



International Literacy Day -2025

Theme - *'Promoting literacy in the digital era'*

An annotated bibliography to promote reading

Since 1967, the annual celebrations of International Literacy Day (ILD) have taken place on 8 September around the world to remind policy-makers, practitioners, and the public of the critical importance of literacy for creating more literate, just, peaceful, and sustainable society.

Literacy is a fundamental human right for all. It opens the door to the enjoyment of other human rights, greater freedoms, and global citizenship. Literacy is a foundation for people to acquire broader knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and behaviours to foster a culture of lasting peace based on respect for equality and non-discrimination, the rule of law, solidarity, justice, diversity, and tolerance and to build harmonious relations with oneself, other people and the planet. Despite progress, at least 739 million youth and adults worldwide still lack basic literacy skills in 2024. At the same time, 4 in 10 children are not reaching minimum proficiency in reading, and 272 million children and adolescents were out of school in 2023. UNESCO website

Literacy is a basic skill that contributes to a person's quality of life in day-to day living and beyond. It is necessary to successfully navigate life and become an informed contributing member of society. Literacy skills can be developed through regular reading including reading for pleasure. Reading contributes to language development and its use, and in the ability to analysis the world around on a deeper level .

In these days of social media, streaming services and endless visual images reading can seem to some, especially children, a chore rather than a joy. There also may be various developmental challenges. Reading aloud to children from birth, and for the many years after, is a wonderful way to assist and grow literacy. The benefits of reading aloud are overwhelming supported by research and is considered by social scientists as 'one of the most important factors in providing children with a positive start to their lives'

Children exposed to books in this way both at home and at school are more likely to develop a love of reading as they grow. They will associate sharing books with being in a warm, comfortable, and loving environment and they learn that reading takes you places, as you slip in and out of real and imagined worlds, meet interesting characters and learn many new and wonderous things.

This bibliography is not about literacy per say but rather it is a list of books about books and stories, about bookshops and libraries and the magical impact they can have. At the end is a list of adult books that have information to assist in encouraging reading both as a life skill and reading for pleasure.

Picture Books

1. ALLEN, Emma. Illustrated by Lisa Coutts
The Great Book Swapping Machine. NLA Publishing, 2021. ISBN: 9780642279736
Late one night, a thing appears in the paddock next to Fabio's house. His dad calls it 'space junk' but inside Fabio discovers books. Books about the galaxy; big, fat books; books full of poems. He swaps a book with Leila from next door and the thing becomes a Great Book-swapping Machine. But will the very important woman from the Space Agency let the community keep their machine, and what will happen when Fabio pulls its shiny red lever? A book about the joys of reading and the importance of community.
2. BAILLIE, Kaye. Illustrated by Tracie Grimwood
Boo loves Books. New Frontier Publishing, 2020. ISBN: 9781922326027
Everyone in the Miss Spinelli's class loves reading except Phoebe, she was always afraid she would get a word or a sound wrong even when she did know it. Then one day the class went to read somewhere special – the Animal Shelter and each student would be reading to a dog. Phoebe was scared but she learnt that the Boo the dog was even more scared. Will Phoebe succeed in reading to Boo?
3. BLAND, Nick
The Wrong Book. Scholastic Press, 2009. ISBN: 9781741693416
Nicholas Ickle is trying to tell a story but he keeps getting interrupted by characters from other stories - a pirate, a queen, even some monsters. To get a chance to tell his story, he has to convince the others that they are in the wrong book.
4. CLARKE, Justine and Arthur Baysting. Illustrated by Tom Jellett
The Gobbledygook is Eating a Book. Penguin Viking, 2012. ISBN: 9780670076574
The Gobbledygook is coming, it snuffles and gruffles but oh no oh, look – it's ripping up pages and eating a book! It's up to us to teach the Gobbledygook that books are for reading and can take us to all sorts of wondrous places real and imagined.
5. DETTMAN, Jessica. Illustrated by Jake A. Minton
There's No Such Book. Little Hare, 2022. ISBN: 9781760509743
It's the night before the Book Week parade and Ellie announces that she needs a costume by the morning. Mum, who is taken by surprise, desperately tries to piece together a costume from what's lying around the house... They went into the bathroom. 'Hmm,' said Mum. 'Don't I remember once reading you a book about a monster whose skin looked like it was made of bright green towels?' 'No,' said Ellie. 'There is no such book.' Ellie heads to bed only with Mum's promise that she'll have a costume sorted by the morning. Mum stays true to her word, but perhaps not in the way that Ellie was hoping.
6. DUBOSARSKY, Ursula. Illustrated by Tohby Riddle
The March of the Ants. Book Trail Press, 2021. ISBN: 9780648498919
The ants are heading out on a very important expedition. What will they need to take with them? It's a wild journey! And in the end, it's the littlest ant who leads the others to discover the most important thing of all. A book about a very special book.

