If you are lucky enough to have a stellar school library and librarian, as well as an outstanding public library (and children’s librarian), you might think that all your child’s reading needs are covered—but building a home library is an important and valuable goal for your family.

In our hurried lives, it’s not easy to find the time to browse and discover books—but you can get creative and work together as a family to build a place of discovery and comfort for you and your children. And even a handful of books can improve reading skills.

A home library should be more than a random pile of books—it should reflect the ideas, skills, interests and values of your family.

A home library can be a collection that says: “We are a family that reads, and we collect poems, stories and information that matter to us.” It can provide convenient access to favorite titles or unusual books that you might not easily find at your public and school libraries.

When in doubt, look for award stickers to help guide your selections. Librarians, educators and book industry professionals read widely to pick the best books each year for the awards, and the lists of winners are wonderful choices for you to own. But remember to honor your own children’s choices, too.

Start Small and Have Fun

- Expand your home library by looking for additions at public library book sales, garage sales, thrift shops and used bookstores.
- Explore resources in your community: Unlikely places, such as doctor offices sometimes have free books to give away.
- Let your friends and relatives know that books are important to your family. Create book wish lists for birthdays and holidays.

The “best” books for your children, ultimately, are the books that will make them want to curl up on the couch and read together as a family. Have fun with your home library—and make it truly your own!

Get more tips on how to build your family library at PTAOurChildren.org/CBCBookResources.

Janet Wong, Christi Showman Farrar and Susan Polos are members of a joint committee of volunteer book experts—librarians, teachers, authors and publishers—representing the American Library Association and the Children’s Book Council.

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NEW BOOKS

No Biggy!
By Elycia Rubin
Ages 4-8

Sylvia Rose and the Cherry Tree
By Sandy Shapiro-Hurt
Ages 5-8

A Season of Flowers
By Michael Garland
Ages 6-9

Moe Berg: Spy Catcher
By Jeri Cipriano
Ages 8-12

Black Panther: The Young Prince
By Ronald L. Smith
Ages 8 and up

A Season of Flowers
By Michael Garland
Ages 6-9

DIVERSE KIDS AND YOUNG ADULT LIT

How to Find a Fox
By Nilah Magruder
Ages 4-8

The Contest Between the Sun and the Wind: An Aesop’s Fable
By Heather Forest
Ages 5-9

Chef Roy Choi and the Street Food Remix
By Jacqueline Briggs Martin, June Jo Lee
Ages 7-12

By Betsy Bird
Ages 7-12

The Book Jumper
By Mechthild Gläser
Ages 13 and up

BEST STEM BOOKS*

The Music of Life:
Bartolomeo Cristofori & the Invention of the Piano
By Elizabeth Rusch
Ages 4-8

The Girl Who Thought in Pictures:
The Story of Dr. Temple Grandin
By Julia Finley Mosca
Ages 5-10

How Could We Harness a Hurricane?
By Vicki Cobb
Ages 9-12

Finding Wonders
By Jeannine Atkins
Ages 9 and up

Warcross
By Marie Lu
Young Adult

*Best STEM Books is a joint project of the American Society for Engineering Education, the International Technology and Engineering Educators Association, the National Science Teachers Association, the Society of Elementary Presidential Awardees and the Children’s Book Council.