

Preparation for Transition to a new Classroom, Kindergarten, or School Good Children's Books

Most of the entries in the list below are annotated to help you select the books that best match your child's situation, interest, temperament and/or questions or concerns. Good children's books are readily available in your public library. Librarians in the children's rooms are excellent resources for you and your child, on this or any topic.

As you already know, each child's questions, concerns, anticipation and/or excitement are individual to that child. They are often a mix of both 'looking forward to', and 'but ?' kinds of curiosity and inquiry. Most important, is to take your cues for feelings and topics from listening to your child's comments and questions. They may also change over the time of the transition. Your child/ren may be moving on to another classroom in the program or another school, into Kindergarten, or to 1st grade. Some of these books will be applicable in preparation for any of these transitions, other books specifically refer to Kindergarten or to 'starting school'.

It is always recommended to read a book yourself first in order to assess the correct 'fit' for your child. Some questions are about routines that can be easily answered such as "Do I still bring my lunch?", "Who will take me to school?", or "Will we still be able to play outside?" Other questions are more experience oriented such as "What do they do in Kindergarten?" or "Will I know anyone? which also means "How will I make new friends?" and "Will they like me?" After a history of nurturing relationships with their JCC teachers, children often wonder if/how that kind of relationship might change. Different books relate to different questions and curiosities.

When introducing conversations or books about a new experience, it is helpful to keep your language in the 'positive'; "A lot of children wonder about i.e. Kindergarten". "Here is a book we can read together." "I have a couple of books here that can help us get ready for your new class/school/Kindergarten/1st grade, etc." Language such as, 'Are you nervous about Kindergarten?', or "There is nothing to worry about", if a child hasn't already used i.e. 'nervous' or 'worried' can put the idea into their mind that they should be. Words like 'curious about', 'interested to hear about' are non judgmental and may help to keep the emotions neutral.

The first list below is from *Successful First Steps to Kindergarten* published by the Cambridge Public Schools in 2002. In both lists, more than one synopsis indicates the book was recommended from more than one source.

Bourgeois, Paulette, [Franklin Goes to School](#)

Bunnett, Rochelle, [Friends At School](#)

Carlson, Nancy, [Look out Kindergarten, Here I come](#)

Henry, a mouse, and his mother discuss what Henry might expect during his first day of school. Since he has already done some of the activities at home, Henry is confident he will do well – until he arrives and sees new faces and surroundings.

[Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!](#) 1999.

It's the first day of kindergarten and Henry is raring to go. He gets ready, packs up, and thinks about all of the exciting activities that will keep him busy. However, when he first arrives, Henry is not so sure he is ready. As he gets involved he quickly finds out that kindergarten is even more fun than he thought it would be.

Henkes, Kevin, [Wemberly Worried](#)

Hest, Amy, [Off to School, Baby Duck](#)

Howe, James, [When you Go To Kindergarten](#)

Penn, Audrey, [The Kissing Hand](#), 1993.

Chester Raccoon is very reluctant about starting school. His mother shows him a special way to feel comfortable and confident about going. She reassures him that everything will turn out fine and it does.

[The Kissing Hand](#). When Chester the raccoon does not want to go to school, his mother shares a special secret that's been in the family for years.

Sensisi, Ellen, [Kindergarten Kids](#)

Simon, Chamon, [One Happy Classroom](#)

Slate, Joseph [Miss Kindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten](#). 1988.

Keller, Holly. [Harry and Tuck](#). 1993.

Harrison and Tucker are twins who like to do absolutely everything together. Things change when they arrive at their first day of kindergarten and are separated in two different rooms with two different teachers. At first they are worried but when they get back home and share all about their eventful day, they realize that things will be just fine.

Langreuter, Jutta and Sobat, Vera. [Little Bear Goes to Kindergarten](#). 1997.

As little bear starts off for kindergarten he talks about all of the exciting things he remembers from his visit to the school. Although he is enjoying his new class when he arrives, he does not want his mom to leave. He quickly gets involved in a game with new friends and soon forgets about being sad.

London, Jonathan. [Froggy Goes to School](#) chronicles first-day-of-school activities and features wry humor and amusing facial expressions of Froggy, his family, and animal classmates.

Martin, Ann M. [Rachel Parker, Kindergarten Show-Off](#). 1992.

Olivia loves being in Mrs. Bee's class, that is, until a new girl joins the class. Olivia tries to be nice to her, but Rachel Elizabeth Parker turns out to be a bit of a show-off. Their teacher has a creative solution to help the girls become friends. Find out how they solve their problem.

McCully, Emily Arnold. [School](#). After his brothers and sisters leave for the first day of school and the house is very quiet, the youngest mouse decides to find out for himself what school is like. What is the youngest mouse wearing that distinguishes him from all the other mice in this wordless story?

McGhee, Alison. [Countdown to Kindergarten](#). 2002.

Ten days before kindergarten is to begin, a young girl is quite nervous about starting school. She has heard that the number one rule is that you have to know how to tie your shoes and she doesn't know how yet. Count down from ten with her as she tries to figure out how she will handle her dilemma.

