

Back to School
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When parents start asking in that weary voice if it's time for school to start, then you know we're close to the end of summer break. Some area schools have started already but we still have a few more days before we go back here in New Ulm. Whether it's your first day ever, or your first day back, we have a book or two to help you feel good about the first day of school.

Some of my favorite school stories include *The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn. This is a classic book that describes the anxiety Chester Raccoon feels about leaving his mother to attend school for the first time. Mrs. Raccoon shares with Chester a secret called the Kissing Hand, to help reassure him that her love will go with him wherever he goes. First published in 1993, this book has been used ever since by teachers in preschool and kindergarten classes to help put their anxious students at ease on the first day of school.

A Place Called Kindergarten by Jessica Harper is another school story. This one is told by the farm animals missing their young friend, who was a regular morning visitor until the first day of school. Their anxiety about what is happening to Tommy while at kindergarten mirrors many kids' fears about their first day. Thankfully Tommy calms his barnyard friends with a wonderful description of his first day.

Mo Willems has a new book titled, *The Pigeon HAS to Go to School!* In which Pigeon expresses the desire not to go to school, wishing to be "A little-itty-bitty-not-going-to-school-baby-waybie pigeon!" The book is pigeon's hilarious rant about how much the idea of going to school stresses him out. And in true Pigeon fashion it concludes with Pigeon's resolve that school is just the place he wants to be, if only he can figure out how to get there. Because you know, Pigeon can't drive the bus.

Another new favorite of mine is called, *A Normal Pig* by K-Fai Steele. This adorable story is about Pip, a normal pig who likes to do normal things. But, when a new pig at school starts telling Pip how unusual she is, she starts questioning herself and all the things she thought she enjoyed. Pip's mother helps her see that there is more than one way to be "normal".

Just a reminder, Storytime returns the week of September 9th. Storytime will be presented Mondays and Wednesdays at 10 a.m. and Wednesdays at 6 p.m. Storytime will have a weekly theme, and is geared for toddlers through preschool age children. We like to sing and move, and work on an early literacy skill, as well as read stories, but mostly we just want to have some fun at the library. We hope to see you there!