The 100 Books challenge for a kindergartener

Peabody guide · updated 2026-10-30

The 100 Books challenge for a kindergartener: read-alouds count, re-reads count, and how long 100 books really takes at two, three, five or seven books a week.

For a kindergartener, the 100 Books challenge is mostly read-alouds, and that is how it should be: every book read to them counts, a favourite read again on another day counts again, and at three books a week the chart is full in 34 weeks. At a bedtime book every night it takes 100 days. This guide is how the challenge works for a five- or six-year-old, the arithmetic of how long it really takes, and where a hundred books come from. Peabody's version is free, like the rest of the site through the end of 2026, with a chart to print or one that fills on a device.

How the challenge works

100 Books is a 10 by 10 chart: one square for each book, coloured in or tapped. It has no end date, so a slow month costs nothing and nobody is behind. Square 100 fills the chart and earns the certificate; there is no certificate for half way, and no prize or ranking anywhere in it. Peabody suggests it for children from about four to eight, when books are short and reading the same one again is the point.

What counts for a five-year-old

The rules are short, and they are generous on purpose:

- A book read to them counts. At five, being read to is reading. The grown-up does the words; the child does the listening, the pointing and the "again!".
- A re-read on another day counts again. If the same favourite comes out four nights running, that is four squares. Reading a book they already know is how a young child learns to read it themselves.
- The same book twice in one day counts once. On the device, a double tap logs one book, not two.
- A chapter book counts once, when it is finished. A chapter book read over two weeks of bedtimes is one square, so mix in picture books to keep the chart moving.
- A book they read to you counts too. The first books a child sounds out are tiny, and every one of them is a square.

How long it really takes

No studies here, only division. The time to a hundred depends almost entirely on how many books a week your family reads, so here it is at a few common paces:

- Books a week: 2 · Time to 100 books: 50 weeks, about a year

- Books a week: 3 · Time to 100 books: 34 weeks (33 and a third, so square 100 lands in week 34)
- Books a week: 5 · Time to 100 books: 20 weeks
- Books a week: 7, a bedtime book every night · Time to 100 books: 100 days: 14 weeks and 2 days
- Books a week: 10 · Time to 100 books: 10 weeks
- Books a week: 14, two at bedtime every night · Time to 100 books: 50 days: 7 weeks and 1 day

A few things the table shows:

- Bedtime does most of the work. One book a night on its own fills the chart in about three and a half months. Everything else, the library trip, the book at breakfast, is extra.
- Missed nights are fine. Read five nights out of seven and you are on the five-a-week line: 20 weeks.
- Short books are not cheating. At this age most books are short. Goldilocks and the Three Bears on Peabody is 175 words, about a minute and a half aloud at the pace Peabody's club kits plan for (about 120 words a minute). A picture book from the library takes longer, a first sound-it-out book far less.

Where a hundred books come from

A hundred sounds like a lot of books. It is fewer than it sounds when re-reads count, and there are more free places to find them than you might think.

- Your own shelf, twice over. Favourites read again on different days can fill a good part of a chart.
- The library. A weekly visit with a bag of picture books covers several weeks of bedtimes.
- Peabody's first books. The library has 48 free stories at levels 0 to 3, the books before and around kindergarten. Level 0 books like Pit, Pat (18 words over 8 pages) and Dad Naps are for a child who can't read yet; A Cat and a Dog, a level 3 pattern book, is 61 words. Any of them can be read aloud on request, and on the device they are a tap to log.
- Read-alouds a level or two up. Stories a kindergartener can't read alone yet are good ones to hear: Goldilocks and the Three Bears and Henny Penny are level 5.
- The lists. Picture book read-alouds for ages 5 to 7, the top 25 books for a kindergartener and sight-word and decodable-friendly books are Peabody's own lists, with plain buy links that pay nobody. A library will have most of them.

A week that gets there

Here is one shape that reaches a hundred in 20 weeks: a bedtime book on five nights, and nothing else. Here is one that reaches it in 10: a bedtime book every night, plus three little sound-it-out books the child reads to you at the weekend. Pick the shape your week already

has. A challenge that needs a new routine is one more thing to keep up; a challenge that counts the reading you already do just needs a pencil.

On paper or on a device

- On paper: the 100 books chart is 10 by 10 numbered squares with lines for the day you started and finished, and a line for records. A kindergartener can colour their own square, which is half the fun.
- On a device: the tracker works in any browser with no account. Your child picks an animal face, not a name, and taps the book; for a library book a grown-up presses and holds for two seconds and types the title. Brothers and sisters each get their own face and their own chart, up to six on one device. The chart prints any time, and the certificate prints at square 100.

Questions parents ask

Does a book read aloud really count?

Yes. For a five- or six-year-old, every book read to them counts, in 100 Books, in Winter Break and in Read-Aloud 20.

What if we stop for a month?

Pick up where you left off. There is no end date, so the chart waits, and nothing tells your child they fell behind.

Is there something shorter for a younger sibling?

Read-Aloud 20 is twenty books read aloud to a little one from about two to six, with a patch of a reading quilt for each.

Does Peabody see which books we read?

No. The log stays on your device. Peabody receives a count that a book was logged in the challenge, and whether it was the first or a later one, plus which sheet was printed: never the book, its title, the face or the age.

Free at peabody.kids/guides/100-books-challenge-kindergarten