



IMPACT THE CHILD NEWSLETTER

## 20 Books for Children Under 8

Curated for parents, grandparents and educators · Five essential categories · Ages 0–8

Books are among the most powerful tools we have for shaping how young children understand themselves and the world around them. This curated list spans five essential areas — courage, identity, joy, African heritage and kindness - chosen specifically for children under eight. Each book is real, researched and recommended with purpose.

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A

### Courage & Resilience

Stories that teach young children to bounce back, be brave and keep going

01

#### The Invisible String

By Patrice Karst **Ages 4-6**

A tender and reassuring story about the invisible bonds of love that connect us to those we care about, even when apart. Builds emotional resilience and security in young children.

[Find this book → https://amzn.to/4ue4yVp](https://amzn.to/4ue4yVp)

02

#### We're Going on a Bearhunt

By Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury **Ages 2-5**

Follow and join in the family's excitement as they wade through the grass, splash through the river and squelch through the mud in search of a bear. What a surprise awaits them in the cave on the other side of the dark forest!

[Find this book → | https://amzn.to/4tCegju](https://amzn.to/4tCegju)

03

#### A Sailing Boat in the Sky

By Quentin Blake **Ages 5-7**

While walking along the beach one day, Isobel and Nicholas discover a strange-looking wreck. As they begin to put it together, they find it is a peculiar sort of sailing boat. They clamber in and so begins their great adventure. Aided by a wounded stork, they sail through the sky encountering scenes of despair and devastation and set about righting some of the wrongs in the world.

[Find this book → | https://amzn.to/4eFtMY0](https://amzn.to/4eFtMY0)

04

#### Lubna and Pebble

By Wendy Meddour **Ages 4-6**

A moving story of a refugee child and her best friend — a pebble — who finds the courage to share her most precious possession. Builds empathy and resilience simultaneously.

[Find this book → | https://amzn.to/4wBPe6K](https://amzn.to/4wBPe6K)

**B****Empowering Children of African Origin**

*Books that affirm identity, celebrate heritage and build pride in children of African origin*

**05****I Am Enough**

*By Grace Byers, illus. Keturah A. Bobo* **Ages 3-6**

A lyrical, affirming picture book that celebrates who we are — our looks, our voices, our hearts. Written by a biracial author, it speaks directly to children of colour about their inherent worth.

Find this book - <https://amzn.to/42skxD1>

**06****Hair Love**

*By Matthew A. Cherry* **Ages 3-6**

A father learns to do his daughter's natural hair for the first time. An Academy Award-winning short film turned picture book — warm, funny and deeply affirming for Black girls.

Find this book - <https://amzn.to/4uF62Yu>

**07****The Day You Begin**

*By Jacqueline Woodson* **Ages 4-6**

A gentle and powerful story about being the only one — the only one who looks different, sounds different, comes from somewhere different. And finding the courage to share your story anyway.

Find this book - <https://amzn.to/3P8nGVF>

**08****Sulwe**

*By Lupita Nyong'o* **Ages 3-6**

Lupita Nyong'o's debut picture book tells the story of a girl with the darkest skin in her family who wishes for lighter skin, and the magical journey that teaches her that beauty comes from within.

Find this book - <https://amzn.to/4niqjAI>

**C****Joyful Fun Stories**

*Delightful, playful stories that make reading a pleasure from the very beginning*

**09****The Giving Tree**

*By Shel Silverstein* **Ages 3-6**

Once there was a tree, and she loved a little boy. A timeless parable about love, generosity and giving — as simple and as deep as a story can be. Cherished for over fifty years.

Find this book → | <https://amzn.to/4twwJO1>

**10****The Very Hungry Caterpillar**

*By Eric Carle* **Ages 2-6**

Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* is a perennial favourite with children and adults alike. Its imaginative illustration and clever cut-out detail charts the progress of a very hungry caterpillar as he eats his way through the week.

Find this book → | <https://amzn.to/4tsiEWg>

**11****Big, Bigger, Biggest | The Sea – A fold out poster book**

*By Marie Aubinais* **Ages 3-6**



A number of sea creatures, including a crab, an eel, a fish, and an octopus, see a strange thing dangling in the water, and they all have different ideas about what it is

[Find this book → | https://amzn.to/4u6AjzN](https://amzn.to/4u6AjzN)

12

### **Mama Panya's Pancakes | A Village Tale from Kenya**

*By Mary & Rich Chamberlain* **Ages 2-8**

With bright, bold artwork, catchy repetition, and a whole host of favourite animals, *Dear Zoo* is a must for every child's bookshelf, and the thick card pages, chunky cased cover and sturdy flaps make it perfect for small hands.

