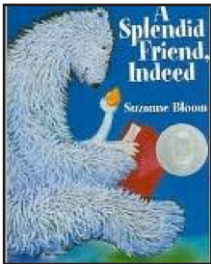


Books about the Power of Friendship

Developing friendships takes practice but is one of the most rewarding things to happen in a child's life. Knowing how to be a good friend is a powerful skill and a child who knows how to be a friend is a child who will have a more successful and happy time in school and in life.

Books show how friends can be very different from one another and still get along. They emphasize the importance of being kind, sharing, and working together to solve problems. All of these skills are truly Super Powers for young children.

Recommended for Read-Aloud

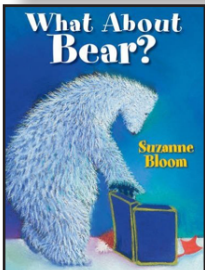


A Splendid Friend Indeed

written and illustrated by Suzanne Bloom

A beautifully illustrated story about a special friendship between a polar bear and duck formed through compromise and acceptance of one another's differences.

Preschool–Kindergarten

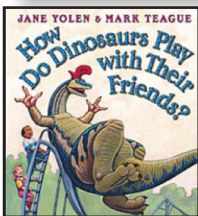


What About Bear?

written and illustrated by Suzanne Bloom

The dilemma of choosing one friend over another is a classic childhood problem. As this gentle story shows, avoiding hurt feelings lies in including friends, not excluding them.

Preschool–1st grade

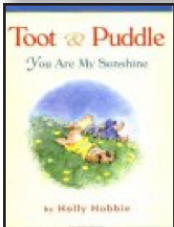


How Do Dinosaurs Play with their Friends?

by Jane Yolen, illustrated by Mark Teague

Children love the funny examples of how dinosaurs play badly with their friends and love to come up with ideas and advice on how these dinosaur friends should behave.

Preschool–1st grade

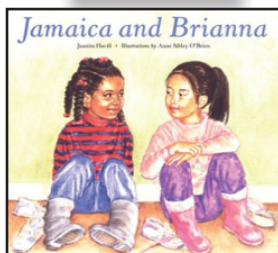


Toot and Puddle: You Are my Sunshine

written and illustrated by Holly Hobbie

This book is one in a series about two pigs, Toot (the adventurer) and Puddle (the homebody) - best friends who truly enjoy each other in spite of their differences.

Preschool–1st grade

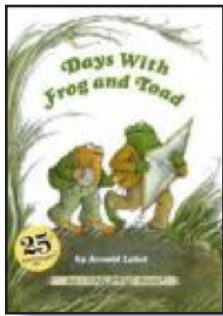


Jamaica and Brianna

by Juanita Havill, illustrated by Anne Sibley O'Brien

These two feisty friends work through feelings of envy and peer acceptance in this story, and end up with their friendship in tact.

Preschool–1st grade

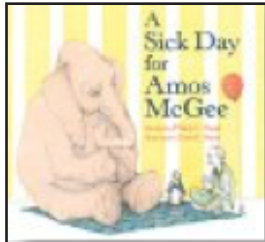


Days With Frog and Toad

written and illustrated by Arnold Lobel

A collection of five short tales about two best friends, Frog and Toad spending time together. These stories illustrate the true meaning of friendship as these two characters practice caring and simple acts of kindness with one another.

Preschool–3rd grade

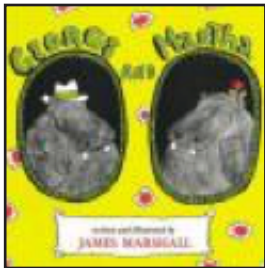


A Sick Day for Amos McGee

by Philip C. Stead, illustrated by Erin Stead

A sweet book about friendship between a zookeeper named Amos and the animals he cares for. When Amos gets sick, his friends elephant, tortoise, penguin, rhinoceros, and owl come to his house to comfort and care for him.

Ages 3 and Up

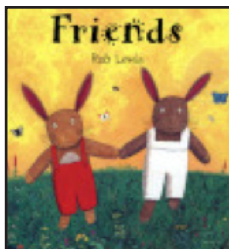


George and Martha: The Complete Stories of Two Best Friends

written and illustrated by James Marshall

A collection of little stories about two best friends, George and Martha. As with real best friends, George and Martha's interactions aren't always perfect but the two pals always find a way to work things out in the end and enjoy their enduring friendship.

