth I to negotiate for his freedom.

Harrington, Janice - The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County

A young farm girl tries to catch her favorite chicken, until she learns something about the hen that makes her change her ways.

Henson, Heather – That Book Woman

A family living in the Appalachian Mountains in the 1930s gets books to read during the regular visits of the "Book Woman"--a librarian who rides a pack horse through the mountains, lending books to the isolated residents.

High, Linda Oatman – City of Snow: the Great Blizzard of 1888

A fictionalized account, told in free-verse poems, of a young girl's experience living through the 1888 "Great Blizzard" in New York City.

Gaiman, Neil – The Wolves in the Walls

Lucy is sure there are wolves living in the walls of her house, although others in her family disagree, and when the wolves come out, the adventure begins.

Geisert, Arthur – Lights Out

Told by his parents that his light must be out at eight o'clock, a young piglet who is afraid of the dark devises an ingenious solution to the problem.

Gravett, Emily – Wolves

When a young rabbit checks out a library book about wolves, he learns much more about their behavior than he wanted to know.

Hesse, Karen – The Cats of Krasinski Square

Two Jewish sisters, escapees of the infamous Warsaw ghetto, devise a plan to thwart an attempt by the Gestapo to intercept food bound for starving people behind the dark Wall.



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High, Linda Oatman – The Girl on the High-Diving Horse

Eight-year-old Ivy Cordelia spends the summer of 1936 in Atlantic City with her photographer father, and dreams of being the girl who perches on a horse as it dives into a tank of water.

Hopkinson, Deborah – Sky Boys: How They Built the Empire State Building

In 1931, a boy and his father watch as the world's tallest building, the Empire State Building, is constructed, step-by-step, near their Manhattan home.

Kay, Verla – Whatever Happened to the Pony Express?

A family's cross-country communication changes during the development and demise of the Pony Express.

Keller, Laurie – The Scrambled States of America

The states become bored with their positions on the map and decide to change places for a while. Includes facts about the states.

Kushner, Tony – Brundibar

Aninku and Pepicek find their mother sick one morning, they need to buy her milk to make her better. The brother and sister go to town to make money by singing. But a hurdy-gurdy grinder, Brundibar, chases them away. They are helped by three talking animals and three hundred schoolchildren, to defeat the bully. Brundibar is based on a Czech opera for children that was performed fifty-five times by the children of Terezin, a Nazi concentration camp in 1943.

Lehman, Barbara – Museum Trip

In this wordless picture book, a boy imagines himself inside some of the exhibits when he goes on a field trip to a museum.

Macaulay, David – Black and White

Four brief "stories" about parents, trains, and cows, or is it really all one story? The author recommends careful inspection of words and pictures to both minimize and enhance confusion.

Machado, Ana Maria – Wolf Wanted

Manny Wolf rewrites a help wanted ad, clarifying that a real wolf is needed so that a documentary can be made to show people what real wolves are like and how different they are from their big, bad fictional counterparts who've applied for the job.

Matthews, Elizabeth – Different Like Coco

Simple text and color illustrations present the life of Coco Chanel.

McCully, Emily Arnold – The Escape of Oney Judge

Young Oney Judge risks everything to escape a life of slavery in the household of George and Martha Washington and to make her own way as a free black woman.

McKissack, Patricia – Goin' Somewhere Special

In segregated 1950s Nashville, a young African American girl braves a series of indignities and obstacles to get to one of the few integrated places in town: the public library.

McNulty, Faith – If You Were to Go to the Moon

Written in the second person, the text allows the reader to participate in every aspect of the journey, from packing to lift-off to traveling through space, ultimately landing at the Sea of Tranquility, the site of the first lunar landing.



Montanari, Eva – Chasing Degas

At the time of the Impressionists, a young ballet dancer races around Paris searching for Monsieur Degas, who accidentally took her bag--and the tutu she needs for the recital in which she is to perform that night. Includes reproductions of paintings by French Impressionist painters, with an author's note.

Muth, Jon J. – Zen Shorts

When Stillwater the bear moves into the neighborhood, the stories he tells to three siblings teach them to look at the world in new ways.

