

## Tried and tested fiction for children

AUTHOR / BOOK TITLE	SYNOPSIS / PERSONAL RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED AGE
<b>Richard Adams</b>		
Watership Down	Moving adventure about a warren of rabbits and their lives.	9+
<b>Aesop's fables</b>		
<b>Joan Aiken</b>		10+
Wolves of Willoughby Chase	Set in imaginary historical era (James III). Becomes darker as goes on.	
Wolves Series		
<b>Louisa Alcott</b>		
Little Women Series	Story of four sisters whose father is away at war, and how they manage. Full of love, fun, romance and drama.	10+
Little Men	Follow on from L.W about one of the sister's boys.	
Jo's Boys	This is the story of Jo (the second sister's) sons and her work in looking after needy children.	
<b>Eleanor Atkinson</b>		
Greyfriar's Bobby	Sweet, moving tale about a loyal dog who refuses to leave his master. Even after he dies he remains in the same place and is looked after by the local village.	10+
<b>Jane Austen</b>		12/13+
Emma	Wonderfully witty and inquisitive Emma is a matchmaker, but also wants to find true romance herself!	
Pride and prejudice	Classic drama about the Bennett sisters (5) who have fun and romance throughout the book, culminating in the famous marriage of Lizzie & Mr Darcy. DVD is excellent too –highly recommended!	
Sense and Sensibility	Beautiful, passionate drama about three sisters and their Mother who have to move to a more lowly cottage after their Father dies. Unrequited love and the finding of deeper true love throughout the book. DVD also wonderful.	
Persuasion	Anne falls in love with the wrong man and is forced to break off her engagement. But tragedy befalls the family and the story twists.	14+
<b>B.B.</b> 'The Little Grey men'	1942. Amusing, lots of outdoor and wildlife detail. Quite hard to read?	11/12
<b>R.M. Ballantyne</b>		
The Coral Island	Adventure story about a boat and children surrounding an island.	11+
<b>J.M. Barrie</b>		
Peter Pan	The little boy who never grew up – magical story of Peter and his siblings and the characters they meet.	9+
<b>Nina Bawden</b>		
Carrie's War	A 12 year old girl is evacuated to the country; the book is about how she views the adult relationships around her and copes with them.	10/12+
Peppermint Pig		

<b>Jeanne Bendick</b>		
Archimedes & the Door of Science (LHL)	A wonderful introduction into the world of science, with little pictures and well written language. Very informative and interesting.	
Galen and the Gateway to Medicine (LHL)	Same format as above but about the history of medicine. Lovely to read aloud and discuss.	8/9
<b>Robert Hugh Benson</b>	All are adult novels that bright teenagers will also enjoy ... they are very moving descriptions of the Catholic Faith and how people respond to it in all the books!	14+
By What Authority	Set in Henry VIII's reign – The Reformation years	14+
The King's Achievement	Sequel to 'By What Authority'	
Lord of the World		
Initiation		
Come Rack! Come Rope!	Richard (Edmund?!) Campion	
<b>Gary L. Blackwood</b>		
The Shakespeare Stealer		8+
<b>Enid Blyton</b>		
Famous Five series	Old fashioned, simple adventure stories of four children and their faithful dog. Very good beginners' chapter books.	
Secret Seven series	Same as above but slightly more children!	
Faraway Tree series	Good for early readers	
Wishing chair series	As above	
The children of Cherry Tree farm	Excellent for nature study, lots of natural history	6+
The Children of Willow Farm	Follows on from above, more about farming	
<b>Elizabeth Borton de Trevino</b>		
I, Juan de Pareja	About a slave to the artist Velazquez. Unusual	8+
<b>Lucy M. Boston</b>		
The Children of Green Knowle series		
<b>Elinor Brent-Dyer</b>		
Chalet school series	About an English woman and her young sister who set up a school in Austria	8+
<b>Ethel .c. Brill</b>		9/10+
Madeleine Takes Command	Account of true events. A 14 year old girl is left to defend the fort against Iriquois attack. Exciting, well written	
<b>Charlotte Bronte</b>		
Jane Eyre	Tragic, moving story of Jane who goes to live in a lovely old house to be a Governess and finds love in an unusual man. Very sad and poignant.	12+
Shirley	Set in the Napoleonic Wars it deals with the social and political issues of the time. An extremely deep and complex book with two contrasting heroines and the men they love. Lots of denial and suffering.	14+
Villette	Deep story of Lucy Snowe who moves to a small village in France called Villette where she gets a job working as a live-in teacher in a Catholic school. Lots of French (with no translation) so excellent for keen French students! Quite a complex story with descriptive language.	14+
<b>Emily Bronte</b>		
Wuthering Heights	Very wild and passionate love story. Evocative	14+

