

FURTHER REVIEW

KEEPING YOUR KIDS BUSY

By Charles Apple
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Your children are home from school for the next several weeks. Their teachers are sending work for them to do. That's keeping them occupied for — what? — maybe 45 minutes a day?

That still leaves an awful lot of free time for kids to become awfully bored. And for parents to become awfully frustrated. And desperate.
Fear not: We have suggestions.

READ A BOOK

If you can, talk your child into putting down the video games and turning off the television set and reading a book. If you're successful at doing this, please write us and tell us how you did it.

Once your child complies, it's only fair to put something extra cool into her hands to read. Not surprisingly, there are some great books that have been released over just the past few weeks.



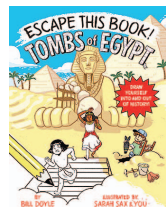
The President of the Jungle
By Paula Desgualdo, Pedro Markun, André Rodrigues and Larissa Ribeiro
(Nancy Paulsen Books, 2020)
Recommended ages: 5-8

The lion has been really full of himself lately, so the other animals of the jungle decide to hold an election to determine a new King of the Jungle. Your child will enjoy the story. And you may like the little references to, um, current events — like, for example, the pink monkey carrying an #occupyjungl protest sign.



Diana Princess of the Amazon
By Shannon Hale, Dean Hale and Victoria Ying
(DC Comics, 2020)
Recommended ages: 8-12

In this graphic novel, 11-year-old Diana has everything she could wish for, growing up on the island of Themyscira. Everything except a friend her age. But she might want to be careful what she wishes for — she's not Wonder Woman quite yet.



Escape This Book! Tombs of Egypt
By Bill Doyle and Sarah Sax
(Random House Books for Young Readers, 2020)
Recommended ages: 8-12

Part puzzle book, part doodling book, part choose-your-own-path book, the story is a fun romp through an ancient Egyptian tomb. The author, Doyle, has written for Rolling Stone, Weekly Reader, Comedy Central and National Geographic Kids.



A Girl, A Raccoon, and the Midnight Moon
By Karen Romano Young and Jessica Bagley
(Chronicle books, 2020)
Recommended ages: 5-9

When the Edna St. Vincent Millay Library is scheduled to be closed, the daughter of the librarian teams up with her friends — plus a literate raccoon — to save the library.

Consider ordering books locally — with folks staying home, the locally owned businesses are hurting the most. And Auntie's on West Main in Spokane is offering curbside pickup. Just sayin': auntiesbooks.com

ONLINE STORY TIME

A number of prominent movie stars and children's book authors have teamed up to read books over their Instagram feeds to help kids spend quarantine time.

There are at least two efforts out there. Search for hashtags #OperationStorytime and #SaveWithStories. Among the folks participating:

■ **Jennifer Garner**, reading Jan Brett's "The Mitten" ... to her golden retriever.

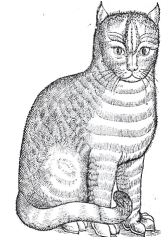
■ **Amy Adams**, reading Aviana Olea Le Gallo's "The Dinosaur Princess."

■ **Josh Gad** — probably best known as the voice of Olaf in the "Frozen" movies — reading Shel Silverstein's "The Giving Tree."

■ In addition, children's book writer **Mo Willems** — author of the Elephant and

Piggy series — is hosting a livestream video "Lunch Doodle" session every Monday. He'll show kids how to write and to draw and will answer questions. Each session will start at 10 a.m. Pacific Time and will last about a half-hour. You can still watch the broadcast, of course, after it's ended. Find it here:

kennedy-center.org/education/mo-willems/



MUSEUM COLORING BOOKS

All kids love to color. Come to think of it, many adults love to color as well. So here's a major tip for you:

Every year, the New York Academy of Medicine takes certain artwork from its collection, makes a coloring book of it and then offers it free online, as a PDF document. And then the Academy invites other museums around the world to participate. More than 100 do.

This is not exactly your typical coloring book material. You'll want to hunt around through their (fairly extensive) collection. These are samples from real, live science and art museums. There is the occasional work of art that might not be suitable for very young children.

Find this year's "Color Our Collections" project here: library.nyam.org/colorourcollections/

DIY SCIENCE PROJECTS

If you're feeling *really* adventurous, you might try home-grown science

projects.

