



RAR 93 – Creating a Book Club Culture at Home

Sarah: You're listening to the Read-Aloud Revival podcast. This is the podcast that helps you make meaningful and lasting connections with your kids through books.

Hello, hello, Sarah Mackenzie here. Today I get to share something a little extra special with you. I've got a new book coming out next week. It's called, *The Read-Aloud Family: Making Meaningful and Lasting Connections with Your Kids*. It's coming from Harper-Collins Publishers at Zondervan. And, to give you a little taste of what the book is about I get to read you a chapter from it today. Now, the book doesn't release for another week. It releases on March 27, 2018, so this is something of a sneak peek. I chose one of my favorite chapters from the book, chapter 6. It's all about creating a book club culture at home.

So, here's the deal. Today on the podcast I'm going to read chapter 6 with Zondervan's permission to you, but the goodness doesn't stop there. I actually created a class called How to Choose Books for Your Kids, and it gives you the confidence and know-how you need to step into the library or the bookstore or any online shop and choose books for your kids that will be a good fit, either for your family as a read-aloud or for your kids to read on their own. It's about an hour long video class and in it you'll find out the two most important qualities you want to look for in the books you read and your kids read, and also, the three question test I use to decide really quickly if a book is worth a place our family's reading stack. So, you get access to that class for free, only if you pre-order *The Read-Aloud Family* before March 27. So, you don't want to

miss that date. And, it's coming really soon! In fact, pause the podcast right now and go order if you haven't done it yet. You can preorder that book wherever books are sold. So, you can go to your favorite bookshop, favorite online store, and preorder. Then you go to

TheReadAloudFamily.com and pop your receipt number into the form on that page. You'll get instance access to the video class, How to Choose Books for Your Kids. I send that to you right away. So, you can preorder wherever you like to buy your books and then go to TheReadAloudFamily.com to get access to the class for free. But, you've got to do it before March 27, so don't put this off. You actually get access to that class when you preorder the audio version of the book as well. I love audio books. The audio version of the book is read by me. It sounds a lot like what I'm going to read in just a second in chapter six, and you can pre-order that audio book wherever you usually get your audio books. You'll also find links right to the audio versions of the book at TheReadAloudFamily.com.

Chapter 6: Create a Book Club Culture at Home

When she was hardly more than a girl Miss Minnie had gone away to a teacher's college and prepared herself to teach by learning many cunning methods that she never afterward used. For Miss Minnie loved children and she loved books, and she taught merely by introducing the one to the other. Wendell Berry, Watch with Me.

3:20 Reading books that don't count

The woman plunked down a stack of magazines on the front desk of the library where I worked



and turned to her 10 year old daughter. “What did you find?” she asked.

The girl tucked a strand of long sandy hair behind her ear, “Not much, but I found this.” She timidly pushed a faded paperback with a yellow and blue cover toward her mother.

“*The Penderwicks!*” I exclaimed from behind the checkout, pulling the stack of magazines toward me and typing my password into the computer. “You’ll love it.” I picked up the book to start scanning barcodes.

“Wait, what is that?” The girl’s mother took the book from my hand and peered through her glasses, eyeing it skeptically. She turned to her daughter, “Is this on the list for school?”

“Well, no...” the girl started to fidget, a slight shade of pink creeping up her neck.

“You’re going to waste your time reading something that doesn’t even count?”

I bit the insides of my cheeks and watched the mother scornfully shake her head. She turned to me.

“You can put this back for us, right?” she said, tossing the book on the counter and rolling her eyes. “We’ll be back in a minute. First, we need to find something that’s actually on the list.” She scooped the stack of magazines back into her arms and mother and daughter started to walk away. The mother still talking.

“Seriously Emma, there’s no use reading something that doesn’t count...”

Seeing Emma’s wistful glance toward *The Penderwicks* now abandoned at my elbow, I bit my cheeks harder. I was struggling not to throw something at the wall.

4:42 Schooling it out

That particular evening I became convinced of something I had long suspected. A sense of duty is killing our kids’ ability to read for pleasure.

Jim Trelease doesn’t mince words about this in *The Read-Aloud Handbook*. “Every child begins school wanting to learn to read. In other words, we have 100% enthusiasm and desire when they start school.”

