Singing is a skill that helps children read. Singing picture books provides many benefits, not least of which are:

- It slows down language, allowing children to hear the different sounds in words and the syllables that make up each word.
- Songs often include repeated phases and repetition is essential for early learning.
- Books often contain new vocabulary to which children otherwise wouldn’t be exposed.

When you add music to reading you increase children’s neural connections and brain development. That growth will help them learn and think better in all subjects.

Include some of these **musical experiences** as you read picture books with children:

- Singing
- Playing or moving to rhythm/beat
- Chanting/Rapping
- Acting out a song
- Developing language skills and increasing vocabulary
- Utilizing recorded music or making your own recording
- Playing instruments
- Making instruments or discovering found sounds
- Moving or marching to music
- Making up new songs
- Listening to music
- Playing musical games
- Using call and response (echoing)
- Learning and singing/playing a repeated refrain throughout the book
- Creating and singing new words to a familiar folk tune
- Singing traditional words to a different melody
Books that are regularly mentioned on lists of singable books
(alphabetically by author)

Señor Don Gato: A Traditional Song (Anonymous)
Dem Bones (Bob Barner)
I Ain't Gonna Paint No More! (Karen Beaumont)
Over in the Jungle (Marianne Berkes)
   -- also wrote "Over in Australia," "... the Arctic," "... in a River Flowing Out to the Sea"
Ten in the Den (John Butler)
Over the River and Through the Wood (Lydia Maria Francis Child)
Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed (Eileen Christelow)
Eensy Weensy Spider (Heather Collins)
Over the Rainbow (performed by Judy Collins)
When You Wish Upon a Star (performed by Judy Collins)
Farmyard Beat (Lindsey Craig)
Cows in the Kitchen (June Crebbin)
   -- sing to the tune of "Skip to My Lou", employ dynamics
Dooby Dooby Moo (Doreen Cronin)
You Are My Sunshine (Jimmie Davis)
This Jazz Man (Karen Ehhardt)
Ten Little Beasties (Ed Emberley)
Knick Knack Paddy Whack (Christiane Engel)
My Aunt Came Back – download free mp3 (John Feierabend)
Ten Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed -- Classic Book with Holes (Tina Freeman)
Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening (Robert Frost / illustrated by Susan Jeffers)
Cat Goes Fiddle-i-Fee (Paul Galdone)
Mail Myself to You (Woody Guthrie / illustrated by Vera Rosenberry)
Riding in My Car (Woody Guthrie / illustrated by Scott Menchin)
This Land is Your Land (Woody Guthrie / illustrated by Kathy Jakobsen)
The Animal Boogie (Debbie Harter)
Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush (Will Hillenbrand)
Miss Mary Mack (MaryAnn Hoberman)
The Seals on the Bus (Lenny Hort)
Mama Don't Allow (Thacher Hurd)
On Top of Spaghetti (Paul Brett Johnson)
Crocodile Beat (Gail Jorgensen)
Take Me Out of the Bathtub (Alan Katz)
The Teddy Bears' Picnic (Jimmy Kennedy)
Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes (Annie Kubler)
Señor Pancho Had a Rancho (René Colato Lainez)
Who Took the Cookies from the Cookie Jar?
   (Bonnie Lass and Philemon Sturges)
Always Room for One More (Sorche Nic Leodhas)
This Little Light of Mine (E.B. Lewis)
Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes + other books
   (Eric Litwin)
The Croaky Pokey! (Ethan Long)
Way Out in the Desert (T. J. Marsh & Jennifer Ward)
My Country 'Tis of Thee (Claire Rudolf Murphy)
Bein' With You This Way (W. Nikola-Lisa)
   -- rap to a steady beat
If It's Snowy and You Know It Clap Your Paws! (Kim Norman)
Ten on the Sled (Kim Norman)
Take Me Out to the Ball Game (Jack Norworth / illustrated by Amiko Hirao / performed by Carly Simon)
The Farmer in the Dell (John O'Brien)
The Duck Song (Bryant Oden)
Going to the Zoo (Tom Paxton)
It's Raining, It's Pouring (Peter, Paul, and Mary)
The Night Before Christmas (Clement Moore, performed by Peter, Paul, and Mary)
Hush, Little Baby (Brian Pinkney)
Sing, Sing a Song – Book and CD (Joe Raposo)
Let's Play in the Forest While the Wolf is Not Around (Claudia Rueda)
America the Beautiful (Robert Sabuda)
All the Pretty Little Horses (Linda Saport)
Old MacDonald had a Woodshop (Lisa Shulman / illustrated by Ashley Wolff)
Antarctic Antics: A Book of Penguin Poems (Judy Sierra)
Five Little Speckled Frogs (Nikki Smith)
Itsy Bitsy Spider: Lift the Flap (Margaret Spengler)
The Erie Canal (Peter Spier)
The Fox Went Out on a Chilly Night (Peter Spier)
The Star-Spangled Banner (Peter Spier)
Octopus's Garden (Ringo Starr)
There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly
   (Simms Taback)
   (some teachers substitute "Oh me! Oh my!"
   instead of "Perhaps she'll die.")
Green is a Chile Pepper (Roseanne Thong)
One is a Drummer (Roseanne Thong)
Round is a Tortilla (Roseanne Thong)
Sue MacDonald Had a Book (Jim Tobin)
Follow the Moon -- Book and CD (Sarah Weeks)
Peanut Butter and Jelly: A Play Rhyme (Nadine Bernard Westcott)
What a Wonderful World (George Weiss and Bob Theile)
Follow the Drinking Gourd (Jeanette Winter)
Day is Done – Book and CD (Peter Yarrow and Melissa Sweet)
Puff, the Magic Dragon (Peter Yarrow)
There Were Ten in the Bed (Karen Young)
When I First Came to This Land (Harriet Ziefert)
Wheels on the Bus (Paul Zelinsky)
Whole World (Christopher Corr/Fred Penner)
Knick Knack Paddywhack (Paul Zelinsky)

