

FAMILY MEDIA/BOOKS

New Year, New Books: 10 Must-Reads for Kids

Healthy choices and trying new things are at the heart of these stories

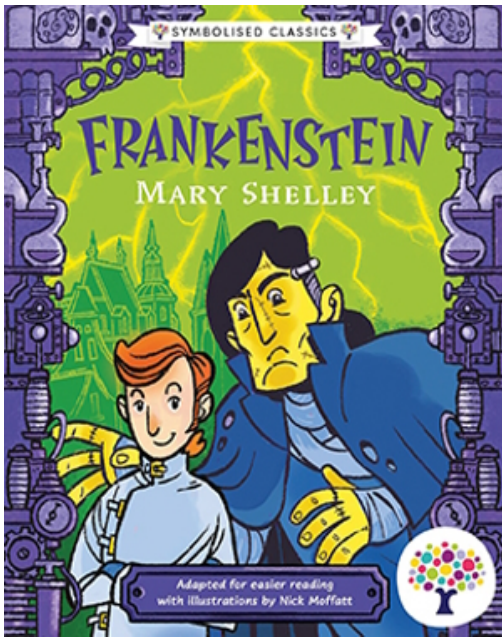
BY [GEMMA ALEXANDER \(/AUTHOR/GEMMA-ALEXANDER\)](#) |

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PHOTO: iStock

There's a reason gyms and yoga studios are packed with new recruits every January. There's just something about the new year — combined with the post-holiday slump and very short days — that makes people want a fresh start. Little kids have a different sense of time, but it's never too early to start learning about healthy choices and trying new things. Here are ParentMap's choices of new books for a healthy new year.



“Frankenstein: Accessible Symbolised Edition” is one in a series of adapted classics from Every Cherry, a new British publisher dedicated to making literacy accessible to special needs students. Symbolized editions incorporate dyslexia-friendly fonts and paper, glossaries, high-low reading levels suited for neurodiverse readers, and graphics above keywords to boost reading comprehension. They also come with free ASL videos.

October, special needs adaptation.

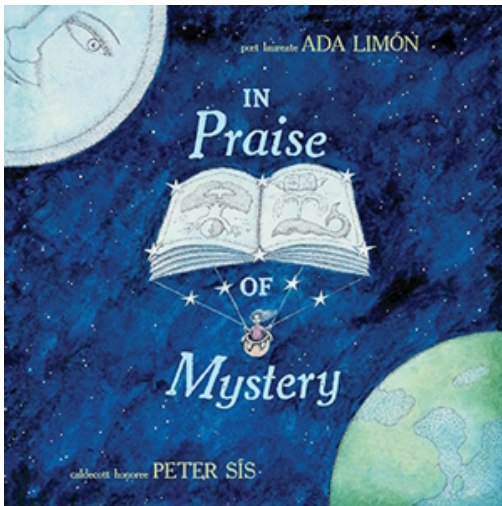
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“The Self-Regulation Workbook for 3- to 5-Year-Olds: Play-Based and Creative Activities to Build Coping Skills and Handle Big Emotions” by Abbré McClain and Jacqueline Salazar is an evidence-based workbook filled with playful and creative activities to help foster self-regulation skills necessary for healthy emotional development in rapidly growing preschoolers.

Ages 3–5.

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“In Praise of Mystery” by Ada Limón is an illustrated picture book of the U.S. poet laureate’s poem that was engraved on the Europa Clipper spacecraft. It celebrates curiosity and exploration while showing how the unknown can teach us about ourselves.

Ages 4–8.

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“Great Idea Malia!” by Alliah L. Agostini explores the power of ideas as Malia comes up with some less than successful ones for helping her mom deal with the challenges of a new job.

Ages 4–8.

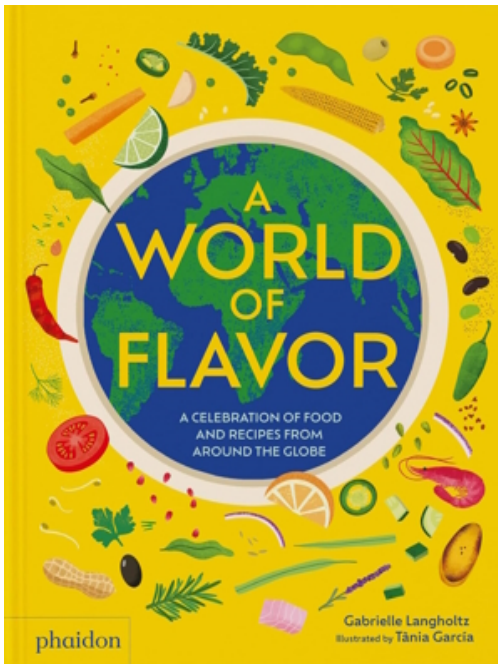
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“The Pie Reports” by Hayley Lowe deals with illness and depression in a gentle, age-appropriate way. Noor and Granddad share their love of pie and keep in touch through weekly video chats. But when Granddad’s blue days get worse and he starts missing calls, Noor decides to write down her pie reports, holding space for Granddad until he feels ready.