7. DUNJEY, Amy. Illustrated by Deb Hudson
Once Upon an A-Z. Affirm Press, 2025. ISBN: 9781923022089.
 Not your typical A-Z and how some words, some magical words sweep you into stories. This is alphabet magic that will take in worlds of magic, wonder and laughter. What story, which words do you know where you can ride a magic carpet or fly with witches through the sky. Open this book and see.

8. GLEESON, Libby. Illustrated by Freya Blackwood
Look, A BOOK! Little Hare Books, 2011. ISBN: 9781921541803
 When two children stumble across a book lying in the dirt of their yard their world begins to change. The familiar becomes fantastical, the mundane magical and a family finds a new world through the magic of story and imagination very different to their dreary real world. A powerful look at the power of story to change lives.

9. HIBBERT, Kelly. Illustrated by Sue DeGennaro
Sebastian and the special stack of stories. Angus & Robertson, 2018. ISBN: 9781460753460
 Sebastian trots off at a slow steady speed with a bundle of books he'd love someone to read. Where can you find the best spot to hear a story when you're the smallest and slowest one in a big family? Sebastian knows. A book that celebrates the joy of reading and family.

10. McGEACHIN, Jess.
The Lost Library. Puffin Books, 2020. ISBN: 978176089271.
 When Oliver finds a lost library book that says to belong to the 'lost library' he decides to return it with the help of his new friend Rosie. In the library he drops it in the return slot but as the book disappeared so did the floor hurtling Oliver and Rosie down and down into a world of books and bookshelves – 'the lost library' and with the help of books and stories they navigate themselves out even soothing the scary bookshelf dragon.

11. PRIOR, Natalie Jane. Illustrated by Cheryl Orsini
Lucy's Book. Lothian Children's Books, 2017. ISBN: 978073441660
 Lucy loves to read, but there is one special book that she borrows from the library over and over again. The book is shared with her friends, dropped in the ocean, flown to China and even made into a banana sandwich. But what will Lucy do when her favourite book goes missing?

12. SAUNDERS, Kirli. Illustrated by Matt Ottley
The Incredible Freedom Machines. Scholastic Press. 2018. ISBN: 978170275228.
 She was small when she heard about them – the incredible freedom machines. They were hard to come by, but she saw the need and the perfect one took time and effort to find and to be able to use properly her freedom machine could take her to the most wondrous places and be all she needed.