	descriptions of the lonely countryside and unrelenting chaos of love and revenge.	
<b>Anne Bronte</b>		
The Tenant of Wildfell Hall		12+
<b>Pamela Brown</b>		
The Swish of the Curtain	Lovely book about a small group of friends who discover an unused theatre.	
<b>Lewis Carroll</b>	Famous nonsense tale. Perhaps better as a read aloud!	9+
Alice in Wonderland etc.		
<b>Anne W. Carroll</b>		
Christ the King, Lord of History	Renowned history book rightly placing Our Lord as the centre of all history. Very concise and Catholic.	11+
The Christendom Series		16+
<b>G.K. Chesterton</b>		
Fr. Brown Mysteries	A Catholic Sherlock Holmes detective story, fantastic for young teens.	10+
<b>Carlo Collodi</b>		
Pinocchio	Magical tale of a poor woodcarver whose puppet 'comes to life' and has lots of fun adventures and learning experiences.	7+
<b>Clare Compton</b>		
Harriet & the Cherry Pie		
<b>Susan M. Coolidge</b>		
What Katy Did	Wonderful story about Katy and all her siblings and how she manages them all with no Mother. She is very cheeky and mischievous in a fun loving manner.	10+
What Katy Did at School	More about Katy's school days.	
What Katy Did Next	For older readers as it is centered on Katy's courtship/marriage.	13/14+
<b>Richmal Crompton</b>	Female author	
Just William	Very witty series about a naughty school boy and all his antics.	
<b>C. Day Lewis</b>		
The Otterbury Incident	Old fashioned detective book for young teens.	10/11+
<b>Charles Dickens</b>		
Oliver Twist	Classic story of orphan Oliver and his young life with the poor of London. Extremely sad but beautiful. The oldest version of the DVD is the best and such a good watch!	
Tale of two cities		
Martin Chuzzlewit	A satire novel full of selfishness and blackmail of a family headed by the mean Martin Chuzzlewit. Brilliant characters and many believe Dicken's best work.	12+
<b>Sir Arthur Conan Doyle</b>		
Sherlock Holmes	Great detective series about Holmes and his sidekick Watson. Very popular with boys.	10+
The Lost World	Exciting adventure with prehistoric creatures	10+
<b>Helen Cresswell</b>		

