

## Books for Multi-age Storytime

Books selected by Kathy Stewart and Beth Gerall

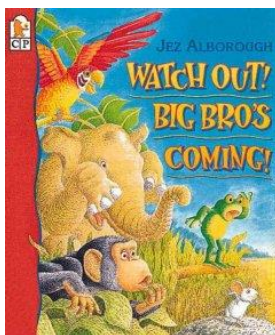
---

Multi-age storytimes present a challenge, and an opportunity: how to make sure the story selection has broad enough appeal to cover a potentially large age range, yet not choose titles with such a broad range that a portion of the attendees lose interest. It goes without saying that the goal is for those who come to enjoy the storytime, and to want to come back for another one!

The books presented here cover a myriad of subjects and include a variety of art styles. Each is well-reviewed and was chosen based on several factors:

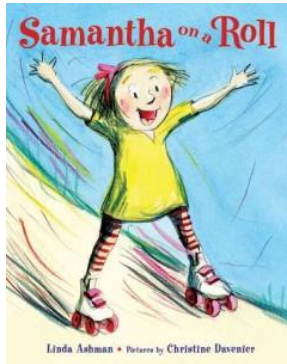
- Readability: is the book fun and easy to read aloud? Rhythmic or rhyming books make good choices for a broad age range.
- Can the books be appreciated on multiple levels?
- Are the illustrations either easy-to-see (a bonus at larger storytimes) or compelling art that fills in story details?

Use this list as a starting point with which to build your own multi-age storytime 'go-to' collection.



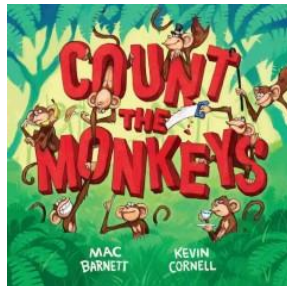
**Alborough, Jez.** *Watch Out! Big Bro's Coming!*, 1997.

Humor and suspense flavor this funny tale of jungle animals' increasing terror as they hear the news that rough, tough, Big Bro is coming.



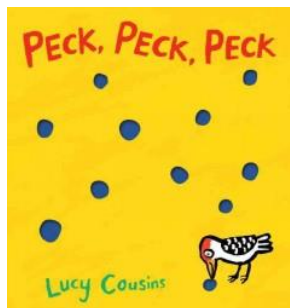
**Ashman, Linda.** *Samantha on a Roll*, 2011.

Clever rhyme plus action make this fun to read aloud. Warned not to try out her new skates, Sammy straps them on anyway, resulting in a wild ride through town.



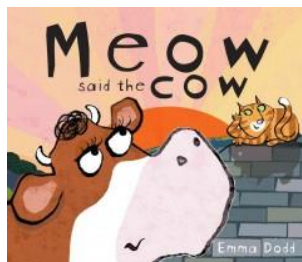
**Barnett, Mac.** *Count the Monkeys*, 2013.

Great for eliciting group participation, in this story, the reader is invited to count the animals that have frightened the monkeys right off the pages.



**Cousins, Lucy.** *Peck, Peck, Peck*, 2013.

Pecking his way through the door of a house, an intrepid little woodpecker busily raps on a rhyming sequence of indoor objects, from a hat and a mat and a racket and jacket to a teddy bear and a book called Jane Eyre.



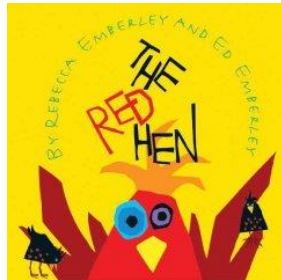
**Dodd, Emma.** *Meow Said the Cow*, 2011.

Children of all ages enjoy books with mixed-up animal sounds. Here, a noisy rooster causes a disgruntled cat to cast a magic spell that creates confusion among the other farm animals.



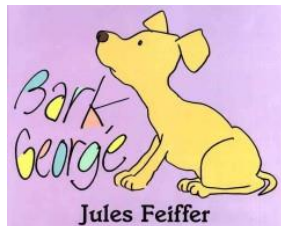
**Ehlert, Lois.** *Rrralph*, 2011.

Can dogs talk? Children will enjoy how the narrator finds out -- through (groaner) questions and responses: "Where are you?" "Roof! Roof!"



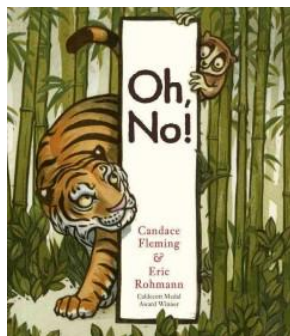
**Emberley, Rebecca.** *The Red Hen*, 2010.

