



## The Good & The Beautiful Book List – Released May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018

*Fill children's minds with the good and the beautiful.*

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### How Points Work

Each book is assigned points based on reading level, length of book, moral merit, literary merit, and educational value. Merit ratings are based on a scale from 0–5. All books are worth between 1–10 points. Parents can use point values to do their own reading programs with children.

Note: A lower rating for moral merit does not mean the book is inappropriate. All The Good and the Beautiful books are deemed appropriate and wholesome by Jenny Phillips, but some books have more emphasis on moral principles than others.

Note: Literary merit is based on the reading level of each book.

Note: Although all books on this list have educational value, in the sense of increasing vocabulary, etc., the educational value scale is based on how well the book helps the reader gain knowledge about historical time periods, cultures, geography, science, etc.

 = Jenny's Top Picks     = likely hard to find

**YELLOW HIGHLIGHTED CELL** = the book was added this year

**GREEN HIGHLIGHTED CELL** = the book is integrated with the curriculum

Δ = includes magical elements (Jenny Phillips is not usually drawn to books that include magic, preferring true-to-life stories, so there are not many books with magic on the booklist. If you completely avoid books with magic, skip the ones with this symbol.)

🔊 Aud = available as an Audible book.

🔊 Lib = available on [www.librivoxx.org](http://www.librivoxx.org). This website features free audio books. Only books with acceptable quality are listed.

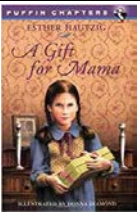

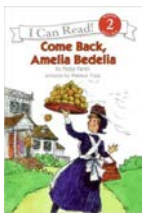
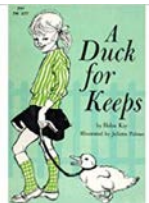
## **How the Books are Reviewed**

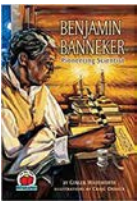
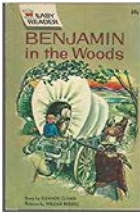
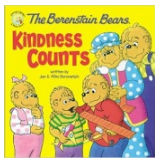
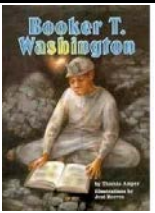
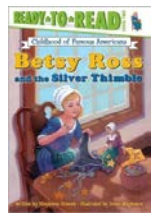
All books are reviewed either by Jenny Phillips reading the entire book, Jenny's teenage daughter, Kate Phillips, reading the entire book, or a small number of trusted assistants of Jenny reading the book first and then Jenny reading at least two chapters and skimming the rest of the books they recommend. If a searchable Kindle version of a book is available, it is searched first for profanity, and a book is automatically not included if it contains any profanity or taking God's name in vain.

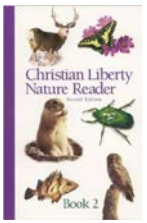
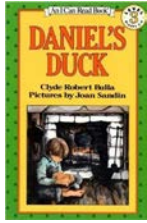
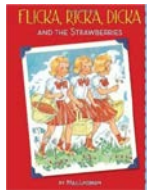
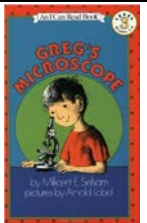

## **Standards Used in Reviewing These Books**


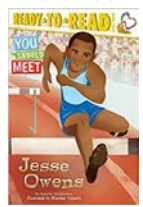


Reviews are based on the following standards. If a book goes against ANY of these standards, it is not recommended. This does not mean the book does not also contain good messages or have good qualities. Most unclean books and movies are mixed with some positive messages and qualities. Only books that meet ALL of the standards below are chosen.

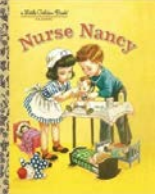
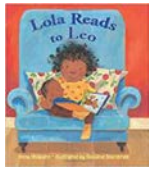
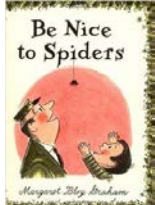
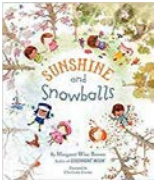
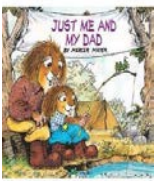
1. Avoids Potty Language and All Uses of Profanity and Taking God's Name in Vain
2. Avoids an Underlying Feeling of Negativity or Darkness
3. Avoids Violence Used for Entertainment or Shock Value or Is Overly Graphic
4. Does Not Weaken Family, Faith, or Christ-Like Behavior
  - Portrays strong families, motherhood, and fatherhood as desirable and noble. Portrays parents as being valuable, involved, and helpful. If positive family ties are not portrayed, it is clear they are not acceptable
  - Promotes respect and appreciation for teachers, peers, siblings, and extended family
  - Portrays faith in God as desirable and noble
  - Portrays learning and education as desirable and noble
  - Does not portray bad behavior or weak character traits as humorous, entertaining, normal, or acceptable (laziness, negativity, flippant attitude, disrespect, cruelty, violence, gossip, pride, vanity, self-centeredness, revenge, greed, worldliness, unkindness, immodesty, immorality, lack of depth of character)

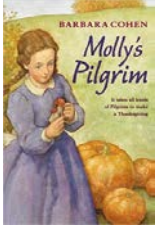
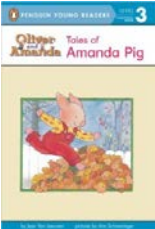
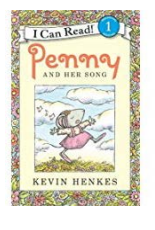
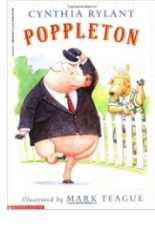

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
<p><b>Press Control + F on a PC, or Command + F on a Mac to search for an author or a book title.</b></p>				
2		<b>A Gift for Mamma</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Esther Hautzig  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 3 Points: 4 (5-7 yrs), 2 (8-9 yrs), 1 (10-11 yrs)	This is a gentle book about a Russian girl who wants to buy her mother a gift for Mother's Day instead of making one, like she always has in the past. She makes a plan to earn money and works hard. The story is not exciting and may not hold the attention of children not used to more gentle, slow-moving stories.
2		<b>A Little Princess (Little Golden Book)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Andrea Posner-Sanchez and Lorena Alvarez  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 1 Points: .5 (5-7 yrs)	Released in 2017, this retelling of the classic book <i>A Little Princess</i> is just right for Level 2 readers. The illustrations are wonderful.
2		<b>Amelia Bedelia (I Can Read 2) (SERIES)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Peggy Parish  Moral Merit: 1 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 1 for 2 books (5-7 yrs)	I found nothing objectionable in this series of fun, witty books. Children under seven may not understand some of the humor, but most kids should find these books entertaining and funny. Although the books do not teach moral lessons, the writing is good for the reading level, and the books are clever and imaginative.
2		<b>A Duck for Keeps</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Helen Kay  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 2 (5-6 yrs), 1 (7-8 yrs)	It's hard to find good and beautiful style Level 2 books, but this is one of them. It's out of print, but worth finding if you can. This 48-page book has charming illustrations and large print. It tells the sweet and gentle story of a girl named Deborah and her pet duck.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
2		<b>Benjamin Banneker</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Ginger Wadsworth  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 2 Educational Value: 5 Points: 2 (5-7 yrs), 1 (8-10 yrs)	I am a big fan of Benjamin Banneker. Big words and full-color illustrations make this 45-page book just right for Level 2 readers. This story is simple but worthwhile as it tells about the life work of this great man.
2		<b>Benjamin in the Woods</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Eleanor Clymer  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 4 Points: 2 (5-6 yrs), 1 (7-8 yrs)	This out-of-print Wonder Books Easy Reader was published in 1962, but some libraries may carry it and used copies can be found. The illustrations and story are lovely and wholesome. The book has good educational value.
2		<b>Berenstain Bears - Level 2 Books</b> <i>(selected books in the series)</i>  <i>Fiction</i>	Stan and Jan Berenstain  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 1 Points: 1 (5-6 yrs), 1 for 3 books (7 yrs)	While some the books are wholesome and appropriate with great messages, some books in the series do contain name-calling and incorrect messages. For example, the father is often, if not most of the time, portrayed as a bumbling fool. The books in the series are reading levels 1-3, with most of them being on reading Level 2. The Level 2 books that I recommend and that are a part of this reading program are: <i>The Berenstain Bears Clean House, The Berenstain Bears Go on Vacation, The Berenstain Bears' New Kitten, The Berenstain Bears Four Seasons, and any in the "Living Lights" series.</i>
2		<b>Booker T. Washington</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Thomas Amper  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 2 Educational Value: 5 Points: 2 (5-6 yrs), 1 (7-8 yrs)	I love the story of Booker T. Washington. This biography is wonderful for a lower level book. Although written in a story format, the book is not a fictionalized account.
2		<b>Childhood of Famous Americans</b> <i>Ready-to-Read Series</i>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Various  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 1 (5-6 yrs), 1 point for 3 books (7 yrs)	This series features big print, nice color illustrations, great educational value, and great moral lessons. I do not approve of all the books in the series, but I have read and approved of the following books in this series, which are all a part of the reading program: <i>Betsy Ross and the Silver Thimble, Abe Lincoln and the Muddy Pig, Thomas Edison to the Rescue, Davy Crockett: A Life on the Frontier, A Lesson for Martin Luther King Jr., Albert Einstein, Clara Barton, Sojourner Truth, Abigail Adams.</i> Not recommended: <del><i>Paul Revere and the Bell Ringers, George Washington's First Victory.</i></del>




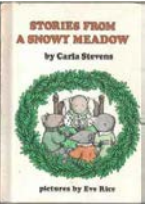
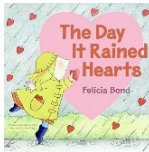
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
2		<b>Christian Liberty Nature Reader Book 2</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Julia Wright Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 10 (5-7 yrs), 8 (8 yrs), 5 (9 yrs)	This fantastic nonfiction series is used by many homeschool families, including mine. The writing is delightful and fun, the content extremely educational and interesting, and the vocabulary rich and varied. The book also beautifully connects the wonders of nature with God.
2 ★ Aud		<b>Daniel's Duck</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 3 (5-6 yrs), 2 (7-8 yrs)	Set in rural Tennessee during early America, this gentle book has a wonderful message. The 64-page book features very large print.
2 ★		<b>Flicka, Ricka, Dicka (SERIES)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Maj Lindman Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 1 for 2 books (5-7 yrs)	I love this series about three Swedish triplets from the early 1900s. These books were first printed in English in the 1930s. The illustrations are delightful and nostalgic, and the writing is great for early reading books. I love how the books support high character and strong, loving family relationships. All books in the series are a part of the reading program for the same number of points each and go in no particular order.
2 ★		<b>Greg's Microscope</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Millicent E. Selsam Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 2 (5-7 yrs), 1 (8-9 yrs)	This is a great little story, originally published in 1963, that displays strong family relationships and respectful behavior, encourages love of learning, and teaches about science.
2		<b>Harry Books</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Gene Zion Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 2 Educational Value: 0 Points: 3 for 1 (5-7 yrs)	My children love the Harry books. They are funny and have wonderful illustrations. While there are no strong moral messages, there is no worrisome content.

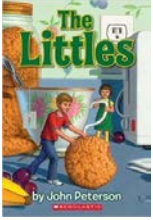
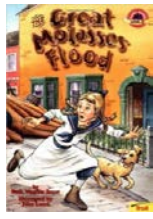
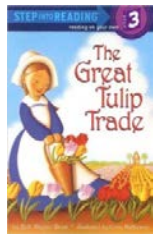
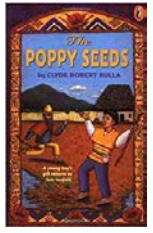

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
2 ★		<b>Imagination Station</b> <i>(SERIES)</i>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Marianne Hering &amp; Paul McCusker</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 3 (7-8 yrs)	The Imagination Station books, published by Focus on the Family, are especially great for reluctant readers who need easier reading while still having wholesome, worthwhile, and fun stories. For a Level 2 book, the writing is good but not great. God, prayer, the Bible, and Christian principles such as mercy and kindness are displayed. I also like the history that is learned through reading the books. I don't recommend these books as read-alouds because the writing is so simple. All books in the series count for the same points in this reading program. After the first book, the books do not need to be read in order. This is a great alternative for parents who feel uneasy about The Magic Tree House series.
2		<b>Jesse Owens</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Laurie Calkhoven</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 2.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 2 (5-7 yrs), 1 (8-10 yrs)	Fantastic full-color illustrations accompany this 47-page book for Level 2 readers that tells the inspiring story of track and field star Jesse Owens.
2 ★		<b>Katie Books (SERIES)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>James Mayhew</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 1 (7-8 yrs) for any SET OF 2	James Mayhew has written and illustrated a series of fiction storybooks (not chapter books) where the main character, Katie, learns about classical art and artists, natural history museums, and historical locations. These books are well-written and very fun. Also, the illustrations are wonderful. My 7-year old loved these books. Katie is polite, has a love of learning, and has a sweet relationship with her grandmother who takes her on her adventures. There are 13 books in the series (they do not go in any particular order): <i>Katie and the Bathers</i> , <i>Katie and the Dinosaurs</i> , <i>Katie and the Starry Night</i> , <i>Katie and the Mona Lisa</i> , <i>Katie and the Sunflowers</i> , <i>Katie in London</i> , <i>Katie and the Impressionists</i> , <i>Katie's Picture Show</i> , <i>Katie and the Spanish Princess</i> , <i>Katie and the Waterlily Pond</i> , <i>Katie in Scotland</i> , <i>Katie and the British Artists</i> , <i>Katie's London Christmas</i> .
2 ★		<b>Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	<b>Peter and Connie Roop</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 4 (5-6 yrs), 3 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	Abbie's tale of courage and endurance is based on the true story of an 1856 storm off the coast of Maine. This book has high educational value. The writing includes a lot of simple sentences, but it does contain strong verbs and some literary devices such as personification. The book is 40 pages long with large print and pictures on every page. This is a quick but worthwhile read for early readers.


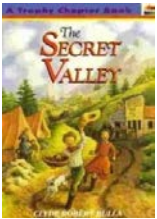
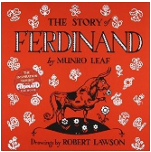
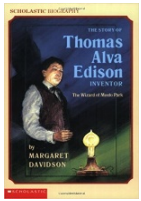
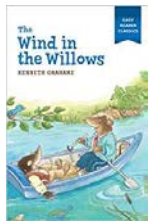
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
2 ★		<b>Little Golden Books</b> <i>(CLASSIC Series)</i>  <i>Fiction</i>	Various  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> .5 each book (5-7 yrs)	My children and I adore the classic Little Golden Books. The illustrations are delightful; the stories have high moral value as they support strong family relationships, kindness, and the innocence and imagination of childhood; and the literary value is great for the reading level. The classic series includes these books, which are part of the reading program: <i>Nurse Nancy, Little Mommy, Wonders of Nature, The Poky Little Puppy, The Three Little Bears, The Little Red Caboose, The Little Red Hen, The Happy Man and His Dump Truck, The Fire Engine, Good Night, Little Bear, The Gingerbread Man, The Fuzzy Duckling, Baby Farm Animals, A Day at the Seashore, Doctor Dan, Daddies, Baby Listens, The Bunny Book, I Am a Bunny, Home for a Bunny, Animal Orchestra, The Friendly Book, The Sailor Dog, Two Little Gardeners, The House that Jack Built, The Jolly Barnyard, Tawny, Scrawny Lion, Tootle, the Seven Little Postmen, Little Galoshes.</i>
2		<b>Lola Books</b> <i>(SERIES)</i>  <i>Fiction</i>	Anna McQuinn  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> 1 for 3 books (5-7 yrs)	These easy-to-read books have lovely illustrations and support strong family values.
2		<b>Margaret Bloy Graham Books</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Margaret Bloy Graham  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 1 (5 yrs), 1 for 2 books (6-7 yrs)	Margaret Bloy Graham both wrote and illustrated cute and appropriate stories for children. The stories don't have strong moral messages, but are clean and clever. Children will most likely enjoy the illustrations and fun, humorous stories. The following Level 2 books by Graham are approved for this reading program: <i>Be Nice to Spiders, Benjy's Boat Trip, Benjy and his friend Fifi, Benjy and the Barking Bird, Benjy's Dog House.</i>
2		<b>Margaret Wise Brown Level 2 Books</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Margaret Wise Brown  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> .5 each book (ages 6-7)	I absolutely love the books of Margaret Wise Brown. The following books are my favorite Margaret Wise Brown Level 2 books in order of my favorite (#1 being my most favorite). All of these books feature wonderful illustrations (the kind children can sit and explore) and beautiful writing that supports a love of nature: #1: <i>Bunny's Noisy Book</i> ; #2: <i>Sunshine and Snowballs</i> ; #3 <i>Big Red Barn</i> ; #4: <i>Sleep Tight, Sleepy Bear</i> ; #5: <i>North, South, East, West</i> ; #6: <i>Little Fur Family</i> ; #7: <i>Good Night, Little One</i> ; #8: <i>The Diggers</i> ; #9: <i>All the Families</i> , #10: <i>The Country Noisy Book</i> , #11: <i>Manners</i> , #12: <i>Seven Little Postmen</i> .
2		<b>Mercer Mayer Level 2 Books</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Mercer Mayer  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> .5 each book (ages 6-7)	Many Mercer Mayer books are sweet, fun stories with fantastic illustrations, but some contain mild, inappropriate illustrations or messages, so use caution. The following Level 2 reading books are considered completely wholesome and appropriate and are a part of the reading program: <i>Grandma, Grandpa, and Me; Just a Day at the Pond; Just a School Project; Just a Snowman; Just Grandma and Me; Just Me and My Dad; Just Me and My Mom; Just Me and My Puppy; The Best Show and Share; The Best Teacher Ever; The Best Yard Sale; We All Need Forgiveness; You Go First.</i>



