



## Pre-K Companion Activities

### *Charlotte's Web* (1952)

by E. B. White

Preschool classes can join in the fun by reading picture books on similar themes and doing activities inspired by *Charlotte's Web*.

#### Reading List

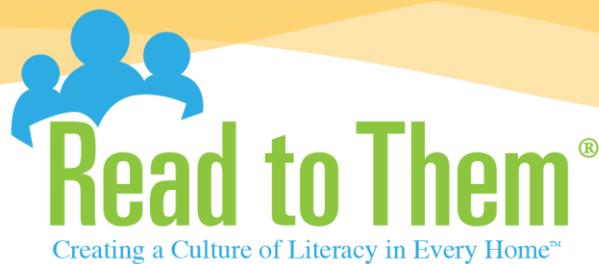
##### **Some Pigs**

*Pigs to the Rescue* by John Himmelman  
*A Pig Parade Is a Terrible Idea* by Michael Ian Black  
*A Piglet Named Mercy* by Kate DiCamillo  
*Toot and Puddle* by Holly Hobbie  
*Small Pig* by Arnold Lobel  
*The True Adventures of Esther the Wonder Pig* by Steve Jenkins, Derek Walter, Caprice Crane, and Cori Doerrfeld  
*The Book Hog* by Greg Pizzoli  
*Ribbit!* by Rodrigo Folgueira  
*If You Give a Pig a Pancake* by Laura Numeroff  
*The Biggest Little Farm: Saving Emma the Pig* by John Chester  
*Ten Hungry Pigs* by Derek Anderson

##### **Special Spiders**

*Jumper: A Day in the Life of a Barnyard Spider* by Jessica Lanan  
*I'm Trying to Love Spiders* by Bethany Barton  
*Diary of a Spider* by Doreen Cronin  
*Walter's Wonderful Web* by Tim Hopgood  
*Sophie's Masterpiece* by Eileen Spinelli  
*Seaver the Weaver* by Paul Czajah  
*Spidernaut: Arabella, the Spider in Space* by Jodie Parachini  
*Just Itzy* by Lana Krumwiede  
*Be Nice to Spiders* by Margaret Bloy Graham  
*Aaaarrgghh! Spider* by Lydia Monks

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## Fairs

*Angelina Ballerina at the Fair* by Katharine Holabird  
*Billy and Goat at the State Fair* by Dan Yaccarino  
*Bear at the Fair* by Sophia Gholz  
*Maddy Lou and Mack at the State Fair of Texas* by Krystal Granzow  
*The Bear and the Hare and the Fair* by Em Lynas  
*Time for the Fair* by Mary Train  
*Emma at the Fair* by Margriet Ruurs  
*Blue-Ribbon Radishes, Farm Friends* series by Kimberly Derting and Shelli R. Johannes

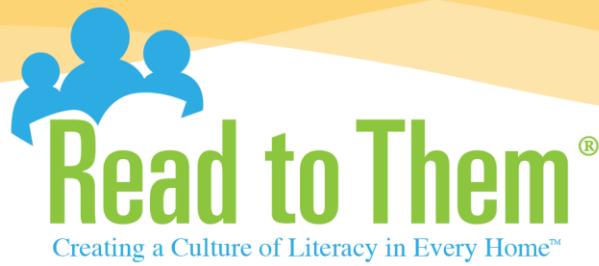
## Farms

*A Home in the Barn* by Margaret Wise Brown  
*Duck on a Tractor* by David Shannon  
*Funny Farm* by Mark Teague  
*Barn at Night* by Michelle Houts  
*This Way Charlie* by Caron Levis and Charles Santoso  
*Farm Flu* by Teresa Bateman  
*Goodnight on the Farm* by D.W. Hancock  
*Mrs. Wishy-Washy's Farm* by Joy Cowley  
*The Cow Who Clucked* by Denise Fleming  
*Down on the Farm* by Merrily Kutner  
*The Grumpy Morning* by Darcia Labrosse  
*Little Blue Truck* by Alice Schertle  
*Charlie the Ranch Dog* by Ree Drummond

