

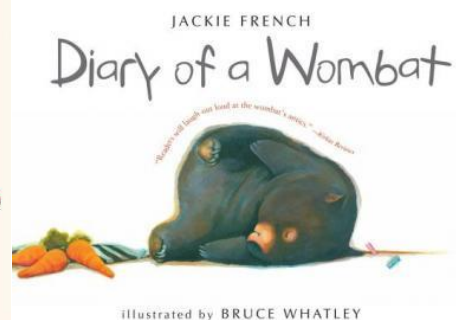
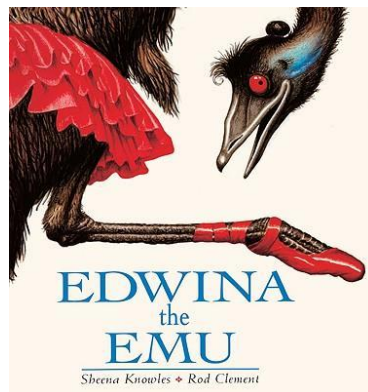
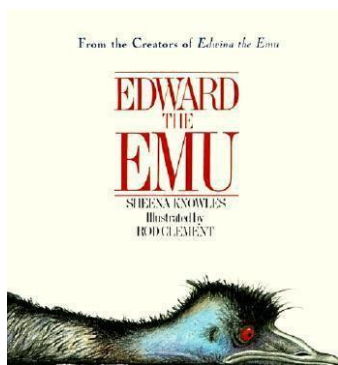
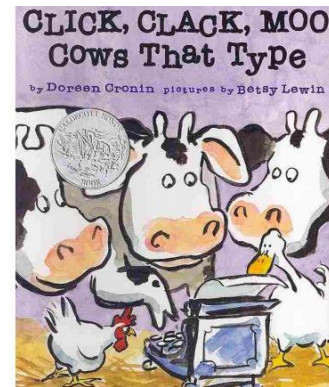
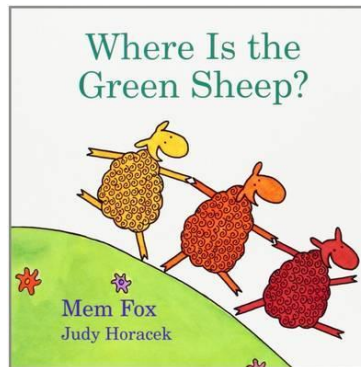
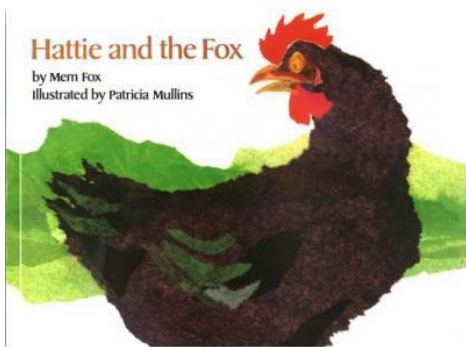
OUR FAVOURITE READ-ALoud BOOKS



I've already lectured you about how great reading aloud is, so let's get straight to the content!

Picture Books

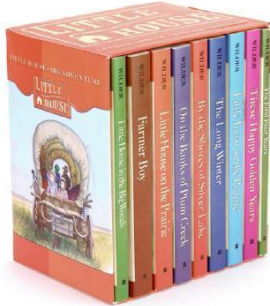
Picture books are fairly easy to get right—they're short, and if the story isn't great the pictures tend to hold the child's interest. Therefore I've only included our very favourites—the ones I've had to read HUNDREDS of times, and do funny voices for. We definitely have an animal theme going on, and I've realised most of them are very Australian!



Click on any picture to be taken directly to the item on Book Depository. However, your best resource will be your library—turn up, choose an armful of picture books at random, and read them then and there. Repeat regularly. Your child will soon start requesting their favourites (over, and over, and over.....AND OVER AGAIN!) You can then buy the ones your child just can't live without.

Chapter Books

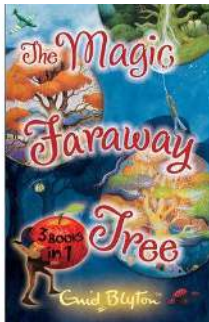
The good stuff! We've read all of these so many times. I've read them aloud, my children have read them to themselves, and they've read them aloud to each other. These are the books I keep and treasure, and look forward to reading aloud to my grandchildren one day. I've started with the easier ones for younger children, and finished with ones more suited to older children. However, all the books are quite ageless-once a child is 5-6 they'll probably enjoy them all.



[The Little House Series](#)-Laura Ingalls Wilder

I'm including the whole series here because these are our #1 books! They chronicle the life of Laura Ingalls Wilder in the late 1800s in the United States, from her earliest memories to her first years of marriage. Daily life, everyday events, disasters and celebrations are all described so vividly that you feel you're there. The set also includes Farmer Boy, in which Laura wrote about her husband, Almanzo Wilder's, childhood.

If you don't want to commit to the whole set, [Little House in the Big Woods](#) and [Farmer Boy](#) are excellent. You'll go back for the rest though, guaranteed!