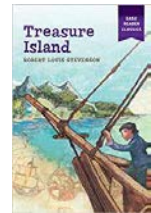
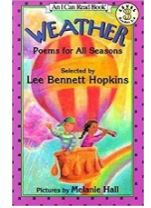

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
2		<b>Molly's Pilgrim</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Barbara Cohen  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 3 (5-7 yrs), 2 (8-9 yrs)	This short book (28 pages) tells the story of a young Russian Jewish immigrant, Molly, who is made fun of when she comes to America because she talks and dresses differently than the other kids. When Molly's teacher asks each student to make a Thanksgiving pilgrim, Molly does not even know what Thanksgiving is. But it is Molly, in the end, who teaches her class a sweet lesson about the true meaning of Thanksgiving.
2 ★		<b>Oliver and Amanda</b> <i>(SERIES)</i> <i>Fiction</i>	Jean Van Leeuwen  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> 1 point for two books (7-8 yrs)	I am impressed with this series of early readers. The literary merit is good for the age level, and the moral value is very high. These stories have very sweet, gentle illustrations and stories that support strong family relationships, imagination, high character, and the joy of childhood. After finding this series, I realized that I had already recommended other books by Jean Van Leeuwen that are for older children. I really like her books (although I don't recommend all of them). I recommend any of the <i>Amanda Pig</i> or <i>Oliver Pig</i> books by Jean Van Leeuwen.
2		<b>Penny Books</b> <i>(SERIES)</i> <i>Fiction</i>	Kevin Henkes  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 0 <b>Points:</b> .5 (5-6 yrs)	These short books are cute and wholesome and contain nice messages. The series includes <i>Penny and Her Song</i> , <i>Penny and Her Doll</i> , <i>Penny and Her Marble</i> .
2		<b>Poppleton</b> <i>(SERIES)</i> <i>Fiction</i>	Cynthia Rylant  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 0 <b>Points:</b> 1 (5 yrs), 1 for 2 books (6-7 yrs)	I have recommended most but not all of Cynthia Rylant's books. The Poppleton series is wholesome and funny with some good messages. The series was a particular favorite of my five-year-old son. We had fun laughing out loud while reading some of the books in the series, and we especially enjoyed <i>Poppleton in Winter</i> . All Poppleton books are part of the reading program for the same number of points.
2 ★		<b>Prairie School</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Avi  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 2.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 5 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9+)	This book gives insights into life on the prairie during the 1800s. As a young boy, Noah gains an appreciation for learning and education from his aunt. This book is packed with educational and moral merit. Kids should find the story interesting.

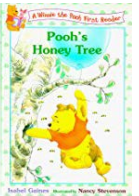
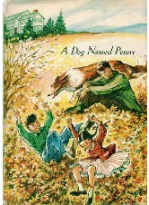

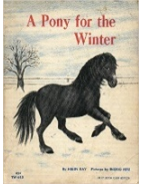
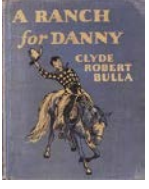
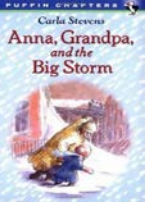




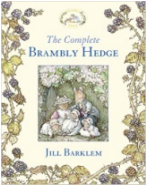

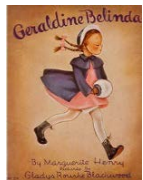

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
2		<b>Richard Scarry Level 2 Books</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Richard Scarry  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2.5 Points: .5 each book (6-7 yrs)	While the books do not focus on character-building messages, they do promote respectful behavior. Scarry's books are usually between a reading Level 2 or 3. The following Level 2 readings books are part of the reading program: <i>The Early Bird; Pie Rats Ahoy;; Billy Dog's Bad Day; Watch Your Step Mr. Rabbit; Cars and Trucks and Things That Go; The Best Mistake Ever; Please and Thank You Book; What Do People Do All Day?; A Day at the Fire Station; Good Night, Little Bear.</i>
2		<b>Silver</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Gloria Whelan  Moral Merit: 1 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 3 Points: 4 (5-7 yrs), 2 (8-9 yrs), 1 (10-11 yrs)	This is a simple but nice book about a 9-year-old girl living in Alaska whose father breeds and races huskies. Rachel's father gives her a runt puppy, and she names him Silver. When the puppy is stolen by a wolf, Rachel sets off on her own to find the pup.
2 ★		<b>Snipp, Snapp, Snurr (SERIES)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Maj Lindman  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 1 (5 yrs), 1 for 2 books (6-7 yrs)	I can't recommend this series highly enough! Snipp, Snapp, and Snurr are three interesting, cheerful, respectful, and kind brothers living in Sweden in the early 1900s. These books were first printed in English in the 1930s. When this review was written, the majority of the books in this series were back in print. The illustrations are delightful and nostalgic, and the writing is great for early reading books. The stories are wholesome and entertaining, and they strongly support high character and strong, loving family relationships. Girls will love this series as much as boys. All books in the series are a part of the reading program for the same number of points each and go in no particular order.
2 📖		<b>Stories from a Snowy Meadow</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Carla Stevens  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 1 Points: 3 (5-6 yrs), 1 (7-8 yrs)	This short chapter book (48 pages with large print) is a cute story about a mole, a mouse, and a shrew that love to serve and visit Old Vole and listen to her exciting and funny stories. I love the gentle messages in the book and the adorable illustrations. Old Vole dies at the end of the book, and I love the beautiful way her death is treated as her friends remember her life with gratitude. The book leaves you feeling happy.
2		<b>The Day It Rained Hearts</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Felicia Bond  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 0 Points: .5 (5-6 yrs)	This short book is adorable. One day it rains hearts, and Cornelia catches them. She knows exactly what to do with them.







Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
2		<b>The Littles (SERIES)</b> <i>Fiction</i> ▲	John Peterson  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 2.5 Educational Value: 0 Points: 5 (5-6 yrs), 3 (7-8 yrs), 1 (9-10 yrs)	This is a wholesome, fun fiction/fantasy series that offers little educational value and only fair literary merit. However, the books are clean and promote respectful behavior, as well as principles such as honesty, courage, and family loyalty. The stories are imaginative and creative. Because the writing is on a lower level, I suggest these books only for beginning or reluctant readers.
2 ★		<b>The Great Molasses Flood</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Beth Wagner Brust  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 2 (5-6 yrs), 1 (7-8 yrs)	This is an interesting and wholesome story based on the Great Molasses Flood of 1919 in Boston. This 48-page book has large print and nice color pictures on each page. I loved the moral message that goes along with the story and the way the father is portrayed so kindly.
2 ★		<b>The Great Tulip Trade</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Beth Wagner Brust  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 1 (5-8 yrs)	This 48-page book has large print and adorable color pictures on each page. The literary and educational value is great for the reading level. The story is sweet and has a nice message. My children loved this book and have reread it several times.
2 ★ Aud		<b>The Poppy Seeds</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	This is only a Level 2 book, but it held my interest as an adult, and I loved it! The official description reads, "In Pablo's small Mexican village, the only source of fresh water is jealously guarded by a bitter old man. His high walls keep out everyone—except Pablo, who bravely goes there one day to plant some poppy seeds. The flowers that bloom beside his stream bring beauty to the old man, and the precious gift of water to the village." The story is engaging and the messages are beautiful. I listened to the Audible version and thought it was well done.
2		<b>The Princess in Black (SERIES)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Shannon Hale and Dean Hale  Moral Merit: 0 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 0 Points: 1 (5 yrs), 1 for 2 books (6-7 yrs)	I found nothing objectionable in this series of fun books. Although it does not really have any moral and educational value, the literary value for the age level is high, and the story and illustrations inspire the imagination.

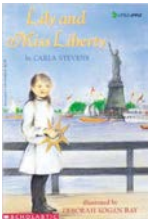
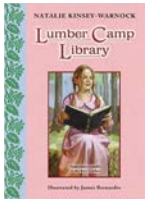
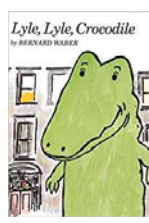

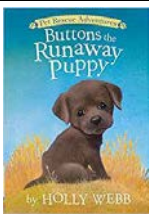
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
2		<b>The Secret Three</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Mildred Myrick</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 2</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 1</b> <b>Points: 2 (5-7 yrs), 1 (8-9 yrs)</b>	This is a fun and wholesome book for younger readers. This 64-page book with large print and lovely illustrations is about two friends who live by the beach. One day they find a bottle with a secret message in it. This fun story contains no objectionable material and supports good family relationships and friendship. It would be a great book for reluctant readers.
2 ★		<b>The Secret Valley</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Clyde Robert Bulla</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Points: 7 (5-6 yrs), 6 (7 yrs), 4 (8-9 yrs)</b>	Clyde Robert Bulla is the author of more than 50 books for children. <i>The Secret Valley</i> tells the adventures of the Davis family as they travel from Missouri to seek their fortune in California during the Gold Rush. Children will learn a lot about the time period as they read this wholesome, sweet story that ends with the family discovering "a different kind of gold." My seven-year-old daughter loved this book so much, she asked if there was a sequel. This book is 100 pages, the print is large, and illustrations are included.
2 Aud		<b>The Story of Ferdinand</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Munro Leaf</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 2</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 2</b> <b>Points: 1 (5-7 yrs)</b>	This story does not have a strong message, but it is absolutely adorable. I also love the charming illustrations. This 32-page book is a fun, cute book for Level 2 readers.
2		<b>The Story of Thomas Alva Edison</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Margaret Davidson</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 4.5</b> <b>Points: 4 (5-7 yrs), 2 (8-9 yrs)</b>	This 64-page book tells the simple but interesting story of Thomas Edison, perfect for Level 2 readers. Because the story is so simple, it may not hold the interest of children reading at Level 3 or above. The book is clean and worthwhile. The print is big, and great black and white illustrations are on most pages.
2		<b>The Wind in the Willows (Easy Reader Classics)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Kenneth Grahame</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 2.5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 2</b> <b>Educational Value: 0</b> <b>Points: 3 (5-7 yrs), 2 (8-9 yrs)</b>	This 184-page book is good for reluctant readers, featuring wonderful illustrations and large print.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
2		<b>The White Stallion</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Elizabeth Shub  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 2 Points: 2 (5-7 yrs), 1 (8-9 yrs)	Gretchen strays from her wagon train in 1845 and is helped by a white stallion. This wholesome book is very short but contains good writing and elevated vocabulary for the age level.
2		<b>Three Dollar Mule</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 7 (5-7 yrs), 5 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10 yrs)	The back cover reads: "Don had to buy the sorry-looking mule. Its owner was beating it . . . But Don's father doesn't want to keep the mule . . . This story combines enthusiasm for animals with realistic detail of ranch life." Even though this is a Level 2 book, it pulled me into the story as an adult. This is the kind of gentle, character-building book that I believe young children should be reading in place of thrilling, fast-paced books only about self-centered fun and adventure. The book is 94 pages long with large font and illustrations on many of the pages.
2		<b>Treasure Island (Easy Reader Classics)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Adapted from Robert Louis Stevenson's Original Book  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit for Level: 2 Educational Value: 0 Points: 3 (5-7 yrs), 2 (8-9 yrs)	This 184-page book is good for reluctant readers, featuring wonderful illustrations and large print, with only a few sentences on each page.
2		<b>Weather: Poems for All Seasons</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Lee Bennett Hopkins  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 1 Points: 2 (5-7 yrs), 1 (8-9 yrs)	This book of simple but wholesome poems has wonderful illustrations and focuses on nature.
2		<b>White Sails to China</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 3.5 Points: 6 (5-7 yrs), 4 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10 yrs)	This book is out of print (as of the date of this review), but used copies can be obtained. This is a simple story about a boy named Nat who lives with his two old aunts in Salem. Nat longs to sail away to China, but in the end learns a lesson about choosing the right and choosing trustworthy friends. This is not my favorite Clyde Robert Bulla book, but it is a nice read with good educational value for the reading level.

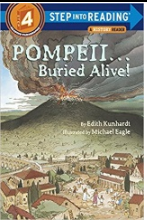

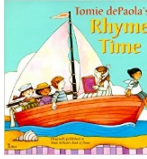
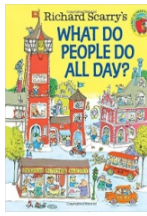
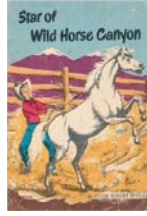
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
2		<b>Winnie the Pooh First Reader</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Isabel Gaines  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 0 Points: .5 each book (6-7 yrs)	There are over a dozen of these readers. If you are looking for Level 2 books that are easier, these are great. In fact, they are more like Level 1 but are included here since they are close to Level 2, and this list does not include Level 1. I have not reviewed them all, but they seem to be wholesome, gentle stories. The illustrations are fantastic.
3 ★ 📍		<b>A Dog Named Penny</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 7 (5-7 yrs), 5 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10 yrs)	I absolutely loved this book! The story and the illustrations are adorable. In the 1950s, two siblings and their beloved, but very poor, grandmother with whom they live. The two children discover and fall in love with a dog that they think is a stray. However, their story takes an unexpected turn when they find the owner of the dog.
3		<b>A Grain of Rice</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Helena Clare Pittman  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (5-7 yrs), 3 (8-9 yrs), 1 (10 yrs)	The official description for this book reads: "A clever, cheerful, hard-working farmer's son wins the hand of a Chinese princess by outwitting her father, the Emperor, who treasures his daughter more than all the rice in China." This story is short, but is written well and contains lessons about hard work and exponential growth. The large print and illustrations are nice for early readers.
3 📍		<b>A Pony for the Winter</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Helen Kay  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 2 Points: 4 (5-7 yrs), 2 (8-9 yrs)	This is a very simple story about a girl who desperately wants a pony. The only way she can get one is to board it over the winter and take care of it. The illustrations are lovely. This is not a powerful or deeply engaging book, but it is gentle and wholesome.
3 📍		<b>A Ranch for Danny</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 7 (5-7 yrs), 5 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10 yrs)	This is another great book by Clyde Bulla. The story is engaging yet gentle. The black-and-white illustrations are charming. This book is out of print and hard to find.
3		<b>Anna, Grandpa, and the Big Storm</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Carla Stevens  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9 yrs)	This sweet story is an example of how even early reading material can be delightful. While many books for early readers today use simple sentences stripped of descriptive language and varied vocabulary, this book contains rich language, including personification, similes, sensory language, imagery, varied sentence structures, and a diverse vocabulary. The book also contains high moral and literary value. The 61-page book contains large print and cute black-and-white illustrations.