Authors

Sandra Boynton has published many illustrated songbook/CD sets
UK author Jane Cabrera has written many books, some of her illustrated folk songs/nursery rhymes include:
- Baa, Baa, Black Sheep
- Row, Row, Row, Your Boat
- The 12 Days of Christmas
- Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star
- The Wheels on the Bus
- Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush
- 1,2 Buckle My Shoe
- Old MacDonald Had a Farm
- Ten in the Bed
- If You’re Happy and You Know It
- Old Mother Hubbard
- Over in the Meadow

Christopher Canyon has made some of John Denver’s songs into picture books:
- Grandma’s Feather Bed
- Sunshine on My Shoulders
- Take Me Home, Country Roads

Performer Raffi Cavoukian has many “Songs to Read” books:
- Baby Beluga
- Down by the Bay
- Five Little Ducks
- If You’re Happy and You Know It
- Shake My Sillies Out
- Spider on the Floor
- Wheels on the Bus

MaryAnn Hoberman and Nadine Bernard Westcott have collaborated on a “sing-along stories” series of books:
- Miss Mary Mack
- Bill Grogan’s Goat
- There Once Was a Man Named Michael Finnegan
- The Eensy-Weensy Spider
- I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly

Skip to My Lou
The Lady with the Alligator Purse
Mary Had a Little Lamb
Yankee Doodle

Verla Kay writes her historical picture books in short, descriptive verses. She rarely uses full sentences.
- Civil War Drummer Boy
- Covered Wagons, Bumpy Trails (1800’s overland journey in a covered wagon)
- Gold Fever (1849 gold rush)
- Hornbooks and Inkwells (about education in a one-room schoolhouse in 1754)
- Iron Horses (transcontinental railroad)
- Rough, Tough Charley (story of a stagecoach driver during the California gold rush)
- Tattered Sails (1600’s ocean voyage from England to American colonies)
- Whatever Happened to the Pony Express? (how mail service and transportation has changed through the years)

Out of print:
- Broken Feather (story of Nez Perce tribe)
- Homespun Sarah (1700’s American colonies)
- Orphan Train (1854-1929)

Iza Trapani was born in Poland and spoke only Polish when she came to the United States at the age of seven. Her relatives gave her a big book of Mother Goose nursery rhymes and she began to learn English as she read the poems.
- The Itsy Bitsy Spider (1993)
- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star (1994)
- I’m A Little Teapot (1996)
- Mary Had A Little Lamb (1998)
- Row Row Row Your Boat (1999)
- Shoo Fly (2000)
- Baa Baa Black Sheep (2001)
- Jingle Bells (2005)
- Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush (2006)
- The Bear Went Over the Mountain (2012)