That number declines steadily, however, beginning in late elementary school and continues to decline rapidly every year thereafter. A typical high school student reads for pleasure approximately six minutes per day. Dr. Daniel Willingham tells us what this means in his book, *Raising Kids Who Read*. As a professor of psychology at the University of Virginia he’s researched and written about strategies to help parents enjoy books with their kids. In *Raising Kids Who Read* he notes that those six minutes a day actually indicate that most kids don’t read at all, while the very few read quite a lot.

The natural question is why? Trelease answers that in chapter one of his book, “It was either never planted or driven out by seat work and test prep leaving no room for a pleasure connection.” He names the decreasing amount of time adults spend reading with kids as they get older as a major factor in the loss of the pleasure connection. Most of us stop reading to our kids as soon as they can read for themselves, and almost no one is reading aloud to middle school and high school age kids, parents or teachers. This, according to Trelease, is the main reason most kids don’t read for pleasure.

It makes sense, doesn’t it? Small children love the warmth and connection of sitting on mom or



dad's lap for a story. For small kids books equal pleasure. By middle school, though, our kids have absorbed the message that reading is something we do for a purpose: book reports, essays, or quizzes. Reading is something to get through, check off, finish already. Reading is work.

That day at the library Emma's mother made it clear to her daughter that the purpose of reading is academic. Now, you and I might not say that in so many words but my fear is that even if we don't believe it's true we communicate it with both our actions and our expectations. I wonder if schools, teachers, and worst of all, parents are sending a message to our kids that we read solely in order to succeed in school.

We do it without realizing it, and we do it with the best intentions. We want our children to succeed academically and demonstrate the ability to read with ease and skill, but good intentions can end in disaster. You could light a fire to stay warm but that fire untended could burn down a house or a field. That fire could burn down an entire forest.

We light a fire for our smallest children, pulling them onto our laps, reading rollicking tales and delightful fables, turning pages in brightly colored picture books, getting lost in tales of *Strega Nona*, *The Little Red Hen*, *Sheep in a Jeep*, but something changes as they grow. They learn to read on their own so we assume they don't want us to read-aloud to them anymore. Their reading assignments aren't the rollicking delightful tales of their childhood but school assignments instead. Calendars fill, to do lists grow, and reading for pleasure becomes a thing of the past, a memory. We slowly, but surely, teach our kids that reading is something that you do out of duty rather than for pleasure.

"Why are we so determined to teach our children to read?" Katherine Patterson asks in her collection of essays, *A Sense of Wonder*. She goes on, "So that they can read road signs? Of course. Make out a job application? Of course. Figure out the destination of the bus so they can get to work? Yes, of course. But, don't we want far more for them than the ability to decode. Don't we want for them the life and growth and refreshment that only the full richness of our language can give. What good are straight teeth and trumpet lessons to a person that cannot see the grandeur that the world is charged with?"

This is, perhaps, one of the most important chapters in this whole book because it reminds us that reading is first and foremost for pleasure, for delight. We communicate what we believe about books by the reading atmosphere, or lack thereof in our homes, either we create a space where reading is something that is done for the joy of it, where the imagination is cultivated and allowed to wander and stretch and grow or we deaden our children's natural love for the written word.

Either way, it's up to us, you and me, parents of the next generation. "If you want to raise a reader you should not rely much on your child's school," Dr. Daniel Willingham writes in *Raising Kids Who Read*, "it's up to parents to create an atmosphere where a child's reading life can flourish."

9:20 The supreme importance of delight

Here's something that may surprise you. Parents who think the primary importance of reading is to be successful in school are less likely to have kids who enjoy reading than parents who see reading primarily as a venue for entertainment.



Did you catch that?

Kids who believe parents who read is first and foremost a mode of entertainment and enjoyment end up being more of voracious readers than those who want their kids to read so that they can succeed in school. They also end up being better readers. Our attitude about reading and the atmosphere we create in our home matter. Our kids pick up on it even if we never say anything out loud. Even if we aren't the mother at the library checkout insisting our child put back that copy of *The Penderwicks*.

It is essential that we communicate with our words, actions, and attitudes, that reading is worthwhile for its own sake. Not because it helps us become more articulate, score better on a college entrance exam, or gives us a culture understanding of those around us. It does all those things to be sure, but it is of paramount importance to communicate to our children that reading is pleasurable and worthwhile for the sheer delight of it. We want our kids to, as the distinguished professor of the Humanities in the Honors Program of Baylor University, Alan Jacobs says, "Read at whim." Jacobs explains reading at whim in his insightful book, *The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction*, a commentary on the importance of reading for the sheer delight of it.

