

Top Ten Picture Books

There are so many great picture books available and many of them can be used as starting points for elements of mathematics. This could be number, size, shape, pattern, one aspect of measures or a combination of these. These books can be visited again and again, explored on many levels and are likely to become classic favourites.

Dunbar, J (2006) Shoe Baby, Walker

This book offers opportunities to explore size and pairs too, through rhythmic text and an engaging storyline that includes giants.

Carle, E, (2010) The Bad Tempered Ladybird , Puffin

Children can explore 'time' and size as the bad tempered ladybird tries to pick a fight with increasing large creatures throughout the day.

Grey, M (2005) Biscuit Bear, Red Fox

Join with Horace as he reads recipes, bakes biscuit bears and decorates them and explore shape and measures in this story which includes both messy and scary bits to entrance children!

Gravett, E (2011) The Odd Egg, Two Hoots

A great book for the youngest children – time to explore all sorts of eggs and talk about size, shape and things that are the same and different too.

Inkpen, M (2006) The Great Pet Sale, Hodder

Another book that offers opportunities to investigate size but here children can talk about money too. Will they buy a tiny terrapin for 2p or a great big dragon for 25p?

Kitamura, S (2009) Millie's Marvellous Hat, Anderson Press

A fantastic tale that promotes abstract thinking and encourages children to look very hard at the illustrations as they discover what is going on.

Freedman, C (2007) Aliens Love Underpants, Simon and Schuster

This book has a hilarious story line that will appeal to children who love aliens, monsters, underwear or all three. An opportunity to think about pattern while having a lot of fun.

Campbell, R (2010) Dear Zoo, MacMillan

This book is available in a board book format so the youngest children can talk about the different sized animals and lift the flaps to see what is inside.

Allen, P (1988) Who Sank the Boat?, Puffin

Time to chat about the size and number of animals and just how many animals can float in a boat. A starting point for problem solving and talk about balance too.

Gray, K (2004) Billy's Bucket, Red Fox

This book follows a popular theme of the perils of not listening to children and offers opportunities to think more about 'full' and 'empty' and size. Just how many things can you fit in a bucket?

If the children enjoy sharing these books, all of the authors have written lots of other titles too, so it is worth searching in libraries for more new favourites.

Remember to explore maths elements in traditional stories such as: The Three Little Pigs, Goldilocks and the Three Bears, The Gingerbread Man, The Enormous Watermelon, Jack and the Beanstalk or The Three Bill Goats Gruff. With older children, contemporary retellings 'with a twist' can enthrall children too. Try looking at Mr Wolf and the Three Bears, by Jan Fearnley (Egmont, 2013), which includes recipes and lots of maths talk about parties.

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