[The Magic Faraway Tree Collection](#)-Enid Blyton

Surely these need no introduction? Joe, Bess and Fanny move to a new house near the woods and discover the Faraway Tree-a magic tree with funny people living in it. By climbing to the very top they can enter lands, which change regularly. They have many adventures in places like the Land of Spells and the Land of Take-What-You-Please.

Warning: I am an Enid Blyton purist, and I don't like how the new versions have been sanitised. I like Dame Slap better than Dame Snap, and so do my kids! They've also cut out some of the content and added in new, rather boring parts instead. If you can get the original versions secondhand they're much better, but the modern ones are still fantastic.



[The Circus Collection](#)-Enid Blyton

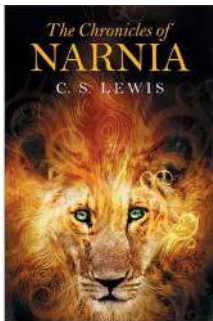
More Enid Blyton! This series follows Jimmy as he joins the circus with his family, learns all about the animals and performing, and ends up training his own dog and performing himself. My kids love hearing the exciting events, like Sammy the chimpanzee's disappearance, and always giggle at the cheeky Lotta and Mr. Galliano's hat changing position with his mood.



Everything-Roald Dahl

I'm sorry, but we just couldn't narrow this down! Everything we've read by Roald Dahl has been absolutely wonderful. I asked the kids' their favourite, and it turned into an impassioned ten minute argument about the merits of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory vs The BFG vs Matilda.....so I've linked the biggest box set I could find! I'd highly recommend any of these as a first read aloud-they're easy to read but fast-paced and funny. And as a wonderfully gruesome and hilarious introduction to poetry, you can't go past [Revolting](#)

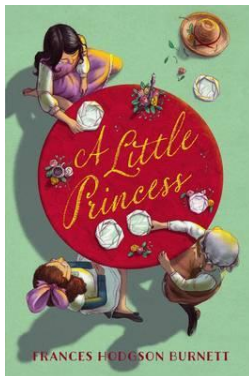
or [Dirty Beasts](#). As an added bonus, there's been plenty of stage shows made-[Matilda the Musical](#) is currently on in Australia (and all over the world) and I can tell you from experience that it is utterly fantastic. If you have the chance, go!



The Chronicles of Narnia-C.S. Lewis

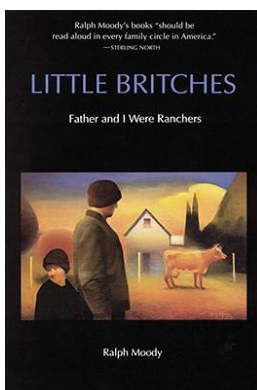
Again, there's no real need for an introduction for these. C.S. Lewis based these books in his fascinating fantasy world of Narnia. There's epic battles, amazing creatures and adventures galore in these books.

Again, if you don't want to buy the lot (I've linked to a very affordable single volume that contains the seven books in one), [The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe](#) is the most well-known.



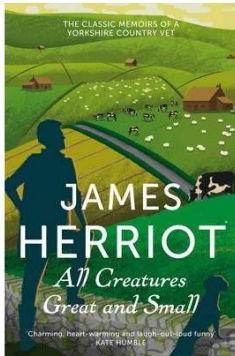
A Little Princess-Frances Hodgson Burnett

A classic from 1905, this tells the story of Sara Crewe. She begins boarding school as a very rich little girl, but when her father passes away she is left penniless, and is forced to work at the school for her keep. Through it all she keeps her dignity, and realises that you can be a princess no matter your circumstances. My children always act that little bit more dignified after I read this-Sara is an inspiration to them.



Little Britches-Ralph Moody

This is a recent addition to our collection, and we're hooked! This is the first in the autobiographical series, detailing everyday life on a ranch in the early 1900s. Ralph farms, gets into fights, works as a cowpoke, and learns amazing tricks with horses. If your boys aren't very excited by the Little House books start on these! [Man of the Family](#), [The Home Ranch](#), and five more books complete the series.



[All Creatures Great and Small](#)-James Herriot

Wonderful stories of life and learning how to be a farm vet in the 1930 onward. My kids find these utterly hilarious-Siegfried being serious, Tristan playing tricks, and James gently poking fun at himself and his mistakes. The stories in these do run a bit slower, so this is not the best if you're new to reading aloud and your child is still developing a decent attention span-but make sure you get to it eventually.

This is the first in a series-follow on with

[All Things Bright and Beautiful](#) | [All Things Wise and Wonderful](#) | [The Lord God Made Them All Every Living Thing](#)

And that should do you for the next year or two!

Don't forget, you don't have to stop at reading the books. If your child loves a book, dig deeper. Most of the books have related movies or a television series (The [BBC Narnia series](#) is dated, but fantastic). You can find free lesson plans and unit studies designed around virtually all of the books listed just by searching. Learn about the place the book took place, draw your visions of the characters or environment, play the games mentioned in the book, investigate something that takes your fancy (tornadoes in Little House and Little Britches, changes in veterinary medicine from James Herriot's days, the ethics of keeping animals in a circus, invent candy recipes based on Charlie and the Chocolate Factory-you get the point!). The scope of your learning and activity is only limited by your imagination.

Have fun with these, and I hope your reading aloud time becomes just as pleasurable as ours.

Kelly.

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