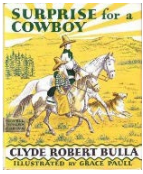


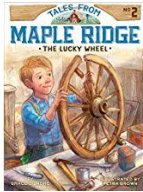

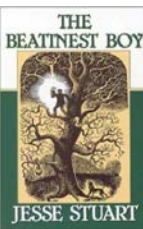
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
3		<b>Best Friends Forever!</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	Amy Shields  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 3.5 Points: 3 (5-6 yrs), 2 (7-8 yrs), 1 (9+)	This set of cute and true stories about animals that helped one another is a great nonfiction read for younger readers. I did not find any inappropriate content, and it was engaging and educational. This 110-page book features large print and interesting photographs.
3 ★		<b>Billy and Blaze (SERIES)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	C.W. Anderson  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 1 (5-6 yrs), 1 for 2 books (7-8 yrs)	This is a wonderful, timeless series about a thoughtful, kind boy and his beloved horse, Blaze, who love to go exploring in the countryside. Wholesome, fun stories full of adventure, beautiful black-and-white illustrations, and great writing for the reading level make these books hard to beat! There are 11 books in this series. Although only eight are currently in print, they all count as part of the reading program: <i>Billy and Blaze (1936)</i> , <i>Blaze and the Gypsies (1937)</i> , <i>Blaze and the Forest Fire (1938)</i> , <i>Blaze Finds the Trail (1950)</i> , <i>Blaze and Thunderbolt (1955)</i> , <i>Blaze and the Mountain Lion (1959)</i> , <i>Blaze and the Indian Cave (1964)</i> , <i>Blaze and the Lost Quarry (1966)</i> , <i>Blaze and the Gray Spotted Pony (1968)</i> , <i>Blaze Shows the Way (1969)</i> , <i>Blaze Finds Forgotten Roads (1970)</i> .
3		<b>Brambly Hedge (SERIES)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Jill Barklem  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 0 Points: 3 (7-9 yrs) for any SET OF 4 BOOKS	This series of short books is just clean, creative fun as it follows the little adventures of the wood mice that live in Bramberly Hedge. The illustrations are imaginative and delightful—the detailed, creative kind that make kids want to study them. The books in the series are out of print, but you can purchase used books on Amazon.com or thriftbooks.com or check them out at a library: <i>Spring Story</i> , <i>Summer Story</i> , <i>Autumn Story</i> , <i>Winter Story</i> , <i>The Secret Staircase</i> , <i>The High Hills</i> , <i>Sea Story</i> , <i>Poppy's Babies</i> .
3		<b>Eagle Feather</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit: 2.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (5-7 yrs), 4 (8-9 yrs)	This 87-page chapter book features large print and black-and-white pictures every 2-3 pages. Readers will learn about life on a Navajo Indian reservation. The official description reads: "Eagle Feather owes a debt to his father's cousin, and must work it off during the summer. His father's cousin mistreats him, and finally Eagle Feather can bear it no longer and runs away. Can the eagle feather he finds along the way really give him the bravery to endure the long and hungry journey?"
3 ★		<b>Geraldine Belinda</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Marguerite Henry  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 3 (5-7 yrs), 2 (8 yrs), 1 (9-10 yrs)	This book is a complete treasure—everything that you look for in a good and beautiful book. One day when Geraldine Belinda decides to go to the store, she learns lessons about friendship and kindness.
3 ★		<b>Ghost Town Treasure</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 6 (5-7 yrs), 5 (8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs)	This book, published in 1957, is a fun and wholesome adventure. Clyde Robert Bulla has a great way of writing well for a lower reading level. This book teaches about the Gold Rush and how some old Western towns turned into ghost towns. I found nothing objectionable in the book. I liked how the adults were portrayed so positively and the children were respectful. The story is interesting and engaging.


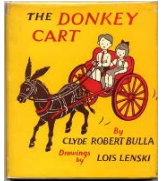
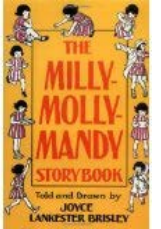

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
3		<b><i>I Have a Dream</i></b>  <i>Biography</i>	Margaret Davidson  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs)	If you are looking for a biography of Martin Luther King for younger children, this is a great choice. This well-documented book is both informative, inspiring, and interesting. I feel that the information was fair, clear, character building, and well organized.
3		<b><i>John Billington Friend of Squanto</i></b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 2 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	Boys who like history will especially enjoy this book, which is based on a true story. Clyde Robert Bulla is a great writer, but this book, in places, starts many sentences in a row with the pronoun "he." Besides that, it is nice writing with high educational value and a good message.
3		<b><i>Johnny Hong of Chinatown</i></b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 3 Points: 3 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	This 69-page book with large print and nice black-and-white illustrations on every two pages or so, is a gentle story that takes place in Chinatown. Johnny had never seen much of the city and did not have friends. When he was 6 years old, he had been very ill of a fever, and had been house ridden for a long time. When he is finally able to venture out, we follow some of his adventures in the city and see him make friends. This is a cute story, but it is slow moving and probably not for reluctant readers.
3		<b><i>Kate Shelley and the Midnight Express</i></b>  <i>Biography</i>	Margaret K. Wetterer  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 2 (7-8 yrs), 1 (9-10 yrs)	This is a wonderful, true story about a courageous girl who prevents a train wreck. I love the messages about prayer, selflessness, and courage. This short book also has great educational value.
3		<b><i>Katherine Johnson</i></b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	Thea Feldman  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 2 Educational Value: 5 Points: 1 (5-10 yrs)	This story is very simple and lacks descriptive language, but it is worthwhile. The story of Katherine Johnson is inspiring. She had a brilliant mind and worked hard, leading her to the opportunity of working for NASA's space program in the early 1950s.
3		<b><i>Lighthouse Family (SERIES)</i></b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Cynthia Rylant  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 2 Points: 4 (7-9 yrs)	This series of short books is just clean, creative fun as it follows the little adventures of a cat and a dog who maintain a lighthouse and have adopted some baby mice that were shipwrecked on their shore. I have read all the books in the series (with my five-year-old son), and I found nothing objectionable. The stories have some good messages. The writing is great. After the first book, <i>The Storm</i> , the books don't need to go in any specific order. All books in this series are a part of the reading program and are worth the same number of points: <i>The Storm</i> , <i>The Turtle</i> , <i>The Whale</i> , <i>The Eagle</i> , <i>The Octopus</i> .




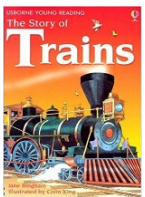
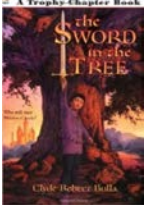
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
3		<b>Lily and Miss Liberty</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Carla Stevens  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	This fun and educational book teaches about the origination of the Statue of Liberty. It is a cute story that includes messages of hard work, perseverance, and loyalty. The book is 55 pages long with larger print and black-and-white illustrations on every 2-4 pages. This list recommends a few other books by Carla Stevens.
3 ★		<b>Lumber Camp Library</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Natalie Kinsey-Warnock  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 7 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-11 yrs), 2 (12+)	<i>Note: This book is a part of The Good &amp; the Beautiful Level 2 Language Arts Course (to be read together with parent).</i> Young Ruby Sawyer has lived her whole life in a Vermont lumber camp. When her wonderful father is killed in an accident, life changes for Ruby's family. This is a beautiful story of family, love, kindness, hard work, and love of learning. The literary, moral, educational, and entertainment value are all fantastic!
3		<b>Lyle the Crocodile</b> <i>(SERIES)</i> <i>Fiction</i>	Bernard Waber  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 1 for every 3 books (5-7 yrs), 1 for every 4 books (8 yrs)	My family and I love this humorous and wholesome series about a loveable crocodile and the family with whom he lives. We have read about 6 of the 11 books in the series and have not found anything objectionable.
3		<b>Margaret Wise Brown Level 3 Books</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Margaret Wise Brown  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 1 Points: .5 each book (ages 6-9 yrs)	I absolutely love the books of Margaret Wise Brown. The following books are my favorite Margaret Wise Brown Level 3 books in order of my favorite (#1 being my most favorite); all of these books feature wonderful illustrations (the kind children can sit and explore) and beautiful writing supporting a love of nature and imagination: #1: <i>The Noon Balloon</i> ; #2: <i>The Moon Shines Down</i> ; #3: <i>The Little Fisherman</i> ; #4: <i>Give Yourself to the Rain</i> ; #5: <i>Sneakers, the Seaside Cat</i> .
3 #Aud		<b>Pet Rescue Adventures (SERIES)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Holly Webb  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 1 Points: 3 (7-8 yrs), 1 (9-11 yrs)	I was delighted to find a modern book series that was completely clean and wholesome. The books I have reviewed in this series so far have been simple, sweet stories that support respectable behavior. The books go in this order: <i>Buttons the Runaway Puppy</i> , <i>The Kitten Nobody Wanted</i> , <i>The Rescued Puppy</i> , and <i>Lost in the Snow</i> . More books will be added to this list as they are reviewed.

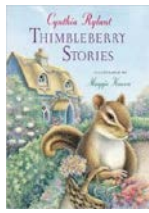

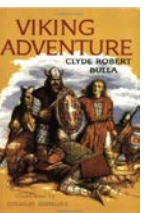
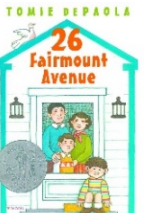



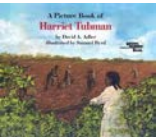

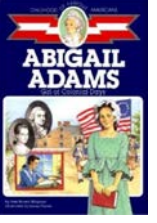
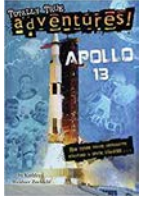
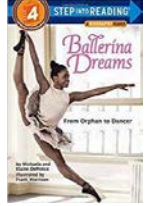
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
3		<b>Pompeii . . . Buried Alive!</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Edith Kunhardt  Moral Merit: 1 Literary Merit for Level: 2 Educational Value: 5 Points: 1 (ages 5-12)	Even as an adult, I enjoyed this Level 3 book because it is packed with educational value and great illustrations. Learn about volcano and what happened to the ancient city of Pompeii. Be aware that everyone in the city is buried under the volcanoes and dies, but it is not treated descriptively. Also, there are a couple pictures of skeletons when the story talks about how the ancient, buried city was rediscovered.
3		<b>Ranger in Time (SERIES)</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Kate Messner  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 1.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (5-7 yrs), 3 (8-10 yrs)	I have reviewed only the first book in this series: <i>Rescue on the Oregon Trail</i> . I found no objectionable content or language. The writing and entertainment value is good but not great. The educational value is high. The book is about a time-traveling golden retriever who has been trained as a rescue dog. The book is simple. Advanced readers and older children would probably like books with more detail and a more complex, interesting plot.
3		<b>Rhyme Time</b>  <i>Poetry</i>	Tomie dePaola  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2.5 Points: 1 (ages 5-8 yrs)	This wonderfully illustrated book contains a great selection of poems by classic authors and Tomie dePaola.
3		<b>Richard Scarry Level 3 Books</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Richard Scarry  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2.5 Points: .5 each book (ages 6-7 yrs)	While the books do not focus on character-building messages, the books do promote respectful behavior. Scarry's books are usually a reading Level 2 or 3. The following level 3 reading books are part of the reading program: <i>Busytown Race Day; A Day at the Airport; Balloons and Other Fun Things, X-Rays and Other Fun Things; Mr. Fixit's Magnet Machine; Busy, Busy World; Funniest Storybook Ever; The Adventures of Lowly Worm; Great Big Schoolhouse.</i>
3		<b>Star of Wild Horse Canyon</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	This is a sweet, simple story for earlier readers about a boy and his wild horse. The writing is nice, with great descriptions of nature. The reader learns about life at an earlier period of American history. I also like the kind and respectful interactions between family members, which is in contrast to many popular children's books today where family is excluded or portrayed negatively. I also liked the message of forgiveness at the end of the book.

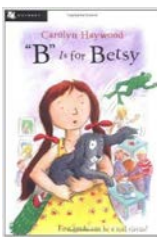


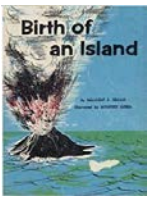
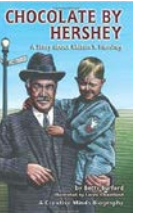
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
3 		<b>Surprise for a Cowboy</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	This is another great book by Clyde Bulla. The story is engaging yet gentle. The black-and-white illustrations are charming. This book is out of print and hard to find.
3		<b>Take a Giant Leap, Neil Armstrong</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Peter Roop and Connie Roop  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4.5 Points: 6 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	I was really impressed with this book. The literary, educational, and moral merit are all high. Many lessons about high character are taught, and strong families are portrayed. The story is also very interesting and should easily keep the attention of children. You can't go wrong with this book! However, I don't recommend Roop's <i>Let's Fly Wilbur and Orville!</i> due to some wrong behaviors made to seem acceptable.
3 		<b>Tales from Maple Ridge (SERIES)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Grace Gilmore  Moral Value: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 1 (5-10)	I am thrilled to add the <i>Tales from Maple Ridge</i> series to this book list! Each book is around 120-140 pages with large print and very charming black-and-white illustrations on every page. The books center around Logan Pryce, an eight-year-old boy who lives in Maple Ridge, Illinois, in the 1890s. Logan's gentle, yet fun adventures have wonderful educational and moral value. There are six books in the series.
3 		<b>The Beatinest Boy</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Jesse Stuart  Moral Value: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	<b>Note: This book is part of <i>The Good and the Beautiful Level 2 Language Arts Course</i>.</b> This short, heartwarming book brings the old days to life as it strongly supports love of family, thoughtfulness, kindness to animals, and speaking encouragingly. Boys will especially like the coon hunting, tree climbing, and nursing back to health an abandoned hound puppy. Although this is not a fast-paced, instantly entertaining adventure, it is a thoroughly enjoyable and fun book that reinforces important values and teaches about life in early America. The author, Jesse Stuart, who died in 1904, led an extraordinary life and published over 36 books. Note: "Beatinest" means "most remarkable or unusual."

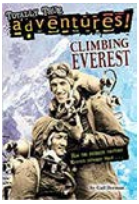

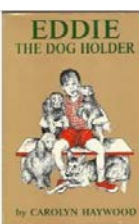
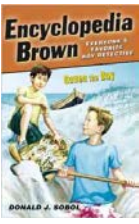
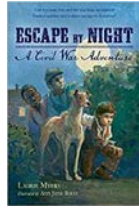
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
3 Aud		<b>The Boxcar Children</b> <i>(SERIES)</i>  <i>Fiction</i>	Gertrude Chandler Warner  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 6 (5-6 yrs), 4 (7-8 yrs), 1 (9-10 yrs)	<i>The Boxcar Children</i> is a fun series originally published in 1942 about a group of orphaned siblings who are trying to stay together and eventually find their loving grandfather. The characters have integrity and kindness and are hard-working. I read the first two books in the series and found nothing objectionable in them, other than they occasionally mention activities they do on Sundays, but they never mention going to church. The first 19 books in the series were written by the original author and are a part of the summer reading program: <i>The Boxcar Children #1, Surprise Island #2, The Yellow House Mystery #3, Mystery Ranch #4, Mike's Mystery #5, Blue Bay Mystery #6, The Woodshed Mystery #7, The Lighthouse Mystery #8, Mountain Top Mystery #9, Schoolhouse Mystery #10, Caboose Mystery #11, Houseboat Mystery #12, Snowbound Mystery #13, Tree House Mystery #14 (one parent told me she was concerned about the "glaring lack of parental involvement" in this book), Bicycle Mystery #15, Mystery in the Sand #16, Mystery Behind the Wall #17, Bus Station Mystery #18, Benny Uncovers a Mystery #19.</i> Note that there are many more books in the series beyond these 19, written by other authors, that I have not reviewed and that others have said might contain less than desirable behavior. Also, note that these books are a Level 3 reading level, so they don't offer challenging reading for readers beyond that level.
3 ★ 📖		<b>The Donkey Cart</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 5 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	I read this book with my 7-year-old son, and we both loved it. Two siblings spend time at their uncle's farm having adventures and befriending an old man. This wonderful book supports high character and strong family bonds. The illustrations are lovely.
3 ★		<b>The Milly-Molly-Mandy Storybook</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Joyce Lankester Brisley  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 2 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9 yrs), 3 (10 yrs)	This is one of my favorite Level 3 books. The book, which first appeared in 1928, is 224 pages long with medium-sized print and adorable black-and-white illustrations every 2-3 pages. The book is beautifully written and includes a great vocabulary, but can still be read by Level 3 readers. Milly-Molly-Mandy is a polite, sweet little girl who lives with her family in a "nice white cottage with a thatched roof." The 21 stories included in this book are interesting, wholesome, and even funny at times. This delightful book gives us a peek into the past and into the innocence and joy of childhood. The book supports strong families, cheerfulness, optimism, obedience, kindness, love of nature, imagination and creativity, and industry. This book would be a great read-aloud for 4-8 year olds, or a read-alone for Level 3-5 readers.
3		<b>The Night Crossing</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Karen Ackerman  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 2.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 5 (6-7 yrs), 3 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10-11 yrs)	This 56-page book has large print and black-and-white illustrations every few pages. It is 1938 during the Holocaust, and Jewish families are no longer safe in Austria, where young Clara lives. When Clara and her family leave, she picks two of her favorite dolls to bring with her—dolls her grandmother had carried with her when she left Russia many years ago. Little does Clara know that the dolls will play an important role in her family's escape.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
3 ★ 📖		<b>The Plain Princess</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Phyllis McGinley  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 0 Points: 5 (6-7 yrs), 3 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10-11 yrs)	This beautiful fairytale-like story was a wonderful find! The book features some of the best writing for the age level I have read. The book is full of humor, wonderful description, and powerful messages. The story begins as the king sends out a proclamation trying to find someone who can help his daughter be more beautiful. Everyone at the palace is skeptical at first when a poor widow claims she can fulfill the task. But the king and queen finally agree, and a wonderful story unfolds.
3		<b>The Secret Garden (Little Golden Book)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Frances Gilbert  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 1 Points: .5 (5-7 yrs)	Released in 2017, this retelling of the classic book <i>The Secret Garden</i> is just right for Level 3 readers. The illustrations are wonderful.
3		<b>The Story of Diva and Flea</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Mo Willems  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 1 Points: 7 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-11 yrs), 2 (12+)	This cute story features good writing. The book is 65 pages with large print and adorable illustrations on about half of the pages. While there are no really strong moral messages, the book is wholesome and promotes friendship.
3 ★		<b>The Story of Trains</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	Jane Bingham  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 2 (5-7), 1 (8-11)	Appealing, full-color illustrations, large print, and interesting information make this worthwhile book about the history of trains a great read for Level 3 readers.
3		<b>The Sword in the Tree</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (5-7 yrs), 4 (8-9)	This 103-page historical fiction book is a great introduction into the Middle Ages. The story is exciting and covers the dangers of the time without being too scary. This has good descriptive writing for the level. For example: "A mist had come in from the sea. Far away were roofs and towers rising out of the mist. They shone red and gold in the evening light." Overall, this is a great book for younger readers.