O'Malley, Kevin – Animal Crackers Fly the Coop

In this humorous take-off of "The Bremen Town Musicians," four animals that aspire to make it big as comedians leave their owners and seek their fortunes.

Palatini, Margie – The Cheese

After they all agree to ignore the story of "The Farmer in the Dell," the rat, cat, dog, child, farmer, and his wife have a party featuring the tempting hunk of cheese.

Park, Linda Sue – The Firekeeper's Son

In nineteenth-century Korea, after Sang-hee's father injures his ankle, Sang-hee attempts to take over the task of lighting the evening fire which signals to the palace that all is well. Includes historical notes.

Peet, Bill – The Pinkish, Purplish, Bluish Egg

Everyone in the forest is afraid of Zeke the griffin until he does them all a very big favor.

Pilegard, Virginia Walton – The Warlord's Messengers

In ancient China, Chuan and Jing Jing invent a cart that sails on land in order to quickly reach the warlord with an important message from the emperor.

Polacco, Patricia – Thank You Mr. Falker

At first, Trisha loves school, but her difficulty learning to read makes her feel dumb, until, in the fifth grade, a new teacher helps her understand and overcome her problem.

Rappaport, Doreen – The Secret Seder

During the Nazi occupation of France, a boy and his father slip out of their village and into the mountains, where they join a group of fellow Jews at a humble Seder table.

Raven, Margot Theis – Night Boat to Freedom

At the request of his fellow slave Granny Judith, Christmas John risks his life to take runaways across a river from Kentucky to Ohio. Based on slave narratives recorded in the 1930s.

Rex, Michael – Frankenstein Takes the Cake

Frankenstein wants to marry his undead bride in peace, but his best man, Dracula, is freaking out about the garlic bread, and the Headless Horseman wishes everyone would stop drooling over his pumpkin head.

Reynolds, Peter – The Dot

Vashti believes that she cannot draw, but her art teacher's encouragement leads her to change her mind.

Rumford, James – Silent Music: a Story of Baghdad

As bombs and missiles fall on Baghdad in 2003, a young boy uses the art of calligraphy to distance himself from the horror of war.



San Souci, Daniel - The Mighty Pigeon Club

When several homing pigeons need a new home, a group of boys and girls adopt them and start the "Mighty Pigeon Club," only to find that they have taken on more than they bargained for.

Schwartz, David. How Much is a Million?

Text and pictures try to make possible the conceptualization of a million, a billion, and a trillion.

Scieszka, Jon – Math Curse

When the teacher tells her class that they can think of almost everything as a math problem, one student acquires a math anxiety which becomes a real curse.

Scieszka, Jon – The True Story of the Three Little Pigs

The wolf gives his own outlandish version of what really happened when he tangled with the three little pigs.

Sierra, Judy – Mind Your Manners, B.B. Wolf

When B.B. Wolf, who now lives in the Villain Villa Retirement Residence, is invited to the library for a storybook tea, he is careful to follow the advice of his crocodile friend and impresses everyone with how polite he can be.

Smith, Cynthia Leitich – Jingle Dancer

Jenna, a member of the Muscogee, or Creek, Nation, borrows jingles from the dresses of several friends and relatives so that she can perform the jingle dance at the powwow. Includes a note about the jingle dance tradition and its regalia.

Smith, Lane – It's a Book

Two readers compare a print to digital media, and learn books are still valuable.

Stevens, Janet and Susan Stevens Crummel – Jackalope

A jackrabbit who wishes to be feared asks his fairy godrabbit for horns and becomes the first jackalope, but there's one condition: he must not tell lies.

Stevenson, James – The Mud Flat Mystery

When a large box is delivered to Duncan while he is away, the other animal inhabitants of Mud Flat are consumed with curiosity about what might be inside.

Stewart, Sarah – The Journey

A young Amish girl tells her "silent friend," her diary, about all the wondrous experiences she has on her first trip to the city.

Turner, Glennette Tilley – An Apple for Harriet

Like other enslaved African-American children, young Harriet Tubman had to work hard. In her master's orchard, she spent long hours picking the juicy apples she loved but was forbidden to eat. When she was grown, she made her escape to the North. Few know about her love for apples, and the freedom they symbolized.