13. SHURETY, Wenda. Illustrated by Amy Calautti
One book was all it took. EK Books, 2022. ISBN: 9781922539137.
Violet longs for a library full of exciting books she's never read before, but on this particular rainy day, the only unfamiliar book she can find is the one propping up the kitchen table. With a CLATTER and a CRASH, Violet's actions set in motion an unstoppable chain of events that soon has the whole town in chaos! A story about how actions can have consequences and just how valuable libraries are.
14. SILLETT, Devon. Illustrated by Anil Tortop.
The Leaky Story: a fun-filled adventure into the power of the imagination and the magic of books. EK Books, 2017. ISBN: 9781925335392.
A book sits abandoned on a living room shelf. While the Blossburn family happily gets on with other things like watching TV and playing video games, the book aches to be read. The longer it sits abandoned, the more it aches. At last, the book can't take it any longer, it starts to swell, then it starts to leak. At first, it's only a small trickle, but eventually the family can no longer ignore the octopus, crabs and other marine life that are swirling around them and when pirates sail out of the book, the family must band together to reclaim their living room. Can they find a way to get the characters back in the book? And in doing so they find that sometimes books are the best fun of all. An action-packed adventure into the wonderful art of storytelling and the power of the imagination.
15. SPRINGER, Luke (Mr Luke). Illustrated by Chris Kennett
Guess what we are doing today? Scholastic Australia, 2024. ISBN: 9781760265533.
When Mr Luke asks his class to guess what they are doing today they are brimming with ideas. Is it the beach or a farm or maybe a circus. Perhaps it's sailing with pirates or going to space. Mr Luke leads them to a familiar place and the class lose their smiles. It's just the library they cry but Mr Luke leads them in, to a world of imagination and unending possibilities – the world of books.
16. WILD, Margaret. Illustrated by Hannah Sommerville
Reading to Baby. Affirm Press, 2024. ISBN: 9781922930378
When Dora was born her brothers were very excited and all name things they are going to do with her; cuddle her, rock her to sleep, laugh with her. The youngest brother Peter says, 'I'm going to read to her.' All Dora's brothers look after and play with her as she grows but Peter's reading to her turns out to be the greatest gift of all.
17. WILD, Margaret. Illustrated by Ben Wood
The Bush Book Club. Omnibus Book, 2014. ISBN: 9781742990149
All the animals belong to the Bush Book Club and love to read. All except Bilby. He can't stay still long enough to read a book not when there are somersaults, cartwheels, and handstands to do. That is until he creep into a book club meeting and bored falls asleep behind a bookcase. When he wakes it's dark and everyone has gone home, and the door and windows are all locked. Bilby reluctantly picked up a book and opened it...

Novels and Storybooks

18. ABELA, Deborah
The book of wondrous possibilities. Puffin Books, 2022. ISBN: 9781761044021
Arlo Goodman lives with his Uncle Avery in a run-down flat above their bookshop. He has no friends, except for his pet mouse, Herbert. But when a girl called Lisette bursts into the shop and begs him to hide her from a murderer, Arlo's life changes forever. He's swept up into an adventure involving kidnappers, car chases and battling dragons a story in 'The Book of Wondrous Possibilities.'
19. GORDON, Kate. Illustrated by Sandy Flett.
Juno Jones: Word Ninja. Yellow Brick Books, 2019. ISBN: 9780994557094
A disaster has happened! Muttonbird Bay School might be closing. I mean forever! Juno Jones loves her school but the Men in Suits want to close it down! And there's only one thing Juno and her classmates can do to stop it... Read! Which is perfectly fine, but Juno Jones is a kid who doesn't like reading! To save her school Juno Jones will become a WORD NINJA!
20. MURRAY, Kirsty. Illustrated by Florence Boyd
The Clever Cats Book Club. Puffin Books (Aussie Bites series), 2013. ISBN: 9780143307228
Alice loves reading more than anything, and she is proud to be the 'biggest reader' in her school. Then Sophie Smith turns up. Sophie is the daughter of the new school librarian, and she's an even bigger reader than Alice and she shakes Alice's confidence. When Alice has the idea for starting up a book club, she imagines it as being just for herself and her close friends, even though her friends aren't particularly dedicated readers. She's not at all sure that she really wants know-it-all Sophie to be a member.
21. PRIOR, Natalie Jane. Illustrated by Cheryl Orsini
The Magic Bookshop. ABC Books, 2018. ISBN: 978-733338328
Anything can happen in the magic bookshop ... On rainy afternoons, when it's too wet to play outside after school, Ben goes to his grandfather's bookshop. But with secret doors and passages, and tigers under the floorboards, there's much more happening at the magic bookshop than Ben bargains for.
22. RIPPIN, Sally. Illustrated by Aki Fukuoka
Billie B Brown & Hey Jack: The Book Buddies. Harie Grant, 2023. ISBN: 9781761212529
Billie and Jack are best friends. They do everything together. They are sure they will be book buddies for the School Reading Challenge. But what happens when they are split up?
23. ZUSAK, Marcus
The Book Thief. Picador, 2005. ISBN: 9780330364263
It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier and will become busier still. By her brother's graveside, Liesel's life is changed when she picks up a single object, partially hidden in the snow. It is the Gravedigger's Handbook, left there by accident, and it is her first act of book thievery. So begins a love affair with books and words, as Liesel, with the help of her accordion-playing foster father, learns to read. Soon she is stealing books from Nazi book-burnings, the mayor's wife's library wherever there are books to be found.