## Financial Literacy

*The Penny Pot* by Stuart J. Murphy, illustrated by Lynne Cravath  
*A Penny's Worth* by Kimberly Wilson  
*A Dollar's Grand Dream* by Kimberly Wilson  
*Rock, Brock, and the Savings Shock* by Sheila Bair, illustrated by Barry Gott  
*Alexander, Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday* by Judith Viorst, illustrated by Ray Cruz  
*Those Shoes* by Maribeth Boelts, illustrated by Noah Z. Jones  
*A Bike Like Sergio's* by Maribeth Boelts, illustrated by Noah Z. Jones  
*Bunny Money* by Rosemary Wells  
*A Chair for My Mother* by Vera B. Williams  
*The Grasshopper and the Ants* by Jerry Pinkney  
*Apple Farmer Annie* by Monica Wellington  
*Sheep in a Shop* by Nancy E. Shaw, illustrated by Margot Apple  
*Pigs Will Be Pigs* by Amy Axelrod, illustrated by Sharon McGinty-Nally  
*Sweet Potato Pie* by Kathleen D. Lindsey

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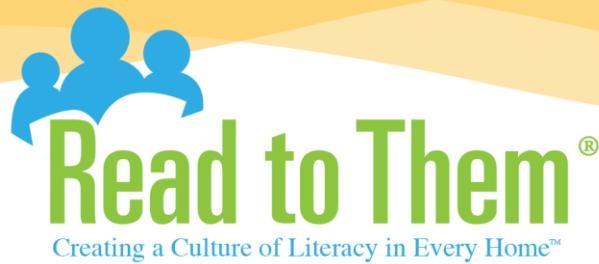
**Written by E. B. White**

*Stuart Little*  
*The Trumpet of the Swan*  
*Some Pig! A Charlotte's Web Picture Book*  
*Wilbur's Adventure*  
*Salutations! Wit and Wisdom from Charlotte's Web*  
*The Perfect Word*

**Illustrated by Garth Williams**

*Stuart Little* (E. B. White)  
*Farmer Boy* (Laura Ingalls Wilder)  
*On the Banks of Plum Creek* (Laura Ingalls Wilder)  
*Little House in the Big Woods* (Laura Ingalls Wilders)  
*Little Town on the Prairie* (Laura Ingalls Wilder)  
*The Cricket in Times Square* (George Selden)  
*Benjamin's Treasure* (Garth Williams)  
*The Rescuers* (Margery Sharp)  
*The Turret* (Margery Sharp)

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### Language Arts

**Word Web** – Draw a massive web on a piece of bulletin board paper and challenge your students to think of a word they would choose to represent themselves. Allow students to share their words and add them to your web to make a collaborative class web!

### Exploring Language

**Animal Sign Language** – Sign language is a great way to learn about language, and animal signs are fun to learn. Any sign language book for children will have animal signs in it. Click [here](#) for a website with video clips to learn the signs. Make sure they learn “Pig” and “Spider”!

### Dramatic Play

**A Trip to the Fair** – Stock your dramatic play area with play food, a picture to represent a Ferris wheel or a carousel, stuffed farm animals, play money, a toy cash register, an entrance sign, and tickets. You could have students take turns pretending to be the ticket seller, ride guides, the farmer, food and merchandise sellers, performers, and (of course) customers. Encourage students to go all out in their roles. They should practice counting with the exchange of money for tickets and the exchange of tickets for activities or items. You could even encourage a few scenarios challenging their ability to adapt during play like: “Now imagine it’s raining, what will you choose to do?” or “It’s time to announce our winning pig!”

**Animal Corner** – Add some special stuffed animals to your Quiet Corner for a snuggle, because every child deserves to read with a Wilbur. (Or a Charlotte.)