Pollyflint		7+
<b>Gillian Cross</b> The Tree House	Sweet little short chapter book; easy to read	5/6+
<b>Regina Doman</b>	Lovely contemporary novels for young people with a 'Little Women' feel, but set in New York with suspense, crime, mystery etc to spice them up... <b>and a very conservative Catholic message...</b> ideal for girls aged 14 and upwards	14+
Shadow of the Bear		
Black as Night		
Waking Rose		
<b>Owen Francis Dudley</b>		
Masterful Monk	Written by Monsignor Dudley you can be sure these are Catholic!	14+
<b>George Eliot</b>		
Daniel Deronda	Set in 1860s English aristocratic society a story of two young people. A battle to survive within the confines of oppressive society rules, racial and religious prejudices.	14+
Mill on the Floss	Very sad story of two siblings whose Father tries but fails to keep afloat the running of his beloved Mill. Also a story of love and friendship and the unbreakable bond between brother & sister.	14+
Middlemarch	Wonderful story about a small village. When a new doctor arrives with modern ideas and great goals, lots of people are unhappy but some are very supportive of his beliefs. Very good characters and meaningful relationships.	14+
<b>Walter Farley</b>		
Black Stallion Series		
<b>T.Meades Faulkner</b> Moonfleet	1898, complex language. Famous smuggling tale	
<b>Fr. Finn</b>		
Tom Playfair series	Each book introduces a new character . Based on events at their school St. Maures. Funny and moving by turns ('Brilliant' says my 12 yr old son)	
<b>Cornelia Funke</b>		
The Thief Lord	Set in dark alleways of Venice. Two boys run away from their stern guardians :the guardians hire a detective to hunt them down. Well written and fast paced.	11+
<b>Jostein Gaarder</b>		
The Christmas Mystery		9+
<b>Leon Garfield</b>		
Devil in the Fog		
<b>Henry Garnett</b>		
Blood Red Crescent	About the battle of Lepanto, excellent	
The Red Bonnet		
A Trumpet Sounds		
Gamble for a Throne	Set during the end of Cromwell's reign.	14+
		12+

<b>Michael.E. Geisler</b> Junia Marcus	Two stories set in Roman times. Very good.Marcus is perhaps for older children	14+
<b>Thomas Hardy</b>		
Tess of the d'Urbervilles	Like most Hardy, dark and depressing!	12+
The Mayor of Casterbridge	Tragic story of a husband whose wife leaves him with their small child because of his drinking bouts. He learns remorse, pain and suffering and finally the real meaning of love.	14+
<b>Cynthia Harnett</b>		
The Wool-Pack	Good, solid Catholic literature, well written and exciting stories. Brilliant author.	10+
<b>Alfred Hitchcock</b>		
Three Investigators	Old fashioned tales of three young boys who have many exciting adventures.	11+
<b>Frances Hodgson-Burnett</b>		
Little Lord Fauntleroy	A little boy is removed from his American home to inherit his uncle's estate. Not much action but quite interesting	10+
The Little Princess	Very good, story of how a rich intelligent girls copes with loss.	9+
<b>William Horwood</b>		
Callanish	The story of an eagle's quest for freedom	12+
The Stonor Eagles	The story of the last sea eagles	12+
Duncton Wood (3 books per volume, 2 volumes)	The life of moles, their struggle to survive and keep their religion, hopes and legends alive	12+
<b>Margaret Ann Hubbard</b>		
The Blue Gonfalon	Crusaders. A little tedious. Blood Red Crescent is better	10+
<b>Regina Victoria Hunt</b>		
Bright Banners	England 1678. Especially appealing for boys	10+
<b>Brian Jacques</b>		
Redwall Books (15+ in series)	" Adventure stories with animals instead of human beings. Well written, great descriptions, songs, riddles, great battle scenes. Highly recommended." (a 12 yo)	9- 14
<b>Elizabeth Janeway</b>		
The Vikings		8+
Torre Jansson The Moomin series	Delightfully offbeat but well written stories about imaginary creatures, the Moomins.	8+
<b>Eleanore M. Jewett</b>		
The Treasures of Glaston (LHL)	Very good Cathoic novel all about Glastonbury at the time of becket's murder. Good read aloud too.	10+
<b>Norton Juster</b>		
The Phantom Tollbooth	Quite funny, clever 'nonsense' book	8+
<b>Charles Kingsley</b>		
The Water Babies		9+

