



Launching young readers!

Reading Rockets

Literacy in the Sciences: Activity No. 18
 Science vs. Science Fiction
 By: Reading Rockets

Science fiction is a type of fiction where the stories revolve around science and technology of the future. As exciting as these books can be, it's good to remind your child that while science fiction may be based loosely on scientific truth, it is still fiction.

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Over time, young readers choose lots of different types of reading materials. Readers with an interest in fiction often stumble upon fantasy books, and a particular type of fantasy writing called science fiction.

Science fiction is a type of fiction where the stories revolve around science and technology of the future. Science fiction texts are often set in the future, in space, in a different world, or in a different universe or dimension. As exciting as these books can be, it's useful to remind your child that while science fiction may be based loosely on scientific truth, it is still fiction. Because the content of the book may be unfamiliar, it's important to keep the conversation flowing when talking about what's happening in the story. "Could that really happen in today's world?" "Does what's happening seem real or make believe?"

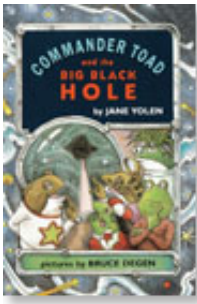
Science fiction books

[The Golden Duck Awards](http://www.goldenduck.org/books.php) award excellence in children's science fiction literature. The organization also provides book suggestions for children's science fiction. Here are three recommended picture books:

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0698114035/readingrocket-20>

Commander Toad and the Big Black Hole
 By Jane Yolen

Commander Toad and his crew encounter a black hole while leapfrogging across the



galaxy. Toad resorts to a secret weapon from his past. (Age level: 4 and up)

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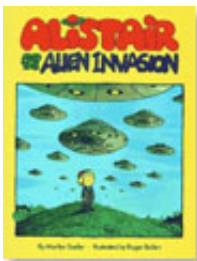
Space Case

By Edward Marshall

When the thing from outer space visits earth, it is taken first for a trick-or-treater and then for a robot. Buddy McGee takes the thing home — only to discover it is from outer space. (Age level: 5 and up)

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[\(http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0671759574/readingrocket-20\)](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0671759574/readingrocket-20)

Alistair and the Alien Invasion

By Marilyn Sadler

As the boy genius blasts off in his space ship in search of the most unusual plant life he can find, he spots an alien vessel heading toward Earth. (Age level: 6 and up)

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[book\(http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0671759574/readingrocket-20\)](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0671759574/readingrocket-20)

To view the entire list, visit the [Golden Duck Awards\(http://www.goldenduck.org/books.php\)](#).

Science books

Science books, in contrast, are an important way for young children to learn about the real wonders of the natural world outside of their neighborhood. Science books for young children often integrate science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Each year, the National Science Teachers Association, in collaboration with the Children's Book Council, announces a list of Outstanding Science Trade Books. For 2012, the Outstanding Science Trade books include:



<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1585364541/readingrocket-20>

B Is for Blue Planet
By Ruth Strother

This book explains what we do know about our planet and what more we have to learn. Explore Earth's different ecosystems, discover geological wonders, learn about extreme weather like hurricanes, and much more. (Age level: 5 and up)

- **[Purchase book](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1585364541/readingrocket-20)**(<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1585364541/readingrocket-20>)



<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0823422860/readingrocket-20>

Bug Shots: The Good, the Bad, and the Bugly
By Alexandra Siy

Bugs bite, drink blood, and steal food from gardens and fields. They can even kill plants, animals, and, occasionally, people. Is bugging a crime? The author compiles "rap sheets" on different kinds of bugs and takes a very close look at insects through photo micrographs that magnify insect parts from 10 to 300,000 times their actual sizes. (Age level: 8 and up)

- **[Purchase book](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0823422860/readingrocket-20)**(<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0823422860/readingrocket-20>)

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1426308655/readingrocket-20>



Baby Mammoth Mummy: Frozen in Time

By Christopher Sloan

Meet Lyuba, the most perfectly preserved baby mammoth ever discovered! Found lying along a riverside 31,000 years after her birth, Lyuba provides a fresh look at prehistoric life in Siberia. Find out how scientists learn more about mammoths and the ice age using the newest science tools, including paleontology and forensic science. (Age level: 8 and up)

- [Purchase book](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1426308655/readingrocket-20)(<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1426308655/readingrocket-20>)

To view the entire list, download [National Science Teacher Association's 2012 Outstanding Science Trade Books for Students K-12](http://www.nsta.org/pdfs/2012OSTBList.pdf)(<http://www.nsta.org/pdfs/2012OSTBList.pdf>). (PDF).

Whether it's science or science fiction, these recommended books are sure to give you and your reader lots to talk about!

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Reading Rockets is a national multimedia project that offers a wealth of research-based reading strategies, lessons, and activities designed to help young children learn how to read and read better. Our reading resources assist parents, teachers, and other educators in helping struggling readers build fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills.

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[Colorado](http://www.colorincolorado.org/)(<http://www.colorincolorado.org/>) | [AdLit](http://www.adlit.org/)(<http://www.adlit.org/>) | [LD OnLine](http://www.ldonline.org/)(<http://www.ldonline.org/>)

"You may have tangible wealth untold. Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold. Richer than I you can never be — I had a mother who read to me." — Strickland Gillilan