### Mindfulness

**Starfish Breathing** – Wilbur faces a lot of worry about his fate in *Charlotte’s Web*. You can teach your children Starfish Breathing as a calming tool. Hold up your left hand with fingers splayed out wide. Note that your hand looks like a starfish. Use the index finger of the right hand to trace along the arms of the starfish as you breathe slowly in and out. Inhale as your right index finger goes up the outside of the left thumb, and exhale as you go down the thumb. Inhale as you trace up the left index finger, and exhale as you go down. Continue, ending on the outside of your left pinky. The combination of the deep, slow breaths with the tactile sensation is very soothing and helps settle the brain. See if your class can sync up your breathing and all calm together. (This is a great strategy to share with families.)



## Art

**Painting with Animals** – See how many farm animals your students can recall and share! Get out a wide assortment of plastic animals. Put them out with some dishes of paint and heavy paper and let students experiment with painting with the animals they may find on a farm.

**Pig Drawing** – Click [here](#) for a great step-by-step video for your students to follow along and draw their very own pig emojis!

**Illustrator Inspiration** – Garth Williams did the beautiful illustrations for *Charlotte's Web*. Read one (or more) of the books listed above also illustrated by Garth Williams, calling attention to the illustrations. Ask children what they notice about the pictures.

One thing to notice in Williams' illustrations is the amount of movement portrayed. E.g. Charlotte spins a web on page 38, Avery takes a tumble on page 73, Wilbur does a flip on page 100.

Invite students to make self-portraits with Williams-inspired movement. What might they be doing in their illustration? Is it a small action, like petting a pig? Or maybe they're taking part in a radiant Wilbur flip...? Have a variety of drawing materials available for the children to use including crayons, colored pencils, markers, chalk pastels, oil pastels, and tempera sticks. You can prop up the Williams-illustrated books for inspiration. Or, if you have access to a color printer, make a copy of several of the illustrations and put them in sheet protectors. Put those on the art table for inspiration.

## Music

**Learn a Song about Animal Sounds** – Click [here](#) for a popular one!

## STEM and Sensory

**Wild Animal vs. Farm Animal Sorting** – Have plastic animals or animal cards available for sorting. Which belong in the wild? Which belong on the farm?

**Farm Themed Sensory Bin** – Use hay as your filler and add plastic farm animals, some small or toy farm tools, and some plastic fruits and veggies to represent a farm.

**Make a Ferris Wheel!** – Allow your students to each decorate a piece of the material you'll be using to craft a class Ferris wheel! Click [here](#) for a video tutorial.



### Game

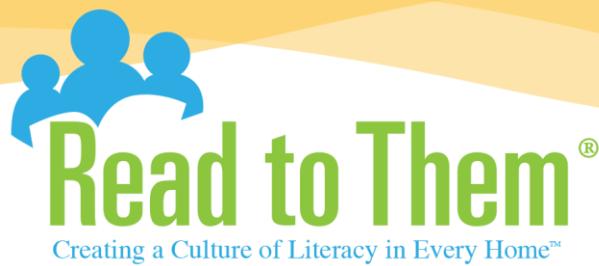
**Match that Habitat** – Print out some pictures of farm animals and habitats on the farm. Allow your students to match each animal to where you may find them on the farm (there can be more than one right answer)! Here's a few animals to get you started: cows, pigs, chickens, sheep, horses, geese, rabbits. And here are some habitats: pasture, barn, chicken coop, stable, pond, rabbit pen, shed. You could do this as a class and talk about all the options that make sense or allow students to give it a try on their own.

**Carnival Games** – Bring the fun of the fair to your play area by engaging your students in one (or all) of the following carnival-themed games:

- *Ring Toss* – Use paper rings or paper plates with the center cut out and cones or bottles as targets. Students can practice their dexterity with this classic game!
- *Ball Toss* – Set up a row or two of plastic cups and allow students to try to land their ping pong balls into the cups.
- *Farm Animal Duck Pond* – Write the names of different farm animals on the bottom of some rubber ducks. Then, fill a bin with water and add the ducks to it. Allow students to take turns choosing a duck, and then acting out or making the noise of the animal written underneath. (You can also do this charades-style for extra fun!)
- *Feed the Farm Animals* – Make a cardboard cutout with drawings of different animal heads (and a hole where each of their mouths would be). Students could toss bean bags (representing food) and try to “feed” the animals!