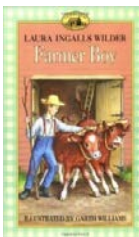
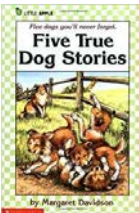

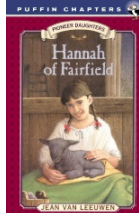
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
3 ★		<b>Thimbleberry Stories</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Cynthia Rylant  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 0 <b>Points:</b> 3 (7-9 yrs)	My seven-year-old daughter adored this book. Scholastic says: "Nigel Chipmunk lives in a cozy little cottage on Thimbleberry Lane, and he has wonderful neighbors who are always up for a visit or an adventure. With heartwarming illustrations and old-fashioned charm, this oh-so-gentle storybook is perfect for a snuggly read-aloud and to be shared with the dearest of friends!" This 64-page book features great writing and an advanced vocabulary.
3		<b>Tornado</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Betsy Byars  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 2.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3.5 <b>Points:</b> 4 (5-7 yrs), 2 (8-9 yrs)	While a family is taking shelter in a cellar due to a possible tornado, past stories about experiences with tornados are told. While this book is not a favorite, it is wholesome, and my six-year-old son enjoyed reading it with me.
3		<b>Viking Adventure</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 6 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs)	Even though this is only a Level 3 reading level, I found this book interesting and full of educational value. This would be a good book for reluctant readers. The writing is good but easy, the story is exciting, and the educational value is high.
4		<b>26 Fairmount Avenue (SERIES)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Tomie DePaola  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 4 (5-7 yrs), 3 (8 yrs), 2 (9 yrs)	I have read two books in this series— <i>What a Year</i> and <i>On My Way</i> . These are stories based on Tomie DePaola's childhood. The stories support strong families, respect, good manners, and good behavior. The stories are interesting and sometimes humorous, but they are not fast-paced or exciting. There is also some educational value as children learn about life during the 1940's. The series goes as follows (purple=recommended; black=not yet reviewed) but does not have to be read in order: <i>26 Fairmount Avenue</i> , <i>Here We All Are</i> , <i>On My Way</i> , <i>What a Year</i> , <i>Things Will Never Be the Same</i> , <i>I'm Still Scared</i> , <i>Why?</i>
4		<b>A Child's Garden of Verses</b> <i>Poetry</i>	Robert Louis Stevenson  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 2 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 7 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	These classic poems, by famous poet Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) are a delightful look at the joy and innocence of childhood. The poems are easily read but beautifully crafted and contain fun and meaningful, wholesome messages. The illustrations are absolutely precious. This book is a gem that should be read over and over again!

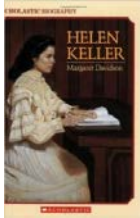
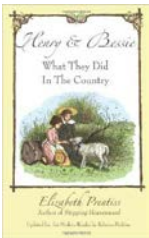

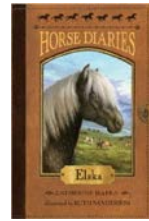

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4		<b>A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman (SERIES)</b> <i>Biography</i>	David Adler  Moral Value: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 1 (5-10)	The following books in this series are on the list: <i>Louis Braille, Harriet Tubman, Benjamin Franklin, and Paul Revere</i> . (Just because a book from the series is not listed here, it does not mean it is not recommended; we may have not reviewed it yet.) These books feature nice illustrations and have great educational value.
4 ★		<b>A Tree for Peter</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Kate Seredy  Moral Value: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 7 (5-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	This is another one of Kate Seredy's meaningful and inspiring stories filled with beautiful description and clever writing. The story begins with a poor, lonely boy named Peter, who lived in sad, dingy Shantytown. The houses were all run down, the people were sad and hopeless, and garbage lined the streets. But one day Peter meets a friend who gives him the simple gift of a little red spade. Through that gift and Peter's hope and love, the town is transformed and a miracle takes place.
4 ★		<b>Abigail Adams</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Jean Brown Wagoner  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (5-7 yrs), 6 (8-9 yrs), 4 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	I really like this author and this series, and so do my daughters. The majority of this book focuses on the inspiring story of Abigail's childhood in a fun, fictionalized way that still holds close to the facts about her life and time period. Forgiveness, manners, love of learning, hard work, perseverance, and good attitude are all emphasized. Jean Brown Wagoner is a great writer for this reading level, using just the right amount of varied vocabulary, description, and sentence structure, while still making the story very interesting for children.
4		<b>Apollo 13 (Totally True Adventures)</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 2 Educational Value: 5 Points: 3 (5-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	This 97-page book features black-and-white illustrations every few pages. Told in part story form, this book follows the adventures of three astronauts in 1970 who blasted off to the moon but had part of their spaceship explode. Follow the exciting story of how they got back to earth, learning much about space travel along the way.
4		<b>Ballerina Dreams</b> <i>Biography</i>	Michaela DePrince  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 2.5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 1 (5-7), .5 (8-11)	This short book is simply written, but it held my attention until the end. It tells the true story of Michaela who lived in an orphanage in Sierra Leone. She saw a photograph of a ballerina when she was just a toddler. She decided right then that she wanted to be a ballerina herself. After being adopted in the United States, her new mother learned of her dream, and Michaela eventually became a famous ballerina.



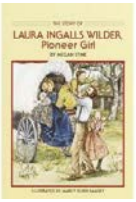
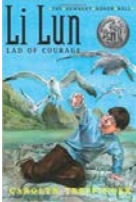

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4 ★ Aud		<b>Betsy Books</b> <i>(SERIES)</i>  <i>Fiction</i>	Carolyn Haywood  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 6 (5-7 yrs), 4 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10+)	Originally published in 1939, the first book in the "Betsy" series has never been out of print. The story follows sweet, adorable Betsy as she starts first grade. Her adventures, such as getting lost as she walks to school, are not fast-paced, but they are cute, uplifting, and wholesome—a beautiful look at the innocence of childhood. Children, especially girls, will probably like the book up through age nine. Any of the following books in the series are recommended and are part of this reading program (same point value). They do not have to go in this order, and books can be skipped, although this is the recommended order. However, you may have trouble finding some books in the series, as they are not all in print: <i>"B" is for Betsy, Betsy and Billy, Back to School with Betsy, Betsy and the Boys, Betsy's Little Star, Betsy and the Circus, Betsy's Busy Summer, Betsy's Winterhouse, Snowbound with Betsy, Betsy and Mr. Kilpatrick, Merry Christmas from Betsy, Betsy's Play School.</i>
4 ★		<b>Betsy's Little Star</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Carolyn Haywood  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 6 (5-7 yrs), 4 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10+)	This book, published over 65 years ago, is another fantastic book by Carolyn Haywood. The book features heartwarming and humorous writing and high moral value. Also, all the young girls I know who have read the book absolutely loved it. This is a story about the birth of a baby sister and a wonderful relationship between daughter and parents. At the time this review was written, the book was out of print.
4 ★ Aud		<b>Betsy-Tacy</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Maud Hart Lovelace  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 7 (5-7 yrs), 4 (8-9 yrs), 3 (10+)	Betsy-Tacy, first published in the 1940s, is a timeless, wholesome story of small town life in the early 1800s. This books captures the magic and innocence of childhood and features fantastic writing for the reading level. There are 13 books in this series, but I have only read the first three books so far. The first two, <i>Betsy-Tacy</i> , and <i>Betsy-Tacy and Tib</i> , are recommended. The third book, <i>Betsy and Tacy Go Over the Bill Hill</i> was not my favorite, because it contains a lot of boy craziness and some unkindness to siblings. We had a customer tell us that after the first three or four books, the characters play with a ouija board at the parties they go to. I recommend sticking with the first two books. It does not leave off at a cliff hanger, so it should be fine to stop after two books.
4 📖		<b>Birth of an Island</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	Millicent E. Selsam  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 0 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 2 (5-7 yrs), 1 (8-9 yrs)	This 48-page nonfiction book has nice, vintage-style illustrations on most pages and features large print. The information about how islands are formed is well-written and interesting, in somewhat of a story form.
4		<b>Chocolate by Hershey</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Betty Burford  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 4 (6-7 yrs), 3 (8-9 yrs), 1 (10+)	This is an interesting, short biography of Milton S. Hershey. It features good writing and tells the inspiring story of courageous, patient, and fun-loving Milton and his journey to create a candy business and follow his dreams. Readers will be inspired by the story of how Milton works hard and refuses to give up.

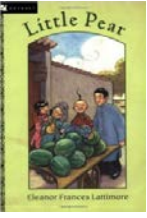
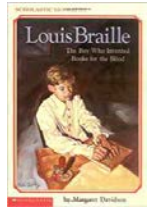
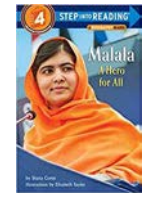
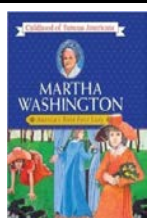

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4		<b>Climbing Everest (Totally True Adventures)</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	Gail Herman  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 2 Educational Value: 5 Points: 3 (5-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs), 1 (11+)	Two brave men, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, come from different cultures, but they share the same dream of climbing to the peak of Mount Everest. Their engaging adventure is told in this 92-page book that features large print and black-and-white illustrations every few pages.
4 ★		<b>Cora Frear</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Susan E. Goodman  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 2 Educational Value: 3.5 Points: 3 (5-7 yrs), 2 (8-9 yrs), 1 (10+)	This is the only book in the Brave Kids series that I recommend. <i>Cora Frear</i> is a short and inspiring story about Cora, who was a real pioneer girl who showed great courage during a prairie fire.
4 ★		<b>Eddie (SERIES)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Carolyn Haywood  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 6 (5-7 yrs), 4 (8-9 yrs), 3 (10+)	We reviewed a few books in this series, and they were all great, clean entertainment. The writing is great and the characters are respectful. I love that the book holds children's attention without having to be about constant thrills and adventure. The books are funny and entertaining. The books are out of print and hard to find. They can go in any order, but they were published in this order: <i>Little Eddie, Eddie and Gardenia, Eddie's Pay Dirt, Eddie and His Big Deals, Eddie Makes Music, Eddie and Louella, Annie Pat and Eddie, Eddie's Green Thumb, Eddie the Dog Holder, Ever-Ready Eddie, Eddie's Happenings, Eddie's Valuable Property, Eddie's Menagerie, Merry Christmas from Eddie, Eddie's Friend Boodles</i> . Note: We did not list <i>Eddie and the Fire Engine</i> , which had a little bit of attitude.
4 Aud		<b>Encyclopedia Brown (SERIES)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Donald J. Sobol  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 5 (6-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11 yrs)	This series is fun and creative with good writing for the reading level. There is not a lot of moral or educational value, but I found nothing objectionable in the two books in the series that I read. Other reviewers have said that the first books in the series are the best, as the later ones are more modern and hip, and, while still appropriate, lose some of their charm. Here are the first nine in the series of 29: <i>Boy Detective (#1), The Case of the Secret Pitch (#2), Finds the Clues (#3), Gets His Man (#4), Solves them All (#5), Keeps the Peace (#6), Saves the Day (#7), Tracks Them Down (#8), Shows the Way (#9)</i> .
4		<b>Escape by Night</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Laurie Myers  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 3.5 Points: 6 (5-7 yrs), 4 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10+)	During the Civil War, ten-year-old Tommy and his sister are used to seeing wounded soldiers arrive in their town to be treated at the church, which had been turned into a hospital. But one mysterious soldier in particular catches Tommy's attention, and Tommy will soon be faced with a difficult decision. This book offers children a fun way to learn about history. I like that faith in God is woven into the book. I do not recommend all books by this author.


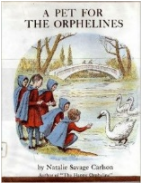

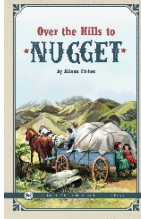









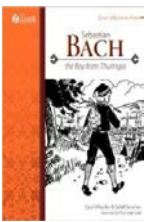


Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4 ★ Aud		<b>Fairchild Family Story (SERIES)</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Rebecca Caudill  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (5-7 yrs), 4 (8-9 yrs), 3 (10+)	One of my daughter's personal favorites, this series of sweet books depicts wholesome family life in the Kentucky Hills in the early 1900s. An Amazon review fittingly states: "Makes you long for a more simple time, when reading and spending time with family was a priority." Rebecca Caudill is a fantastic writer and tells these stories with a fresh, joyful spirit. The series goes in this order, and each book is worth the same amount of points: <i>Happy Little Family</i> , <i>Schoolhouse in the Woods</i> , <i>Schoolroom in the Parlor</i> , <i>Up &amp; Down the River</i> .
4 ★ Aud		<b>Farmer Boy</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Laura Ingalls Wilder  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 7 (5-7 yrs), 4 (8-9 yrs), 3 (10+)	This is the third book in the <i>Little House</i> series ( <i>Little House in the Big Woods</i> is first in the series and is on this list). However, <i>Farmer Boy</i> is a stand-alone book that both boys and girls will enjoy. The back cover reads: "Growing up on his family's farm in New York, Almanzo Wilder wishes for only one thing: his very own horse. But Father doesn't yet trust him with such a big responsibility. Almanzo needs to prove himself to Father—but how?"
4 ★		<b>Five True Dog Stories</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	Margaret Davidson  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 2 (5-8 yrs), 1 (9-10 yrs)	This wonderful little book has it all—good educational value, great moral merit, wonderful writing, and high entertainment value. Even as an adult, I found these five true short stories about dogs interesting. This is a great pick for any young reader.
4 📖		<b>Ginnie and Her Juniors</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Catherine Woolley  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 4 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	This book is a great alternative to the <i>Baby Sitter's Club</i> series, which is highly not recommended. <i>Ginnie and her Juniors</i> is a wholesome, gentle book about optimistic Ginnie and her babysitting service. While the book is mainly just good, clean entertainment, there are also some positive messages such as friendship and loving family relationships. This is the 6th book in a series, but it works well as a stand-alone book. We will add more information when we review the rest of the series. Unfortunately, this book is out of print and will likely be hard to find.
4		<b>Hannah of Fairfield (SERIES)</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Jean Van Leeuwen  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	This series takes place in Fairfield, Connecticut, during the Revolutionary War. Hannah helps save a baby lamb, experiences her brother going to war, and much more. This is a great book for Level 4 readers. The books in the series are <i>Hannah of Fairfield</i> , <i>Hannah's Helping Hands</i> , and <i>Hannah's Winter of Hope</i> .