He writes, "For heaven's sake, don't turn reading into the intellectual equivalent of eating organic greens, or shifting the metaphor slightly, some fearfully disciplined appointment with an elliptical trainer of the mind in which we count words or pages the way that some people fix their attention on the calories burned read out. How depressing.

Rather, he tells us, "Read what gives you delight."

Reading at whim, that is, reading for the sheer delight of it may have a bigger impact on the life of your child than you expect. For many of us, the books we choose to read on our own are the ones that stick with us. It turns out there is nothing magical about a book once it makes it to a grade level approved list or lands on a teacher's syllabus. The act of picking up a book and reading it for no other reason than enjoyment can open the door for significant impact.

11:48 Welcome to Book Club

Humor me, for just a moment here. Imagine you have just arrived at your book club gathering. You've spent a long day with the kids and you're looking forward to attending this book club for the first time. This month's selection is Anthony Doerr's *All the Light We Cannot See*. The book left you speechless and you're ready for a meaty discussion with the other members.

You're greeted at the door by the hostess, a friend who embraces you in a hug and then promptly hands you a sheet of multiple choice questions about the book. "Welcome to book club," she says cheerily, "Go ahead and start with this. We just want to make sure you've read and understood the book before we get any further."

You take the quiz, making guesses at the city names, numbers, details and dates; was the girl who hunted Werner's conscience Viennese or Parisian? Werner was 16 or was he 17? Did Madame Manec get the flu or was it pneumonia? Did the story begin in 1944 or was it 1934, or somewhere in between? You fill out the answers as best as you can realizing you would have read the book differently if you'd had any idea you'd be taking a test on it.



You look up to see the rest of the book club attendees waiting expectantly for you to finish your quiz, so you mark a few more answers and then wait for whatever happens next.

The hostess pulls out a notebook. “OK,” she says, “let’s start brainstorming what we can all write our five paragraph essays on. Who wants to take a stab at the book’s theme?”

By the time you leave book club you’ve been assigned to write an essay on the role of duty as it relates to Werner’s character. You’ve also been given a list of hands-on activities to choose from; you could make a diorama, write a diary entry from the perspective of Etienne, or draw a map of Marie-Laure’s steps through the city of Paris.

On your way home that night you realize that the book club is really just a way to demonstrate that you’ve read the book. There’s no meaningful discussion happening there. No relationships being formed with other attendees. No deep dive into the murky and beautiful waters of a well-written story. You’re assigned tasks only to prove that you did indeed read the book.

Check this book off the list. You’ve done it, now onto a new one.

Would you go back to such a book club? Would you be itching to re-read the novel in your free time? To call your best friend and ask if she’d gotten to the part that you’re dying to talk about, the part that turned you inside out? Would you, after completing the quiz, writing the essay, building the diorama feel that the book was one of your life companions? Would you say the book changed you? Formed you? Challenged you?

Or would you simply feel like you had ‘done the book?’

This is exactly how we treat our children’s reading lives, and yet, we wonder why they view reading as something to be done for school, for a grade, for a check list.

All of these— from the comprehension quiz, testing to see if you actually read the story and understood it, to “creative projects” like making a diorama or creating a map— are typical assignments that tend to accompany the books our kids read.

We literally school the love of reading right out of our kids and then we worry because they aren’t taken up with a voracious love of literature and a burning desire to enjoy reading for pleasure.

What would happen, I wonder, if we started treating our kids’ reading lives the way we treat our own? What if we were to get out of the way and let the book work its magic on the child without interfering, without telling him how to think about it, without insisting he parrot back facts or agree with us on the theme? What if, rather than obsessing whether a child *did* a book, we let our kids meet great ideas, make connections, think for themselves, and experience what it means to be fully human, fully alive through the great ideas and characters they encounter in stories?

Don’t misunderstand me here, I’m not suggesting a teacher or parent never assigns schoolwork related to a book. I am suggesting, however, that delight must play an important role. If we want to raise kids who will be lifelong readers, then we would do well to take a page from real adult readers; those who read for the sheer joy and thrill of it.

The adults I know who read for pleasure do not make dioramas, take comprehension quizzes, or write five paragraph essays on the story’s main



conflict or theme. Real readers enjoy books that peak their interest and curiosity. They talk about them with their friends, sometimes they join book clubs. As those book club meetings they might enjoy food and drink while discussing open-ended questions. They ask questions that help everyone think more deeply about the book and about what the author might have been trying to say. Questions about what the book might be saying to us.

