

## Katie's Favorite Read-Aloud Books

First, my disclaimer...this is only MY list. I'm sure I've left off some of your favorites, and I'm sure you'll disagree about some of my choices. But that's the best part about book lists...they give you a place to start, and may introduce you to new favorites.

Secondly, be careful about the age ranges! They are very loose suggestions (say, plus or minus 99 years). As C.S. Lewis once said, if a book is worth reading at age 10, it should still be worth reading at age 50. So, these books will hopefully appeal to a large age range. On a practical note, however, your child may be ready for some books in a section, but not ready for others. Keep in mind that a child's "listening level" is usually more advanced (vocabulary-wise) than their reading level. But this does not make them ready for the CONTENT of every book they are capable of listening to. Some subjects and ideas may be more complex than your child is ready for. Be wise and preview books before sharing them with your child. Don't feel like you have to continue a book just because you started it, if you find your child is confused or disinterested. Choose another! And don't be in too much of a hurry to move to a "higher" level...you'll miss out on too many great books that way!

Finally, this list is far from exhaustive. For more book lists, check out The Read-Aloud Handbook by Jim Trelease and Gladys Hunt's great books: Honey for a Child's Heart and Honey for a Teen's Heart. They are wonderful resources! Happy Reading!

--Katie Wilson

### Poetry/Nursery Rhymes/Fairy Tales for All Ages

#### **Cole, Joanna and Stephanie Calmenson**

- The Read-Aloud Treasury  
*Favorite nursery rhymes, poems, stories and more for the very young. My copy is falling apart after being read to four children, but I'm not parting with it!*

#### **Katz, Alan**

- Take Me Out of the Bathtub (and other silly dilly songs)  
*Pull out this book when you really need a laugh! Hilarious poems put to the tunes of familiar songs. You HAVE to sing these! There is now a sequel.*

#### **Kennedy, X.J and Dorothy**

- Talking Like the Rain, A First Book of Poems  
*This book is a nice collection of familiar poems with gorgeous illustrations.*

#### **Lansky, Bruce**

- A Bad Case of the Giggles
- Kids Pick the Funniest Poems  
*If you have a child who thinks that poetry is boring, read these books together! I guarantee you will both be chuckling or even laughing out loud!*

#### **Paschen, Elise**

- Poetry Speaks to Children  
*This book/CD set contains familiar and not-so-familiar poems. The CD has the poets read their poems when possible. A nice collection, for elementary age children and up.*

#### **Prelutsky, Jack**

- Behold the Bold Umbrellaphant and other Poems
- The Random House Book of Poetry for Children
- Read-Aloud Rhymes for the Very Young  
*Prelutsky has a knack for knowing what poems children love. Whether he writes them or compiles them into collections, he always finds winners. All are highly recommended.*

#### **Stevenson, Robert Louis**

- Leaves from "A Child's Garden of Verses"  
*A nice introduction to Stevenson. Lavish illustrations.*

### Picture Books for Younger Children (birth - approx. age 5)

#### **Aardema, Verna**

- Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain  
*A fun book with repeated phrases. Melodic and visually pleasing.*

#### **Baumgart, Klaus**

- The Little Green Dragon Steps Out  
*Fun story with bright pictures.*

#### **Cannon, Janell**

- Stellaluna  
*Beautiful illustrations, a sweet story about friendship despite differences.*

#### **Carle, Eric**

- The Very Hungry Caterpillar  
*Carle's books and illustrations are loved by children and adults. Look for more by this author.*

#### **Eastman, P.D.**

- Are You My Mother?
- The Best Nest
- Big Dog...Little Dog A Bedtime Story  
*These are classics. Eastman's characters are the best!*

#### **Freeman, Don**

- Corduroy
- A Pocket for Corduroy  
*These books about a sweet bear who needs someone to love him have been popular for many years. A warm story.*

#### **Gramatky, Hardie**

- Hercules. The Story of an Old Fashioned Fire Engine
- Little Toot  
*These classic favorites are out of print, but still readily found in libraries or on e-bay. Worth the search! Little Toot teaches us that little guys can do big things and Hercules teaches us that even "old fashioned" fire engines can be useful.*

#### **Henkes, Kevin**

- Chrysanthemum
- Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse
- Owen  
*Kevin Henkes gives us characters that children love. Look for more by this author.*

#### **Hubbard, Patricia**

- My Crayons Talk  
*This book begs to be read aloud! The phrases are rhythmic and melodic and the illustrations are fun.*

#### **Johnson, Crockett**

- Harold and the Purple Crayon  
*This story has simple pictures that capture a child's imagination. What would you draw if you had a magic crayon? Look for others in the series.*

\*\*\* Great audio version available, check your library, i-tunes or audible.com

**Joslin, Sesyle**

- What Do You Say, Dear?  
*This is a charming and funny introduction to manners. Illustrated by Maurice Sendak.*