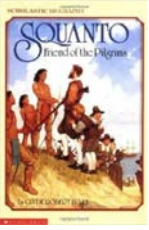
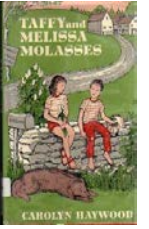
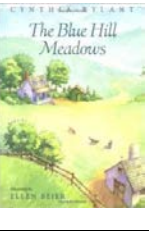


Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4 ★		<b>Helen Keller</b>  <i>Biography</i>	<b>Margaret Davidson</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	The inspiring story of Helen Keller is told wonderfully in this book. Whether done as a read-aloud or read-alone, I believe children ages 7-12 (or older) will find this book fascinating. Using just the right amount of detail, the author tells the story as a fictionalized biography (based on facts but in story form with dialogue). This book strongly supports high moral character such as patience, dedication, and persistence. The book is 96 pages without illustrations, but there are some real photos of Helen at the end of the book. I only wish this book included references to God, such as Helen's joy at first discovering the Bible and Bible stories.
4 ★		<b>Henry &amp; Bessie: What They Did In The Country</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Elizabeth Prentiss</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 9 (7-8 yrs), 6 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	This delightful book takes place in 1853 and follows the story of siblings Henry and Bessie. Having lived all their lives in the city, these two children are excited to move to their new home in the country. Through lovely writing, readers are transported to a more simple time where children explore the wonders of the countryside, plant their first garden, and help change a poor girl's life. This is not an edge-of-your-seat book with constant thrills and self-centered adventure like many books today. Instead it is a gentle, heartwarming, funny, and charming book that teaches about life in the country, strong family bonds, kindness, honesty, love of nature, faith, prayer, and the love of Christ. I did this book as a read-aloud for my 8-year-old girl and 5-year-old boy, and they really loved it.
4		<b>Here Comes the Bus!</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Carolyn Haywood</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 7 (5-7 yrs), 5 (8-9 yrs), 3 (10-11 yrs)	Carolyn Haywood is one of my favorite authors for early readers. While many of her books are a part of a series, <i>Here Comes the Bus</i> is a stand-alone. The story follows the main character, Jonathan, and his funny, but wholesome stories at school. This is an example of a book that makes everyday, gentle stories interesting and humorous without the need for constant thrill, action, or unrealistic adventure. I love that the book promotes strong family relationships and respectful behavior.
4		<b>Horse Diaries (SERIES)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Catherine Hapka &amp; Ruth Sanderson</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 4 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	I believe young girls who like horses will enjoy this book. It is a wholesome and gentle story that takes place in Iceland in 1000 A.D. There are several books in this series that do not need to go in any specific order. They all teach about horses and historical time periods. Readers may receive points for any of the following books, but please be aware that I only reviewed this first book ( <i>Elska</i> ) and skimmed through a few others: <i>Elska</i> , <i>Bell's Star</i> , <i>Koda</i> , <i>Maestoso Petra</i> , <i>Golden Sun</i> , <i>Risky Chance</i> , <i>Tennessee Rose</i> , <i>Jingle Bell</i> , <i>Cinders</i> , <i>Calvino</i> . The books <i>Yatimah</i> , <i>Black Cloud</i> , <i>Luna</i> , and <i>Darcy</i> are not recommended because of some violence that is overly descriptive for the age level and lying made to look acceptable.
4 ★		<b>In Grandma's Attic (SERIES)</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Arleta Richardson</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4.5 <b>Points:</b> 8 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	Both of my daughters enjoyed the book so much that they begged for the other books in the series. My daughters found the true, old-fashioned, and charming stories in the book funny and entertaining. Each story teaches a moral lesson. Most of the stories even include a quote from the Bible. The books also teach a lot about the historical time period. All the books in this series are part of the reading program and have the same point value: <i>In Grandma's Attic</i> , <i>More Stories from Grandma's Attic</i> , <i>Still More Stories from Grandma's Attic</i> , <i>Treasures from Grandma</i> .

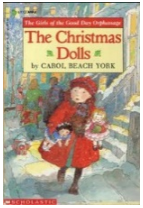
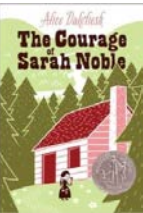

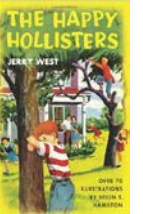

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4		<b><i>In Their Own Words</i></b> <i>(Selected Books from the Series)</i>  <i>Biography</i>	Various  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit: 1.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (6-7 yrs), 2 (8-9 yrs)	This series has low literary value (mainly simple sentences and no challenging vocabulary) but extremely high educational value. The books feature large print and black-and-white photos and illustrations. They are written in a way that should hold the interest of most children. Some books in this series contain profanity or taking God's name in vain and are not recommended: <i>Thomas Edison</i> . Those that we have reviewed and recommend are: <i>Lewis and Clark</i> .
4		<b><i>Kangaroo to the Rescue!</i></b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	National Geographic Kids/Moira Rose Donohue  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit: 2.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 4 (6-7 yrs), 2 (8-9 yrs), 1 (10 yrs)	I found nothing objectionable in this book, which contains true stories about animals that are little heroes. Pages that teach interesting facts about these animals (kangaroos, dogs, and pigs) are also scattered throughout the stories. I think kids will like this informative and fun book.
4		<b><i>Laura Ingalls Wilder, Pioneer Girl</i></b>  <i>Biography</i>	Megan Stine  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 4 Points: 4 (6-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	This is a simple but nicely written and interesting biography about Laura Ingalls Wilder. My 9-year daughter enjoyed it, but it wasn't her favorite book. She enjoyed the <i>Little House on the Prairie</i> series more. But the book is a great introduction to that series and has great educational value.
4		<b><i>Li Lun, Lad of Courage</i></b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Carolyn Treffinger  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4.5 Points: 7 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	Afraid of the sea, young Li Lun is banished to a mountain top to accomplish a difficult task. This is a well-written, wholesome, and interesting story of courage, perseverance, kindness, and respect, as well as a great look into old China.
4		<b><i>Lions in the Barn</i></b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i>  <i>Fiction</i>	Virginia Voight  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 2 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	Senor Dobbinelli is in need of a good, stout winter barn for his circus animals. Clay and his family have just the barn in Connecticut, but do they have what it takes to take care of lions and tigers? In this delightful tale of adventure and family life on a farm, Clay is in for some lessons on responsibility and wild animal training.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4		<b>Little Pear</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Eleanor Frances Lattimore  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	Little Pear is a kind and curious boy who lives in a small village in China. As you follow his funny, wholesome adventures, you learn much about life in the past in China. Strong, loving families are portrayed and attitudes are respectful. Although there is not a huge emphasis on moral lessons, there are good messages. The books are charming and should be enjoyed by both boys and girls. The sequel, <i>Little Pear and His Friends</i> , is also a part of this reading program for the same number of points. However, I have not read the sequel.
4 ★		<b>Louis Braille</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Margaret Davidson  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4.5 <b>Points:</b> 4 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	I really enjoy the writing style of Margaret Davidson. This book is just right for Level 4 readers. It is well written and packed with educational value, and it is very interesting and holds the reader's attention. If you like this book, also try Davidson's book <i>Helen Keller</i> .
4		<b>Malala: A Hero for All</b> <i>Biography</i>	Shana Corey  <b>Moral Value:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 2.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 1 (5-10)	This is a great story for children. In Malala's country, life is different for girls. It is even dangerous for a girl to receive an education. Find out what happens when Malala stands up for her right to an education and becomes an advocate for the rights of girls everywhere.
4 ★		<b>Martha Washington</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Jean Brown Wagoner  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 9 (6-7 yrs), 7 (8-9 yrs), 5 (10-11), 3 (12+)	This book is much more enjoyable and well-written than I thought it would be—I really liked it! Almost the entire fictionalized biography focuses on Martha's childhood. It is a fun book to read, it teaches a lot about the time period, and it supports high moral character. And although this is an easy read, it contains great writing—just the right elevated vocabulary for the age level—and lovely descriptions, such as: "The fireflies began to twinkle in the tall grass along the river." This is the perfect example of an easy reader that is really entertaining and interesting and yet is so much more than empty, fast-paced adventure—it is inspiring and gives the reader a deeper understanding of history, cultures, character, and human nature. I highly recommend this book!
4 🗺️		<b>Mystery in the Pirate Oak</b> <i>Mystery</i>	Helen Fuller Orten  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 6 (6-7 yrs), 4 (8-10 yrs), 2 (11 yrs)	If you are looking for a good, old-fashioned, wholesome mystery, this is a great choice. Grandmother insists that she left a silver box in the hollow of an oak tree sixty years ago. What is in the box, and why is it so important?


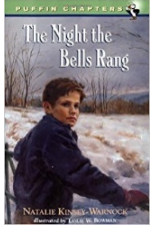
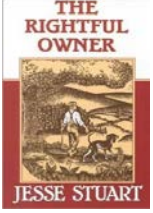
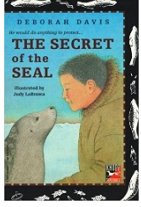
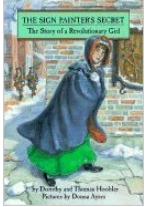
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4 		<b>Orphelines (SERIES)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Natalie Savage Carlson  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> 4 (6-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	This out-of-print series has some cute, wholesome books that take place in France in the early 1900s. The stories center around 20 orphan girls that live in a little village in France. The series goes in this order (purple=recommended, strikethrough=-not recommended, black= not yet reviewed): <del>The Happy Orpheline</del> , <i>A Brother for the Orphelines</i> , <i>A Pet for the Orphelines</i> , <i>The Orphelines in the Enchanted Castle</i> , <i>A Grandmother for the Orphelines</i> .
4 		<b>Over the Hills to Nugget</b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Aileen Fisher  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	Ernie Brett never could have guessed what surprises lay in store for his family when his father moves them from the shanty mining camp of Skillet Gulch over the hills to Nugget to settle on a new ranch. Set in the high Rocky Mountains of Colorado Territory during the gold rush years, this novel explores some of the risks, hardships, joys, and pastimes of the era. Through hard work and ingenuity, Ernie and Papa are able to provide for the family and improve the farm. When tragedy strikes, will the Bretts have the courage to stay on their beloved ranch? <i>Over the Hills to Nugget</i> is an example of how literature can be on a lower reading level, but still have very high literary value. With beautiful writing, readers are immersed in a wonderful, wholesome story. This is exactly the type of book I want my little readers to enjoy."
4 		<b>Patriots in Petticoats</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	Shirley Raye-Redmond  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	In a fun and interesting way, this book tells the story of hard-working, heroic women and girls who helped in the fight for freedom during the American Revolution in many different ways. The stories are interesting and inspiring with messages of courage, hard-work, loyalty, and sacrifice. The book also has a lot of information about the time period. I learned a lot and really liked this book.
4 		<b>Primrose Day</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Carolyn Haywood  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 7 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	I consider this book by the author of the popular "Betsy" series, written over 70 years ago, a classic. Because of WWII, Merry Primrose Ramsay must leave England to live with family in America. One reviewer wrote: "It's wonderful that this book is still in print, so modern children can experience a slower-paced society, where people rode on trains and ocean liners, young girls knew how to knit, and children didn't need electronic games to entertain themselves." I love the refreshing way the children in this book treat adults, siblings, and classmates with respect and kindness.
4 		<b>Robert Rows the River</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Carolyn Haywood  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 5 (6-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11 yrs)	Carolyn Haywood is one of my favorite authors for early readers. While many of her books are a part of a series, <i>Robert Rows the River</i> is a stand-alone. The book brings you back to the simple, wholesome summer adventures in times past with row boats, bicycles, and a wonderful tree house. The book has messages about friendship, not judging others, kindness, and love of learning. The book is about a boy named Robert who, during the summer, becomes friend with a gypsy boy and his monkey. They have adventures together, and Robert teaches him how to read in exchange for the gypsy boy teaching him to play the violin. This is a simple but wonderful story that should hold the interest of boys and girls.

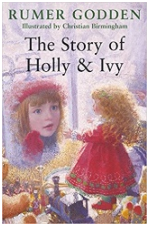
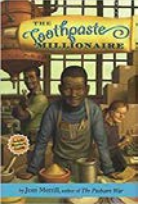



Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4 ★ Aud		<b>Sarah, Plain and Tall</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Patricia MacLachlan</b>  <b>Moral Value:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 8 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	<i>Sarah, Plain and Tall</i> is a worthy Newbery Medal-winning book and children's literature classic. Through skilled writing, readers are transported into a heartwarming story during a more simple time on the plains during the 19th-century. Valuable lessons are taught and high character is displayed. This book would be great as a family read-aloud. Four more books follow on the story, are on this book list, and go in this order, although they all can work as stand-alone books: <i>Skylark</i> , <i>Caleb's Story</i> , <i>More Perfect Than the Moon</i> , and <i>Grandfather's Dance</i> .
4		<b>Sebastian Bach</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	<b>Opal Wheeler and Sybil Deucher</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	This biography on Sebastian Bach is an informative and delightful read! Whether done as a read-aloud or a personal read, children should enjoy this interesting and uplifting story. I love the gentle, optimistic writing of the author as well as the details included, the knowledge gained about the time period, and the elevated vocabulary. This is the only book in the series I have read all the way through, but almost all of them are written by the same authors and are included in this reading program for the same points. The books are available on amazon.com or on zeezok.com. Zeezok also offers a fantastic music appreciation program that goes along with these books. <i>Mozart</i> , <i>The Wonder Boy</i> ; <i>Ludwig Beethoven and the Chiming Tower Bells</i> ; <i>Joseph Haydn</i> ; <i>The Merry Little Peasant</i> ; <i>The Young Brahms</i> ; <i>Franz Schubert and His Merry Friends</i> ; <i>Frederick Chopin</i> ; <i>The Early Years Frederick Chopin</i> ; <i>The Later Years</i> ; <i>Stephen Foster and His Little Dog Tray</i> ; <i>Edward MacDowell and His Cabin in the Pines</i> ; <i>Handel at the Court of Kings</i> ; <i>Robert Schumann and Mascot Ziff</i> ; <i>Peter Tchaikovsky and the Nutcracker Ballet</i> ; <i>The Story of Peter Tchaikovsky</i> ; <i>Paganini</i> , <i>Master of Strings</i> ; <i>Adventures of Richard Wagner</i> .
4 ★		<b>Snowbound with Betsy</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Carolyn Haywood</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 5 (6-7 yrs), 4 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10+)	Experience life with Betsy inside a cozy, loving home while a blizzard is raging outside. For company she has her family and a small family that Betsy's father rescued from a stranded car. I love the gentle innocence and beauty that Carolyn Haywood is able to bring out in family life. Many popular books today are about children off having adventures away from their family. Just to give you an idea of how important family is in this book, I counted the word MOTHER and FATHER used over 80 times in one chapter. The mother and father in this story are loving, fun, creative, and patient. My 8-year-old daughter adored this book.
4 ★ Aud		<b>Stone Fox</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>John Reynolds Gardiner</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 4 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10+)	10-year-old Willy, a kind and courageous boy, lives with his grandfather on a potato farm. As the story opens, his grandfather loses the will to live. When Willy discovers the reason, he sets out to save both his grandfather and the farm. This wonderful, heartwarming, profound story is based on a Rocky Mountain legend. I suggest reading this book with your child as the ending is beautiful but sad; it may need some discussion.

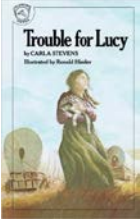

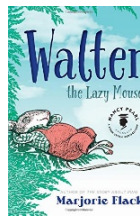


Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4		<b>Squanto, Friend of the Pilgrims</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Clyde Robert Bulla  Biography Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (7-9 yrs), 2 (10-11 yrs)	This short chapter book, based on the true story of Squanto, is written at a level for younger readers, and yet it totally engaged me as an adult. I personally feel the white men of that era were represented accurately: there were great and kind white men, but there were also some white men who were cruel. Be aware that there are sad parts of the book, although the author does a great job of showing Squanto's enduring spirit. Children will learn much about the historical time period.
4		<b>Taffy and Melissa Molasses</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Carolyn Haywood  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 2 Points: 5 (6-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11 yrs)	This is another wonderful, wholesome, fun book by Carolyn Haywood. A brother, a sister, and their friend have summer adventures together such as buying a flagpole and getting stranded on a rock at high tide. My 9-year-old daughter loved the book.
4		<b>The Blue Hill Meadows</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Cynthia Rylant  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 4 (6-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	Award-winning author Cynthia Rylant wrote these four heartwarming stories about "the simple things that make family life so special." The back of the book reads: "Willie Meadow lives with his mother, father, and brother in Blue Hill, Virginia. It's peaceful there—a perfect place for growing up. For the Meadow family, each season of the year holds something special, like puppies born to their beloved dog one summer, a fishing trip on a crisp October day, or the thrill of a rare winter blizzard." I agree with Booklist that this book "masterfully catches tiny, specific details that are so evocative."
4		<b>The Canada Geese Quilt</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Natalie Kinsey-Warnock  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 7 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	10-year-old Ariel, who loves drawing and spending time in the outdoors, lives on a farm in Vermont after World War II. This charming story is about Ariel's relationship with her grandma as they work together to make a unique quilt for Ariel's future baby sister. Although the book is easy enough for early readers, it has high literary merit: "The hills blazed with the scarlet and orange of maples . . . Apples and butternuts hung heavily from the trees along the fencerow, almost begging to be picked." Although the story explores some deep topics, such as her grandmother suffering a stroke, this book is gentle, character-building, and inspiring, unlike so many books out there.
4		<b>The Chocolate Touch</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Patrick Skene Catling  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 2 (7-9 yrs)	This humorous book is a twist on the legend of King Midas. The writing is good and made me laugh. There is a moral to the story (don't be greedy), but mainly the book is just fun and wholesome reading. I did not find any objectionable content or disrespectful behavior. This would be a good book for reluctant readers.


