

# Growing



# Readers Review

Book recommendations to help your child spark a lifelong love of reading

Celebrating

25  
years

## Preschool-Young School-Age

### The Yellow Bus

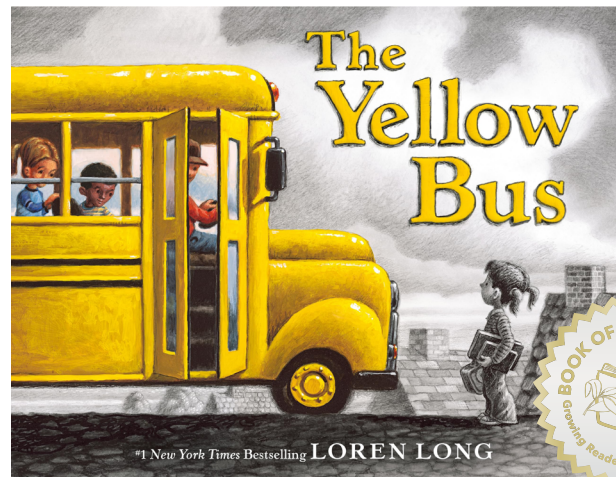
Written and illustrated by Loren Long

The Yellow Bus spends her days joyfully carrying children to the places that matter most, their laughter filling her with happiness. Over the span of 50 years, life brings changes—a new driver, different routes, and a mix of passengers, both young and old. Eventually, her journey on the road comes to an end, leaving her alone but not without purpose. With striking monochrome illustrations, *The Yellow Bus* is a tender story about the endless possibilities that come with change and new beginnings.

#### Engaging activities

##### How do you help others?

Throughout every phase of life, the Yellow Bus has helped others, whether by transporting people to an important place or offering a warm shelter. In what ways have you helped others? Ask your child to draw a picture showing a way they have been helpful to another person. They could draw



themselves helping a friend, picking up their toys, sharing, or comforting another person.

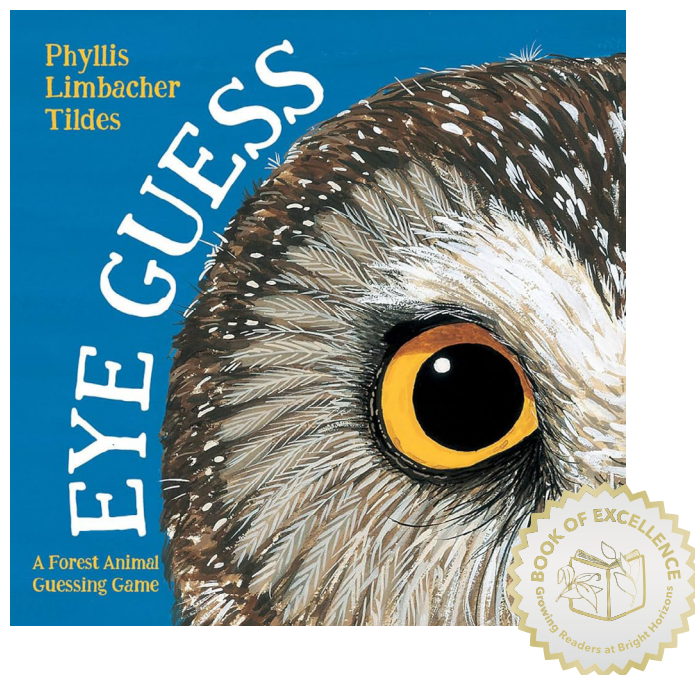
##### Dream up a story.

On a walk around your neighborhood or even exploring old objects around your home, find an object that intrigues you. What do you think it's been used for? Who or what has it encountered? What is their journey from shiny and new to what you see today? Similar to the author, write a story about the "life" of an object and its adventures. Invite your child to be creative and silly in their imaginative ideas!