2nd–5th grade

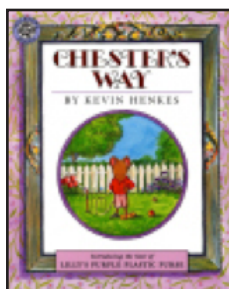


Friends

written and illustrated by Rob Lewis

Oscar moves to a new town with his mother and tries to make friends. But he finds out he has to learn how to be a friend before he can make friends.

Preschool–1st grade

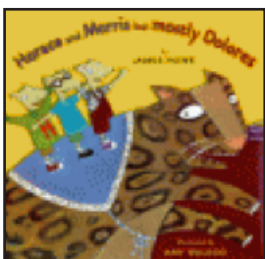


Chester's Way

written and illustrated by Kevin Henkes

Children easily relate to this story about all of the conflicts (often very funny) that arise when two best friends try to figure out how to add a third friend.

Preschool–4th grade



Horace and Morris but Mostly Dolores

by James Howe, illustrated by Amy Walrod

Three spunky mouse friends struggle with and find an alternative to the "no girls /no boys allowed" rule.

Preschool–3rd grade

Ideas to Extend the Power of Books in the Classroom

Super Power: Friendship

Start by reading a selection of books on the theme of Friendship. Bring these books to life through activities and experiences that provide ways for children to practice the “Super Power” of Friendship introduced in the stories.

Create Opportunities to Celebrate and Practice Friendship

Make a Friendship Tree

On the bottom half of a large piece of paper draw a simple tree trunk. Invite children to paint their hands with their favorite colors and make handprints in the top half of the paper, just above the tree trunk, to make leaves. When the paint dries, add the children’s names and branches between the leaves.

At the top or bottom of the Friendship Tree write: “Friends are Different Branches of the Same Strong Tree.” Display your tree in a place of honor and refer to it when you notice examples of children having different needs or interests, but still being part of the “same strong tree,” which is your classroom.

Obstacle Course for Friends

Create a simple obstacle course for children to do in pairs, either inside or outdoors. Select partners’ names from a container so children will be paired with others they might not typically choose.

The Friends Obstacle course could include:

- A double balance beam (made of blocks on the floor) where partners need to hold hands and match their pace as they walk across. They can hold hands and try to walk backwards to the other end.
- A hula hoop on the floor that partners jump into and out of together. This takes some teamwork and coordination.
- Partners take turns dragging or pushing one another in a laundry basket or box from one end of a room across a finish line at the other end of the room.

– Notice and acknowledge acts of friendship that happen: listening, sharing, helping, laughing together, and smiling at each other

– Leave the obstacle course up for children to use on their own, if possible, so they can have a chance to try it with different friends

All Aboard the Friendship Train

Tell the children they will be making a Friendship Train, a train that is safe, fun, and has room for everyone! On this train friends need to move carefully and all together like a team. The children make a train by gently placing their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them, and then the child in the front (the conductor) walks around the room to music.

The conductor can use a bell or musical instrument to lead the group as she walks. After a minute say, “Stop Train!” The conductor then passes the instrument to the child behind her, and goes to the end of the train and becomes the caboose.

Keep the train going until each child has a turn to be conductor, or make sure to play again the next day so all the children all have a turn to lead the train.

Partner-Friend Activities

Partner activities help develop friendships. Everyday classroom activities become a different experience and often require some problem solving, negotiation, and more communication when children do them with partners. It works best to assign partners randomly at first to avoid “best friends” working together and to encourage children to interact with new friends.

Simple Partner Activities

- Painting with a Friend: set up one easel or one large sheet of paper with two brushes and invite the children to create a painting together
 - Tower Building: invite one pair of children at a time to make a tower as tall as their shoulders in the block area. Then ask them to build a barn for some animals, or a house for a family, or a garage for some cars
 - Partner Legos: have small bins of Legos for pairs of children to use and ask them to work together to build a machine (or something of their choosing)
- With partner activities, it is important to acknowledge friendly behaviors: listening, sharing materials and ideas, negotiating, and of course enjoying each other’s company

Friendship Crowns

In the book *The Spiffiest Giant in Town*, George the Giant gives away all his spiffy new clothes to friends who need them, and his friends surprise him with a special, and very spiffy crown. Children love to decorate and wear crowns and they can re-enact the book’s acts of friendship by creating Friendship Crowns.

- Pre-cut crowns from a simple pattern in a variety of colors.
 - Work with children in small groups of 3-4. Have a child choose a crown, and ask the rest of the group to describe what makes that child a special friend.
 - Write the words on the child’s crown, and continue to the next child in the group.
 - Children can then decorate their crowns with markers, jewels, or collage materials.
- Be sure to read the “friend messages” on each child’s crown out loud and often. Talk about what an honor it is to be a good friend and to wear a Friendship Crown