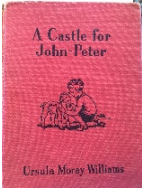
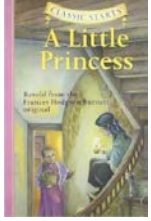
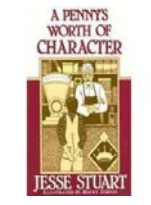

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4		<b>The Christmas Dolls</b> <i>Fiction</i> Δ	Carol Beach York  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 4 (6-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs), 1 (11 yrs)	This heartwarming story begins two days before Christmas. Girls will especially love this gentle Christmas story about the loveable girls at the Good Day Orphanage. Parents should be aware that dolls do talk to the little girl in this story.
4 ★		<b>The Courage of Sarah Noble</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Alice Dalgliesh  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 4 (6-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs), 1 (11 yrs)	This short book (53 pages with many illustrations) is a Newbery Honor book written in 1954. It takes place in 1707 and tells the true story of young Sarah Noble. Children should find this book very interesting and fun to read while also learning lessons about early America, courage, and perseverance. It is so refreshing to find such a well-written, interesting book that references God in several places. For example, "The Lord did not speak out loud, or at least Sarah didn't hear Him. But all at once she knew what to do." I highly recommend this fantastic book! The lower point values are only because of the short length.
4 🌀		<b>The Donkey Prince</b> <i>Fiction</i> Δ	M. Jean Craig  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 0 <b>Points:</b> 3 (7-8 yrs), 1 (9-10 yrs)	Once there lived a vain queen and a greedy king who cheated the wizard who was to give them a child. So begins this lovely fairytale. The illustrations are wonderful, the story is engaging, and the reader is left with a nice message. I am not a huge fan of stories with magic, but if you like fairytales, this is a good book.
4		<b>The Happy Hollisters (SERIES)</b> <i>Fiction (Mystery/Adventure)</i>	Jerry West  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 6 (6-7 yrs), 4 (8-10 yrs), 2 (11 yrs)	The <i>Happy Hollisters</i> is a series of well-written, fun, wholesome chapter books written in the 1950s and 1960s. The series is about the Hollister family, nicknamed the "Happy Hollisters" by their neighbors. My 7- to 10-year-old children have loved these books, which portray kind, loving families and strong relationships with siblings. So far, we have only reviewed the first and second books, but there are a total of 33 books in this series, and they are all a part of the reading program. As of today, 19 of the <i>Happy Hollisters</i> books have been reissued in paperback format and are available on the official website, <a href="http://thehappyhollisters.com">http://thehappyhollisters.com</a> . The titles are also available world-wide in paperback and eBook formats on Amazon.com.
4 ★		<b>The King's Equal</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Katherine Paterson  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> 5 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 1 (11-12 yrs)	My 7-year-old daughter and I thoroughly enjoyed this book about a conceited prince in search of a bride who is his equal. Not only does this book have a fantastic message, but it is very interesting and very well-written.

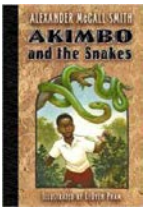


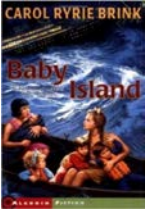



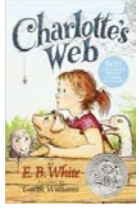


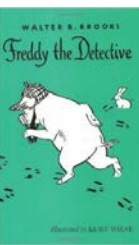
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4		<b>The Minstrel in the Tower</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Clyde Robert Bulla</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 3 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	The back of this book reads: "It is the year 1195. Roger and Alice have lost their father to the Crusades, and now their mother is terribly ill. They set off in search of their mother's long-lost brother, who is a powerful baron who might help them." This 64-page historical fiction book has an elevated vocabulary, good messages, and high educational value. Extra sensitive children may want to avoid this book due to a mean uncle and the kidnapping of the children by two highwaymen.
4		<b>The Night the Bells Rang</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Natalie Kinsey-Warnock</b>  <b>Moral Value:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 3 (9-10 yrs) 2 (11-12 yrs)	This book takes place during World War I and tells the story of Mason who lives on a farm with his family. After being bullied, Mason in turn bullies his little brother. The book does use the words "stupid" and "dumb" a couple of times, but we see how Mason immediately feels terrible inside. The story tells how Mason comes to understand the bully and have compassion for him. In the end, Mason tells his father how he has been bullying his little brother. Mason repents and starts showing kindness to his brother and bonds with him. This is a nice story with great writing but may not engage all children.
4		<b>The Rightful Owner</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Jesse Stuart</b>  <b>Moral Value:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 8 (6-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	Jesse Stuart is a fantastic writer of moral stories for youth. We read this warm, gentle story about a boy and his love for a dog to our young homeschool group, and the kids loved it. This is a great look into a time in the past when things were slower, families were close and strong, and kids were respectful and hard-working. The ending is sad but also hopeful.
4		<b>The Secret of the Seal</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Deborah Davis</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3.5 <b>Points:</b> 3 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	This is a wholesome story about a boy in a small Eskimo village and his friendship with a seal. The story is simple but interesting and has good educational value.
4		<b>The Sign Painter's Secret</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 5 (5-6 yrs), 3 (7-10 yrs), 1 (11 yrs)	The official description reads: "When the Redcoats occupy her house in Philadelphia, young Annie MacDougal finds a way to help General Washington's troops at Valley Forge." This 52-page book published in 1991 is an interesting and wholesome story with great educational value.

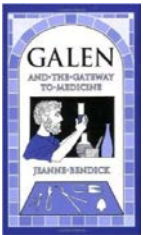
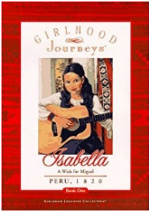
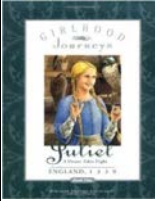
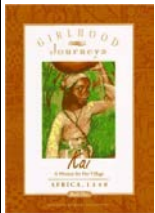
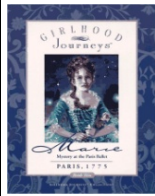
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4		<b>The Story of Holly and Ivy</b> <i>Fiction</i> ▲	<b>Rumer Godden</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 5</b> <b>Educational Value: 2</b> <b>Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11-12yrs)</b>	My nine-year-old daughter loved this book. Holly is the doll left all alone in the toy shop on Christmas Eve. Ivy is an orphan who has no one to be with on Christmas Eve. This sweet story describes how the girl and the doll come together. It has wonderful illustrations and a good message. Parents should be aware that the dolls in the book wish and have feelings; avoid the book if that makes you uncomfortable.
4		<b>The Toothpaste Millionaire</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Jean Merrill</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 2</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 2.5</b> <b>Educational Value: 2</b> <b>Points: 4 (5-8 yrs), 2 (9-11 yrs)</b>	Creative and self-motivated sixth graders Rufus Mayflower and Kate MacKinstrey start a toothpaste company that becomes incredibly successful. This story, originally published in 1972, is a fun book with messages about entrepreneurship and creativity. It is not a top pick, but it is clean and shows how helpful math skills are in real life.
4 ★		<b>The Tuttle Twins (SERIES)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Connor Boyack</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3.5</b> <b>Educational Value: 4.5</b> <b>Points: 3 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10-11 yrs), 1 (12+)</b>	These books were highly recommended, and they did not disappoint. They are easy reading, but they have great value. In addition, children seem to love them. These books teach principles of liberty and the proper role of government through short fictional stories and fun illustrations. I highly recommend these books. I recommend the physical books over the Audible versions, as children really like the fun, colorful illustrations that are a big part of these books.
4 ★		<b>The Whipping Boy</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Sid Fleischman</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 5</b> <b>Educational Value: 1</b> <b>Points: 8 (8-9 yrs), 6 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)</b>	Orphan boy Jemmy is taken from the streets to the palace and is made the whipping boy, where he is punished every time the spiteful, spoiled Prince Brat does something wrong, which is often. One day the prince announces that he is running away and orders Jemmy to come with him. This fun, Newbery Medal book is well-written and entertaining while teaching lessons about character such as humility, trust, and kindness. I do not recommend reading this book to kids under age eight due to some harsh treatment portrayed in the book.
4		<b>The Year of the Panda</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Miriam Schlein</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3.5</b> <b>Educational Value: 4</b> <b>Points: 4 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 1 (11+)</b>	This is an interesting and wholesome book. The official description reads: "Strange things are happening on Lu Yi's farm. First, some men from the Chinese government ask Lu Yi's father to sell the property that has belonged to the family for generations. Then a giant panda appears in a neighbor's field, a rare occurrence, given the farm's distance from the high-mountain bamboo forests that pandas inhabit. Lu Yi has a feeling that the two mysteries are somehow connected. Before long, an orphaned baby panda he finds in the woods provides an answer. As the boy nurses the helpless animal back to health, he begins an adventure that may well change his entire future."

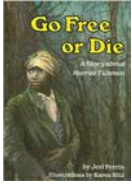
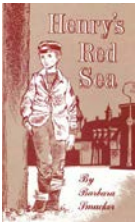
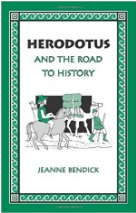
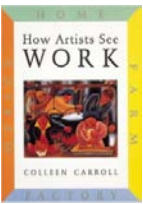
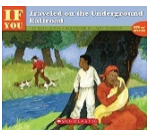
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4		<b>Trouble for Lucy</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Carla Stevens  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (6-7 yrs), 4 (8-9), 3 (10 yrs)	This book is a fun and well-written read with nice messages. Based on actual journals of pioneers' treks to Oregon, this story follows the main character Lucy and her mischievous dog on a short section of their journey.
4		<b>Uncle Wiggily's Story Book</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Howard R. Garis  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit: 4.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 7 (7-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	This is a good old book originally published in 1949. These classic stories feature a cheerful bunny rabbit gentleman who understands human speech and has dedicated his life to helping other animals and children. I completely agree with an Amazon.com reviewer who wrote: "These stories are set in such an innocent time, that it requires adjustment for most children initially to get involved, compared to the books and television shows that are currently available. The book provides imaginative stories that promote virtuous behavior." The writing and vocabulary is excellent.
4		<b>Walter the Lazy Mouse</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Marjorie Flack  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 0 Points: 5 (6-7 yrs), 4 (8-9 yrs), 3 (10 yrs)	This is a great book for reluctant readers. Originally published in 1937, this wholesome and engaging story teaches great morals about laziness. The book is also hilarious, and the pictures are adorable.
4	 ★ 🧭	<b>William Bradford: Pilgrim Boy</b> <i>Biography</i>	Bradford Smith  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (6-7 yrs), 4 (8-10 yrs), 2 (11 yrs)	The engaging style of writing will pull even young readers into the story of William Bradford, who becomes a Separatist and travels with the Pilgrims to the New World where he becomes governor of Plymouth Plantation. Most of the story focuses on his childhood. This book is a wonderful tool to make history come alive for children. However, because it is written for a lower level reader, it might not be as interesting for children over 12 years old.
4		<b>Usborne Illustrated Stories from Aesop</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Susanna Davidson  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 5 (6-7 yrs), 3 (8-9 yrs)	The font and illustrations are very creative and appealing in this book. Kids should enjoy these short fables that contain great messages about pride, greed, friendship, and more.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4 Aud		<b>When the Soldiers Were Gone</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Vera W. Propp Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	This is a well-written and interesting historical fiction story. Henk, a young Jewish boy, is taken to a farm in the country during WWII. His parents have to flee, and the farmer and his wife raise Henk as their own child. After the war, Henk's real parents show up, but Henk does not remember them or even recall that he had other parents. This sweet story is treated well for the age group, and I found nothing objectionable in the book.
5 P		<b>A Castle for John Peter</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Ursula Moray Williams Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 2 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9 yrs)	I recommend several books by British author Ursula Moray Williams; this is one of them. John-Peter, who lives in London, is surprised when his godfather dies and leaves him his large house in the country. When he and his family go to visit, they fall in love with the house and its grounds. But one door in the house is different, and it says "the pirates' lair, go away." There is definitely a mystery to be solved. This gentle, well-written story is charming.
5 S		<b>A Little Princess (Classic Starts)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Retold from the Francis Hodgson Burnett Original Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9 yrs)	I am not a fan of abridged classics for older children or adults, but I highly recommend many of the Classic Starts series <i>only</i> for younger readers. My children have loved reading them, and they are wholesome, classic stories that will prepare and excite readers for reading the full versions one day. The series is written by different writers and includes varying levels of descriptive language, a variety and complexity of sentence structures, and elevated vocabulary. This abridged version of <i>A Little Princess</i> is one of the best-written in the series that I have read. Girls will love and be inspired by this classic story. Any <i>Classic Starts</i> included in this program are worth the same number of points.
5 S		<b>A Penny's Worth of Character</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Jesse Stuart Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (6-7 yrs), 5 (8-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	<b>Note: This book is integrated with The Good and the Beautiful Level 3 Language Arts Course.</b> Jesse Stuart is a fantastic writer of moral stories for youth. My daughter and I enjoyed reading and discussing <i>A Penny's Worth of Character</i> , which is a simple but lovely story about honesty. I love the descriptions in the book about nature and about the feelings we have when we are both honest and dishonest. We also learned about life in Kentucky in early America. The book is 61 pages long with medium print and full-page black-and-white illustrations every few pages.
5		<b>A World of Knowing (A Creative Minds Biography)</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Andy Russell Bowen Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (7-9 yrs), 3 (10-12 yrs), 2 (13+)	I have enjoyed several of the Creative Minds Biographies. <i>A World of Knowing</i> tells the powerful story of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet who was a pioneer in the field of deaf education. He suffered from poor health himself, and I found his perseverance and hard work inspiring. The writing is good but not amazing. The book is 55 pages long with larger print. I did not find anything objectionable in the book and found it worthwhile reading.






Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5 ★ Aud		<b>Akimbo and the Snakes</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Alexander McCall Smith  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit for Level: 2.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (6-8), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11 yrs)	Akimbo visits his uncle's snake park, learns about snakes, and has an adventure with his uncle as they search for a green mamba snake. The writing is good, and the educational value is fantastic as readers learn about life in Africa and snakes. I found only respectful behavior and no inappropriate content. A scary experience with a deadly snake may scare very young or sensitive readers.
5 ★ Aud		<b>All-of-a-Kind Family (SERIES)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Sydney Taylor  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 7 (5-7 yrs), 5 (8-9 yrs), 3 (10+)	This time-honored classic, published in 1951, follows the story of a Jewish family living in New York on the brink of World War I. The charming, fun, and rich stories of this close-knit family teach about hard work, love, respect, honesty, and obedience to parents in addition to giving insight into Jewish holidays and the historical time period. All the books in this series are part of the reading program (except the last book, <i>Ella Of All-Of-A-Kind Family</i> , which has attitudes I don't like) and have the same point value. The books go in this order: <i>All-of-a-Kind Family</i> , <i>All-of-a-Kind Family Downtown</i> , <i>More All-of-a-Kind Family</i> , <i>All-of-a-Kind Family Uptown</i> .
5		<b>Along Came a Dog</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Meindert DeJong  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 1 Points: 8 (7-8 yrs), 6 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	A lonely dog searches for a home and develops a friendship with a cocky and friendless hen. I have read and loved other books by DeJong, and reviewers that I usually agree with said this was one of their favorite books to do as a read-aloud. DeJong's books are not full of fast action, but they are well-written and explore small, delightful topics that promote and strengthen Christ-like behavior. The book is 172 pages with larger print. The first two chapters are a little slow, but then it picks up.
5 ★		<b>Baby Island</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Carol Ryrie Brink  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (any age)	Written by the author of <i>Caddie Woodlawn</i> , this book has been a childhood favorite for decades. This wholesome story tells of two sisters who are traveling to Australia to visit their father when a storm causes the ship to wreck. The girls end up stranded in the life boats with four babies. After two nights, they land on a deserted island and have to figure out how to survive and take care of the babies. The story displays courage, compassion, and taking responsibility. Young girls should love this story's plot and characters.
5 ★		<b>Cabin on Trouble Creek</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Jean Van Leeuwen  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (8-9 yrs), 4 (10+)	Based on a true story set in Ohio in 1803, this historical fiction book is well-written, very engaging and wholesome, and even includes references to God and the Bible. After clearing the forest and building a log cabin, Pa leaves his two sons and returns to Pennsylvania to fetch and bring back the rest of the family in six weeks. But when Pa doesn't return before winter, the boys are on their own. This would be a great book for reluctant readers. The book supports courage, perseverance, hard work, and strong family relationships. This book is similar to <i>The Sign of the Beaver</i> , but it is different in many ways. Homeschoolers could compare and contrast the two books as a project.

