Read along as a few girls follow their grandmother to her special garden. There, she shares with them rocks, crystals, seashells, and meteorites, asking them to wonder where these objects have been and what they’ve experienced. This book’s beautiful illustrations encourages readers to imagine and be curious about their surroundings and the earth.

This alphabet book is all about birds! Vivid illustrations show detailed views of a wide variety of birds from around the world. Each spread includes lots of details for any avid bird lover who wants to take a deep dive. But this book still makes a great read-aloud when focusing on just the short poems on each page.

Alice Walker is known for amazing adult fiction, but this picture book is equally lyrical. The illustrations are bright and joyous. The text flips our place in nature and invites curiosity and imagination. This book encourages us to put down our devices, step outside, and connect to nature. Write a shared poem with your little one about your time outdoors!

Dianne White’s latest is a read-aloud hit! We love rhyming books because they encourage children to pay attention to the smaller sounds in words, which will help them as they learn to read. The rhymes here are part of a fun guessing game. Be sure to give a dramatic pause before you turn the page and reveal the answer!

News You Can Use

We have two great museum pass programs you can use to get discounts and have new experiences this summer! While the Brookfield Zoo and The Chicago Botanic Gardens are our most popular passes, other great options include the Bronzeville Children’s Museum, Children’s Museum in Oak Lawn, KidsWorks Children’s Museum, and the Chicago Children’s Museum, among many others!
Author/Illustrator Spotlight

TODD PARR

Sometimes an author or illustrator has so many great titles, we wish we could name them all! This month, we want to highlight the work of Todd Parr! Todd’s bright, colorful, and graphic illustrations match the joyful nature of his messages. You can’t (and shouldn’t!) miss his books on our picture book shelves!

Photo courtesy of Little Brown Young Readers and Todd Parr, used with permission

Early Literacy Tips

Print awareness is an important early literacy skill, since children have to be aware of words before they can try to read them! Finding examples of print while you’re out and about is easy and fun! Point out the word STOP on red stop signs. Have your child notice the letters that spell out the name of your grocery store or favorite restaurant. Look at street signs while you’re on a neighborhood walk. Print is all around us, and encouraging your child to be aware of it will help them when they eventually learn to read.

While you’re outside, either in your backyard or a park, gather a few leaves off of the ground (please don’t pick leaves off plants or trees!). Describe the different attributes of the leaves. You can talk about size, shape, color, edge style, etc. Put them into categories together. Categorizing things helps children look for patterns, which lends itself well to learning to read and categorizing sounds or word families.