**Krauss, Ruth**

- A Hole is to Dig: A Book of First Definitions  
*Back in print for its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, this book is still as attractive to children as ever. A classic.*

**Martin, Antoinette Truglio**

- Famous Seaweed Soup  
*Read this before you go to the beach and you little one will want to make her own version!*

**Martin, Bill**

- Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?  
*A perennial rhyming favorite with illustrations by Eric Carle.*

**Piper, Watty**

- The Little Engine That Could  
*A classic "repetitive sound" book. You little one will be saying "I think I can, I think I can" right along with you!*

**Rey, Margaret and H.A.**

- Curious George  
*The original mischievous monkey who gets into a world of trouble. Many titles in this series.*

**Schuett, Stacey**

- Somewhere in the World Right Now  
*A nice introduction to places outside of the US. Shows different activities going on all over the world.*

**Seuss, Dr.**

- Hop on Pop
- Hand, Hand, Fingers, Thumb  
*Some of the simplest "repetitive sound" books. So many favorites by Dr. Seuss. Can be enjoyed by the youngest children.*

**Showers, Paul**

- The Listening Walk  
*A girl goes on a walk and listens to all the sounds around her. Fun to read and then go on your own "listening walk."*

**Stepito, Michele**

- Snuggle Piggy and the Magic Blanket  
*Don't all children think their blanket is magic? Kids love Snuggle Piggy's blanket because it really is!*

**Sweeney, Joan**

- Me On the Map  
*Starts with a girl and her room, and then moves to her house, her town, her state, etc. Nice for helping children understand their relationship to the world.*

**Trapani, Iza**

- The Itsy Bitsy Spider  
*A clever re-telling of the favorite nursery song, with additional verses and beautiful illustrations.*

**Watt, Melanie**

- Scaredy Squirrel  
*Scaredy Squirrel is the kind of hero that helps us understand that the world may not be as scary as it seems!*

**Wood, Audrey**

- The Napping House  
*We used to read this after my son's nap, what a great story to wake up to!*

**Wright, Dare**

- The Lonely Doll  
*Back in print, this story of a doll and her teddy bear friend has been loved for generations. Black and white photographs of a real*

*doll accompany the text. (May not be considered politically correct, the doll gets spanked for disobeying.)*

**Young, Miriam**

- Miss Suzy  
*Miss Suzy is a squirrel who has captured children's hearts for over 40 years. Recently back in print.*

## Picture Books for Older Children (approx. age 3 and up)

**Anderson, C.W.**

- Billy and Blaze  
*Billy and his pony, Blaze, are the best of friends. These are old favorites, recently back in print. Look for others in the series.*

**Bemelmans, Ludwig**

- Madeline  
*Every child should be introduced to the "twelve little girls in two straight lines, the smallest of which was Madeline." Many titles in the series.*

**Breathed, Berkley**

- Red Ranger Came Calling  
*From the creator of the Bloom County comic strip, this book explores a young skeptical boy's relationship with an old man in a red suit. Will he get the "Buck Tweed" bicycle he wants for Christmas? If you are ever on Vashon Island near Seattle, you can find "evidence" of this story! Very fun!*

**Burton, Virginia Lee**

- Katy and the Big Snow
- Mike Mulligan and his Steam Shovel  
*Classics. These stories and illustrations have been loved for years.*

**DiCamillo, Kate**

- Mercy Watson to the Rescue  
*Mercy Watson is one of the most lovable pigs you'll ever meet, and she's pretty resourceful, too. Look for more in the series.*

**Duvoisin, Roger**

- Petunia  
*Who can forget Petunia, the lovable goose who learns that in order to be wise, you actually have to READ a book, not just carry it around.*

**Farley, Walter**

- Little Black, A Pony  
*Written by the author of The Black Stallion, these delightful stories appeal to the youngest horse lovers. Lovely illustrations, recently back in print. Look for more in the series.*

**Golenbock, Peter**

- Teammates  
*A wonderful portrayal of Dodgers teammates, Jackie Robinson and Pee Wee Reese. A thoughtful introduction to the concept of race, segregation and above all, standing up for what is right.*

**Heller, Ruth**

- Behind the Mask (A Book About Prepositions)
- Kites Sail High (A Book About Verbs)
- Many Luscious Lollipops (A Book About Adjectives)  
*Ruth Heller's "World of Language" books help children understand parts of speech through well chosen words and glorious pictures. Look for others in the series.*

**Hoff, Syd**

- Danny and the Dinosaur  
*Syd Hoff has been around forever, and his books are winners with children. Simple, charming illustrations.*

**Keillor, Garrison**

- Cat, You Better Come Home

\*\*\* Great audio version available, check your library, i-tunes or audible.com

*This amusing story/poem is by the creator of the "Prairie Home Companion" radio show. You and your child will both enjoy this, on different levels most likely!*