[Countdown to Kindergarten](#). A young girl has heard there are many rules in kindergarten. It is now ten days before the start of kindergarten, and she cannot tie her shoes by herself. A first grader told her this is rule # 1. As the days countdown, she experiences many shoelace disasters. Humorous details make this book a joy to read aloud and share.

Munsch, Robert. [We Share Everything!](#). 1999.

Amanda and Jeremiah have a problem: they both want to play with the same blocks and it's only the first day of kindergarten. Their teacher repeats the same words all day, "In kindergarten we share. We share everything." Amanda and Jeremiah take this lesson one step too far and the class is in for a hilarious surprise.

Numeroff, Laura. [If You Take a Mouse to School](#). The mouse from [If You Give a Mouse a Cookie](#) returns as a boy gives him his lunch box at school. The mouse's enthusiasm for learning is well depicted in the story and the crisp watercolors stand out against the white background.

Rockwell, Anne. [Welcome to Kindergarten](#). 2001.

Tim gets a note from his kindergarten teacher inviting him to come and see what his new class will be like. At first he thinks the class just may be too big for him but as he explores the different centers in the room he changes his mind and realizes kindergarten will be just right for him.

[Welcome to Kindergarten](#). A young boy and his mother visit his new kindergarten classroom that he will join in September. At first, the room seems to be dauntingly large. During the tour, he learns about the many activities that are in store, and he concludes the room is just the right size.

Rogers, Jacqueline. [Kindergarten ABC](#). 2002.

It's A day and a class of kindergarten students is searching for acorns. On B day they bring their backpacks. Learn the ABC's of kindergarten with this classroom of children as they go through each letter of the alphabet. Readers can play the search and find game for every letter on each page.

[Kindergarten ABC](#). Follow a kindergarten class through twenty-six days of the year as the students participate in alphabetically linked activities. Build vocabulary by looking for the items listed for each letter. Some are easy to find, others can be challenging.

Rogers, Jacqueline. [Tiptoe into Kindergarten](#). 1999.

An eager preschooler tiptoes into her older brother's classroom and finds out what kindergarten is all about. She looks forward to the day she will go there after her wonderful experience at school.

Rose, Debra Lee. [The Twelve Days of Kindergarten](#). 2003.

"On the first day of kindergarten, my teacher gave to me the whole alphabet from A to Z," so begins this poem about kindergarten with the familiar pattern of "The Twelve Days of Christmas." Readers learn all about what happens in the classroom and can try singing the words to the tune as they read.

Roth, Carol. [The Little School Bus](#). A pair of rhyming verses introduces each of the seven silly animals who climb onboard the yellow bus. In this cumulative tale, children will join in on the repetitious refrain "Riding the bus to school, to school, riding the bus to school."

Schwartz, Amy. [Annabelle Swift, Kindergartner](#). 1982.

Annabelle has her big sister Lucy, a third grader, to thank for preparing her for kindergarten. Lucy has taught her many things but not all of her advice works out. Annabelle learns for herself what to do in kindergarten.

Schwartz, Amy. [Bea and Mr. Jones](#). 1982.

Bea Jones is tired of going to kindergarten every day and her father is tired of going to work every day. They cook up a wild plan to switch places. Find out how this new arrangement works out for both of them.

Smalls, Irene. [Beginning School](#). 1997.

Follow Alicia on her journey through her first days and weeks of kindergarten up until winter vacation. Each day Alicia and her friend Roger learn to enjoy all the special qualities of kindergarten.

Stoeke, Janet Morgan. [Minerva Louise at School](#). Readers in-the-know will recognize that Minerva Louise, the hen, has mistaken the school for a big, fancy barn. After she returns to the farm, Minerva Louise says she will return to the fancy barn someday, because it is a "wonderful place to get new ideas."

Weiss, Leatie. [My Teacher Sleeps in School](#). Because Mrs. Marsh is in the classroom when the students arrive and leave for the day, they think she lives at school. They even find clues in the classroom that make them believe their teacher's home is school. But where does she sleep?

Wild, Margaret. [Tom Goes to Kindergarten](#). 2000.

Tom's whole family is excited as they walk Tom to school for his first day of kindergarten. Tom wants his family to stay and they do -- enjoying all of the fun activities kindergarten offers. When they arrive the next day, planning to spend the day again, they are a bit disappointed when Mrs. Polar Bear the teacher has to tell them they can't stay.

[Tom Goes to Kindergarten](#). There's always a place for fun and fantasy. On the first day of school, Tom the panda does not want to stay, so his teacher invites his parents to spend the day. Everyone has lots of fun and Tom's parents find ways to carry the fun into their daily routines.

Woodruff, Elvira. [Show and Tell](#). 1991.

Andy never has anything interesting to bring to kindergarten for show and tell, until one day he finds a blue bottle that says "Caution: Bubbles may cause trouble." Show and tell will never be the same for this kindergarten class after Andy shares his special bubbles.

Revised: 2007