<b>Rudyard Kipling</b>		
Just so stories	Good to read aloud, language can be difficult, but very good.	6/7+
Jungle book		8+
<b>Ann Lawrence</b>		
Between the Forest & the Hills		13+
<b>Madeleine L'Engle</b> The Time Quintet	Similar to Narnia only in that they are fantasy - travel can be outside their own time. Good defeating the bad, like 'fallen angels'; reference to the 'Presence' as in God in one of the books; a Bishop who says the Kyriele when in trouble in another book; etc. Boys and girls	9+
<b>Margaret Leighton</b>		
Twelve Bright Trumpets		9+
<b>C.S. Lewis</b>		7+
Narnia series		
<b>Emily Little</b>		
The Trojan Horse - How the Greeks Won the War		7+
<b>Living History Library</b> A series of about 20 books, several mentioned here. An excellent series to collect.		Aimed at 10+
<b>Arnold Lobel</b> Frog and Toad series	Charming, funny; ideal early readers	4-6
<b>Hugh Lofting</b> Doctor Dolittle Stories	Fun Stories about a man who loves animals and learns to talk to them, leading to many adventures.	6/7+
<b>Jack London</b>		
White Fang	Very violent story about wolves- lots of bloodshed.	11/12+
Call of the Wild	Similar to above	
<b>George Macdonald</b> The Princess and the Goblin	Famous 'Christian' author; rather an odd book!	10+
<b>Rosemary Manning</b> Dragon in Danger series	Nice stories, easy to read books	6/7+
<b>Captain Marryat</b>		
The Children of the New Forest		10+
<b>Eloise Jarvis McGraw</b>		
The Golden Goblet		10+
<b>Herman Melville</b>		
Moby Dick	"Very difficult language, if an interesting story." Maybe 13 + for some readers	11+
<b>A.A. Milne</b> Winnie the Pooh series	Classic whimsical tales for little ones.	4+
<b>Elyne Mitchell</b>		
The Silver Brumby		
<b>L.M. Montgomery</b>		
Anne of Green Gables		8+

<b>Michael Morpurgo</b>		
Kensuke's Kingdom		9+
<b>Farley Mowat</b>		
The Black Joke		10+
		6/7
<b>Jill Murphy</b> The Worst Witch series	Easy, entertaining chapter books for intermediate readers (if you don't mind witches!)	
<b>E Nesbit</b>		
The Railway Children	Lovely, entertaining story and great film to match	
The Treasure Seekers series	Nice film available, too.	8+
The Phoenix and the Carpet	Magic/fantasy (quite different from previous two).	
The story of the Amulet	Amulet more difficult, say 11+	
Five children and It		
<b>Andre Norton</b>		
Shadow Hawk		10+
<b>Mary Norton</b>		
The Borrowers		
<b>Mary O'Hara</b>		
Flicka Trilogy		
<b>Jenny Overton</b>		
The Thirteen Days of Christmas		9+
<b>Philippa Pearce</b>		
Tom's Midnight Garden		
<b>K.M. Peyton</b>		
Flambards		
<b>Madeleine A. Polland</b>		
Fingals Quest	6th century Gaul	
Chuiraquimba and the Black Robes	Paraguay missions	
City of the Golden House	Roman period	
Beorn the Proud	Ireland, 9 <sup>th</sup> century. A girl is captured by raiders. Well written, catholic themes	
<b>Eleanor Porter</b>		
Pollyanna	Anne of Green Gables style stories	8+
Pollyanna Grows up		9+
All the <b>Beatrix Potter</b> books		3/4/5
<b>Christine Pullein-Thompson</b>	The Pullein-Thompson sisters have many titles, all about horses	7+
Mystery at Black Pony Inn		
Stolen Ponies		
<b>Diana Pullein-Thompson</b>		
Three Ponies and Shannan		
Janet Must Ride		
<b>Josephine Pullein-Thompson</b>		
Show Jumping Secret		
Race Horse Holiday		
<b>Arthur Ransome</b>		