**Knight, Hillary**

- Where's Wallace  
*This charming book is about an orange orangutan, who also happens to be an escape artist. Your children will love looking for Wallace in the detailed drawings.!*

**Krementz, Jill**

- A Very Young Rider
- A Very Young Dancer
- A Very Young Circus Flyer  
*These "picture books" are actually pictorial biographies. Your older children will enjoy these glimpses into the world of horseback riding, ballet dancing and circus life. Out of print, but usually available at libraries or on e-bay. More in the series,*

**Lionni, Leo**

- Alexander and the Wind-up Mouse
- Frederick
- Swimmy  
*Lionni's fanciful stories have been children's favorites for a long time. Look for more by this author.*

**Marshall, James**

- George and Martha  
*Every child should become friends with these lovable hippos.*

**McAfee, Diane**

- The Amazing Incredible Sulk  
*This is one book that just might help a child "get over" pouting and sulking. Quite funny.*

**McCully, Emily Arnold**

- Mirette on the High Wire  
*Mirette is a little girl who walks on the high wire with the famous master, Bellini. "Starring Mirette & Bellini" is the sequel. Lovely illustrations.*

**Minarik, Else Holmelund**

- Little Bear  
*These sweet stories and charming illustrations delight children of all ages.*

**O'Connor, Jane**

- Fancy Nancy  
*My daughter wants to BE Fancy Nancy. Charming stories with lavish illustrations. Look for more in the series.*

**Parish, Peggy**

- Amelia Bedelia  
*It is a great day in our house when the little ones "get" Amelia Bedelia! This sweet, but clueless housekeeper "changes the towels" by cutting designs into them, "dusts the living room" with perfumed dusting powder, and "draws the drapes" with a pencil and paper. You'll want to read all of her adventures!*

**Platt, Kin**

- Big Max  
*Big Max is a detective that warms your heart. Great fun in the land of Pooka-Pooka.*

**Potter, Beatrix**

- The Tale of Peter Rabbit  
*Potter's charming tales and illustrations have been loved by children forever. Your child will be richer for having met all the Peter Rabbit friends. Look for more books by this author.*

**Scieszka, Jon & Lane Smith**

- Math Curse
- Science Verse

*These books have kept my whole family laughing. In Math Curse, a poor boy starts seeing math EVERYWHERE! In Science Verse, we are treated to humorous science poems in the style of famous poets. (FYI - Science Verse has a poem about Darwinism. This may be a good chance to talk with your child about the different ideas people have about the creation of the world.)*

**Shannon, David**

- A Bad Case of Stripes  
*Camilla loves lima beans! How embarrassing! But Camilla learns an important lesson about being true to herself. A fun story.*

**Troll Associates**

- Young Abraham Lincoln (A Troll First Start Biography)
- Young George Washington (A Troll First Start Biography)
- Young Martin Luther King, Jr. (A Toll First Start Biography)  
*These biographies are great introductions to famous Americans. Look for others in the Troll series, by various authors.*

**Wiesner, David**

- The Three Little Pigs
- Tuesday  
*Wiesner's visual images are stunning and slightly mysterious. Each of Wiesner's books has a twist: the characters come "off the page," or the story is told entirely in pictures, etc. Great books to spark a discussion.*

**White, Linda**

- Too Many Pumpkins  
*What do you do with too many pumpkins? Why, have a party for the whole neighborhood! Fun to read at Halloween.*

**Chapter Books for Younger Readers**  
(approx. K to 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Atwater, Richard and Florence**

- Mr. Popper's Penguins  
*Mr. Popper and his twelve-penguin show are always getting into trouble. Fun for the whole family.*

**Baum, L. Frank**

- The Wizard of Oz  
*Very different (better!) from the movie. Look for others in the series (Ozma of Oz, etc.)*

**Bendick, Jeanne**

- Archimedes and the Door of Science  
*A great, entertaining introduction to the basic ideas in math and science.*

**Bond, Michael**

- A Bear Called Paddington \*\*\*  
*Who can resist when a small bear from Darkest Peru shows up in Paddington Station, London? Paddington always manages to get into trouble, but come out on top. Look for others in the series. The audio version is read by a Brit—just the perfect voice for Paddington!*

**Boston, L.M.**

- The Children of Green Knowe  
*A skillful blend of fantasy and reality, Boston creates a world that draws the reader in. The ancient manor, Green Knowe, holds many secrets for Tolly, including an ancient grandmother, old magic and visitors from the past. For the older end of this age range.*

**Brock, Betty**

- No Flying in the House  
*Annabel Tippens is not a usual girl! Not only is her guardian a tiny white dog, Gloria, who can talk, but she finds out that she is a fairy! Soon Annabel has to choose between the fun of being a fairy, and the love of her best friend. Wonderful story and illustrations!*