Real readers get lost in stories. Sometimes they're burning to talk about them with others, sometimes they just read and ponder the questions by themselves. They may dog-ear the pages, jot down passages from the book into their journals, or underline and scribble in the margins. Real readers engage with books in a way that fuels curiosity, inspires connection, and provides enjoyment.

I read Chaim Potok's, *The Chosen* when I was in school but I don't remember much of it. I remember slogging through the book, trying to find snippets of text I could use to build the argument in my persuasive essay. I remember trying to note random details that I thought might show up on the Friday quiz. I don't remember much else. I have no desire to re-read it as an adult, though, many people I love and trust call it one of the best books they've ever read.

Are the books you wrote reports on as a child the same books for which you have a resounding fondness decades later? Are they the books you can't wait to read with your children? The books you associate with your happiest childhood memories?

Surely a child who loves stories, whose life has been richly bathed in them, who has had many conversations about the characters and quests

and the stories she's read will have no trouble taking apart a piece of literature to analyze it in college, but dissecting the book won't be her natural inclination, and we don't want it to be. There is a time and a place for literary analysis, for charting plots, and noting character arcs, but I am not all convinced that poem is that place. Home is where we fall in love with books. Home is the only place in which our children have a fighting chance to fall in love with books.

We already know what happens to kids whose parents don't see pleasure and enjoyment as the main reason to read, whose parents think the main purpose of reading is for academic success, those kids simply don't read.

18:05 Extreme measures

Jonathan Auxier's mother was concerned about her son's lack of interest in reading for fun, so, when he was a young boy she pulled him out of school intent on turning him into a reader.

Jonathan said, "I came from a family of serious readers. I, myself, knew how to read but I didn't enjoy it very much. I guess there were just other things I enjoyed more. It was not an activity that brought me joy."

His mother panicked. For any of her children not to read for pure enjoyment and delight simply wasn't an option in their home. She decided to start homeschooling Jonathan during his third grade year and the main requirement was that he read for three hours per day.

Now, Jonathan wasn't told that his mother had pulled him out of school in order to help him fall in love with books, but she wisely realized that Jonathan would only learn to love reading if he disassociated reading with schoolwork. He needed plenty of time for reading and he needed



the opportunity to choose books he wanted to read, not just books that were assigned to him. She also knew that Jonathan needed to take on the identity of a reader for himself. She couldn't do that for him. All she could do was set up the circumstances to make it more likely to happen.

And happen it did.

"When I came back to traditional school," Jonathan said, "I was a year older, to be fair, but I was also a very strong reader. My mother's move to pull me out of school was certainly the intervention that turned me into a reader."

Jonathan Auxier is now an award-winning writer of middle grade novels. You'll find *Peter Nimble and His Fantastic Eyes* in one of the book lists in Part Three of this book. Clearly, his mother gave him more than just an opportunity to become a reader. She gave him an opportunity to form a deep and lasting love for both words and stories.

You probably don't have complete control over all of your kids interactions with books, especially as they relate to school work. Your child's teacher likely assigns book reports, comprehension quizzes, and other book related assignments. No matter where your child does his academic learning though, one thing is true, you can shape the atmosphere in your home. You decide the way books are chosen, discussed, and engaged with at home. And, that atmosphere means a whole lot. Home, remember, is where our kids fall in love with books.

A parent's attitude about books makes a huge difference in the reading life of a child regardless of where that child goes to school, or what kind of literary education he or she receives. So, what's a parent to do? How do we create an environment where we communicate enjoyment of books, curiosity about the ideas they contain,

and a desire to connect with kids? We create a book club culture at home.

20:56 How to create a book club culture at home

Let's try that book club scenario again. This time you arrive at your friend's house to be greeted by a warm embrace and flickering candlelight. You drop onto a plush sofa and catch up for a few minutes with the other friends who are gathered there. The host sets a bowl of tortilla chips and mango salsa on the table and pours Riesling into glasses.

Casually, she shifts the conversation over to the book, leading the discussion by asking an open-ended question. You aren't being quizzed on how much you know or don't know, you're thinking about the book in ways you didn't think of on your own. You're making connections you hadn't made on your own, listening to insights that never occurred to you. You offer your own perspective on which character was the most cowardly or which character grew the most, or how this book reminded you of the book you read last summer. You toss around ideas what the characters really want, what they're most afraid of.

