

My List of Top Storybooks 2017

by Chazda Albright -

<http://greatstorybook.com/my-list-of-top-storybooks-2017/>

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This is my list of Top Storybooks 2017, an annual update for my local library that I'm sharing with you.

Every year for about 5 years now, my local library asks me to make a list of the top illustrated storybooks I think they should order. It's a difficult list to make actually, because it means I need to do a lot of research before making my decisions.

These are the top books I've asked my local library to order this year. It's a decision I don't take lightly.

Top Storybooks make it to my list after hours and days of researching the market. These are the newest (sometimes as yet unreleased) books of 2017.

I've been doing this for 5 years, but only started posting about it a couple of years ago. Here are my previous lists:

- [My Top Storybooks for 2016](#)
- [My Top Storybooks for 2015](#)

The books on the library list *must be* new releases (that's the rule of the library, not mine) – which means in most cases, I'm ordering books that aren't even on the market yet (because I place my order in February).

How I Pick the Top Books to Read

That means I need to be familiar with someone working on the book project, and based on the story description and talent creating it, trust that the book will be really good - not necessarily in terms of what adults might think, but based on a balance of what kids like and what teachers would want as well.

This isn't theoretical for me; it's real ([here's my criteria](#)) – because I will be the one reading these books to groups of kids at the library. The librarians will watch and take pictures. **If my selection flops, I feel it!**

I can't read *all the books I want to the kids*. So I have to be very picky. The following titles are the ones I can't wait to read.

The Top Storybooks 2017

Here are the books I expect to be amazing reads this year. If you want to write storybooks, you need to know what's out there right now and you need to know what's coming, too. This is That List – my list of the tops.

[A Perfect Day](#)

by [Lane Smith](#)

[Roaring Brook Press](#) (February 14, 2017)

This looks to be a very sweet and funny book about opposing perspectives. When the Bear has a perfect day, it's not so great for all the other animals around him. He smashes and splashes and has no idea the affect he's having.

I can easily imagine kids laughing at the bear and empathizing with the other, smaller animals around him... especially the kids with older siblings.

[Way Past Bedtime](#)

by [Tara Lazar](#), [Rich Wake](#)

[Aladdin](#) (April 25, 2017)

Tara Lazar is becoming one of my all-time favorite storybook authors. Her story **Normal Norman** was on my 2015 list, and is hardly ever found at the library because it's constantly checked-out. The librarians have all approached me to personally thank me for that book.

When I saw that Tara Lazar has another, absolutely hilarious book coming this April, adding that to my new list was a no brainer.

What I love about this book is that it isn't a typical bedtime story. It's set-up like a detective mystery. The protagonist wants to know what all happens when he is asleep. I can't wait to read this, and Rich Wake's artwork is a perfect match.

[Don't Call Me Choochie Pooh!](#)

by [Sean Taylor](#), [Kate Hindley](#)

[Walker Books Ltd](#) (February 2, 2017)

The title alone makes me smile. I can imagine my sister reading this with glee (she's a dog lover). Sean Taylor and Kate Hindley are relatively new to me personally, though they're total pros.

That means these two people are on my list of Creatives to Follow. You should too (along with everyone else on this list).

[The Thing Lou Couldn't Do](#)

by [Ashley Spires](#)

[Kids Can Press, Ltd.](#) (May 2, 2017)

Ashley Spires is one of my favorite artist-authors. I think she has a great ear and she expresses what's important in amazing simple, to-the-bone but whimsical ways.

I first discovered her with [The Most Magnificent Thing](#), a book I love and have shared with many people. You can read my [book review about that HERE](#).

Ashley Spires' artwork fits her writing tone - so if you're not sure how to capture the right tone in your storybooks, you should take a look at what she's doing.

[You Can Read](#)

by [Helaine Becker](#), Mark Hoffmann

[Orca Book Publishers](#) (February 28, 2017)

The title of this book could have been much, much better. I don't know what the editor was thinking.