\*\*\* Great audio version available, check your library, i-tunes or audible.com

**Brooks, Walter R. \*\*\***

- *Freddy Goes to Florida*
- *Freddy the Detective*  
*Funny, fanciful stories of Freddy the pig and his barnyard pals. Get lots of good voices ready for these! There are some good audio versions available,*

**Cameron, Ann**

- *The Stories Julian Tells*
- *The Stories Huey Tells*
- *Julian, Secret Agent*  
*Ann Cameron has a knack for producing the kind of stories kids love. They are about childhood: the adventures, the fears, the dreams, the jokes. Delightful.*

**Childhood of Famous Americans series (series, by various authors)**

*These biographical stories are good introductions to the childhoods of many famous historical figures. Favorites include Abraham Lincoln, Albert Einstein, Davy Crockett and George Washington.*

**Cleary, Beverly**

- *Beezus and Ramona*
- *Ramona the Pest \*\*\**
- *Henry Huggins \*\*\**
- *The Mouse and the Motorcycle \*\*\**
- *Socks*  
*These are great fun for young readers. Try to do the individual series' in order, although there is a lot of overlapping between the series (i.e. Beezus and Ramona also show up in the Henry series, etc.)*

**Clements, Andrew**

- *A Week in the Woods*
- *Frindle*
- *The School Story \*\*\**
- *Room One*
- *Lunch Money \*\*\**  
*Entertaining, "real-life" stories about "real-life" kids. Once you have read Clement's work, you will want to read more by him. His stories are all about kids solving problems, but they are varied and interesting, not formulaic.*

**D'Aulaire, Ingri and Edgar**

- *Christopher Columbus*
- *George Washington*
- *Greek Myths*  
*These beautifully illustrated books are well-loved classics. Look for more by the D'Aulaires.*

**Dahl, Roald**

*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*  
*James and the Giant Peach*  
*As usual, the book versions of these are different (and I think, much better) than the movie versions.*

**Drury, Roger**

- *The Finch's Fabulous Furnace*  
*What would you do if you had a volcano in your basement? Should you tell the town and start a panic, or keep the secret and enjoy free heat all winter long? Fun for all ages. May even spark an interest in earth science!*

**Fisher, Dorothy Canfield**

- *Understood Betsy*  
*A "delicate," pampered girl is sent to live with rustic relatives and discovers that she can do things for herself after all. A favorite of girls for years, but boys like the characters as well.*

**Gannett, Ruth Stiles**

- *My Father's Dragon*

- *Elmer and the Dragon*  
*What fun books for the little ones! Adventures with dragons, tigers and more! Look for the whole series.*

**Goscinny & Sempre**

- *Nicholas*  
*Originally published decades ago in France, these gems have recently been re-printed—in English! Nicholas is a mischievous child that will bring a chuckle to anyone's lips, even while you are warning your own children never to imitate him! Not high literature, but quite hilarious! With charming illustrations. Look for more in the series.*

**King-Smith, Dick**

- *Lady Lollipop*
- *Clever Lollipop*  
*Lollipop is a talented pig who belongs to Princess Penelope. But who belongs to whom? Lollipop and her trainer, Johnny, seem to be the good influences that spoiled Penelope needs.*

**Lindgren, Astrid**

- *Pippi Longstocking*  
*Pippi's hilarious adventures with Tommy and Annika. Look for others in the series.*
- *Ronia, the Robber's Daughter*

**Lovelace, Maud Hart**

- *Betsy-Tacy*
- *Betsy, Tacy and Tib*  
*Every little girl loves Betsy, Tacy and Tib. These stories about "ordinary" little girls in the 1940s are classics. The illustrations by Lois Lenski are charming. Look for the whole series.*

**MacDonald, Betty:**

- *Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle*
- *Hello, Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle*
- *Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle's Farm*
- *Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle's Magic*  
*Favorites of children and adults for years. The hilarious adventures of a woman who has a cure for every irritating childhood fault. You'll wish there was a Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle around today!*

**McCaughren, Geraldine**

- *Greek Myths*  
*Introduce your child to the fascinating stories that have shaped history and the world's literature. Beautiful illustrations.*

**Milne, A.A.**

- *Winnie-the-Pooh*
- *The House at Pooh Corner*  
*The Disney versions don't do Milne's books justice! Wonderful prose that only gets better as you get older. Pooh books should be read and enjoyed in every age group! (Wonderful illustrations by Ernest Shepherd.)*

**Mowat, Farley**

- *Owls in the Family*  
*What kind of escapades can you have with a pair of owls for pets? You wouldn't believe! Hilarious! Also by Mowat for older listeners: "The Dog That Wouldn't Be."*

**Mull, Brandon**

- *Fablehaven*  
*A fun fantasy series. Two children visit their grandfather, whose home holds secrets. The third book has just been published. For the older end of this age range.*

