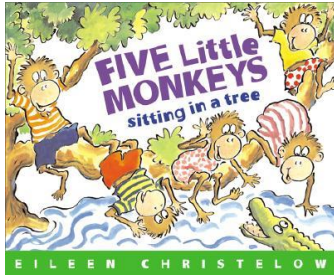


Picnics Read-Aloud Outline

Eating outside is fun. And risky. Do your Read-Aloud picnic-style, with a blanket and snacks. Outdoors, weather permitting. The books explore the ups and downs of picnicking and the activities bring picnics, and the books, to life.

Depending on the age of the kids in your group, start with either ***Five Little Monkeys Sitting in a Tree*** by Eileen Christelow (for kids age 4 to 6), or ***Bats at the Beach*** by Brian Lies (ages 6 to 10).

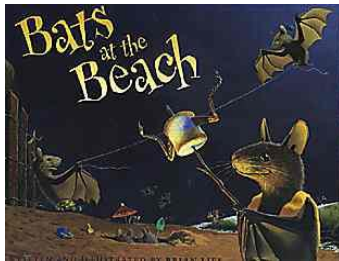


Five Little Monkeys Sitting in a Tree by Eileen Christelow

Ages 4 and up

A family of monkeys goes to the river for a picnic, only to meet a crocodile. The monkey children proceed to tease the crocodile, much to their parents' chagrin! Kids will enjoy wondering whether or not the crocodile will snap up the picnickers.

The book includes the words to the famous song.

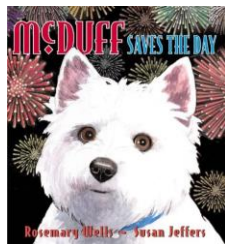


Bats at the Beach by Brian Lies

Ages 5 and up

Since bats are nocturnal, they have nighttime picnics! Beautiful double-page illustrations accompany Lies' clever story, in which his bats enjoy picnic and beach activities like building sand caves and toasting bug-mallows.

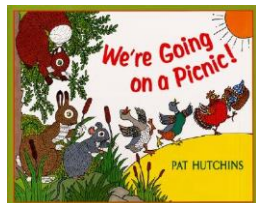
You could also start your Read-Aloud with books about how, sometimes, things go wrong at picnics. These two stories focus on food disappearing.



McDuff Saves the Day by Rosemary Wells

Ages 4 to 8

Rosemary Wells is a master at juxtaposing story and illustrations in a way that each lends depth to the other. In this book, McDuff just oozes character! Left to guard the picnic, McDuff doesn't notice when ants steal all of the food from the family picnic basket. He saves the day by befriending a stranger with a lot of meatballs, enough to share!



We're Going on a Picnic by Pat Hutchins

Ages 4 and up

Hen, Goose and Duck set out on a picnic. Each time they stop to check out a place, some of their food disappears. Will they find the perfect spot? And when they do, will they have any food left?

Other picnic books

Picnic by Emily Arnold McCully (Ages 4 to 8)

A wordless book in which a mouse gets lost and then experiences the joy of being reunited with his family.

Mr. Putter and Tabby Row the Boat by Cynthia Rylant (Ages 6 to 8)

A picnic with good friends can be the best way to while away a hot summer day. Mr. Putter, his fine cat Tabby, Mrs. Teaberry and her dog Zeke enjoy a meal of tomato sandwiches, kiwi salad and apple tea.

Activities

1. Have a picnic! Spread blankets on the floor and enjoy a healthy snack together.

2. Get Moving: Monkeys and Crocodiles

A play on "Sharks and Minnows," this is a good game for a group of energetic kids to play outside in the summer. Start with one kid as the croc and the rest as monkeys. As they try to cross the yard, the croc will try to "snap" them! Have the croc give monkeys a gentle tag on the shoulder and yell "SNAP"! Monkeys who get tagged become crocs in the next round. The last remaining monkey becomes the first croc the next time.

3. What Would You Bring To A Picnic?

Play "I'm going to a picnic and I'm bringing. . ." This is the old alphabet game where one kid says "apple" or some other food beginning with "A." The next child says a "B" food, and so on. Silliness is encouraged!

4. Make a picnic collage

This is a good option if your Read-Aloud falls on a rainy day or if you aren't able to go outside. Bring magazines or newspaper ads with pictures of food. Let the kids cut out their favorite pictures. Then glue their favorite foods to paper plates to make picnic food collages.

Conversation starters

Night-time picnics sounds like a great idea! What would be some good locations for a night-time picnic? What are the pros and cons of our site? What special problems might come up at a night-time picnic?

What would you pack for a picnic you were planning? What makes some food a good fit for a picnic?

Can you have a picnic indoors? What makes something qualify as a picnic?

Some cultures eat while sitting on the ground as a matter of course. What do you think it would be like to eat on the ground on a regular basis, instead of at tables and chairs?

What would you bring to a picnic if you were a monkey? A crocodile? A bat? A person?