### Story Retelling

**Story Basket** – Choose one (or some!) of the suggested titles to highlight. Read it to the class and then put it out with a basket of props to use in retelling the story. Include small dolls, animals, pieces of felt, and loose parts that can be used as props.

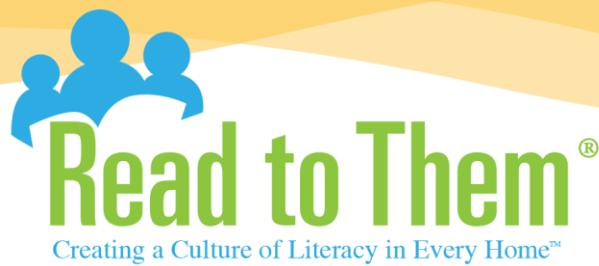


### Financial Literacy and Math

**Coin Exploration** – Whether visiting a fair, a farm, or any place of business, currency is essential! Put out a bowl of change for the children to explore. They can sort the different types of coins and put them in order from smallest to largest. Put out a balance scale and let them explore the weight of the different coins. Mount some on a clipboard with clear contact paper and let them do crayon rubbings.

**Come One, Come All** – Introduce your young minds to the concept of ‘marketing’ by encouraging them to make some advertisements for the fair! You could assign each kiddo a different aspect of the fair to advertise for (the entrance, the Ferris wheel, the carousel, the popcorn stand, balloons, etc.) and allow them to draw or paint their advertisement. You could then talk through what they want their ad to say, and you could either write their message for them or they can do it themselves depending on their skill level.

**Weighing Animals** – Put out a balance scale with an assortment of plastic animals. You can add Unifix cubes or other small manipulatives. Students can see how many cubes it takes to balance the scale for different sized animals.



## Sharing Stories Outside

Any activity you do inside can be done outside—bigger, louder, messier, and more fun.

Here are some activity ideas to get you started for a Sharing Stories Outside day inspired by *Charlotte's Web*:

- *Collaborative Art* – Make your painting projects BIG. Use textured items to paint on big pieces of cardboard or long pieces of bulletin board paper. Try bath scrubbers, sponges, pine branches, pine cones, squeegees.
- *Add texture to the paint* – Mix different textures into tempera paint and have students finger paint with it on a smooth surface like a piece of plexiglass or even the windows of your school. (Adding clear dish soap to the paint will help it wash off easily with a blast of the hose.) Some textures to try: sand, corn starch, salt, small pasta (like orzo or couscous), garden soil.
- *Fair Fun* – Combine some of the activities above and host a fair for your students! They can play carnival games outside, as part of a dramatic play-fair event.
- *Wash the animals* – All those animals you used to paint with will need a bath. Put out big bins of soapy water, a bin of clear water, and some old towels for a spa day for your plastic animals.
- *Picnic Snack* – Have some foods inspired by the books you read together.
- *Construction* – Save cardboard boxes to be used outside for building. Challenge students to build a fun place for animals to play.
- *Animal Walks* – Practice moving like different animals. Have all the students start at one end of the play area. Call out an animal and have them move like that animal across to the other side. (This game is more challenging—and fun—if you have a hill they can go up and down.) Some animals to try:
  - Cow – walking slowly on all fours, while swishing an imaginary tail
  - Pig – waddling slowly, snuff to the ground, rolling in mud
  - Horse – gallops galore
  - Sheep – walking with springy steps
  - Chicken – pecking and flapping
  - Barn Cat – tiptoeing softly, licking paws
  - Goose – waddling with outward facing toes and flapping, neck stretched

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