**O'Brien, Robert C.**

- *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH*

\*\*\* Great audio version available, check your library, i-tunes or audible.com

*Wonderful fantasy story. A group of rats has become super-intelligent through a laboratory experiment. They team together to save a mouse and her family.*

**Ormondroyd, Edward**

- David and the Phoenix  
*Recently back in print! A young boy discovers a mythical phoenix is living on the mountain behind his house.*

**Pearce, Philippa**

- Tom's Midnight Garden  
*Tom is stuck at the boring house of his aunt and uncle because his brother is quarantined. Then, he hears the ancient clock in the hallway striking 13, and his midnight adventures begin. A "timeless" tale.*

**Reimer, Luetta and Wilbert**

- Mathematicians Are People, Too (Vol. 1 & 2)  
*How do you get kids to like math? Tell them the stories of the mathematicians! Fascinating!*

**Robinson, Barbara**

- The Best Christmas Pageant Ever  
*A very unusual Christmas story. The Herdmanns (the worst kids in town) finagle their way into the starring roles in the annual Christmas Pageant. Funny and touching. (Minor language issues in this book, just skip them when reading aloud.) For the older end of this age range.*

**Selden, George**

- The Cricket in Times Square \*\*\* (great on audio, because you get to hear the music the cricket plays!!)  
*Beautiful story about a cricket, mouse, cat, and the poor family who own a newspaper stand in the Times Square subway station. Look for the audio version by Listening Library, read by Rene Auberjonois.*

**Steig, William**

- The Real Thief  
*An honorable goose is accused of stealing the treasure he faithfully guards. Will his friends believe his innocence? This deceptively simple story requires discussion.*

**Taylor, Sydney**

- All-of-a-Kind Family
- More All-of-a-Kind Family  
*Warm, lovely stories of a Jewish family's life in New York City at the turn of the century! Look for others in the series.*

**Wersba, Barbara**

- Walter, the Story of a Rat  
*A beautifully written, touching story about a misunderstood rat, a lonely woman and their unlikely friendship. Beautiful illustrations.*

**White, E.B.**

- Stuart Little
- The Trumpet of the Swan
- Charlotte's Web \*\*\* (great audio, read by the author, his voice is perfect for this farm story)  
*Classic stories, from a masterful writer. Again, different from the film versions (especially Stuart Little). One of my favorite quotes applies here: "Never judge a book by its movie."*

**Wiggin, Kate Douglas**

- Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm  
*Rebecca has an irrepressible spirit, somewhat akin to Anne in "Anne of Green Gables." Written for a somewhat younger crowd than the Anne series. Your family will love Rebecca.*

**Books for Middle Readers**  
(approx. 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades)

**Alexander, Lloyd**

- The Book of Three
- The Black Cauldron
- The Castle of Llyr
- Taran Wanderer
- The High King  
*Good fantasy, based on Welsh legend. Could be a bit scary for the younger end of this age range. Classic good vs. evil, favorites of boys. Also by the same, versatile author: The Gawgon and the Boy (hilarious!)*

**Alcott, Louisa May**

- Little Women
- Little Men  
*Semi-autobiographical books. The adventures of the March sisters. Classics. Look for more books by this author (Eight Cousins, An Old Fashioned Girl, etc.).*

**Babbitt, Natalie**

- The Search for Delicious
- Tuck Everlasting  
*Babbitt is a talented writer. "Delicious" is more humorous and can be read at a younger age than "Tuck."*

**Barrie, James**

- Peter Pan \*\*\*  
*The original is VERY different from the Disney version. Adults also love this story of the boy who doesn't grow up. New audio version read by Jim Dale. (Minor language issues.)*

**Banks, Lynne Reid**

- The Indian in the Cupboard  
*What happens when a boy makes a plastic Indian figure come to life? Exciting and thought-provoking.*

**Brinley, Bertrand R.**

- The Mad Scientist Club  
*Recently back in print. I remember my brother devouring these books when we were young. The Mad Scientist Club consists of regular "real life" boys who have adventures you won't believe in a town that you want to visit! Lots of fun, look for more books in the series.*

**Burnett, Frances Hodgson**

- The Little Princess
- The Secret Garden  
*Every child, girl and boy, should be exposed to these wonderful stories. Classics.*

**de Angeli, Marguerite**

- The Door in the Wall  
*A touching medieval story about a crippled boy finding honor in serving his king--not in ways he expected, but in doing the best he can with the abilities he has.*

**DiCamillo, Kate**

- The Tale of Despereaux \*\*\*  
*A tale of high adventure--concerning a mouse and the princess he befriends. (Try the audio version, for a reading with a French accent!)*

