

Our Recommended Reads: A Prescription for Comic Relief



Kids want to read books that make them laugh, and they need to read books they enjoy to help them become adults who read for fun.

Scholastic polls children and parents every other year, asking questions about their reading habits and what they want to read. The poll shows, unfortunately, that kids start to lose the belief that reading is fun and enjoyable between the ages of eight and nine. The good news is you can make an impact in changing their minds with giggles and guffaws! Scholastic reports that over 50% of children want a book that will make them laugh, and this desire continues to grow with each survey they do.

Kerri Brown Parker, director of the NC State College of Education's Media and Education Technology Resource Center (METRC), curated three lists of book recommendations designed to keep kids smiling as they develop a love of reading for fun. The books, sorted by grade level, can be used in K-12 classrooms or added to your home library to encourage reading on a daily basis.

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Picture Books

- > *Rude Cakes* by Rowboat Watkins
- > *Polar Bear's Underwear* by Tupera Tupera
- > *Mother Bruce* by Ryan T. Higgins
- > *Robo-Sauce* by Adam Rubin
- > *Is that Wise, Pig?* by Jan Thomas
- > *Goodnight Already!* by Jory John, Benji Davies
- > *Interrupting Chicken* by David Ezra Stein
- > *Interrupting Chicken and the Elephant of Surprise* by David Ezra Stein
- > *The Legend of Rock Paper Scissors* by Drew Daywalt
- > *We Found a Hat* by John Klassen
- > *The Book with No Pictures* by B. J. Novak
- > *The Wall in the Middle of the Book* by Jon Agee
- > *The Happiest Book Ever* by Bob Shea
- > *Rabbit's Bad Habits* by Julian Gough
- > *Penguin Problems* by Jory John, Lane Smith
- > *Potato Pants* by Lauri Keller
- > *Snappsy the Alligator Did Not Ask to Be in this Book* by Julie Falatko
- > *Be Quiet* by Ryan Higgins
- > *XO, OX* by Adam Rex
- > *I'm Bored* by Michael Ian Black
- > *Big Bad Bubble* by Adam Rubin
- > *Everyone Loves Bacon* by Kelly DiPucchio



Elementary Chapter Books and Graphic Novels

- > *The Bad Guys* by Aaron Blabey
- > *The Terrible Two* by Mac Barnett
- > *Mac Undercover: Spy Kid #1* by Mac Barnett
- > *Timmy Failure* by Stephen Pastis
- > *The Wee Free Men* by Terry Pratchett
- > *Bunny vs. Monkey* by Jamie Smart
- > *The Infamous Ratsos* by Kara LaReau
- > *Dog Man* by Dav Pilkey
- > *Narwhal: Unicorn of the Sea (Narwhal and Jelly Series)* by Ben Clanton
- > *The Boy Who Crashed to Earth (HiLo Series)* by Judd Winick
- > *Squirm* by Carl Hiaasen
- > *King Flashypants and the Evil Emperor (King Flashypants Series)* by Andy Riley
- > *Funny Girl* by Betsy Bird
- > *Sam Wu is Not Afraid of Ghosts* by Katie Tsang, Kevin Tsang, Nathan Reed
- > *The Magic Misfits* by Neil Patrick Harris
- > *Funny Kid for President* by Matt Stanton
- > *Frazzled. Everyday Disasters and Impending Doom* by Booki Vivat
- > *Margot and Mateo Save the World (4-6)* by Darcy Miller
- > *Funny Girl: Funniest. Stories. Ever* by Betsy Bird
- > *Tito the Bonecrusher* by Melissa Thomson
- > *Sparks* by Ian Boothby
- > *Mr. Penguin and the Lost Treasure* by Alex T. Smith
- > *The Last Kids on Earth* by Max Brallier
- > *Front Desk* by Kelly Yang

Middle School and Teen/YA Books

Many of these YA titles are both funny and moving. Humor can be an excellent way into difficult topics for teens. The recommended appropriate grade level is listed following each title.

- > *Foolish Hearts (9+)* by Emma Mills
- > *When Dimple Met Rishi (9+)* by Sandhya Menon
- > *The Rest of Us Just Live Here (9+)* by Patrick Ness
- > *The Assassination of Brangwain Spurge (6-8)* by M.T. Anderson, Eugene Yelchin
- > *Americanized: Rebel Without a Green Card (8+)* by Sara Saedi
- > *My Plain Jane (9+)* by Cynthia Hand, Jodi Meadows, Brodi Ashton
- > *The Haters: A Book About Being in a Band (10+)* by Jesse Andrews
- > *We are the Perfect Girl (6+)* by Ariel Kaplan
- > *American Panda (9+)* by Gloria Chao
- > *Heretics Anonymous (9+)* by Katie Henry
- > *The Pros of Cons (7+)* by Alison Cherry, Lindsay Ribar,
- Michelle Schusterman
- > *The Lake Effect (9+)* by Erin McCahan
- > *This is Not the End (8+)* by Chandler Baker
- > *It Wasn't Me (5-8)* by Dana Alison Levy
- > *I am Fartacus: Fartacus Series (4-8)* by Mark Maciejewski
- > *The Mighty Odds (5-8)* by Amy Ignatow
- > *Merci Suarez Changes Gears (4-7)* by Meg Medina
- > *New Kid (5-8)* by Jerry Craft
- > *Slider (5-8)* by Pete Hautman
- > *The Worst Class Trip Ever (5-8)* by Dave Barry
- > *The Tapper Twins Go to War (With Each Other) (5-8)* by Geoff Rodkey
- > *Boys Don't Knit (8+)* by T.S. Easton
- > *Lumberjanes (5+)* by Noelle Stevenson

Want more suggestions? Explore GoodReads and NoveList (public library card or university ID required for access). In NoveList you can filter searches by "Tone: Funny" and find read-alikes for books children and adults enjoy. Books on the lists in this article were selected from NoveList, a variety of award listings, and starred reviews from Kirkus, School Library Journal, Publisher's Weekly and BookList.

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