

Recent years have shown an uptick in children's books that celebrate STEM themes. Science, technology, engineering and math (also called STEAM to include the arts) may not necessarily strike you as the most logical combination with literature. However, books are a terrific and low-stress way for your child to explore different ways of thinking, learn about leaders in scientific fields celebrated for their innovative work, and open minds about the everyday applicability of STEM concepts.

Here are several books emphasizing mathematics that should add up to a fun storytime for your readers!

***"The Boy Who Dreamed of Infinity: A Tale of the Genius Ramanujan"* by Amy Alznauer and Daniel Miyares (2020)**

Woefully misunderstood until just before his early death, Ramanujan dreamed of mathematical concepts that continue to inspire STEM thinkers today. This gorgeously illustrated picture book biography is written by a mathematics professor whose family has a curious connection to Ramanujan's work.

***"Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race"* by Margot Lee Shetterly and Laura Freeman (2018)**

A beautifully illustrated picture book adaptation of Shetterly's book about four female mathematicians integral to NASA's first launch of men into space, these sheroes were referred to as "computers" before machines were capable of making the calculations they could.

***"Millionaires for the Month"* by Stacy McAnulty (2020)**

In this dual-voice chapter book, two boys find a billionaire's wallet and, after borrowing \$20, accept her challenge to secretly spend the same as a penny doubled in a month (more than \$5 million) in order to receive funds they can keep.

***"One Big Pair of Underwear"* by Laura Gehl and Tom Lichtenheld (2014)**

Sharing is caring but as the animals get larger and there's more of them to split amongst, things get comically complicated in this hilarious rhyming picture book with excellent math concepts at its core.

***"One Fox: A Counting Book Thriller"* by Kate Read (2019)**

Tension builds as a hungry fox covets five delicious eggs but faces more than he bargains for as this alliterative counting book progresses.

“Seven Golden Rings: A Tale of Music and Math” by Rajani LaRocca and Archana Sreenivasan (2020)

Bhagat travels to the Rajah's city with the hope of recognition for his musical talents, but Bhagat's nimble way with numbers earns him attention instead. This book is an entertaining introduction to binary numbers, the ancient root of computing.

“We All Count: A Book of Cree Numbers” by Julie Flett (2014)

Creatures and humans coexist in every context, and those relationships are centered in this contemporary counting book featuring Cree, the Native American tribe's numbers and pronunciations, for the youngest readers.

“What Will Fit?” by Grace Lin (2020)

One in a series of bright and sweet concept books (storytelling math) meant to empower our youngest readers to see themselves as mathematical thinkers, this book is written by diverse authors and illustrators featuring children of color in engaging, realistic scenarios.

“Which One Doesn't Belong? Playing With Shapes” by Christopher Danielson (2019)

Four images on each page invite readers to find an outlier, except each image could be an outlier for a different reason. This family-friendly title invites justifications and reasoning in defense of your correct answer and encourages creative mathematical thinking for all ages.

After your storytime try one of these *equally* engaging family activities to build on the concepts raised by mathematical books:

- Use a bag of M&Ms, Skittles, or a snack mix to discuss ratios, graphing out the contents of a package before enjoying it as a snack.
- Find a deck of cards and play Addition War. Divide the deck in half and each player flips over *two* cards at once. The player with the larger sum wins and the goal is to collect the most cards.
- Introduce a numbers-based game like Sudoku or KenKen to your reader. Check your newspaper to see if they offer a game or find a free app with puzzles suitable for young mathematicians.