SECTION 5
TRANSITION BOOKS
Storybooks are the natural currency of teachers in early childhood and elementary school settings. Reading stories can help children become more comfortable with transition to kindergarten as they are often used to start discussions and are particularly helpful in broaching subjects that are new, sensitive, or challenging.

Many books are available that acknowledge children’s anxiety and excitement, show other children having similar feelings and celebrate the growth and pride in the transition to kindergarten. Start your own school Transition Library today.

Choosing books
In choosing books on transition, look for the following attitudes and feelings:
• Transition can be exciting and also a little scary
• Other children have similar feelings
• There is much to be proud of as you transition and grow

Prepare
Before reading the book with children, review it thoroughly to be sure you know the story and can answer questions. If possible, gather information about the new setting so accurate answers can be given to children’s questions about what their new program will be like.

Tell the story
Read the book with the children. First, ask open-ended questions about what happened in the story. Open-ended questions invite children to expand upon their answers. Help children label the feelings of the child (character) in the story. Expand the discussion with questions such as: “What did the child (character) seem worried about at his new school? What helped him feel better?” Show pictures of an actual kindergarten classroom if available.
Discuss the story
- Present new words to children, helping them expand their vocabularies
- Respond to children’s questions letting them take the conversational lead which helps build their language skills.

Make books available
Regularly rotate books on transition on the classroom or school library. Provide parents with a list of the books and develop a circulation system for families. A suggested list follows. Please see your local librarians for more information.
SECTION 5 TRANSITION BOOKS

I Am Not Going to School Today!
Robie Harris, 2003 Simon and Schuster Children’s Publishing
When a child gets ready for the first day of school, it feels very exciting. But doing something new for the first time can also feel somewhat scary.

The Kissing Hand
Audrey Penn, 1993 Tanglewood Press
In this contemporary classic, Chester Raccoon seeks love and reassurance from his mother as he ventures out into the world to attend his very first day of school.

Making Friends
Fred Rogers, 1996 Penguin Group (USA)
Making friends is one of the nicest experiences of growing up…but it’s not always the easiest!

Mouse’s First Day of School
Lauren Thompson, 2003 Simon and Schuster Children’s Publishing
Mouse decides to hide inside a bright red backpack…and ends up at school! As he explores this place full of colors, letters, and numbers, Mouse discovers a world beyond his imagination—and makes some friends along the way.

D.W.’s Guide to Preschool
March Brown, 2006 Little, Brown Books for Young Readers
D.W., Arthur’s fun and sassy little sister, stars in this humorous guide to a child’s very first day of school.

Tiptoe Into Kindergarten
Jacqueline Rogers, 2003 Scholastic, Inc.
Rhythmic text and a warm, happy environment welcome children who are fearful of kindergarten as well as those who are eager to begin.

Kindergarten Rocks!
Katie Davis, 2008 Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Sure, some kids are a little afraid of going to kindergarten, but not Dexter. No, he’s not a bit afraid…he’s terrified. But his big sister helps him.

Welcome to Kindergarten
Annie Rockwell, 2004 Walker and Company
Join Tim as he visits his future kindergarten classroom and learns what he will do during his first year of school. The classroom may look a little too big at first, but after finding out about all the fun ahead, it doesn’t seem too big at all. In fact, it’s just the right size.
Leo the Late Bloomer
Robert Kraus, 1994 Harper Collins Publishing
When everyone starts blooming, poor Leo is left behind. But with the encouragement of his mother and the patience of his father, Leo proves that eventually everyone blooms.

Kindergarten Countdown
Anna Jane Hays, 2007 Random House Children’s Books
In this delightful book, a little girl counts off the days by naming what she’ll do in kindergarten. “I’ll be ready, I’ll be smart. I will get a running start. I’ll say thank you, I’ll say please. I will say my ABCs!” And deciding what to wear and what to take are all part of her preparation for that exciting first day.

Curious George’s First Day of School
H.A. (Hans Augusto) Rey, 2005 Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
It’s the first day of school and George has been invited to Mr. Apple’s class to be a special helper! George is just the right monkey for the job—that is, until he starts to make his usual mischief.

Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!
Nancy Carlson, 2001 Penguin Group (USA)
The first day of kindergarten is finally here, and Henry can’t wait to paint pictures, sing songs, and practice counting. When he gets to school, though, he’s not so sure he’s ready for kindergarten.

The Night Before Kindergarten
Natasha Wing, 2001 Penguin Group
It’s the first day of school! Join the kids as they prepare for kindergarten, packing school supplies, posing for pictures, and the hardest part of all—saying goodbye to mom and dad. But it won’t be so hard once they discover just how much fun kindergarten really is!

Countdown to Kindergarten
Alison McGhee, 2006 Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
It’s ten days before kindergarten—and according to a first grader, you can’t get in unless you know how to tie your shoes. What is an almost kindergarten girl up against the clock to do?

Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten
Joseph Slate, 2001 Penguin Group (USA)
It’s the first day of kindergarten and Miss Bindergarten is hard at work getting the classroom ready for her 26 new students. This rhyming, brightly illustrated book is the perfect way to practice the alphabet and introduce young children to kindergarten.
Ruby in Her Own Time
Jonathan Emmett, 2007 Scholastic, Inc.
Mother Duck and Father Duck are worried about Ruby. As the littlest duckling of the family, she learns to eat and swim long after her four brothers and sisters. Father Duck frets that Ruby will never catch up, but Mother Duck calmly reassures him that Ruby will flourish—“in her own time.”

When You Go to Kindergarten
James Howe, 1995 Harper Collins Publishers
This critically acclaimed book has been thoroughly updated and re-illustrated with all-new photographs.

Maisy Goes to Preschool
Lucy Cousins, 2010 Candlewick Press
In a bright book of familiar scenes, this child-friendly look at a day in the life of a preschooler is one that newcomers and seasoned pros alike will love.

Emily’s First 100 Days of School
Rosemary Wells, 2005 Hyperion Books for Children
A bright, jubilant, oversized book that celebrates the joy of learning. Starting with the number 1 for the first day of school, Emily learns the numbers to 100 in may different ways.

Twelve Days of Kindergarten—A Counting Book
Deborah Lee Rose, 2003 Harry N. Abrams, Inc.
On the first day of kindergarten, my teacher gave to me...the whole alphabet from A to Z! Drawing on the rhythm and rich repetition of the familiar carol The Twelve Days of Christmas, The Twelve Days of Kindergarten is a welcoming introduction to school.

On the Way to Kindergarten
Virginia Knoll, 2010 Penguin Group (USA)
They grow up so fast, Here’s the best way to celebrate all they’ve achieved, and help them get excited for kindergarten!

Annabelle Swift, Kindergartner
Amy Schwartz, 1991 Scholastic, Inc
Although some of the things her older sister taught her at home seem a little unusual at school, other lessons help make Annabelle’s first day in kindergarten a success.
Dinosaur Starts School
It’s the first day of school and Dinosaur has a lot to be worried about, from the size of the building to the yucky food in the school cafeteria to the mess he made during painting time.

Ryan and Ruby Go to Kindergarten
Alexander McNeece and Wendy Betway, 2008 Nelson Publishing and Marketing
Now that twins Ryan and Ruby are five-years-old, it’s almost time to start kindergarten at Douglas Elementary. But are they ready? Spend the day with them as they practice their ABCs, numbers, colors, and shapes with their family.

Tom Goes to Kindergarten
Margaret Wild and David Legge, 2000 Albert Whitman and Company
Legge’s (Bamboozled) fun-filled watercolors are as infectious as Australian author Wild’s lively tale of a young panda’s first day of school.

Starting School
Allan Ahlberg and Janet Ahlberg, 1990 Penguin Group
Through rich illustrations, this book shows children what going to school entails. From playhouse to playground, from stories to school dinners, this book attempts to calm anxieties and fire enthusiasm in preschool children.

Wemberly Worried
Kevin Henkes, 2010 Harper Collins Publishers
Wemberly is a mouse who does one thing really well—worry. At the top of Wemberly’s list of worries is starting school. She can’t imagine all the things that could go wrong.

Do I Have to Go to School? A Look at Starting School
Pat Thomas, 2006 Barron Educational Series, Inc.
This book speaks directly to preschoolers and early elementary students, encouraging them to explore their feelings and talk about things that bother them.

The Puppy Who Went to School
Gail Herman and Betina Ogden, 2000 Penguin Group USA
Wags is Ben’s puppy. Anywhere Ben goes, Wags goes, too. So when it’s time for Ben to go to school, guess who’s following right behind?
**I Don’t Want to Go to School: A fold-out surprise book**  
*Ellen Weiss, 2006 Brighter Minds Children’s Publishing*  
It’s the first day of school for Duncan and Lulu and they’re scared. Will it be fun? Their mom says it will! Unfold the flap on each page to see all the activities and friends that await Duncan and Lulu on their first day of school.

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**I Don’t Want to Go to School!**  
*Stephanie Blake, 2009 Random House Children’s Books*  
Author-illustrator Blake delivers a book to ease those first-day-of-school jitters and has created a lovable character in Simon the Super Rabbit, whose cautious approach to something new will feel familiar for parents and children alike. Originally written in French, some of the illustrated activities may seem unusual to American preschoolers, but Simon’s initial fears and renewed self confidence will speak to readers of all cultural backgrounds about to start, reluctantly or not, their own school adventures.

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**Jake Starts School**  
*Michael Wright, 2010 Square Fish*  
It’s Jake’s first day of school. He doesn’t want his mom and dad to leave him there alone. Will Jake ever be able to stay at school on his own? The answer will delight and reassure children and their (anxious) parents!