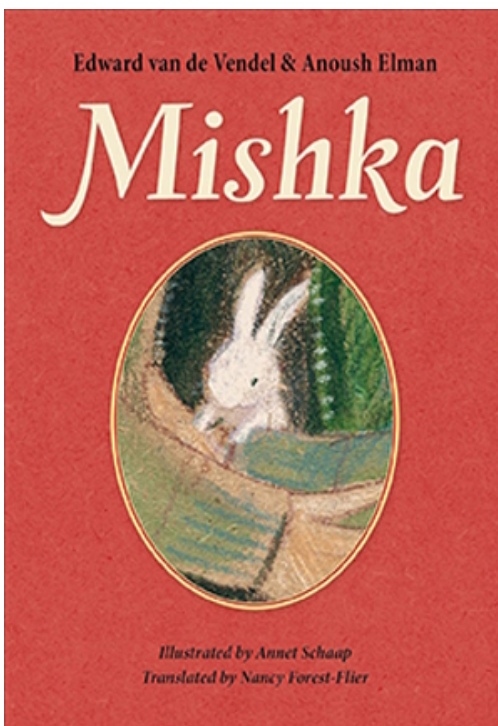
Ages 6–8.

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“A World of Flavor: A Celebration of Food and Recipes from Around the World” by Gabrielle Langholtz is an innovative cookbook that inspires kids to explore new foods with more than 40 easy, kid-friendly recipes from countries around the world, each paired with fun facts and cultural information. *Ages 7–10.*

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“Mishka” by Edward van de Vendel starts with a new pet, Mishka, whose arrival sparks storytelling about Roya’s family’s journey from Afghanistan to the Netherlands. With the story told from different family members’ points of view, Roya gets a new perspective on family history. *Ages 7–10.*

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“Chickenpox” by Remy Lai is a graphic novel about Abby, who gets stuck at home with her four annoying younger siblings when her friend gives them all chicken pox. Kids who are old enough to remember pandemic lockdowns will sympathize with Abby’s desire to be anywhere else.

Ages 8–12.

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“Deer Run Home” by Ann Clare LeZotte is a novel in verse using ASL grammar about Effie, who is deaf and the only one in her family who speaks sign language. But Effie has a secret that needs to be told. Although it deals with abuse, this story is sensitively told by a deaf author.

Ages 10–14.

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“Compound Fracture” by Andrew Joseph White is a violent, political story for teens. Miles Abernathy is a trans teen with socialist ideals who tries to end a century-old blood feud between his coal-mining family and corrupt local authorities in West Virginia. “Compound Fracture” was chosen by Publishers Weekly as one of the best YA books of 2024.
Ages 14 and older.

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“Twenty-Four Seconds from Now ...” by Jason Reynolds treats Black boys and their emotional lives with all the nuance and sensitivity Reynolds is known for. Neon is going to consummate his relationship with first love Aria — if he can stop freaking out. As the story is told in rewind, readers see the young couple’s history, from embarrassing meet-cute to 24 seconds before they begin a new, more adult phase of their relationship.
Ages 14 and older.

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More books to love:

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[Teach Kids About Forgiveness With Picture Books \(https://www.parentmap.com/article/books-about-forgiveness\)](https://www.parentmap.com/article/books-about-forgiveness)

[Children's Books That Capture the Magic of the Pacific Northwest \(https://www.parentmap.com/article/kids-books-seattle-pacific-northwest\)](https://www.parentmap.com/article/kids-books-seattle-pacific-northwest)

[Powerful Books for Families to Read During Banned Books Week \(https://www.parentmap.com/article/5-powerful-books-read-during-banned-books-week\)](https://www.parentmap.com/article/5-powerful-books-read-during-banned-books-week)

[15 Books for Kids About the Importance of Failure \(https://www.parentmap.com/article/kids-books-about-failure\)](https://www.parentmap.com/article/kids-books-about-failure)

[18 Books for Kids That Feature LGBTQ Characters \(https://www.parentmap.com/article/lgbtq-books-kid-family-friendly\)](https://www.parentmap.com/article/lgbtq-books-kid-family-friendly)

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About the Author

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