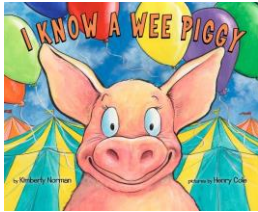


Fairs and Amusement Parks

Read-Aloud Outline

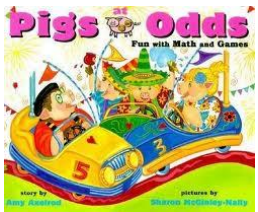
What do you think of when you hear “county fair” or “amusement park”? Thrilling rides? Sticky foods? Games of chance? How about crowds, bright lights and giant vegetables? Explore this summertime phenomenon at your Read-Aloud with books about roller coasters, fairs and contests, and then play some games of chance, learn about centripetal force or award a blue ribbon.



I Know a Wee Piggy by Kim Norman

Ages 4 and up

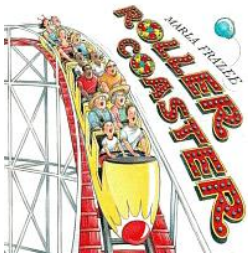
Piggy's day at the fair becomes color chaos! As Piggy runs through the fair, knocking over and upsetting one thing after another, he picks up the color of whatever he has just run through. To add yet more fun to this book, a cumulative verse recounting Piggy's color adventure appears every few pages.



Pigs at Odds by Amy Axelrod

Ages 4 and up

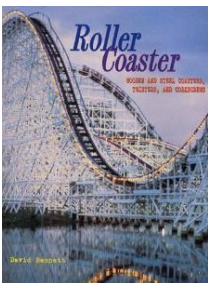
The pig family wants to win at the county fair, but the odds seem to be against them. Fun, colorful illustrations make the carnival look exciting. This book would be a great introduction to a discussion about probability and the odds of winning.



Roller Coaster by Marla Frazee

Ages 5 to 8

Roller coasters are exhilarating and sometimes scary. They are not everyone's cup of tea. This book has spirited and humorous illustrations, and the brief text gives reasons to examine the drawings again.



Roller Coaster: Wooden and Steel Coasters, Twisters, and Corkscrews by David Bennett

Nonfiction for all ages

Photographs show roller coasters around the world and through history, showing how they have changed over the years. This nonfiction book is good for selecting just a few of the most appropriate illustrations for discussion.

Additional carnival books

Bear Flies High by Michael Rosen (Ages 3 to 7)

Riding an amusement park ride can be like flying! Follow along as Bear and his friends enjoy the amusement park rides. The sing-song text and bright illustrations make this a good choice to read with younger children.

Zoom! by Diane Adams (Ages 3 to 7)

This little boy is hesitant about riding the Dino Coaster. Then his ride starts with him sinking down in his seat and peering backwards. It edges closer to the top. AAAHHH!! – it zooms towards the ground. He exits his little car with a jubilant smile, and gets in line again.

Charlotte's Web by E. B. White (Ages 5 and up)

White's description of the county fair, where Fern's uncle enters Wilbur the pig in a competition, paints a vivid and exciting picture. Read an excerpt and encourage the kids to close their eyes and imagine the scene.

Frederick Finch, Loudmouth by Tess Weaver (Ages 6 and up)

Frederick Finch loves the state fair. He loves the rides, the snow cones and corndogs. Most of all, he loves the contests – the turkey calling contest, the checkers contest, the country music contest – he tries them all. Frederick finally wins . . . the mom calling contest!

Divide and Ride by Stuart J. Murphy (Ages 8 and up)

Using amusement park rides and helpful graphics, this book is a fun introduction to the math skill of division. Eleven friends divide up by 2s, 3s and 4s to fit on the rides. Sometimes they add a new friend to fill in the seats.

Activities

There are lots of **games of chance** at fairs or amusement parks. Playing a game that uses a spinner is one way to experience the role of chance. The game "Twister" is one good choice because it lets the kids move around. We have spinners in the office, if needed.

Blue ribbon contests. The kids can judge the best jam or apples, or whatever you choose. Bring in a few varieties. Covering the labels will add to the suspense. Decide on characteristics your group wants to assess -- sweetness, texture, appearance, etc. Then let the judging begin! Encourage the kids to describe what they are tasting and talk about the different choices. Then let them vote on their favorite version and award a blue ribbon to the winning item.

Games of skill. Create a ball toss with three tennis balls and three buckets. Make a line on the floor with some masking tape. Set up the three buckets at different distances from the line and take turns throwing the tennis balls toward the buckets.

Do a science experiment. You can demonstrate why people don't fly off of circular carnival rides and roller coasters with a bucket and water. Put a few inches of water in a bucket and then, making sure there is plenty of room, have a volunteer swing it in circles. The water will stay in the bucket even when it is upside down, due to centripetal force.

Conversation starters

1. Have you ever been to a fair, carnival or amusement park? Take a minute to name what you saw. How is an amusement park different from a park? What did you see that Frederick (in *Frederick Finch, Loudmouth*) also saw?
2. Have you ever been on a carnival ride or roller coaster? What are some words that describe how the ride felt or moved? Do you like going fast? Spinning around? Being high off the ground? Were you afraid or excited? What other words can you think of to describe how your body felt?

3. Fairs and amusement parks have their own kind of food — popcorn, corn dogs, funnel cakes, cotton candy, ice cream. Explain why you think that “funnel cakes” have that name. What about “corn dogs”?

4. Do you like to play games like those at fairs and amusement parks? Which ones do you like better — games of skill (like throwing a ball or a dart) or games of chance (like ones with a spinner)? What do you think “chance” means when describing a game?