You leave the book club feeling like you experienced the book a little more fully by being here. You experienced your friendships a little more fully, too, because you were able to get a peek into the minds and souls of your friends as they discussed the parts that made them weep or laugh, caught them off guard, pleased, or scared them. The way one of your friend's described the scene where Marie-Laure's hiding at the top of the house makes you want to go back home and re-read the book because you didn't see all the things she saw, you didn't make the connections



she made, you want to see if the book whispers something new to you this time around.

You leave book club feeling richer.

That is what a book club is for, to connect us more deeply with what we read, to help us bond more meaningfully with the people in our lives, to leave us feeling as though we've only shaken hands with the story. We're now hungry to go back and spend more time with the book or with another.

A really good story can't be properly experienced or examined under the scrutiny of a magnifying glass. It can't be tested, quizzed, or five paragraph essayed into our souls. A good story gives shape to the human experience and touches us in our innermost places. It picks us up right where we are and leaves us somewhere else; changed, transformed, more awake, and alive, and aware. We leave better off than we came, richer.

Katherine Paterson has written many award-winning children's books about big and deep issues; tragedy, comedy, death, loneliness, hope, fear, sorrow, all have a place in her rich and imaginative books. But Paterson doesn't want her books to be used in a classroom to teach vocabulary or test comprehension levels.

"When I read a story," she says, "it is not an attempt to make children good or wise. Nobody but God can do that, and even God doesn't do it without the child's cooperation, I'm trying in a book simply to give children a place where they may find rest for their weary souls."

If we compare the average kid's classroom experience with our own book club meetings we'll get a sense for how to treat our children's reading lives more like our own. We'll create a

book club culture in an organic, simple, natural way. This is not to suggest that you must replace your child's literary experience in the classroom in order to live out a richer one at home, although, admittedly that's what I've chosen to do with my own kids, but your home can be infused with a book club spirit. Your own attitude about books and reading can shift to allow every member of the family more time and space for reading at whim, more reading for the sheer pleasure of it.

24:11 Food, glorious food

Try Something for Me. Bake a pan of brownies. As the scent drives everyone in your home toward the kitchen in hopeful curiosity, place some small plates and napkins on the table and pour a pitcher of milk. Set those brownies, luscious, gooey, piping hot in the center of the table and open a book. It can be anything; a picture book, middle grade fiction, a poem. It doesn't really matter which book it is, just start reading it aloud.

I can nearly guarantee you you'll have a table full of people listening in and they will remember even well into the future that you read it with brownies. They will very likely look back on that book with fondness.

I've never been to a grownup book club meeting that didn't include food, and yet, I so often make my kids' book reading sessions feel more like a classroom than a book club.

Why no treats? Why no snacks? Why not throw a big picnic blanket on the grass in the backyard and let everyone dig into a ginormous bowl of popcorn and sip Capri Suns? Why not set the table with china and pass around tea and scones? Why not pull out a package of store bought cookies and paper plates and gather



everyone at the table for a few moments of rest and reading?

I don't always give my kids snacks while I'm reading aloud but I do try to manage it on occasion, especially if I'm having trouble wooing anyone into read-aloud time. Or, if our relationships and interactions have been particularly fraught, food is comfort, and comfort is a wonderful thing to associate with read-aloud time.

My husband speaks fondly of his own family's game nights when he was growing up. They played Monopoly, Risk, and other classic board games, but when he tells me stories of his family game nights, the games themselves play a minor role in his memory. He mostly remembers the tea, the little bowl of sugar, the gravy boat filled with milk, and a soft, light sweet coffee cake his mother served.

Tea and coffee cake became a symbol for game night. When my husband drinks tea from a fancy cup, stirs in a swirl of milk and drops in a pinch of sugar, he thinks of game night. He remembers family time, warm and comforting.

We can do the same with stories. You don't need to make coffee cake every time you read-aloud, of course, it wouldn't hurt. Popcorn is my own go-to. It's quick, easy, and everyone likes it, so I often make a giant bowl and put it in the middle of the table while I read.

It can be simple. A box of crackers, store-bought cookies, sliced fruit, a bowl of grapes. Sharing food and gathering around the table means community, friendship, love, laughter, and warmth. That's what we're going for, right?

Do we have the courage to admit that the main purpose of reading may, in fact, be for joy for the

sake of itself. Affection is of great importance when it comes to making connections with our kids through books. When we demonstrate interest in the things that our kids are interested in, and that includes the stories they like, we're communicating love to them.

