



# The Kindergarten Chronicles

Robyn Markovic, Lamping Elementary

Casey Juliano, Lunt Elementary

## Literature in the Classroom

I can't imagine teaching without wonderfully rich literature filling the walls of my classroom. It flows through every aspect of my curriculum.

To develop phonological awareness, I read books like Altoona Baboona by Janie Bynum and nearly any Dr. Seuss book. When I wish to inspire glorious words in writing, I read books such as Feathers and Fools by Mem Fox and Fancy Nancy by Jane O'Connor.

When I embark on an investigation of oviparous animals, I select Chickens Aren't the Only One by Ruth Heller, or I call on authors such as Gail Gibbons or Steve Jenkins, who make informational text come alive. When I plan to explore counting, I choose Rooster's Off to See the World by Eric Carle. For onomopopia, Yikes!

by Robert Florczak, to improve students' ear for voice, Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse by Kevin Henkes, to make a distinction between ending punctuation, Yo! Yes! by Chris Raschka, to delve into story elements, any fairy tale (or fractured fairy tale), and when I want to impart motivation and inspiration to students, I rely upon the magic within my classroom library: Koala Lou by Mem Fox, Alice the Fairy by David Shannon, and The Last of the Really Great Whangdoodles by Julie Edwards.

I read with enthusiasm, zest, and thoughtfulness. I model daily, throughout the day, the thrill and enchantment reading brings to my life, so that my students will appreciate the world that reading will unlock for them!

- Casey Juliano

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Bill Hanlon, Director

## Books You May Not Know (and Will Want to Read!)



### The Great Fuzz Frenzy

by Janet Stevens & Susan Stevens Crummel

A delightful story about greed, coveting, and teamwork will hit home with your kindergarteners as they learn to share, discover their individuality, and learn to work with others. When a new "fuzzy" object (a tennis ball) drops down their hole, the prairie dogs lose all reason just to get their hands on some of that wonderful yellow fuzz, but the story really explodes when their amazing new find disappears. As always, Janet Stevens offers wonderfully vivid illustrations that place the reader smack dab in the middle of the fantastically, outrageous chaos.



### Fancy Nancy by Jane O'Connor

You will adore the whimsy and pizzazz that O'Connor's character Nancy creates, and immediately you will want to fancify your life. There is nothing ordinary about Nancy. Not only is she the fanciest girl on the block, but she also teaches others how to be as fancy as her. With the love of her family, she embraces her glamour in good times and bad. This is a personal favorite for introducing young students to the art of choosing the perfect words to make your writing dance across the pages.



### The Deep Blue Sea by Audrey Wood

This book just screams Kindergarten. In the tradition of The House That Jack Built and The Napping House, Wood slowly builds throughout the story until the culmination; a burst of color shining itself on a tiny island. The highlight of this story about colors is Wood's son Bruce's wonderfully vivid illustrations, which compel the reader to run their fingers over each page. Each time I read it, I imagine all of the class books I could create with my students, incorporating the structure of the book, while changing the setting.



### Beatrice Doesn't Want To by Laura Numeroff

Beatrice is stubborn. Her brother is enlisted to baby-sit Beatrice for three days. He also has a report due that must be researched at the library. Beatrice is adamant about not reading any books because, "She doesn't want to!" We follow Beatrice on her journey to reading. This story may launch hard-to-reach students' interest in finding a genre or story that will inspire them to dive into reading.



### The Ticky-Tacky Doll by Cynthia Rylant

From the Newbery Award winning author who has brought us The Relatives Came and Henry and Mudge, comes this book which is perfectly suited for students just beginning school. No one can understand why the little girl is not learning at school, but her grandma knows. The power of observation and problem solving come to life on each page and inspire us to be truly watchful. I read this book when teaching text-to self connections, as most young students starting school for the first time are leaving something special at home.



### The Story of Frog Belly Rat Bone by Timothy Ering

The title alone inspires at least one read! The book has unique illustrations and a story that fills the heart with beauty and magic. This book is a "hidden treasure". This story definitely explores the sayings, "One man's trash is another man's treasure" and "You can't judge a book by it's cover." There is drama, mystery, suspense, garbage and beauty. It is a book that will inspire and encourage students to indulge in their imagination and should be read over and over, as each reading will bring something new to consider.

Show me the books he loves and I shall know the man far better than through mortal friends.

~ Dawn Adams ~