A fun, colorful twist on the classic tale. When Red Hen finds a recipe for a cake, she wishes to bake it with her friends Cat, Rat, and Frog, but they want to do nothing -- except help her eat it.



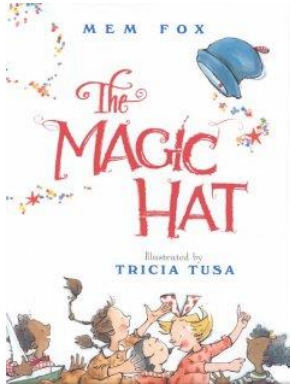
**Feiffer, Jules.** *Bark, George*, 1999.

Spare, yet unforgettable text paired with simple drawings will have the storytime crowd laughing out loud. George is a puppy who does not sound like a puppy should, despite the efforts of his mother.



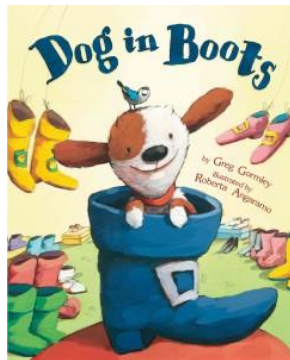
**Fleming, Candace.** *Oh, No!*, 2012.

A series of animals falls into a deep hole, saved at last by a very large rescuer. Children will enjoy the rhythm of the story while they're awaiting the next animal's tumble into the hole.



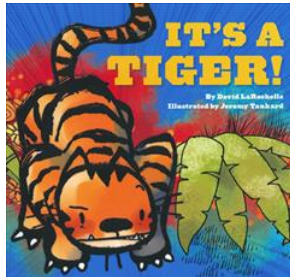
**Fox, Mem.** *The Magic Hat*, 2002.

The pacing allows this story to become an interactive guessing game with each page turn as a magical hat flies on the wind into a quiet town and transforms the townsfolk into animals.



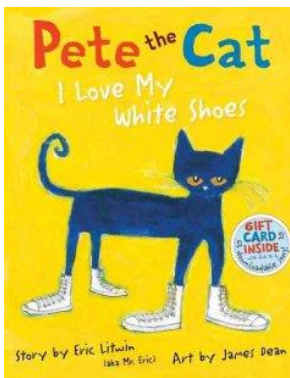
**Gormley, Greg.** *Dog in Boots*, 2011.

After reading "Puss in Boots," an adventurous dog sets out to find the perfect pair of shoes to suit his every need.



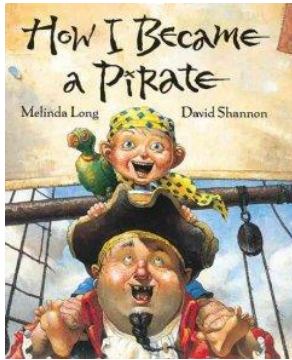
**LaRochelle, David.** *It's a Tiger!*, 2012.

Sure to invite participation, this reverse hide-and-seek features a child who imagines that he is in a story where he encounters a tiger at every turn.



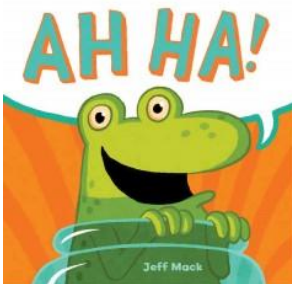
**Litwin, Eric.** *Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes*, 2010.

As he walks down the street, Pete the cat sings about his brand new white shoes as they change from red to blue to brown to wet. Children in storytime will find his infectious outlook irresistible!



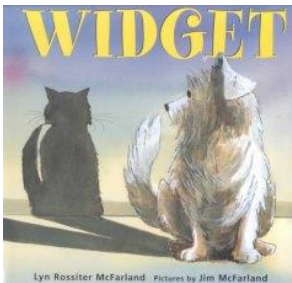
**Long, Melinda.** *How I Became a Pirate*, 2003.

Jeremy Jacob joins Braid Beard and his pirate crew and finds out about pirate language, pirate manners, and other aspects of their life in this lively tale with brightly-colored drawings by David Shannon.



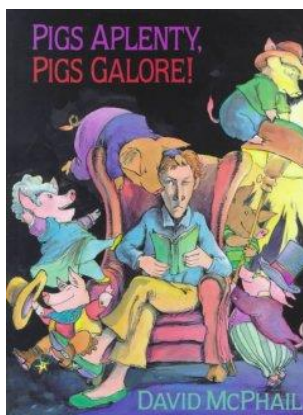
**Mack, Jeff.** *Ah Ha!*, 1941.

Fun to read aloud, this story told through simple, repeated text follows the ups and downs of a frog's day.



