

Math in Books | Math Stories

Reading stories together is a fabulous way to initiate conversations with a child, especially about math. Here are some suggestions to help get you started.

Five Creatures by Emily Jenkins

Math: relationships, attributes, comparisons, similarities, differences

“Five creatures live in our house. Three humans, and two cats. Three short, and two tall. Four grownups, and one child (that’s me!).” This is an absolutely charming book that illustrates all the ways a family of five are similar and different. Some of these comparisons are easy to figure out, others require some close looking. Either way, you’ll be delighted by what you find.

Caps for Sale by Esphyr Slobodkina

Math: Categories, positional language, sequential ordering and language, patterning

Caps for Sale is a classic children’s book chock full of math! Are the caps in the same order at the end of the story as they were at the beginning?

Beep, Beep, Vroom, Vroom by Stuart Murphy

Math: sequence, combination, attributes, patterning

As Molly plays with her big brother’s toy cars she inadvertently puts them in to disorder. Can she put the cars back in the right order before her brother returns?

What’s Next Nina? by Sue Kassirer

Math: Sequential ordering and language, combination, attributes, patterning

A borrowed string of beads breaks unexpectedly and Nina has to hurry to remember the original order of the beading design. Diversity represented in the illustrations.

How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World by Marjorie Priceman

Math: Sequential ordering and language

A mathematical algorithm is essentially a process or a series of steps to be following. A recipe is like an algorithm in that it has a certain logical ordering. The illustrations in this book show a young girl visiting various agrarian locations around the world to pick up various ingredients for her pie.

***Hannah's Collections* by Marthe Jocelyn**

Math: Sort, classify, attributes, visual patterns and groupings, ordering, number combinations, problem solving

A collection is a group of things that share one or more common attribute. This book is full of images to look at and notice and wonder about and, maybe, inspire your students to create, share, and/or explain their own collections! What do the objects in the collection have in common? What differences do you see?

***Equal Shmequal* by Virginia Kroll**

Math: equal, half, fair sharing, attributes, groups, balance, measurement, symmetry, number, sorting, classifying

This is an engaging, action packed tale about all the different ways we can think about and use "equal". Children will enjoy and learn from the different ways the animal characters work together to figure out what equal really means. Teachers will enjoy having such a memorable tale to use as a benchmark experience for this multi-faceted idea. Parents with young children will enjoy action as the characters work to solve their disagreements.

***Round is a Mooncake* by Roseanne Thong**

Math: shapes in everyday life, geometry

Through gentle, rhyming text and lovely illustrations readers follow a young Chinese girl as she travels through her urban neighborhood finding shapes. Best of all, the shapes she finds have personal meaning to her life and experience. "Square is the basket where kittens sleep. Square is a box for secrets I keep."

<D>Primary and Intermediate

***Ten Times Better* by Richard Michelson**

Math: multiplication, scale, relational language (farther, taller, stronger, etc.)

The story itself is simple and charming but the back of the book holds amazing information from which physical body-based challenges can be created. The author asks readers to consider the attributes of twenty or so animals and asks them to think how they might fare in comparison. Scale can be an elusive concept but ten times bigger, longer, faster, smaller, etc. is a large enough amount to make an impact, psychologically speaking, on kids who know intuitively that they are small creatures in an adult-sized world. See

www.mathinyourfeet.blogspot.com/2013/01/ten-times-better-longer-faster-farther.html for a related activity.