Ward, Helen – The Dragon Machine

George sees dragons everywhere, but since he is the only one that sees them trouble begins. He must lead the dragons back to the great wilderness where they belong and then find his way home again.

Weber, Elka – The Yankee at the Seder

As a Confederate family prepares for Passover the day after the Civil War has ended, a Yankee arrives on



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their Virginia doorstep and is invited to share their meal, to the dismay of ten-year-old Jacob. Includes historical notes about Corporal Myer Levy, on whom the story is based, and his prominent Philadelphia family.

Wiesner, David – Art & Max

Max wants to be an artist like Arthur, but his first attempt at using a paintbrush sends the two friends on a whirlwind trip through various media, with unexpected consequences.

Williams, Marcia – Archie's War

When Archie is given a scrapbook for his tenth birthday in 1914, he chronicles the next four years of his life using documents, artifacts, and comic strips.

Winter, Jonah – The 39 Apartments of Ludwig van Beethoven

Ludwig van Beethoven and his five legless pianos keep having to move from one apartment to another when his neighbors complain about the noise.

Winter, Jonah – The Fabulous Feud of Gilbert and Sullivan

In the late nineteenth century, Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Sullivan, who write operas together for a theater called Topsy-Turvydom, have a falling-out when Mr. Sullivan refuses to write music for another ridiculous story that is like all the others.

Van Allsburg, Chris – Jumanji

Left on their own for an afternoon, two bored and restless children find more excitement than they bargained for in a mysterious and mystical jungle adventure board game.

Yin - Brothers

Having arrived in San Francisco from China to work in his brother's store, Ming is lonely until an Irish boy befriends him.

Yolleck, Joan - Paris in the Spring with Picasso

Describes how some of Paris's famous artists and writers, such as Pablo Picasso, Max Jacob, and Guillaume Apollinaire, spend their day before preparing to attend a party at Gertrude Stein's apartment.

Yorinks, Arthur – Hey, Al

A city janitor and his treasured canine companion are transported by a large colorful bird to an island in the sky, where their comfortable paradise existence threatens to turn them into birds as well.

Picture Books for Older Readers located in the Juvenile Fiction (J) Collection:

Alexander, Lloyd – Dream-of-Jade: the Emperor's Cat

Follows the adventures of a Chinese cat who became the emperor's good friend and advisor.

Base, Graeme – The Discovery of Dragons

A group of eccentric Victorian scientists describe and catalog dragons from around the world, including everything from their natural habitats to their unusual eating habits.

Craddock, Sonia – Sleeping Boy

A young German boy and his family fall under a spell that puts them to sleep until peace comes to the city of Berlin.



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Dahl, Roald – The Minpins

Little Billy goes into the forest of sins looking for magic. He is chased up into a tree by the Gruncher and here he meets the Minpins and discovers that there is magic if you know where to look.

Fleischman, Paul – The Dunderheads

When Miss Breakbone confiscates Junkyard's crucial find, Wheels, Pencil, Spider, and the rest of the Dunderheads plot to teach her a lesson.

Grahame, Kenneth – The Reluctant Dragon

The boy who finds the dragon in the cave knows it is a kindly, harmless one, but how can he convince the frightened villagers and, especially, St. George the dragon killer that there is no cause for concern?

Hughes, Shirley – The Lion and the Unicorn

Lenny, a Jewish boy living in London during the Blitz in World War II, must adjust to many changes and find the true meaning of courage when he is evacuated to a large mansion in the English countryside.

Innocenti, Roberto – Rose Blanche

This picture book for older children tragically relates the death of a young girl who attempts to share food with Jewish prisoners in a nearby concentration camp. - *Booklist*

Mochizuki, Ken - Baseball Saved Us

A Japanese American boy learns to play baseball when he and his family are forced to live in an internment camp during World War II, and his ability to play helps him after the war is over.

Ryan, Pam Muñoz – Amelia and Eleanor Go for a Ride

A fictionalized account of the night Amelia Earhart flew Eleanor Roosevelt over Washington, D.C. in an airplane.

Woodson, Jacqueline – Show Way

The making of "Show ways," or quilts which once served as secret maps for freedom-seeking slaves, is a tradition passed from mother to daughter in the author's family.