**Eager, Edward**

- Half Magic \*\*\*
- Magic by the Lake
- Knight's Castle  
*Wonderful, charming, well-written magical tales that children love! Eager is a wonderful writer who weaves his characters flawlessly throughout his books. Begin with Half-Magic and you'll want to read the whole collection. More in the series.*

\*\*\* Great audio version available, check your library, i-tunes or audible.com

**Enright, Elizabeth**

- The Saturdays
- The Four Story Mistake  
*Classic favorites for over 50 years. The adventures of the Melendy family. Recently back in print. Look for others in the series.*
- Gone Away Lake
- Return to Gone Away  
*Great stories about summertime adventures in a town time forgot.*

**Estes, Eleanor**

- The Hundred Dresses  
*Touching story. Good to read-aloud and talk about.*
- Ginger Pye
- Pinky Pye  
*Funny and warm stories about very unusual animals and the family that loves them.*

**Farley, Walter**

- The Black Stallion  
*A series about an Arabian stallion and the boy who tames him.*

**Fitzgerald, John D.**

- The Great Brain
- More Adventures of the Great Brain  
*Semi-autobiographical stories of Tom and his great brain. Hilarious, set in Mormon town of Adenville, Utah at the turn of the century. Look for others in the series (a total of eight, including one recently found and published!)*

**Grahame, Kenneth**

- The Wind in the Willows  
*Classic story of Mole, Rat, Badger and Toad. Don't read this one too young—very young children may be intimidated by the descriptive language. Great reading for teens and adults, too. A few minor language issues, but easily deleted in a "read-aloud."*

**Hale, Lucretia P.**

- The Complete Peterkin Papers  
*The classic has been around over 100 years, but kids still find their escapades hilarious.*

**Henry, Marguerite**

- Misty of Chincoteague
- Stormy, Misty's Foal  
*For your horse lover. Classics.*

**Garfield, James B.**

- Follow My Leader  
*A newly-blinded boy, learning to adapt to his new life, also learns some of life's lessons along the way.*

**George, Jean Craighead**

- My Side of the Mountain  
*Great adventure story of a boy living by himself in the woods. Be warned, your children may want to move to the mountains after reading this one!*

**Jacques, Brian**

- Castaways of the Flying Dutchman
- Redwall  
*Both Castaways and Redwall are first books in a series. (The Redwall series is much longer.) These books are exciting adventures that explore timeless themes. Favorites of boys and girls alike.*

**Juster, Norton**

- The Phantom Tollbooth  
*Bored, unmotivated Milo receives a purple child-sized toll-booth from an unidentified giver. Children love Miles' adventures in a magical world. Great introduction to literary techniques like*

*metaphor, allusion, homonyms, good vocabulary, etc.! These wonderful characters just "beg for" special voices during read-alouds, so be prepared with a few!*

**Kipling, Rudyard**

- The Jungle Books
- Just-So Stories  
*The masterful writing transports you to the jungle. This is not the Disney-version!*

**Konigsburg, E.L.**

- From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler  
*Two kids run away from home and live in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. They also get to solve a mystery while they are there.*
- The View from Saturday  
*Four very different children become best friends and help each other and a special teacher.*

**L'Engle, Madeline**

- A Wrinkle in Time  
*Three children go on a dangerous, interplanetary quest to save their father. Explores many ideas, especially good versus evil. Classic. (Look for others in the series.) For the older end of the age range.*

**Lamb, Charles and Mary**

- Tales from Shakespeare  
*A great introduction to Shakespeare. Well-done, told in story form, great read-alouds for young readers.*

**Lampman, Evelyn Sibley**

- The Shy Stegosaurus of Cricket Creek  
*A fun adventure story about finding a stegosaurus and keeping him secret! Recently back in print.*

**Lantham, Jean Lee**

- Carry On, Mr. Bowditch  
*Incredibly inspiring story about a taking responsibility for your own life and education. Based on a true story. A sea-faring delight!*

**Lewis, C.S.**

- The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
- Prince Caspian
- Voyage of the Dawn Treader
- The Silver Chair
- The Horse and His Boy
- The Magician's Nephew
- The Last Battle  
*The masterful Christian writer, Lewis, writes timeless classic fantasy tales. Christian allusion is woven throughout the books. Can be enjoyed on many different levels. Favorites of all ages. (Although I very rarely recommend "dramatized" versions of stories, Focus on the Family has produced a Radio Theater version of these books. They are fabulous, and very true to the original. We were making up car errands, just so that we could finish listening to them!)*

**Lofting, Hugh**

- The Voyages of Dr. Doolittle  
*Impossible and funny adventures of a man who "talks to the animals."*

**McCloskey, Robert**

- The Complete Adventures of Homer Price \*\*\*  
*A great read-aloud for the whole family. Homer always seems to find himself in the middle of strange adventures. Older children will enjoy recognizing the allusions to Homer's Odyssey. (Can be found in separate volumes also: Homer Price and Centerburg Tales.)*