Swallows and Amazons series	Very good, quite old fashioned. Several in series.	10/11+
<b>Joan J. Robinson</b> Teddy Robinson series	Charming, short stories, ideal for first chapter books (excellent tapes available too)	5+
<b>Sir Walter Scott</b>		
Ivanhoe		11+
<b>Ian Serrailier</b>		
Beowulf the Warrior	Nice retelling of the bloodthirsty Saxon tale	10+
The Silver Sword	Set during WWII, Polish children journeying to find their parents in Switzerland	10+
<b>Johanna Spyri</b>		
Heidi		
<b>Robert Louis Stevenson</b>		
Treasure Island	Gripping adventure story, quite difficult language	10+
Vanity Fair		10+
Kidnapped		10+
The Black Arrow		10+
<b>Joyce Stranger</b>		
The Running Foxes		
<b>Noel Streatfield</b>	Ballet stories	7/8+
<b>Rosemary Sutcliffe</b>		
The eagle of the ninth		9/10+
Silver Branch		
Lantern bearers. Plus many other excellent historical novels and short stories. See especially 'Black Ships before Troy' and it's sequel, ill. By Alan Lee.	All round excellent author for historical novels, worth collecting. We have a dozen of her books and there are more to get!	
<b>J.R.R. Tolkien</b>		
The Hobbit	Lovely, well written adventure story	8+
Lord of the Rings	Excellent language, gripping adventure story, great for reading aloud	9/10+
<b>Alison Uttley</b> Traveller in Time	Unusual book about a girl who travels back in time and gets involved in the Babington plot. Intriguing catholic elements.	12/13+
<b>Hilda Van Stockum</b>		
Pegeen series		9+
The Winged Watchman(LHL)	Set in World War II. A young boy living in Holland under Nazi occupation harbours a British pilot	10+
<b>Jules Verne</b>		
2000 Leagues under the sea	As below!	10+
Journey to the Centre of the Earth	Well written, exciting, interesting ideas.	9+
<b>Sr. M. Imelda Wallace, SL</b>		
Outlaws of Ravenhurst	The language (some Scottish dialect!) is tricky but a gripping and very Catholic adventure story	10+
<b>T.H. White</b>		
The Sword in the Stone	Complicated, humorous, well written. An alternative Arthurian tale (like the movie of the same name)	12+
<b>Oscar Wilde</b>		



The Happy Prince	Lovely, moving story, very nicely written	7+
The Selfish giant	As above, but make sure you get the unabridged version- many versions omit the very catholic ending!	
<b>Laura Ingalls Wilder</b>		8+
Little House series Little house in the Big Woods Farmer Boy Little house on the prairie On the Banks of Plum Creek	Lovely books about life on the western frontier. Chronicle the life of Laura Ingalls growing up in the pioneer days of the 1800's, full of life.	
As above, later five By the shores of the Silver Lake The Long winter Little town on the prairie These happy golden years The first four years		10/11+
<b>Barbara Willard</b>		
The Bronze bow		
Augustine Came to Kent		8+
Mantlemass Series		12+
Son of Charlemagne		
<b>Ursula Moray Williams</b> Gobbolino and the Witches cat series		7/8
<b>Joanne Williamson</b>		
Hittite Warrior (LHL)		10+
<b>Louis de Wohl</b>	Both are adult books but suitable for good readers from about 13/14 years old.	14+
The Spear	Novel about the soldier who thrust his spear into Christ's side	
The Quiet Light	Novel about St Thomas Aquinas, centring on a young Englishman who falls in love with Thomas' sister...exciting, romantic and full of theology!	14/15+

Other resources for Parents:

### **Carolyn Hatcher**

Let the authors speak – a guide to worthy books based on historical settings

**Landscape with Dragons. The Battle for your Child's Mind** (has an extensive suggested reading list as well as a long discussion of neo-pagan influences on recent children's literature)

**Pied Piper of Atheism** (Catholic assessment of Philip Pulman books)