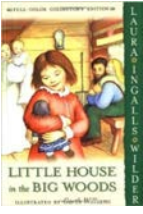
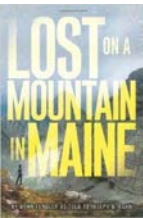


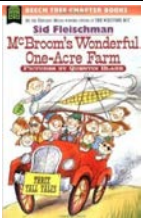
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5 Aud		<b>Charlotte's Web</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>E.B. White</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 8 (7-9 yrs), 5 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	<i>Charlotte's Web</i> has sold over eight million copies and is considered a beloved children's classic. The book is clean and explores the topics of kindness, friendship, loss, and hope.
5 ★ Aud		<b>Esperanza Rising</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Pam Muñoz Ryan</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (8-9 yrs), 4 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	I love it when I can find a more modern book to recommend! Written in 2000, this book has won several awards. I found no objectionable language or content. The story is beautiful and very engaging. Esperanza has a life of wealth and comfort on her family's ranch in Mexico. But, when tragedy shatters Esperanza's world, she is forced to flee to California and settle in a camp for Mexican farm workers. This story is packed with educational value and has uplifting messages about family, loyalty, hard work, attitude, gratitude, enduring trials, friendship, honesty, kindness, and more.
5 ★		<b>Five Little Peppers and How They Grew</b> <i>(Classic Starts)</i> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Retold from the Margaret Sidney Original</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (6-7 yrs), 5 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10-11 yrs)	I am not a fan of abridged classics for adults, but I highly recommend many of the <i>Classic Starts</i> series for younger readers. My children have loved reading them, and they are wholesome, classic stories that will prepare and excite readers for reading the full versions one day. This abridged version of <i>Five Little Peppers and How They Grew</i> retains much of the charm of the original book and features good writing. This is a fantastic story of an upright, strongly united family that offers an invaluable look into the past. Any Classic Starts are included in this program for the same points.
5 Aud		<b>Freddy the Pig</b> <i>(SERIES)</i> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Walter R. Brooks</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 0 <b>Points:</b> 4 (7-9 yrs), 3 (10-11 yrs)	Freddy the Pig is the central figure in a series of over 20 books written in the mid 1900s by author Walter R. Brooks. Not only are they fun, hilarious, clever, and very well-written, but they teach values such as kindness, positive attitude, sharing, responsibility, and teamwork, without seeming preachy. Some of the books are out of print, but you can often find used copies. These books are great, but my daughter lost interest after a few of them. The books do not have to be read in order, but they make more sense by following the recommended order: <i>Freddy Goes to Florida</i> , <i>Freddy Goes to the North Pole</i> , <i>Freddy the Detective</i> , <i>The Story of Freginald</i> , <i>The Clockwork Twin</i> , <i>Freddy the Politician</i> , <i>Freddy's Cousin Weedly</i> , <i>Freddy and the Ignoramus</i> , <i>Freddy and the Perilous Adventure</i> , <i>Freddy and the Bean Home News</i> , <i>Freddy and Mr. Camphor</i> , <i>Freddy and the Popinjay</i> , <i>Freddy the Pied Piper</i> , <i>Freddy the Magician</i> , <i>Freddy Goes Camping</i> , <i>Freddy Plays Football</i> , <i>Freddy the Cowboy</i> , <i>Freddy Rides Again</i> , <i>Freddy the Pilot</i> , <i>Freddy and the Spaceship</i> , <i>Freddy and the Men from Mars</i> , <i>Freddy and the Baseball Team From Mars</i> , <i>Freddy and Simon the Dictator</i> , <i>Freddy and the Flying Saucer Plans</i> , <i>Freddy and the Dragon</i> .

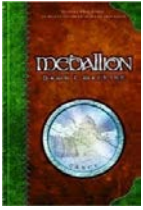



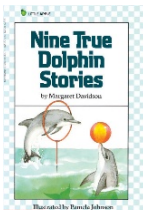
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5		<b>Galen and the Gateway to Medicine</b> <i>Biography</i>	Jeanne Bendick  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (6-7 yrs), 5 (8-9 yrs), 3 (10+)	This book offers a fun way to learn about a great historical figure—Galen, a medical researcher born in 129 A.D. The book is very informative, interesting, and easy to understand.
5		<b>Girlhood Journeys: Isabella</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Shirlee Newman  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11)	I read the first book in the series, <i>A Wish for Miguel</i> , and enjoyed it. The writing is good and the story wholesome. The story takes place in South America in the 1800s.
5		<b>Girlhood Journeys: Juliet</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Anna Kirwan  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11)	My daughters loved this sweet, beautifully written book. Juliet is loyal, courageous, and respectful to her parents—a great role model for girls. The story is interesting and teaches about England in the 1300s. The book has delightful full-page color illustrations every 5-6 pages. The print is larger, making the elevated vocabulary and more complex, skilled writing less daunting. The other books in the series, <i>Rescue at Marlehead Manor</i> and <i>Midsummer at Greenchapel</i> are also part of the reading program for the same points.
5		<b>Girlhood Journeys: Kai</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Various  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 3.5 Points: 5 (5-6 yrs), 4 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-11 yrs)	This is the third book in the Kai series, but I read it first, and it works great as a stand-alone book. I do not recommend the first book in the series ( <i>Kai: a Mission for Her Village</i> ) because it has some unkindness and name calling (mild) between sisters (dog-brain, etc.) that is not corrected. But, <i>Kai A Big Decision</i> and <i>Kai: The Lost Statute</i> had nothing objectionable and contained good educational value about Africa in the 1400s.
5		<b>Girlhood Journeys: Marie</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Jacqueline D. Greene  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11)	I like all three books in this series: <i>An Invitation to Dance</i> (Book One), <i>Mystery at the Paris Ballet</i> (Book One), <i>Summer in the Country</i> (Book Three). Readers will enjoy the story while learning about life in France in the late 1700s. The print is larger, making the elevated vocabulary and more complex, skilled writing less daunting.

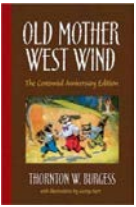

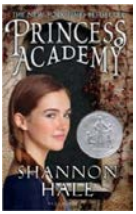


Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5		<b>Go Free or Die</b> <i>(A Creative Minds Biography)</i>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Jeri Ferris  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 2.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (7-9 yrs), 3 (10-12 yrs), 2 (13+)	I have enjoyed several of the Creative Minds Biographies. <i>Go Free or Die</i> tells the powerful story of Harriet Tubman in an engaging way. The writing is good but not amazing. The book is 54 pages long with larger print. Our homeschool group of children ages 5-9 all enjoyed the book. The book does use the word "nigger."
5 ★		<b>Henry's Red Sea</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Barbara Smucker  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 10 (7 yrs), 8 (8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	The back cover summarizes this fantastic story: "World War II is coming to an end, but many of the homes and villages of the Mennonites in the Russian Ukraine have been burned and destroyed. Many of the people have died or been taken prisoner. Those who remain are desperate to escape. So hundreds start west, looking for new homes where there is peace and safety." This book is an example of how an author can write about a really complicated topic in a way that is inspiring and uplifting while still helping the reader deeply understand the difficulties people went through. This book is deeply faith-based, showing a reliance and love for God. It was a truly delightful read, and I can't wait to share it with my children.
5		<b>Herodotus and the Road to History</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Jeanne Bendick  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (6-7 yrs), 5 (8-9 yrs), 3 (10+)	This books offers a fun way to learn about a great historical figure—Herodotus. Travel with Herodotus to discover what mysterious and exciting things he did and saw as he traveled to distant lands such as Syria, Egypt, and Persia. This 77-page book features large print and nice black-and-white pictures on nearly every page.
5		<b>How Artists See Work</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Colleen Carroll  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit for Level: 2.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 3 (7-9 yrs), 2 (10-11 yrs), 1 (12+)	This worthwhile and interesting book (35 pages) explores classic art from around the world. While some of the books in the series <i>How Artists See</i> contain art with nudity, this one does not. This is my favorite book from the series and the only one that is a part of this reading program, as many of them contain nudity, and I have not been able to review them all.
5 ★		<b>If You (SERIES)</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	Various  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 2 (5-7), 1 (8+)	With this very worthwhile series, nonfiction is written in a way that is appealing to children. The books are written by different authors. We have reviewed and approve of the following books in the series: <i>If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad</i> and <i>The Great San Francisco Earthquake</i> .

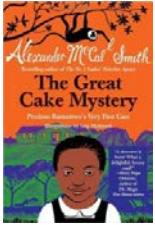
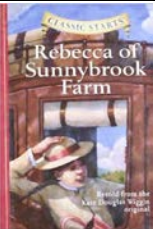
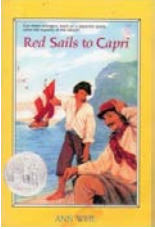
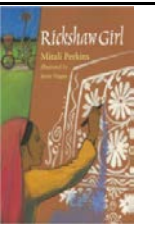








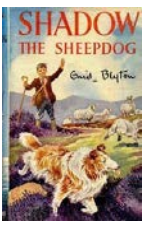


Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5		<b><i>Ink on His Fingers</i></b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Louise A. Vernon <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 8 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	In this shorter book, we read about the story of Johann Guttenberg, who invented the printing press, through the eyes of a fictional character: twelve-year-old Hans Dunne, apprentice to Guttenberg. I found this to be delightful historical fiction on an important part of world history that both boys and girls will enjoy.
5		<b><i>I Survived: Five Epic Disasters</i></b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Lauren Tarshis <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 4 (8-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This non-fiction book is well-written and engaging. Readers will learn more about places and historical time periods in general as they learn about famous blizzards, the Titanic, the Japanese Tsunami, and the Henryville Tornado.
5		<b><i>Ivan Series</i></b> <i>Fiction</i>	Myrna Grant <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 6 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-11 yrs), 2 (12-14 yrs)	This series follows two siblings, Ivan and Katya, in Soviet Russia. I've only read <i>Ivan and the Hidden Bible</i> , but the books in the series go in this order: <i>Ivan and the American Journey</i> , <i>Ivan and the Daring Escape</i> , <i>Ivan and the Hidden Bible</i> , <i>Ivan and the Informer</i> , <i>Ivan and the Moscow Circus</i> , <i>Ivan and the Secret in the Suitcase</i> , <i>Ivan and the Star of David</i> , <i>Katya and the Silver Cross</i> . These wholesome books have wonderful educational value, but I think some children will love them and some children will find the books a little less engaging than other books. At the time of this review, some books in the series were out of print, but others had been republished.
5 ★ 📍		<b><i>Jorli</i></b> <i>Fiction</i>	Johanna Spyri <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3.5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (7-9 yrs), 4 (10-12 yrs), 3 (13+)	<b>Note: This book is integrated with the Level 5 The Good and the Beautiful Language Arts Course Reader.</b> Johanna Spyri is best known for her book <i>Heidi</i> . However, she wrote many other wonderful children's books, including <i>Jorli</i> . This book is a sweet story of a Swiss young man who struggles to find work. An unexpected adventure ensues, and a mystery is eventually solved when Jorli finds work at a mill. This story is an example of literature of the highest literary and moral value.
5 ★ 📍		<b><i>Katie Kittenheart</i></b> <i>Fiction</i>	Miriam E. Mason <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 8 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10), 2 (11+)	Katie gains confidence while staying at her grandmother's farm in Kentucky and taking care of 37 small children in a sudden flood. My 10-year-old girl loved it.

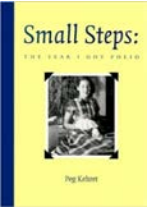

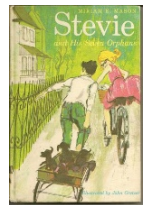


Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5 ★ Aud		<b>Little House Books (SERIES)</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Laura Ingalls Wilder  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 9 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-10), 3 (11+)	<i>Little House in the Big Woods</i> is the first book in Laura Ingalls Wilder's beloved <i>Little House</i> series, based on her life growing up on the American frontier. These warm family stories give insight into a more simple time in history. Most girls who start this series will be hooked. The next six books in the series, which are all a part of the reading program with the same point values, are as follows: <i>Little House on the Prairie</i> , <i>Farmer Boy</i> , <i>On the Banks of Plum Creek</i> , <i>By the Shores of Silver Lake</i> , <i>The Long Winter</i> , <i>Little Town on the Prairie</i> , <i>These Happy Golden Years</i> , <i>The First Four Years</i> .
5		<b>Lost on a Mountain in Maine</b>  <i>Autobiography</i>	Donn Fendler  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	My children really enjoyed this true and inspiring story. The book contains clean language and no objectionable material. The back cover reads, "When twelve-year-old Donn Fendler gets tired of waiting for his father and brothers to join him on the summit of Maine's highest peak, he decides to find his own way back to camp. But Donn doesn't expect a fast-moving fog to obscure his path, knocking him completely off course. He doesn't count on falling down an embankment that hides him from sight. And he never could have imagined taking a wrong turn that leaves him alone to wander aimlessly for nearly two weeks in the empty mountain wilderness."
5 ★		<b>Lucy's Wish</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Joan Lowery Nixon  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This book tells the interesting and heartwarming story of Lucy, an orphan traveling west on the Orphan Train. Lucy is a kind young girl who dreams of having a father, a mother, and a little sister. When things don't turn out exactly the way she plans, she faces her new life with optimism and kindness. This book contains a lot of historical information and features superb writing.
5 ★		<b>Mary Jones and Her Bible</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Mary Ropes  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (7-9 yrs), 3 (10+)	<b>Note:</b> <i>This book is included in the Level 7 The Good and the Beautiful course; thus, it is suggested that children do not read the book if they are going to complete the course.</i> Taking place in Wales in the late 1700s, this true but short story describes how a young girl, Mary Jones, saved up money for six years and walked 50 miles barefoot to buy her own Welsh Bible. Her actions led to millions of copies of the Bible being made available to others in their native tongue. Her story is an inspiring example of working hard and sacrificing to obtain important things in life. This is a short book (150 pages), written in a somewhat quaint, old-fashioned language, but it contains lovely descriptive writing and elevated vocabulary. This feel-good book greatly inspired me to place more value on the scriptures and to work hard toward worthy goals.
5		<b>McBroom's Wonderful One-Acre Farm</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Sid Fleischman  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 0 Points: 4 (7-9 yrs), 2 (10+)	My whole family loved this 63-page book (broken into 3 different stories) that my husband did as a read-aloud. This book is an example of literature that is absolutely hilarious while being absolutely appropriate. Written in 1966, this ageless classic centers around a positive, upright, and very large family. Elevated vocabulary, figurative language, and witty writing abound in this very fun book. The sequel, <i>Here Comes McBroom</i> , is also a part of the program and is worth the same points.

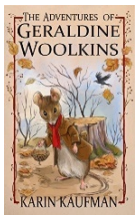

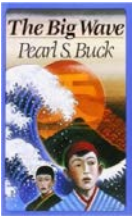
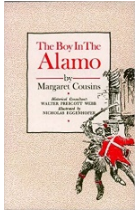

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5		<b>Medallion</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Dawn L. Watkins  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 0 Points: 4 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-11 yrs), 2 (12+)	Trave goes on a quest to find the medallion that will prove his right to the crown. This allegory is a fun read for middle readers, with no objectionable material. It teaches lessons about honesty, hard-work, forgiveness, and loyalty. " <i>Shield: A Prequel to Medallion</i> " is also part of this reading program and is worth the same points.
5 ★ Aud		<b>My Name is Sally Little Song</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Brenda Woods  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 2 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This is a well-written, interesting historical fiction with no objectionable material. I really enjoyed this book! I recommend this as a read-aloud for children 9+ or an independent read for children ages 11+, as there are some heavy subjects such as death in the book. However, the author does a great job at keeping a positive tone amidst the severe trials the young protagonists face. Most reluctant readers should like this book. The back cover reads: "Sally Harrison and her family are slaves on a plantation in Georgia. But when Master decides to sell Sally and her brother, the family escapes to seek shelter with a tribe of Seminoles who are rumored to adopt runaway slaves." The only thing I didn't like was the poor grammar some of the characters used, even though it was the author trying to make the characters authentic.
5 🔍		<b>Mystery of the Hidden Book</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Helen Fuller Orton  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 4 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	Helen Fuller Orton is a fantastic children's author. In fact, one of her books is included in our Level 3 language arts curriculum. Published in 1953, <i>Mystery of the Hidden Book</i> follows the story of two sets of siblings and their adventures. A professor has a valuable book, and the children are asked to find it and send it to him. However, the children soon realize that a thief is also searching for the book. Although Helen Fuller Orton's mysteries do not have strong moral messages, they are wholesome, clean, fun entertainment.
5		<b>Nim's Island</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Wendy Orr  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 6 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-11 yrs), 2 (12+)	Nim and her father live on an isolated island in the Pacific Ocean by themselves. While on his boat doing some nature research, something goes wrong that delays the father's return, which leaves Nim to take care of herself on the island. Nim and her animal friends face adventures, and Nim shows her upbeat attitude and resourcefulness. This is a fun, clean adventure and nature story.
5		<b>Nine True Dolphin Stories</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	Margaret Davidson  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 4 Points: 2 (5-8 yrs), 1 (9-10 yrs)	This book is a compilation of nine great stories about real dolphins. The print is big and illustrations are included, making nonfiction not too overwhelming for young readers. This book is interesting, wholesome, and packed with educational value.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5 ★ Aud		<b>Old Mother West Wind</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Thornton W. Burgess</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 7 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This classic is Thornton W. Burgess' first published work (1910) and my favorite of all his works. The writing is wholesome, charming, creative, clever, and full of great description. These timeless tales include gentle moral lessons and winsome characters such as Mother Nature, the Merry Little Breezes, and animals such as Reddy Fox and Jimmy Skunk. This books works great as a family read-aloud—just the right kind of lovely stories to fill children's minds with before they drift off to sleep. However, this is not a book for reluctant readers.
5 ★		<b>Owls in the Family</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Farley Mowat</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 4 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11-12 yrs)	Farley Mowat is a fantastic writer, and this book, published in 1961 and still in print over 50 years later, is an uplifting story about his own life as a child. Not only is this a well-written, wholesome, funny, adventurous story, but it also teaches a lot about owls and life in rural Canada in the mid-1900s. I also love the appreciation for and connection with nature that the main character displays. The town does hold a "pet parade" with awards on a Sunday, but that is all I found objectionable.
5		<b>Princess Academy</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Shannon Hale</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 0 <b>Points:</b> 3 (10-11 yrs), 2 (12+)	This is a fun, easy-read with a sweet message. 14-year-old Miri is sent with other girls in her village to an academy where they are trained to be princesses. The prince will choose one of the girls from this village to marry. I like the message that you do not have to be a princess to have it all. All in all, the story is cute and creative.
5 ★		<b>Philomena</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Kate Seredy</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 6 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	I have highly recommended other books by Kate Seredy, and I recommend this one too! This short book (93 pages), set in pre-World War I Czechoslovakia, tells the story of 12-year-old Philomena. When her grandmother, with whom she lives, passes away, Philomena goes to the city of Prague to find her aunt. Unexpected adventures ensue as Philomena tries to find her aunt. The story is fun, sweet, and beautifully written. I love the overall feeling of kindness, optimism, goodness, and respect Philomena displays.
5		<b>Pirate's Promise</b> <i>Historical fiction</i>	<b>Clyde Robert Bulla</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 3 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	The official description for this book reads: "Against his will, a young boy is separated from his sister and sold as a bonded servant, but the good-hearted pirate captain who rescues him makes possible a happier future." This short chapter book contains adventure while still displaying strong loyalty to family, integrity, and courage. The good-hearted pirate helps the boy, but you also see the consequences the pirate pays for his lifestyle. This is a great book that also helps readers gain knowledge of the historical time period. I suggest children be at least eight before reading this book because the topics of death and a cruel relative will be easier to understand at an older age.