The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* put together a list of five quick-and-easy science projects using items you're likely to have around the home. How to make rock candy. How to make a lava lamp. How to make a solar cooker out of a pizza box. How to make oobleck.

What is oobleck? It was featured once on an episode of "The Big Bang Theory." Oobleck is a very strange substance that behaves like a liquid and a solid. You can whip some up with water, corn starch, a bowl and maybe a little food coloring.

Try the oobleck. If your kids end up getting hired as physicists at CalTech — well, then, that's a bonus.

tinyurl.com/AJCScienceProjects

LIVE STEAMING

Yes, it's difficult to drag your kids away from the magic flatscreen. We get that. But rather than let them channel surf, why not find something new and interesting for them to watch?

NETFLIX

■ "The InBESTigators"

This is an Australian kids' show — a rockumentary/comedy/drama — in which a group of kids solve mysteries around their school and neighborhood. Kind of like Scooby-Doo, but without the dog treats and the scary old men in rubber masks.

The names of the episodes give you an idea of what to expect: "The Case of the Lousy Lunch Orders," "The Case of the Very Lost Notebook," "The Case of the Sad Little Sister."

Other classic children's fare you might enjoy on Netflix:

■ "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang"

A father entertains his kids by creating a car ... that comes alive. Bonus points: The original children's book was written by James Bond creator Ian Fleming. ■ "Space Jam" — Just in case you don't feel old yet: "Mommy? Who is Michael Jordan?"

DISNEY+

This seems to be the hottest streaming service around right now, and for good reason: They have (nearly) every Disney movie, all the Pixar movies and all the Marvel comics movies.

Last week, Disney+ announced it was picking up "Frozen 2" way ahead of schedule — originally, they didn't plan to steam that film until June. And the Disney+ folks also began streaming "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker" ahead of schedule as well.

The TV series "The Simpsons" also recently made a highly-publicized move from Hulu to Disney+.

Try "The Rocketeer," an often-overlooked 1991 film starring Bill Campbell, Jennifer Connelly, Alan Arkin and Timothy Dalton. A

stunt pilot in depression-era Los Angeles stumbles upon a rocket-powered jet pack and decides to become, y'know, a super hero.

HBO

■ "The Land Before Time"

This is an 1988 animated film directed and produced by Don Bluth and executive-produced by Steven Spielberg and George Lucas. A small group of child dinosaurs work together to try to find safety in the far-off Great Valley. Presumably, before that giant comet smacks into the planet.

"Yep, yep, yep."

HULU

■ "Super 8"

This is a science fiction film directed by J.J. Abrams and produced by Steven Spielberg. A group of teens are filming a home movie when a train derailed nearby releasing a... something.

Much of the movie is shot with handheld cameras, which caused your reporter's delicate tummy an indelicate moment. So be warned.

■ "Rango" is an animated film starring a chameleon who is stranded in a Nevada desert — after he falls out of his owner's terrarium — and then stumbles across an old-western town. Naturally, he's named sheriff.

Bonus: The voice of Rango is played by Johnny Depp.

AND COMING SOON...

Universal pictures announced Monday that some of the movies currently playing at nearly-empty theaters will begin streaming online soon. This would include "Trolls World Tour," which was scheduled to begin playing theaters on April 10. Universal says it'll offer that movie for \$19.99 for a 48-hour window, starting on that date.

For what it's worth, Universal says it'll offer other recent releases — "The Invisible Man," and "The Hunt" — for the same price, as early as this Friday.

We should note that neither of those latter two are suitable for children.

CLASSIC MOVIES ONLINE

If streaming from one of the big services isn't for you, then try something a little different: Watch an older movie that's lapsed into the public domain.

Open Culture compiled a list of more than 1,150 movies that are free to watch online.

Included among them: ■ Laurence Olivier's first filmed Shakespeare appearance — from 1936 — in "As You Like It."

■ Charles Laughton and John Carradine in the 1945 classic, "Captain Kidd."

■ The original 1960 "Little Shop of Horrors," directed by Roger Corman and with an early appearance by Jack Nicholson as a masochistic dental patient.



■ And if you're seeking real quality entertainment (cough, cough), try Ed Wood's 1959 "classic" "Plan 9 from Outer Space." "Remember my friend, future events such as these will affect you in the future."