Resources to assist Parents and Teachers with promoting reading
These books may be available in public libraries

24. DALEY, Megan
Raising Readers. How to nurture a child's love of books. University of Queensland Press, 2019. ISBN: 9780702262579
An essential and practical resource for parents and educators. Information on when to start reading to your child, how to find that special book to inspire a reluctant reader and how to keep tweens reading into their adolescent years in these days of social media and much more. A very accessible book that covers a wide range of reading/book related topics.
25. FOX, Mem. Illustrated by Judy Horacek
Reading Magic. How your child can learn to read before school - and other read-aloud miracles. 2nd edition Pan Macmillan Australia, 2012. ISBN: 9781742612690
How many of us realise we can get our children on the road to reading long before they start school simply by reading aloud to them every day. Author and literacy expert Mem Fox explains why reading aloud to young children has such an impact on their ability to learn to read – and on their entire lives.
26. FRENCH, Jackie
I spy a great reader. How to unlock the literacy secret and get your child hooked on books. Angus & Robertson, 2014. ISBN: 9780732299521
Does your child love books, but cannot stay still long enough to focus on reading one? Would you like to improve your child's reading ability? Do not know where to begin to stimulate a greater love of reading in your child? The author knows what it is to struggle with reading and literacy. Drawing on her own experience with dyslexia, Jackie has written this book to help parents identify the possible reading difficulties their children may have. All children learn differently, and Jackie offers many fun and rewarding ways to help launch your child into literacy. These include games for coordination, concentration and focus as well as helpful steps to kickstart your child into reading and to foster a life-long love of books. This book is filled with a wealth of advice, anecdotes, and activities.
27. GRAY, Lara Cain. Illustrated by Timothy Ide and Lorena Carrington
The Grown-Up's Guide to Picture Books. MidnightSun, 2024. ISBN: 9781922858504
A picture book is a book with pictures, but it's so much more than that! This A to Z guide helps you level up your picture book reading experiences, empowering yourself and the young readers in your world to dive deeper into what makes a great picture book great. With histories, insights, and handy talking points for shared reading, come and explore the complexities of modern picture books.
28. JENNINGS, Paul. Illustrated by Andrew Welden
The reading bug ... and how you can help your children catch it. Penguin, 2003. ISBN: 014300087X.
In a clear and humorous style author Paul Jennings explains how you can open the world and more to your children through a love of books and reading. He explains in simple terms ways to enable every parent to infect their child with the 'reading bug'

29. MOLONEY, James. Illustrated by Cathy Wilcox
Boys and books. Building a culture of reading around our boys. 2nd edition ABC Books, 2002. ISBN: 0733311563
The declining literacy standard for boys is an issue of widespread concern. This book looks at why boys don't read and why they should. The author gives practical tips and strategies for helping boys of all ages. James Moloney is an author and an experienced teacher-librarian with fifteen years' experience in a boys' school.
30. PARK, Louise. Illustrated by Nellé May Pierce
7 Steps to get your child reading. Allen & Unwin, 2020. ISBN: 9781760524678
Literacy is the single most important thing for our children to learn. If they can read, all other learning will follow, but in today's digital age the goalposts have shifted. This book shows how to make the most of both digital and traditional forms of reading and provides commonsense plans for making a reader of your child.
31. RIPPIN, Sally
Wild Things. How we learn to read and what can happen if we don't. Hardie Grant Books, 2022. ISBN: 9781760507640
When author Sally Rippin discovered her child was struggling to read, she assumed it would sort itself out over time. She was wrong. Her son's dyslexia and ADHD went unsupported for years, leaving him behind his peers and labelled as 'difficult' by an education system that couldn't easily cater to *neurodivergent* kids. By the time Sally learned how to advocate for him, it was -- almost -- too late. In this book, Sally shares those vital lessons so that we can help all kids find the joy in reading -- and advocate for them throughout their school years.