



Starting School: a list of recommended books

Annabelle Swift, Kindergartner by Amy Schwartz (New York: Orchard Books, 1988). Annabelle is rather flamboyant, and eager to show off some of the unusual lessons her older sister has taught her, but the day ends up a roaring success.

Beginning School by Irene Smalls (New York: Burdett, 1996). Alicia's fears about starting Kindergarten are calmed when her first days are full of fun and activity.

Born in the Gravy by Denys Cazet (New York: Orchard, 1993). Margarita and her Papá go out for ice cream while she tells him all about her first day of Kindergarten.

Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes (New York: HarperTrophy, 1996). Chrysanthemum has always loved her name but when she arrives in a kindergarten class full of kids with short, sensible names like Max and Sam, her name becomes the object of ridicule until an unexpected surprise puts an end to the teasing.

Countdown to Kindergarten by Alison McGhee (San Diego, CA: Harcourt, 2002). With the start of kindergarten only 10 days away, a preschooler who cannot tie her shoes fears that she won't be allowed to go and tries to learn, only to find out that when she shares her fear on the first day many of her classmates can't tie theirs either.

First Day, Hooray! by Nancy Poydar (New York: Holiday House, 2000). Explores the feelings of happiness and apprehension of the first day of school experienced not just by Ivy, the new student, but also by the bus driver, janitor, teacher and principal.

First Day Jitters by Juli Dannenberg (Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2000). Sarah Hartwell imagines all the worst things possible about her new school as she slowly gets up, gets ready and goes to school. The surprise ending – Sarah is the new teacher – should reassure children that adults also get scared about new things.

First Grade Can Wait by Lorraine Aseltine (Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman, 1998). A young kindergartner who does not feel ready to move on from kindergarten to first grade is relieved when his parents and teacher decide he can stay in kindergarten for another year.

I Am Too Absolutely Small For School by Lauren Child (Cambridge, MA; Candlewick, 2004). Lola, the charming heroine of "I Will Never, Not Ever, Eat a Tomato" is worried about starting school her older brother Charlie reassures her that it will be okay.

Kindergarten Rocks! by Katie Davis (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2005). Dexter is about to start kindergarten and although he's not at all scared about it, his stuffed dog, Rufus, is. So Dexter's older sister tells Rufus all about how kindergarten rocks.

Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come! by Nancy L. Carlson (New York: Viking, 1999). Even though Henry is looking forward to going to kindergarten, he is not sure about staying once he first gets there.

Lunch Bunnies by Kathryn Lasky (Boston: Little, Brown, 1996). Clyde, first grader, has been told all sorts of scary tales about the cafeteria by his older brother. But on his first day he finds that things can, and do, work out well.

Mama, Don't Go! by Rosemary Wells (New York: Hyperion, 2001). Yoko loves kindergarten, but she doesn't want her mother to leave, until her new friend helps her realize that "mothers always come back."

Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten by Joseph Slate (New York: Dutton, 1996). The first of the many Miss Bindergarten books, all of which take place in a kindergarten class room. Here Miss Bindergarten prepares herself and her classroom for the first day of school, while her 26 soon-to-be students (from Adam the alligator to Zach the zebra) also get ready.

Molly Rides The School Bus by Julie Brillhart (Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman, 2002). Molly is worried about riding the school bus on her first day of kindergarten, but a friendly older girl helps her out.

Moses Goes to School by Isaac Millman (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2000). A typical first day of school, except that this a school for the deaf and hard of hearing. Includes easy-to-understand illustrations of American Sign Language and the lyrics and signs for "Take Me Out to the Ballgame."

The Most Beautiful Place in the World by Ann Cameron (New York: Knopf, 1988). A short first chapter book telling the story of Juan, who lives with his grandmother in Guatemala, and desperately wants to go to school.

Mrs. Watson Wants Your Teeth by Alison McGhee (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2004). A first grader is frightened on her first day of school after hearing a rumor that her teacher is a 300-year-old alien with a purple tongue who steals baby teeth from her students.

The Name Jar by Yangsook Choi (New York: Knopf, 2001). A Young Korean girl enlists her new classmates' help to pick out an American name.

Ndito Runs by Laurie Halse Anderson (New York: Henry Holt, 1999). Ndito runs barefoot in her school uniform though her Kenyan village and out onto the savannah to her school.

Never Spit on Your Shoes by Denys Cazet (New York: Scholastic, 1993). After an exhausting first day of first grade Arnie and his Mom discuss the day, while the illustrations show what actually went on. The title refers to a discussion of school rules.

The Night Before Kindergarten by Natasha Wing (New York: Scholastic, 2002). Written in the style of "The Night Before Christmas" this tells all about the preparations for the first day of Kindergarten.

Rachel Parker, Kindergarten Show-off by Ann M Martin (New York: Holiday House, 1992). When Olivia's new neighbor, Rachel, arrives in her kindergarten class, the two girls' feelings of jealousy and competitiveness must be conquered before they can be friends.

Running the Road to ABC by Denize Lature (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). Several Haitian kids run through the early morning to school, rhyming and showing off the beauty of the island.

School Supplies: a Book of Poems by Lee Bennett Hopkins (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). 16 short and colorful poems sing the praises of school supplies.

Sparky and Eddie: the first day of school by Tony Johnston (New York: Scholastic, 1997). Two friends find that they are not in the same classroom when they start school, but they end the day glad they decided to give school a try.

Tiptoe into Kindergarten by Jacqueline Rogers (New York: Scholastic, 1999). A young preschool girl accompanies her big brother to kindergarten and discovers a fun atmosphere, full of blocks and books, paints and puzzles.

We Share Everything! by Robert Munsch (New York: Scholastic, 1999). On the first day of school, after being scolded by their kindergarten teacher for not sharing, a boy and girl share their clothes and shoes.

Welcome to Kindergarten by Anne F Rockwell (New York: Walker, 2001). A boy visits the classroom where he will attend kindergarten the following fall and finds out what is in store for him.

Wemberly Worried by Kevin Henkes (New York: Greenwillow, 2000). A mouse named Wemberly, who worries about everything, is especially worried about her first day nursery school, and recites a long list of concerns. Her teacher introduces her to a new friend, and they play together she still worries, but no more than usual, "and sometimes even less."

What Will Mommy Do When I'm at School? by Dolores Johnson (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990). A young girl worries that her mother will be unhappy when she goes to school because they have always been together during the day, but her mother reassures her that it will be fine.

"Where Are You Going, Manyoni?" by Catherine Stock (New York: HarperCollins, 1993). The story of Manyoni's long walk to school in Zimbabwe, showcasing many wonderful sights along the way.