My seven-year-old-three goes to three different preschools at a young age of three years and I think that’s great. I hear the three-year-olds are often a little behind on the social skills of older children. So, I’ll be keeping these in reserve until he’s ready to take more of a leadership role.

Llama Llama Red Pajama

by Anna Dewdney

A delightful and prolific series, Anna Dewdney’s Llama Llama is a reader favorite. The magic began back in 2005 with Llama Llama Red Pajama, a rhyming read-aloud that finds young Llama Llama feeling nervous about falling asleep by himself—and Mama Llama coming to the rescue. This extra-special edition includes a CD audio recording of Dewdney reading the story, bonus Llama Llama tales, and even a keepsake print. It’s the perfect place to start with the beloved series, or an exciting new addition to your collection.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar

by Eric Carle

Every family needs a copy of Eric Carle’s classic, and three is the perfect age to start fully appreciating the voracious caterpillar who snacks his way through every day of the week (including one epic picnic that will have you itching to plan a picnic yourself!). Even better, this 50th anniversary edition is stuffed with special bonus content, including a letter from Eric Carle, page-for-page reproductions of his original sketches, and more.

The Little Engine That Could: 90th Anniversary Edition

by Watty Piper, illustrated by Dan Santat

An absolute classic since it was first published in 1930, The Little Engine That Could is still charming readers worldwide. We love this 90th anniversary edition, which features illustrations by Caldecott Medal winner Dan Santat and an introduction by Dolly Parton. It pays homage to the original illustrations while adding even more life and cheerful triumph to the timeless story of perseverance.

Dragons Love Tacos

by Adam Rubin, illustrated by Daniel Salmieri

This silly book about, you guessed it, dragons that love tacos (and parties!), is a huge hit with the preschool set. The illustrations are entertaining and include subtle jokes that are fun to find as the storyline becomes more familiar.

The Story of Ferdinand

by Munro Leaf, illustrated by Robert Lawson

If it’s been a while since you read The Story of Ferdinand, prepare to be won over again. Ferdinand isn’t like the other bulls—he prefers smelling flowers to locking horns—so what’s he to do when expected to fight? The story’s message of nonviolence made it a favorite of Gandhi’s, and it’s also a valuable entry point for discussing themes of masculinity with young boys and girls.

The Gruffalo

by Julia Donaldson, illustrated by Axel Scheffler

Ooh, I don’t want to spoil The Gruffalo if you haven’t read it. It’s kids’ storytelling at its finest. The wonderfully rhymed tale of a mouse who invents a fearsome creature called the Gruffalo to ward off enemies is both amusing and a marvelous lesson in quick-thinking and imagination.

The Incredible Book Eating Boy

by Oliver Jeffers

Charmed by the illustrations, my son chose this read as a vacation souvenir from City Lights Bookstore in San Francisco. The story of a boy who eats books—and gets smarter as a result—quickly became my son’s most-read picture book, returning to our library shelves after each visit.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar

by Eric Carle

Iva-Marie Palmer lives with her family in a book-laden house just outside Los Angeles. She is the author of two YA novels, The End of the World As We Know It and The Summers. She doesn’t need to write a letter of advice to her 9-year-old self because that 9-year-old had already discovered the works of Judy Blume.