What I wish I could say to that mom at the library, the one who told her 10 year old daughter to put *The Penderwicks* aside in favor of something that would "count" for school is this: go get a copy yourself, read it with her, just for fun, not because it "counts," not because she gets credit for it in class, not even because it will make her a better human being for having read it (though it might).

Read it to waste time with her, read it for the single purpose of getting lost in the good story of getting along with your child. Read it to connect. The memories she'll store from the time you spent that didn't count for anything other than the joy of connecting, those are the memories she'll carry with her long into the future. Read with your daughter at whim.

When we create a book club culture at home we send a crucial message to our children. We communicate that their reading life matters and that it ought to be a source of joy and delight to them. We allow them the freedom and ability to engage with ideas and the place we want them to love most of all, home. Perhaps best of all, we give them a fighting chance of falling madly in love with the reading life.

How The Read-Aloud Family is organized

Phew, that was chapter six. I hope you enjoyed it! Before we get to my favorite part of the podcast where kids tell us about their favorite books, I want to tell you a little bit about how the book is



organized. The first five chapters of the book will help you understand how reading aloud can change your world. In these chapters we'll discuss the gift of being fully present with our kids, the ability stories has to inspire heroic virtue in both our kids and in us, we'll talk about the research that shows reading aloud is incredibly beneficial for our kids' academic success as well as the myriad ways that we get to walk a mile in the shoes of another when we share books with our kids. That helps our kids develop empathy and compassion for others. The second part of the book is a bit more practical and this is where we get into the nitty-gritty. If you've read *The Read-Aloud Handbook* by Jim Trelease you already know the importance of reading aloud, but you might be struggling to find time to fit it all in with the other demands on our time and attention. And today, in our world today, we are up against some unique challenges that we weren't up against when that book released. For example, our kids having technology in their faces all day long, right? So, in this section we talk about the importance of creating a book club culture at home, we'll debunk the five myths about reading aloud, that are keeping most of us from enjoying it more, and then I'm going to give you the tools that you need to become your child's literary match maker, to help them find books they love and how to have meaningful, rich, engaging conversations with our kids about the books they're reading, whether or not we've read the book ourselves.

Ask compelling questions

One of the most useful chapters in this section is chapter 11. It's called, Ask Compelling Questions, and, in that chapter I share 10 questions you can ask your kids about any more, any book at all,

from a picture book to an epic novel, to have fantastic conversations with your kids. I'll give you some examples of those questions with books at different levels and then you'll be able to use that chapter as a reference again and again as you get comfortable having really good conversations with your kids about books. That is a total game-changer for the relationships in your family. I can't wait for you to read that one. Part three of the book is another really valuable part, of course, the book lists. Four entire chapters of the book are dedicated to great read-alouds, divided up by age. You'll find a few classics and old favorites on the list as well as lots and lots of books written in very recent years. Reading aloud presents unique challenges at each age level and reading aloud with a 2 year old for example, it's a very different experience than reading aloud with an 8 year old, and reading aloud with an 11 year old is pretty different than reading aloud with a teen. In each chapter we tackle the problems that most often present themselves at each level. And, I provide you with a list of things your kids can do to keep their hands busy while you read aloud. Since we know that some kids listen and comprehend better, if they can move while they listen.

Book recommendations

There's also a whole lot of book recommendations at every age level. I'll tell you what – in *The Read-Aloud Family* there are nearly 400 book recommendations. I have read every single one from cover to cover. I've never worked so hard and so long on very curated book recommendations so I'm pretty proud of all 400 books that made it into the recommended read-alouds in *The Read-Aloud Family*. To help you navigate those book recommendations we have



really helpful indices in the back, so one index is organized by book titles, one is organized by book authors and illustrators, and then another is organized by ages, which will be really, really helpful when you're trying to find something for a particular child in your family. That's a wrap on our episode for today. Don't forget you need to preorder *The Read-Aloud Family* before March 27, 2018, to get the video class, *How to Choose Books for Your Kids*, for free. So preorder the book wherever you like to buy your books—at your local independent bookstore, at Barnes and Noble, online, anywhere at all, and then go to TheReadAloudFamily.com to enter your receipt number and I'll give you instant access to that video class, and you'll be the first to get the book when it releases March 27. I can't wait. Thanks so much for listening and until next time, go make meaningful and lasting connections with your kids through books.