# Eye Guess

Written and illustrated by Phyllis Limbacher Tildes

Who is looking at you? Combine animals, mystery, and predictable interactive text, and you have yourself a popular children's book. In this playful board book, children of all ages will enjoy flipping through the pages as they use clues to guess each of the eight North American animals. By using bold and vibrant colors, Tildes captivates the reader with images of animals and their natural habitats. The story begins in the daytime and progresses throughout the day, culminating in a bushy-eyed owl in the darkness of the night.



## Engaging activities

### Make a treasure basket.

In a container or basket, collect a few toy animals or nature items. Encourage young children to discover with their senses, as you layer in descriptive vocabulary to describe the texture, shape, and size of each item.

### I Spy.

With early verbal children, play a variation of the game you see in the book, "Who or What am I?" Start with easy examples or provide clues to visible, tangible things first. If playing with older children, get creative with the clues. I see something red, round, that I usually eat for a snack. What am I? [Answer: apple]. I am large and usually filled with water droplets. I can be white or gray; you see me from far away. What am I? [Answer: cloud] I drop by around the same time most days. I wear a blue uniform and usually drop off newspapers or envelopes. Who am I? [Answer: mailperson]

### Become a scientist.

Older children can use the See/Think/Wonder routine from [Teacher Nate's Book Club video](#) to explore something new. What will you discover next? Offer a magnifying glass or small notepad for your child to continue studying, investigating, and jotting down their observations.



## Meet Loren Long: The artist behind *The Yellow Bus*

Long is a bestselling author-illustrator whose heartwarming picture books have captivated readers of all ages. Loren grew up in Lexington, Kentucky, where he discovered his love for drawing and storytelling—though he'll tell you his favorite subject in school was P.E.!

Long now lives in Cincinnati with his wife, their two sons, and their pandemic rescue dog, Charlie. On one of his regular outdoor walks with Charlie, along a wooden bike trail, he spotted a rusty, broken-down bus. Curious about the old school bus in his neighborhood, he began to wonder about a time when the bus was new and shiny. He envisioned the bus's adventures before it ended up on a bike trail surrounded by goats. His keen observation and fascination with this sight inspired his most recent release, *The Yellow Bus*, which debuted at number one on The New York Times bestseller list.

**Fun Fact:** Long is colorblind—a challenge for any visual artist—but he overcomes it relying on the basics of color theory, a deep understanding of visual storytelling, and his friends.

## Reading news



## Growing Readers Book Club



This month's [Growing Readers Book Club Video](#) features the book "Eye Guess" by Phyllis Limbacher Tildes. Join Teacher Nate in extending this captivating board book for use with older children to develop higher-order thinking skills—such as analysis, evaluation, and creation—through activities that encourage questioning, problem-solving, and reflection.



# Storytelling tips

## Build anticipation with a picture walk.

A picture walk is a classic classroom reading practice that involves examining the illustrations in a new picture book to familiarize children with the story before introducing the text. It sparks interest in the book and allows children to connect the story to their prior experiences.

Picture walks are a great way to build literacy skills starting from infancy! With young babies and toddlers, picture walks offer an opportunity for back-and-forth interactions, enabling adults to introduce new vocabulary words in context and engage the children's listening skills. For preschoolers and older children, this practice bolsters pre-reading skills as children use visual cues to grasp the story's setting, characters, and plot; acquire new vocabulary words in context; and make predictions – crucial skills for developing reading comprehension.

Before you start to read a book, look at the front cover together. Ask your child, "What do you think this book is about?" Give them time to think about their answers, then encourage them to think deeper by asking, "How can you tell?" Support your child's responses with clues and reasoning of your own. "I can see why you predict this story is about school because you can see the front part of a bus, and a little girl is holding a book. You are very observant. I also noticed the bus on the front cover is yellow, which makes me think it's a school bus, not a city or metro bus. Let's find out if we can make more predictions from just the illustrations."

Encourage your child to open the book and harness their thinking skills as they make predictions about the story, characters, and the setting. Inviting children to explain their logic enhances their critical thinking skills and prepares them to be strong readers.



**Make reading a joyful part of your child's daily routine.**

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