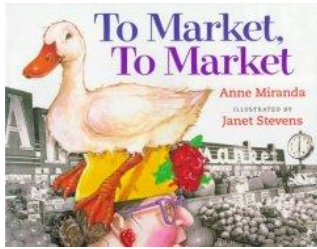
**McFarland, Lyn Rossiter.** *Widget*, 2001.

Quiet humor flavors this story of a small stray dog's efforts to fit into a household full of cats. Then, when his mistress is hurt, he demonstrates that being a dog is not all bad.



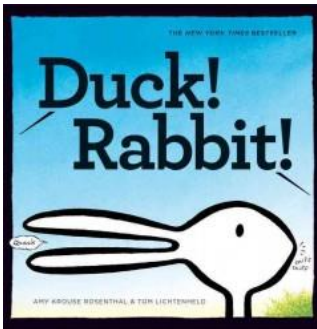
**McPhail, David.** *Pigs Aplenty, Pigs Galore!*, 1993.

Told in verse, with guffaw-inducing illustrations, kids will delight in this story of pigs who invade a house then hold a party, much to the occupant's chagrin.



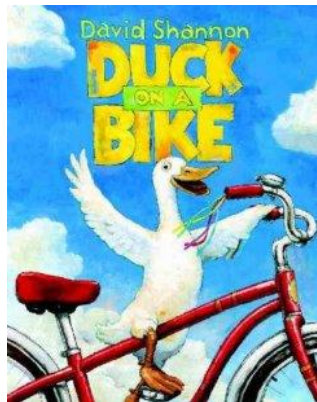
**Miranda, Anne.** *To Market, To Market*, 1997.

Beginning with the nursery rhyme about buying a fat pig at market, this rollicking read-aloud features unruly animals that run amok, evading capture and preventing the narrator from cooking lunch. Finally the animals "help" shop for and prepare a pot of vegetable soup.



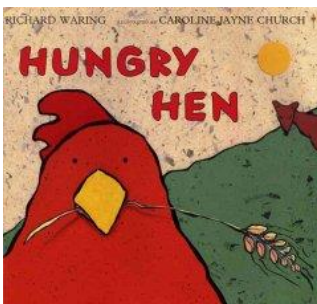
**Rosenthal, Amy Krouse.** *Duck! Rabbit!*, 2009.

Kids will revel in the art providing different points of view as two unseen characters argue about whether the creature they are looking at is a rabbit or a duck.



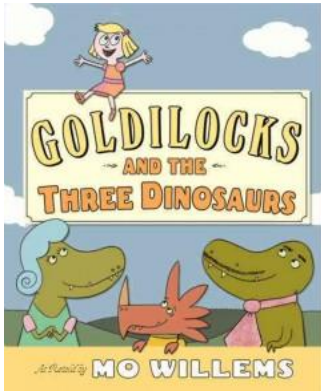
**Shannon, David.** *Duck on a Bike*, 2002.

The big, bold art makes this a storytime natural. A duck decides to ride a bike and soon influences all the other animals on the farm to ride bikes, too.



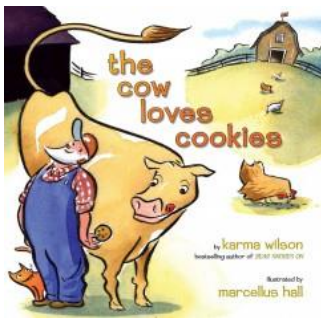
**Waring, Richard.** *Hungry Hen*, 2001.

A greedy fox watches a hungry hen growing bigger every day, knowing that the longer he waits to eat her, the bigger she will be. Older readers will pick up on the ironic ending.



**Willems, Mo.** *Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs*, 2012.

Willem's wacky retelling of the Goldilocks story involves three hungry dinosaurs lay a trap hoping to catch something to eat. Goldilocks, who never listens to warnings, walks into their house and springs the trap.



**Wilson, Karma.** *The Cow Loves Cookies*, 2012.

Repetition plus rhyming text will make this story of a cow that chooses to eat the one thing that she loves best (while other farm animals enjoy their regular food) a crowd-pleaser.

---

*Kathy Stewart, a children's librarian for 13 years, still loves reading teen and children's literature and occasionally fits in an adult novel. She is currently a Juvenile Content Specialist at NoveList and the editor of NoveList's Kids & Books.*

*Beth Gerall is the Juvenile Content Lead at NoveList. She has 18 years of library experience, 14 of them as a teacher-librarian in public schools. She reads everything from picture books to young adult fiction, and was a member of the 2008 USBBY Outstanding International Books Committee and on served on the ALA Notable Children's Books Committee for 2010 and 2011.*

---

This material is copyrighted. Text may not be copied without the express written permission of the publisher except for the imprint of the video screen content or via the output options of the EBSCOhost software. Text is intended solely for the use of the individual user.