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**Kindergarten ABC**  
*Jacqueline Rogers, 2002 Scholastic, Inc.*  
On A day we find acorns, on B day we bring in our backpacks, on C day we change the calendar. Each and every day celebrates a letter of the alphabet with a fun-filled classroom scene.

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**Cool Dog, School Dog**  
*Deborah Heiligman and Tim Bowers, 2009, Cavendish Marshall Corporation*  
Tinka is a golden retriever who offers a rather distinctive take on the separation anxiety that is triggered on many levels when a young child begins the great adventure of schooling. Emphasis on the dog missing its master rather than on the trauma of leaving home for the child could prove to be an effective way for teachers and parents to talk about the challenges and benefits of participating in the world of school.

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**I Love School**  
*Philemon Sturges and Shari Halpern, 2006 Harper Collins Publishers*  
What’s your favorite part of the school day? Come along to a warm, friendly world of reading and writing, singing and painting and all-around fun that will make you want to yell, “I love school!”
What Teachers Can’t Do
Douglas Wood and Doug Cushman, Simon and Schuster Children’s Publishing
There are lots of things that regular people can do, but teachers can’t. Teachers can’t ride a bike or scooter to school. And they can never be tardy. But first they really need some help cleaning the blackboard. And the erasers! It’s a wonder they come back to school at all.

Time for School, Nathan!
Lulu Delacre, 1991 Scholastic, Inc.
Nathan the elephant triumphs on his first day of school when he learns how to divide his attention between school and his jealous best friend, Nicholas Alexander.

Who Will Go to Kindergarten Today?
Karl Ruhlman and Miriam Monnier, 2002 North-South Books, Inc.
One day Sam decides he does not want to go to school. He comes up with the idea of sending his stuffed monkey in his place. Whether it’s first-day jitters or middle-of-term blues, here’s the perfect solution for children who don’t want to go to school.

This is the Way Children Go to School
Edith Baer and Steve Bjorkman, 1992 Scholastic, Inc. (Available in reprint only)
This book describes, in text and through illustrations, the many different modes of transportation children all over the world use to get to school.

My Kindergarten
Rosemary Wells, 2004 Hyperion Books
Organized into monthly segments and accompanied by bright, appealing artwork, this one-of-a-kind complete kindergarten book offers parents, teachers, and children a special way to share the most important school year in a child’s life.

How Do Dinosaurs Go to School?
Jane Yolen and Mark Teague, 2007 Scholastic, Inc.
Everyone’s favorite dinosaurs are back—and this time they are going to school. More fun dinosaur antics await. Yolen and Teague capture children’s rambunctious natures with playful read-aloud verse and wonderfully amusing pictures.

The Berenstain Bears Go Back to School
Stand and Jan Berenstain and Michael Berenstain, 2009 Harper Collins Publishers
It’s summer break and the bear cubs are reminded by Mama Bear that fall is arriving and soon they will be going back to school.
The Best Teacher Ever  
Mercer Mayer, 2008 Harper Collins Publishers  
Little Critter has the best teacher around. Join Little Critter as he searches for the perfect gift to show Miss Kitty just how special she is to him!

Adventure Annie Goes to Kindergarten  
Toni Buzzeo and Amy Wummer, 2010 Penguin Young Reader Group  
Annie Grace wears her “Adventure Annie” cape to her first day of kindergarten and proceeds to barrel through the day, searching for adventure in every moment. Spirited and funny, this is an introduction to kindergarten that will please kids and teachers alike.

Is Your Buffalo Ready for Kindergarten?  
Audrey Vernick and Daniel Jennewein, Harper Collins Children’s Books  
Your Buffalo is growing up. He plays with friends, shares his toys, and he’s smart! But is he ready for kindergarten? (And is kindergarten ready for him?) A hilarious look at first-day-of-school jitters.

Let’s Take Over the Kindergarten  
Richard Hamilton and See Heap, 2007 Bloomsbury USA  
What happens when the students take over the school after their teacher gets caught in the jungle gym? They have a great time. A fun read-aloud for kindergartners or any child excited about starting school.

Kindergarten Diary  
Antoinette Portis, 2010 Harper Collins Publisher  
Starting kindergarten can be a little scary. Experience the ups and downs of the first days of kindergarten through Annalina’s very own diary (as told to Antionette Portis) and discover why the kids in Room 2K are just fine!

Off to Kindergarten  
Tony Johnson and Melissa Sweet, 2007 Scholastic, Inc.  
“I’m off to kindergarten now. I’d better take my bear. He likes to sit beside me so, I’ll take a little chair…” So begins the long list of things Bill absolutely needs for his first day of school. A touching story of first-day jitters and hopes. Tony Johnson’s rhyming text is paired with Melissa Sweet’s delightful illustrations.

First Day Jitters  
Jule Dannebert and Judith Dufour, 2000 Charlesbridge Publishing  
Sarah Jane is worried about going to a new school. Readers will understand and sympathize with Sarah’s feelings and laugh when they discover the surprise ending to this delightful story.