\*\*\* Great audio version available, check your library, i-tunes or audible.com

**Montgomery, L.M.**

- Anne of Green Gables \*\*\*
- Anne of Avonlea
- Anne of the Island

*I wanted to be Anne Shirley when I was young! Watch her grow from awkward child to self-assured woman. Girls have loved these for years, but my boys find them interesting, too! (Look for more in the series.)*

**Moody, Ralph**

- Little Britches
- Man of the Family

*A male version of the "Little House" books. A young boy comes to manhood out on the prairie. Look for more books in the series. Wonderful autobiographical adventures that teach self-reliance, honesty, hard work—great virtues to talk about with our kids.*

**Nesbit, Edith**

- Five Children and It \*\*\*
- The Railway Children
- The Magic City

*Classics. One of the great writers of fantasy and adventure stories for and about children. Look for more fabulous books by this writer.*

**O'Dell, Scott**

- The Island of the Blue Dolphins
- The Black Pearl
- The King's Fifth

*O'Dell writes wonderful adventure stories. His characters draw you in, until you feel as if you have lived awhile with them—the mark of great historical fiction!*

**Paolini, Christopher**

- Eragon
- Eldest

*This young author has created a world of dragons and dragon-riders that calls to young people. Quickly becoming classics. The third book is due out this fall.*

**Ransome, Arthur**

- Swallows and Amazons

*A classic series newly back in print. Adventure stories about summertime, sailing and best friends. What could be better?*

**Raskin, Ellen**

- The Westing Game

*A whodunit mystery where you hold all the clues! Part mystery story, part play-along game, part do-it-yourself puzzle. Very clever.*

**Rawlings, Marjorie Kinnan**

- The Yearling

*The classic story of a farm boy and the pet fawn that he loves. Difficulties arise when the fawn becomes a dangerous nuisance to the families livelihood. For the older end of this age range. You will want to discuss the complex issues with your child.*

**Rawls, Wilson**

- Where the Red Fern Grows \*\*\*

*Just try not to cry at the end of this one! The timeless tale of a boy and his coon-hounds. Great on audio, so that you won't get choked up reading it aloud!*

- Summer of the Monkeys

*Hilarious and touching. You'll be glad you met Jimbo and all his friends!*

**Robertson, Keith**

- Henry Reed, Inc.

*Fun story about an enterprising boy and his summertime adventures. Look for more in the series. Some are out of print, but can be found on e-bay.*

**Rowling, J.K.**

- Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

*Everyone had heard of Harry Potter—J.K. Rowling's books have created a national sensation. Although some object to her portrayals of magic and witchcraft, I have found these books entertaining. My older boys and I have read these together and had many thoughtful discussions on the classic themes that Rowling explores (family, friendship, good vs. evil, love, trust, honor, etc.). There are seven books in the series.*

**Serendy, Kate**

- The Good Master

*A beautifully written story about life in pre-WWI Hungary. The images of love and family will stay with you and your children. (The Singing Tree is the sequel.)*

**Sewell, Anna**

- Black Beauty

*The best horse story ever written! Read the unabridged version.*

**Smith, Dodie**

- 101 Dalmations

*Read the real story, not the Disney version. Much better, clever writing.*

**Smith, Roland**

- The Captain's Dog (My Journey with the Lewis and Clark Tribe)

*Read about the Lewis and Clark expedition through the eyes of their massive Newfoundland dog, Seaman! Although told from a fictional perspective, the narrative is closely tied to the account of the documents, diaries, etc.*

**Speare, Elizabeth George**

- The Bronze Bow
- The Sign of the Beaver
- The Witch of Blackbird Pond

*Adventure stories with history woven in. Wonderful writer. These are books to talk about!*

**Taylor, Theodore**

- The Cay

*This is a classic story of a love, trust, prejudice and growing up. Around the time of WWII, a young white boy is shipwrecked with an older black man and a cat. We see Phillip mature and move past his preconceived ideas of race, age and what friendship really is. You'll want to talk about this one as you read it.*

**Travers, Pamela**

- Mary Poppins

*This is not the Mary Poppins that you know from the Disney movie! Discover the real Mary Poppins in Travers' books (look for more in the series).*

**Wilder, Laura Ingalls**

- Little House in the Big Woods
- Little House on the Prairie
- Farmer Boy

*Perennial favorites of boys and girls, full of warmth, fun and the adventures of pioneer families. Look for others in the series.*

## Books for the More Practiced Listener (approx. 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade and up)

**Burnford, Shelia**

- The Incredible Journey \*\*\*

*The movie is good, but the book is wonderful. The amazing adventures of two dogs and a cat who find their way home over*

\*\*\* Great audio version available, check your library, i-tunes or audible.com

hundreds of miles of wilderness. Wonderful writing and a great story.