But everything else about this French book looks spot-on. It *isn't* a, “you really should read because you can” type of book. It's more a funny book about all the ways and places you can read. Even outer space!

[The Giant Jumperee](#)

by [Julia Donaldson](#), [Helen Oxenbury](#)

[Dial Books](#) (April 18, 2017)

For those of you who have been with me for a while, you might remember an article where I mentioned [getting to see the professional mock-up of an unpublished book at the Bologna Book Fair \(2016\)](#).

This is that book! ([Dial is a division of Penguin](#), which is now [Penguin Random House](#).) I am really excited about finally getting my hands on this story. If you don't know who either of these gals are, you need to remedy that right now. Visit their websites, search for more about them, and see what they've been doing.

[Time Now to Dream](#)

by [Timothy Knapman](#), [Helen Oxenbury](#)

[Candlewick](#) (March 14, 2017)

This should be a really interesting book. Knapman I think is tipping his hat to the storybook classics, so the choice to pair him up with Oxenbury for this project is really smart.

This I think is going to be the type of book that book lovers love.

[Mrs. White Rabbit](#)

by [Gilles Bachelet](#)

[Eerdmans Books for Young Readers](#) (February 6, 2017)

This should be a fun romp of a story, where we get to see at last what life is like for Mrs. White Rabbit - that's right, the fuzzy thing behind the White Rabbit in Alice in Wonderland.

The illustrations look amazing, and I know kids will love hunting down all the details. Always give kids something to point to (“Where's the White Rabbit?”). It's interactive and kids love it.

[Prince Ribbit](#)

by [Jonathan Emmett](#), [Poly Bernatene](#)

[Peachtree Publishers](#) (March 1, 2017)

This creative duo brought us [The Princess and The Pig](#), which is a big favorite in my home and in my classrooms. I expect this new project will have the same sense of humor and the same quirky references to classic stories and storytelling.

As a writer, how can I not want to check this out? Not possible!

[Rabbit Magic](#)

by [Meg McLaren](#)

[Clarion Books](#) (January 10, 2017)

The artwork in this little book is just irresistible. Let me just stress this: irresistible. I know the kids are going to love the mix of magic and all the great details in these pictures.

[The Unexpected Love Story of Alfred Fiddleduckling](#)

by [Timothy Basil Ering](#)

[Candlewick](#) (January 10, 2017)

Ering is known primarily for his portfolio, and his ability to make illustrations feel like high art. I'm very curious to read a story from him.

This is going to be almost certainly more somber than the other titles on this list - and probably moreso than on any publisher's catalogue in terms of what they would normally publish as an illustrated storybook. It's going to be I think a special book, one that makes kids and adults think.

[Twist and Hop, Minibeast Bop!](#)

by [Tony Mitton](#)

[Orchard Books](#) (February 14, 2017)

This fun story of dance comes from the man who created the beloved **Giraffes Can't Dance**, which is one of the books I recommended to the library in the past. It's a shoe-in.

[The Great Henry Hopendower](#)

by [Justin Roberts](#), [Deborah Hocking](#)

[G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers](#) (June 6, 2017)

The name of this protagonist cracks me up. What a great name!

What really makes me excited about this book though is that it's about this boy's memory of his

grandfather and of magic in everyday things. It's a wonderful story idea and I think it would be great to see more stories like this.

[Pete The Cat And The Treasure Map](#)

by [James Dean and Kim Dean](#)

[Turtleback Books](#) (March 7, 2017)

I don't even KNOW how many Pete the Cat books there are, but these are silly, brightly colored stories that kids really love. You can't really go wrong with cat pirates, and I think this new release from the Dean family is going to bring a lot of giggles.

Have I Missed Something?

What's your favorite choice in terms of what's coming out this year? Write below, let me know – or, as ever, send me an email. You know I love getting those! So share with me your top choices for 2017 - or maybe one of your favorite all-timers.

Keep creating, no mater what.

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