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Description automatically generated with medium confidenceMath Booklist for Staff and Students

**Booklist**



**Tips and Reminders**

* Just because a book has a reading level or target audience that’s at a lower grade level doesn’t mean your students won’t enjoy it or learn from it. People of all ages can access and enjoy picture books, and they make great conversation starters.
* If you find a book you really like, look for other books by the same author.
* This list is just a starting point!
  + Check with librarians and math teachers to get their recommendations.
  + You can also search online for booklists related to math and math anxiety.
    - See what’s available in your school or local library.

**What to do:** Choose books for students or staff to support math learning and reduce math anxiety.

**Why it matters:** Books can spark new ideas and conversations. They can also reinforce positive messages like “Math is interesting” and “Mistakes are learning opportunities.” Reducing anxiety and encouraging a growth mindset can help students persevere with math and help staff members feel more prepared to lead math activities.

# Picture Books to Build Math Interest and Enthusiasm

***Bean Thirteen*** by Matt McElligot — Ralph and Flora try to get rid of the unlucky thirteenth bean, but it keeps coming back! This story is a fun way to explore remainders and division. *Grades K-3.*

***Counting on Katherine: How Katherine Johnson Saved Apollo 13***by Helaine Becker — This true story of Katherine Johnson, an African American mathematician who worked for NASA during the space race, was featured in the film *Hidden Figures*. *Grades 1-2.*

***Fractions in Disguise: A Math Adventure*** by Edward Einhorn — A valuable fraction goes missing. Knowing it’s likely to be disguised, George Cornelius Factor invents a tool (the Reducer) to strip away disguises, reducing the fraction and revealing its true form. *Grades 2-5.*

***G Is for Googol: A Math Alphabet Book*** by David M. Schwartz — This book presents interesting math concepts for every letter of the alphabet. It’s also a painless way to build math vocabulary. *Grades 4-8.*

***How Much Is a Million?*** by David M. Schwartz and Steven Kellogg — This book is one in a series that uses stories and imagination to teach important math concepts like quantifying large numbers, grasping basic financial concepts, and understanding why and how people use standard measurements. *Grades K-3.*

***I’m Trying to Love Math*** by Bethany Barton— This book shows cool and amazing uses of math, whether you’re making music, baking cookies, or blasting off into outer space. *Grades pre-K-3.*

***Nothing Stopped Sophie: The Story of Unshakable Mathematician Sophie Germain*** by Cheryl Bardoe — Sophie’s parents took away her candles so she wouldn’t stay up late doing math. But one day she would develop a formula that laid the groundwork for modern architecture. *Grades pre-K-3.*

***The Art of Clean Up: Life Made Neat and Tidy*** by Ursus Wehrli — Bright photographs surprise and delight by showing everyday objects (like a bowl of alphabet soup, sunbathers, a spruce branch, and stars) sorted by color, shape, or size. *Grades 1-6.*

***Uno’s Garden*** by Graeme Base — This book takes you on an adventure where you search for certain plants and animals in the forest where Uno lives. To complete the adventure, you have to complete skills, puzzles, and multiplication questions. *Grades pre-K-2.*

# Picture Books to Help With Math Anxiety

***Everything You Need to Ace Math in One Big Fat Notebook: The Complete Middle School Study Guide*** edited by Ouida Newton *—* This book presents strategies for dealing with math anxiety along with easy-to-understand explanations of math concepts like fractions, decimals, ratios, percentages, probability, geometry, and more. *Grades 6-9.*

***I Am Peace***by Susan Verde — This book addresses general moments of anxiety and ways to calm down and be in the moment. Includes mindfulness exercises. *Grades pre-K-3.*

***The Dot*** by Peter Reynolds — How do you overcome the fear of “I can’t draw”? By starting with a simple dot and seeing where it takes you. This book has a powerful message about overcoming fear of any kind. *Grades K-4.*

***The Monster Who Did My Math***by Danny Schnitzlein — A boy with math anxiety faces homework that involves multiplication when a monster appears in his room and offers easy answers. The consequences, however, aren’t so great. *Grades pre-K-3.*

***When Sophie Thinks She Can’t*** by Molly Bang — When Sophie feels frustrated because she can’t solve a math puzzle, her teacher helps her find a different approach. “I can’t do it” becomes “I can’t do it — yet.” *Grades pre-K-2.*

*Anyone who has never made a mistake  
has never tried anything new.*

– Albert Einstein

# Books That Show Math as Interesting, Relevant, Amazing, and “Doable”

***Mammoth Math: Everything You Need to Know About Numbers***by David Macauley — In this illustrated book, mammoths help readers understand key math principles. Written with reluctant math students in mind, each chapter covers a different branch of math. *Grades 2-6.*

***Math Doesn’t Suck***and other books by Danica McKellar — This book covers fractions, decimals, and more. All of the author’s math books aim to entertain, encourage, and explain. *Grades 4-7.*   
***Tip:*** Her website shows her books by age group (including adults): <https://mckellarmath.com/>.

***The I Hate Mathematics! Book***and other books by Marilyn Burns — This illustrated book shares math tips, tricks, and tidbits in a lively way. *Grades 4-adult.****Tip:*** Check your library or check online for other books by this author for various age groups.

***This Book Thinks You’re a Math Genius***by Mike Goldsmith —This fill-in book uses entertaining activities to introduce key math concepts in a highly visual way. It helps children think like mathematicians by inviting them to experiment and investigate for themselves. Covers geometry, space and volume, statistics, numbers and number patterns, codes and ciphers, and the concept of infinity. *Grades 2-8.*

***Unbuilding***by David Macauley — This is a fictional account of selling the Empire State Building and dismantling it to move it to the new owner’s country. The book features drawings of and discussion about the math and engineering involved in building. *Grades 5-7.*

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