**Dickens, Charles**

- Oliver Twist
- A Tale of Two Cities  
*What can I say about Dickens? Some of the most memorable characters you will ever meet! Wordy but well worth the effort.*

**Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan**

- Classic Adventures of Sherlock Holmes  
*Everyone should meet the detective that started them all.*

**Dumas, Alexander**

- The Three Musketeers
- The Count of Monte Cristo  
*Swash-buckling adventures that have stood the test of time!*

**Durrell, Gerald**

- My Family and Other Animals
- The Zoo in My Luggage  
*Durrell documents natural history in a fascinating and immensely entertaining style. His books recount his childhood (and later, adult) adventures in the great outdoors, beginning with his childhood home on a Greek island and traveling all over the world, collecting animals for a zoo. He does speak frankly about animal life, including animal husbandry, but I don't believe anyone can read these books and not be thoroughly entertained (and educated a bit, as well.)*

**Gilbreth, Frank Jr. & Ernestine Gilbreth Carey**

- Cheaper by the Dozen
- Belles on their Toes  
*The hilarious adventures of a family of twelve children, with an efficiency-expert father and psychologist mother. Great read-alouds for the whole family. (Minor language issues here—I simply skip those words.)*

**Gipson, Fred**

- Old Yeller  
*The classic story of a boy and his dog. This book is often read at younger ages, but age simply increases its appeal.*

**Goldman, William**

- The Princess Bride  
*If you liked the movie, you'll love the book! A hilarious, swash-buckling tale, with all the over-the-top details!*

**Henty, G.A.**

- The Young Carthaginian
- The Cat of the Bubastes  
*Henty wrote over 100 historical-fiction novels. Some have described him as the best story-teller ever. Although fiction, Henty's stories were meticulously researched, and contain vast amounts of accurate historical information. His stories appeal to any boy (and many girls) who loves a great adventure story. Many of his stories have Christian overtones. These books are just now coming back onto print. A great writer worth seeking out. (Look for many more books by this author.)*

**Herriot, James**

- All Creatures Great and Small
- All Things Bright and Beautiful
- All Things Wise and Wonderful
- The Lord God Made them All  
*Warm, funny, autobiographical stories about a country veterinarian and his many adventures tending the animals he loved. Minor language issues to reflect the "coarse dialect" of the Yorkshire farmer of the 1930's.*

**Lowry, Lois**

- The Giver

Very powerful, disquieting book. What happens to a society that "does away with" all differences, pain, choices and memories? You will want to talk about this one with your child.

**McKinley, Robin**

- Beauty: A Retelling of Beauty and the Beast
- Spindle's End
- The Outlaws of Sherwood
- The Hero and the Crown  
*Robin McKinley is a master of fairy-tales and fantasy writing. In some of her books, she re-works classic fairy tales into beautifully written literature, with surprising twists along the way (Beauty, Spindle's End, The Outlaws). She also writes other books in which she fully forms new worlds and characters for us to fall in love with. If you have a daughter who is interested in fantasy, she must read McKinley! (And boys like her books, as well!)*

**Patterson, Katherine**

- Bridge to Terabithia
- Jacob Have I Loved  
*Growing up stories, modern classics. More mature issues, for older audiences.*

**Porter, Gene Stratton**

- The Girl of Limberlost
- Laddie  
*Timeless stories, with classic values and morals.*

**Potok, Chiam**

- The Chosen
- My Name is Asher Lev  
*Truly wonderful coming of age books. Complicated issues and ideas. Potok weaves the history and culture of Judaism into these modern classics. I believe everyone should read them as a (late) teenager, and again, ten years later.*

**Stevenson, Robert Louis**

- Treasure Island
- Kidnapped  
*Great adventure stories!*

**Tolkien, J.R.R.**

- The Hobbit
- The Lord of the Rings  
*Wonderful fantasy story. Good versus evil, Christian symbolism, a master-storyteller! Tolkien's language is sophisticated, but flows beautifully in a read-aloud.*

**Twain, Mark**

- The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
- The Adventures of Tom Sawyer
- The Prince and the Pauper
- A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court  
*Twain was a master of the English language. These are too good to miss-great adventures stories!!! Listening to Twain takes a bit of practice.*

**White, T.H.**

- The Once and Future King  
*The King Arthur story told in wonderful, humorous prose. The first section is the best to read-aloud, save the other sections for older kids to read later.*

**Wodehouse, P.G.**

- The Code of the Woosters
- How Right You Are, Jeeves  
*Wodehouse was an incredibly gifted and prolific writer (he wrote over 100 books, not counting his essays and plays). His characters are hilarious slices out of turn-of-the-century British life. You'll wish you had a "Jeeves" in your own life! For pure enjoyment!*

\*\*\* Great audio version available, check your library, i-tunes or audible.com