[Find this book | https://amzn.to/48V83aN](https://amzn.to/48V83aN)

D

## **Books by Sub-Saharan African Authors**

*Stories from and about Africa, written by African voices for the world's children*

13

### **Thank You, Omu!**

*By Oge Mora* **Ages 3-6**

Igbo-inspired story of a grandmother whose rich stew draws the whole neighbourhood to her door. A warm celebration of Nigerian food, community and generosity by a rising star author-illustrator.

[Find this book → | https://amzn.to/4tYNjXX](https://amzn.to/4tYNjXX)

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### **A is for Africa**

*By Ifeoma Onyefulu* **Ages 2-6**

From A to Z, stunning color photographs depict everyday life in Nigeria, where the author-photographer grew up—but the images pictured also represent the rich diversity of Africa, and the warm family ties and traditional village life found throughout this vast colorful continent.

[Find this book → | https://amzn.to/3R07Tc2](https://amzn.to/3R07Tc2)

15

### **Wanda the Brave**

*By Sihle Nontshokweni* **Ages 4-6**

A South African girl with thick curly hair raises her fist and finds her voice. By a South African author, this bold and joyful book celebrates courage and African girl power.

[Find this book → | https://amzn.to/4ttV33h](https://amzn.to/4ttV33h)

16

### **Bintou's Braids**

*By Sylviane A. Diouf* **Ages 3-8**

Bintou wants braids. Long, pretty braids, woven with gold coins and seashells, just like her older sister and the other women in her family. But she is too young for braids. Instead, all she has are four little tufts of hair; all she ever gets are cornrows. However, when Bintou saves the lives of her two young cousins and is offered a reward of her choosing, Bintou discovers that true beauty comes in many different forms.

[Find this book → | https://amzn.to/42tXPKR](https://amzn.to/42tXPKR)

E

## **Stories That Combat Bullying**

*Picture books that build empathy, courage and the language to name and stop unkind behaviour*



### 17 **Chrysanthemum**

By Kevin Henkes **Ages 3-6**

Chrysanthemum absolutely loves her name — until she goes to school. A classic, gentle story about teasing, belonging and the power of a kind teacher. Essential for every early years setting.

Find this book → | <https://amzn.to/4u72Nt8>

### 18 **Desmond and the Very Mean Word**

By Desmond Tutu & A.G. Ford **Ages 6-8+**

Based on a true story from Archbishop Desmond Tutu's childhood in South Africa. The power of words — and the even greater power of forgiveness — told with warmth and wisdom.

Find this book → <https://amzn.to/4noE3dt>

### 19 **Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon**

By Patty Lovell **Ages 2-6**

Molly Lou is small, has buck teeth and a voice like a bullfrog — and her grandmother has taught her to be proud of every inch. When a bully strikes, Molly Lou knows just what to do.

Find this book → | <https://amzn.to/3QSloCH>

### 20 **Each Kindness**

By Jacqueline Woodson **Ages 5-8+**

Chloe never accepts Maya's offers of friendship — and when Maya moves away, she is left with the regret of unkindness never repaired. A quietly devastating and powerful book about the cost of exclusion.

Find this book → | <https://amzn.to/4uLjST3>

### **A note from Impact the Child**

Every book on this list has been chosen because it does something specific - it builds a capability, affirms an identity, sparks joy or opens a conversation that matters. Reading with a child is not just a literacy activity.

It is one of the most powerful things a parent, grandparent, educator or carer can do. Start anywhere. Read it again. Let the child lead.

As an Amazon Associate I earn a nominal fee from qualifying purchases at no additional cost to you. Fees go towards the support and improvement of preschools in Sub Saharan Africa.

**Patricia Mezu M.A.Ed.** | *I am available for one-to-one parent coaching - grounded in CTI methodology, trauma-informed practice and AMI Montessori principles. If you are navigating a specific challenge with your child, feeling stuck in patterns that are not working, or simply wanting to parent with more intention and confidence, I would love to hear from you.*

*Transformed parenting begins with one conversation. Reach out at – [info@prmind.org](mailto:info@prmind.org)*