Reading certificate for kids: free to print, earned not given

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A free printable reading certificate for kids: a blank one to fill in by hand, and the one Peabody's reading challenges print only at the finish line.

Peabody's reading certificate for kids is free to print in two ways: a blank certificate that a teacher, a librarian or a parent fills in by hand, and the certificate each of Peabody's reading challenges prints at its finish line, and not before. There is no certificate for half way and no prize beside it. Both are free, like the rest of Peabody through the end of 2026, with no sign-up.

The blank certificate

The certificate page prints a certificate with lines to fill in by hand: the reader's name, the challenge, the number of books and the dates. Use it for a challenge your class or your family made up: ten books before a birthday, a whole series over a holiday, the first chapter book read alone.

Fill it in with your child beside you, and say it out loud as you write: "six books, from the 19th to the 27th". A certificate means more when the child hears a grown-up read out what they did.

The certificate a challenge prints

On each of Peabody's six challenges, the certificate button stays dark until the finish line. Then it prints with the challenge, the number of books and the dates already on it, and a line for the reader's name to be written by hand.

- Challenge: Winter Break, 19 December 2026 to 3 January 2027 · The certificate prints at…: the top of the mountain: 10 books for ages 5 to 7, 6 for ages 8 to 10, 4 from 11 up
- Challenge: January, 1 to 31 January 2027 · The certificate prints at…: the twentieth coloured day
- Challenge: 100 Books · The certificate prints at…: square 100
- Challenge: Book Bingo · The certificate prints at…: all 25 squares (five in a row is a Bingo, but not yet the certificate)
- Challenge: Series Challenge · The certificate prints at…: the last book of the series, read in order
- Challenge: Read-Aloud 20 · The certificate prints at…: the twentieth book read aloud to a little one

The chart and the log print at any point along the way, so there is always something for the fridge. Only the certificate waits.

Why earned, not given

I built it this way on purpose. Children know the difference between a prize for turning up and one they earned, and they know it young. A certificate handed out at the half-way mark tells a child that half is the same as all, and the next certificate is worth a little less.

So the finish lines are set to be reachable instead:

- Winter Break is sized to the reader. Ten books for a five-year-old, when picture books and read-alouds count; four for an eleven-year-old reading novels.
- January asks for twenty days out of thirty-one. A week of illness or travel does not end it, and a missed day stays empty with no message about it.
- Book Bingo has a free centre square, and 100 Books has no end date at all, so nothing can run out.

No prizes, no leaderboards

There are no prizes and no leaderboards on any challenge. A prize pays the child who picks the shortest books and reads them fastest. A leaderboard tells every child but one that they lost. A finish line that everyone can reach rewards finishing, and finishing is the habit worth having.

For a class or a library

Print the blank certificate for each reader at the end of a class challenge, and keep track along the way on the class reading log: thirty rows of reader, title, level and date finished. For a book club, the leaders' page has a sign-up sheet and meeting plans. A certificate handed over in front of the group, with the number of books read out, is all the ceremony it needs.

If a reader needs one more book to reach the line, there are 425 free stories in the library, on 19 reading levels, and the books by level page helps find the right one.

What Peabody sees

The tracker never asks for a name: the reader is an animal face, and the name goes on the paper in pencil. Everything a child logs stays on the device. Peabody receives a count that a book was logged in a challenge, and which sheet was printed; never the book, the title, the face or the age.

Questions parents ask

Can I print the certificate before my child finishes, as something to aim at?

The blank one, yes: print it, put it on the fridge empty, and fill it in on the day. A challenge's own certificate only prints at the finish line, because that is the point of it.

My child was one book short when the challenge ended. What now?

Print the chart: it shows every book they read, and that is worth putting on the fridge. Then start 100 Books, which has no end date, so every book from now on counts towards something.

Is there a certificate for a child who cannot read yet?

Yes. Read-Aloud 20 is for ages 2 to 6: twenty books read aloud to a little one, a patch of a reading quilt for each, and a certificate at the twentieth. The name on it can be written by the grown-up who did the reading.

Free at peabody.kids/blog/reading-certificate-for-kids