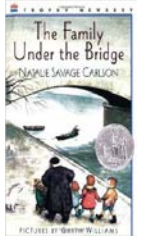
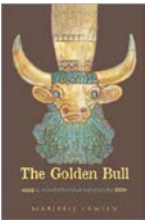
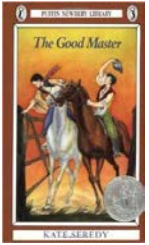
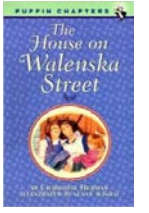
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5 ★ Aud		<b>Precious Ramotswe Mysteries for Young Readers</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Alexander McCall Smith  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs)	If you are looking for wholesome, fun books for your early reader, Precious Ramotswe Mysteries for Young Readers are a great alternative to the plethora of inappropriate books for children that are out there. The Precious Ramotswe Mysteries for Young Readers books feature great writing for the age level as well as characters that are respectful and good role models. The series also promotes positive behaviors such as kindness and honesty. In addition, readers will learn about culture in Africa. The series starts with <i>Precious and the Monkeys</i> , and then it does not matter in what order the books are read. All books are part of the reading program and worth the same points, but we have only reviewed the underlined titles. <u><i>The Great Cake Mystery</i></u> , <u><i>The Mystery of the Missing Lion</i></u> , <u><i>The Mystery of Meerkat Hill</i></u> , <u><i>Precious and the Puggies</i></u> , <u><i>Precious and the Monkeys</i></u> , <u><i>Precious and the Zebra Necklace</i></u> .
5		<b>Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm (Classic Starts)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Retold from the Kate Douglas Wiggin Original  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9 yrs)	I am not a fan of abridged classics for older children or adults, but I highly recommend many of the Classic Starts series <i>only</i> for younger readers. My children have loved reading them, and they are exemplary, classic stories that will prepare and excite readers for reading the full versions one day. <i>Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm</i> is about a creative, caring, and spirited girl sent to live with her aunts. This charming, fun story is full of wholesome insights. Any <i>Classic Starts</i> included in this program are worth the same number of points.
5 ★		<b>Red Sails to Capri</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Ann Weil  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 7 (7-9 yrs), 4 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	First published in 1952, Newbery Honor book <i>Red Sails to Capri</i> is a delightful, humorous, adventurous, and wholesome historical fiction book that takes place on the Italian island of Capri. The story begins as three men come sailing in to the remote island on a beautiful ship with red sails. The main character, a boy named Michele, comes to know these men when they stay at his father's inn. Each of the three men are there searching for something different, and they are all very interested in exploring a cave on the island that all the islanders greatly fear. The writing is skilled, the characters are lively, the story is engaging, and the dialogue is clever and funny while remaining wholesome. I laughed out loud often and smiled through most of this book. I also learned more about life in Italy in times past.
5 ★		<b>Rickshaw Girl</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Mitali Perkins  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4.5 Points: 6 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	This award-winning story has all the things to look for in a book: clean and appropriate content, good writing, good messages, good educational value, and good entertainment value. I enjoyed this book and learned more about the Asian culture.

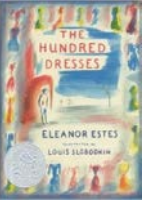
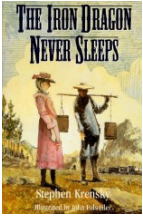
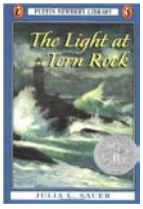
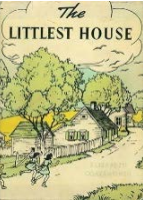
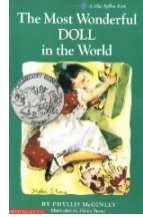
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5 		<b>Saturday Cousins</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Rebecca Caudill  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 7 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	Published in 1953, Rebecca Caudill tells the story of six small cousins—three from one family and three from another—who visit together every Saturday. The stories are not fast-paced or super exciting. Rather, the stories give a wholesome and cute look into the simple innocence of childhood before video games and television. Children will learn about a simpler time period of history in the countryside from this well-written book that supports strong families, work, kindness, and overall goodness. Children who do not need instant entertainment and fast-moving plots will enjoy a story of homemade ice cream, farms, trains, player pianos, and talking machines. Reluctant readers will most likely struggle with this book. If readers have not read any of Rebecca Caudill's books, I would start with the Fairchild Family Story series first, which I like even better.
5 		<b>SeeSaw Girl</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Linda Sue Park  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (6-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	This short historical fiction book features fantastic writing and great educational value as it teaches about life in 17th century Korea. The story is lively and interesting and good values are promoted.
5  		<b>Shadow the Sheepdog</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Enid Blyton  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 7 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	Enid Blyton was a very popular British writer who wrote nearly 800 books for children in the early to mid-1900s. I do not recommend most of Blyton's books because they contain words such as "idiot" and "shut up" and show some slightly inappropriate behaviors as acceptable. However, <i>Shadow the Sheepdog</i> (published in 1942) uses totally appropriate language, and I found it to be wholesome and uplifting in every way. I really loved this book, and I think kids of all ages would enjoy this sweet and adventurous story. Readers will gain a deeper understanding of the time period and of life on sheep farms. Readers will also learn wonderful lessons about honesty, obedience, not running away from your problems, kindness, forgiveness, and selflessness. This book kept my attention and made me laugh out loud in some places—a truly delightful, worthwhile read. I highly recommend it as a family read-aloud. The book is out of print and is not likely to be found in your local library. However, you may find used copies on Amazon.com or <a href="http://www.abebooks.co.uk/">http://www.abebooks.co.uk/</a> .
5 		<b>Shadrach</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Meindert DeJong  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3.5 <b>Points:</b> 8 (6-7 yrs), 6 (8-9 yrs), 4 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This Newbery Honor Book, written in 1953, is a humorous, warm story about a young boy from the Netherlands whose dearest wish is to be granted—he will have a rabbit, black if possible. Lessons are learned and an adventure ensues when the beloved rabbit gets lost. DeJong's deliberately thoughtful and descriptive writing about a time before television and video games is endearing and interesting, offering a needed counterbalance to the fast action, edge-of-your-seat books many kids are used to. Readers will also learn about the culture of the Netherlands during that time period.

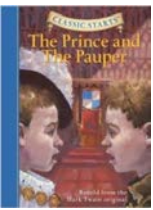

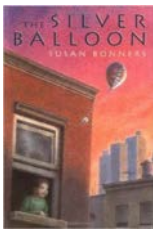
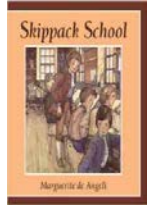

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5 ★		<b>Small Steps</b> <i>Autobiography</i>	Peg Kehret  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Points: 7 (8-9 yrs), 4 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)</b>	In this true story, middle-schooler Peg Kehret has a muscle spasm at school. After her temperature rises, she is taken to the hospital and put into isolation as she becomes paralyzed from the neck down and can hardly breathe on her own. She develops not just one type of polio, but three. This engaging and educational book gives a fascinating insight into polio and its symptoms, treatments, and effects. From the first page, readers will be pulled into this honest and moving account. This book inspires its readers to be more appreciative and positive.
5 ★ Aud		<b>Snow Treasure</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Marie McSwigan  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Points: 6 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)</b>	This story takes place in Norway during WWII and is based on a true story, although it contains fictional characters. The book is exciting, well-written, and packed with educational value as it teaches about the Nazi occupation of Norway and the way of life in a small Norwegian village in 1940. Peter and his friends are given the task to slip nine million dollars in gold past the Nazi soldiers as they ride their sleds. The story models courage and determination and contains no objectionable material.
5 ★		<b>Stevie and His Seven Orphans</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Miriam E. Mason  <b>Moral Merit: 3.5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3.5</b> <b>Educational Value: 1</b> <b>Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs)</b>	This is just the kind of sweet, entertaining story I love my children to read. Stevie and his friend Debby take in seven orphan dogs. Their adventures lead them to befriend an old man and help him find happiness again. My 10-year-old daughter loved this book.
5		<b>Summer of the Monkeys</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Wilson Rawls  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 3</b> <b>Points: 6 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)</b>	This well-written classic features clean language and content and a heartwarming story. Fourteen-year-old Jay lives on a farm in the Ozarks. When a circus train crashes in his area and all the monkeys escape, a large reward is offered for the monkeys. As Jay and his dog try to track the monkeys down, the reader is taken on a journey of adventure. I love the wonderful relationship of Jay and his grandfather and Jay's persistence and hard work. This story is slower than most stories today, so not all readers will love it.
5 ★ 📖		<b>The Tuckers</b> <i>(SERIES)</i> <i>Fiction</i>	Jo Mendel  <b>Moral Merit: 4.5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4.5</b> <b>Educational Value: 2</b> <b>Points: 7 (6-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)</b>	The Tuckers is a children's book series released in the 1960s that we are thrilled to have discovered. Not all of the books in the series are recommended, but the books that are recommended are absolutely fantastic! Our favorite in the series is <i>The Adventures of Plum Tucker</i> . In this book the Tuckers meet and fall in love with a puppy, which leads them into unexpected adventures and lessons. The story is wholesome and humorous, beautifully written, and the ending made us teary eyed. This is not the first book in the series, but it works great as a stand alone. We also recommend <i>The Special Secret</i> and <i>Here Comes a Friend</i> . We do not recommend <i>The Wonderful House</i> . We will continue to review the rest of the series in future book lists.



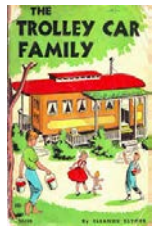



Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5		<b>The Adventures of Geraldine Woolkins</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Karin Kaufman <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 0 <b>Points:</b> 4 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	This cute book follows Geraldine, a mouse who wants to be brave, in her little adventures. Meet her forest friends and go deep into the forest and countryside with Geraldine as she learns lessons. God is woven strongly throughout the book, which is nice, but it is also a slight bit different for a mouse family to be praying and talking of God as if they were humans. I enjoyed the nice writing and the wholesome, gentle approach to this book.
5 Aud		<b>The Adventures of Sir Lancelot</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Gerald Morris <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 2 (6-8 yrs), 1 (9-10 yrs)	This is definitely more light and fun reading, but this story features good writing which is humorous and witty. My young children and I listened to the Audible version, and my children loved it. They thought it was hilarious. It's hard these days to find funny books that are appropriate. We did find this book appropriate. There is one part where Lancelot accidentally gets shot in his bum and has to sit on pillows for a while. Some parents may feel that is inappropriate, but I felt it was fine, and there was nothing else questionable. The book tells the story, with some liberties, of Sir Lancelot. There is not really much educational or moral value in the book, but the book has good literary value and promotes creativity and imagination. I have not reviewed the other books in the series.
5 ★		<b>The Big Wave</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Pearl S. Buck <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 4 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	<b>Note: This book is integrated with The Good &amp; the Beautiful Level 4 Language Arts course.</b> This short book (64 pages with somewhat big print), which I really enjoyed, is packed with great writing and an interesting story that teaches about people and cultures. The book is clean (unlike some of Buck's other books) and supports good values and high character.
5		<b>The Boy in the Alamo</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Margaret Cousins <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	It is always wonderful to find a book that is educational and entertaining. Originally published in 1958, <i>The Boy in the Alamo</i> tells the story of the siege of the Alamo through the point of view of twelve-year-old Billy Campbell. This would make a great read-aloud for the whole family.
5		<b>The Buffalo Knife</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	William O. Steele <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 7 (6-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	This is a great adventure novel about early America. I loved the emphasis on strong families, courage, and faith. The story is engaging and should be enjoyed by even reluctant readers. I found no objectionable material. However, the main character talks about how excited he is to hunt and kill animals and Indians when he gets older, which some parents may not like. Later in the story, he kills an Indian to defend his family, but feels sick about doing so. The descriptions of violence are not graphic. The vocabulary and writing are excellent.








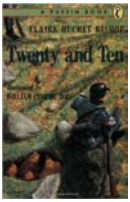
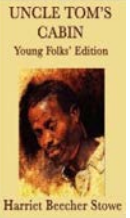

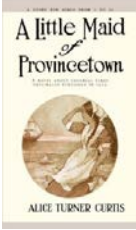

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5 ★		<b>The Cabin Faced West</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Jean Fritz</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (7-8 yrs), 5, (9-10 yrs) 3 (11+)	This is such a fantastic book! When Anne Hamilton's family moves to the West in 18th-century America, the area is so remote that only two families live there. Readers will love the characters, engaging plot, and vivid writing as they learn about a previous era and feel both the challenges and wonders of the new land through Anne's eyes. The warm family relationships are in stark contrast to many popular books. Themes include gratitude, adjusting to change, love of learning, hard work, strong families, and compassion.
5 ★		<b>The Family Under the Bridge</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Natalie Savage Carlson</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 5 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	We did this Newbery Honor Book, published in 1958, as a read-aloud with our lower elementary homeschool group. We all loved it! The writing and messages were fantastic. The official description reads: "This is the delightfully warm and enjoyable story of an old Parisian named Armand, who relished his solitary life. Children, he said, were like starlings, and one was better off without them. But the children who lived under the bridge recognized a true friend when they met one, even if the friend seemed a trifle unwilling at the start. And it did not take Armand very long to realize that he had gotten himself a ready-made family, one that he loved with all his heart, and one for whom he would have to find a better home than the bridge."
5		<b>The Golden Bull</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Marjorie Cowley</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	The official description reads: "The story takes place in Mesopotamia 5000 years ago. The drought has lasted for months and the farmlands on the outskirts of the city of Ur have been devastated. The parents of Jomar and Zefa have no choice but to send their children away from their failing farm to seek employment in Ur. At fourteen, Jomar is old enough to apprentice with Sidah, a master goldsmith who works for the temple of the moongod." This book contains no objectionable material and is packed with historical details about the life and history of Mesopotamia.
5 ★		<b>The Good Master</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Kate Seredy</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (7-9 yrs), 4 (10+)	This book is a very worthy Newbery Honor winner, set in pre-World War I Europe on a Hungarian ranch. As the novel begins, Jancsi is excited to go pick up his cousin Kate, whom he has never met. She is coming from Budapest to recover from measles in the country. But Kate is not quite what Jancsi was expecting. The book paints a vibrant, detailed portrait of life in the Hungarian countryside as Jancsi learns to appreciate his hardworking rural life, and Kate, a young, motherless girl, learns the meaning of love and family. As an interesting side note, Kate Seredy originally wrote this book in English, but English is not her first language—an amazing fact considering the rich writing full of imagery and exceptional sensory language. This book would make a great read-aloud.
5		<b>The House on Walenska Street</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Charlotte Herman</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 4 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	Leah lives with her mother and two sisters in a small Russian village in the early 1900s. Leah's father recently died, and her mother supports the family by baking bread and renting out part of her cottage to a cobbler. This book is a delightful look into a Jewish child's life in a different time and place and in different circumstances. Leah, who is a talented writer, reads and writes letters to her cousins in America, has little adventures in her daily life, and experiences soldiers raiding her family's home. Nearly every chapter starts with, "Mama, come quick!" as Leah's little sister Esther has gotten into some predicament. This book is not only wholesome, fun, and well-written, but also gives worthwhile insight into history, cultures, and human nature.

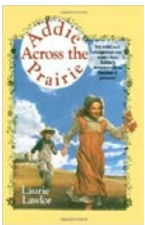




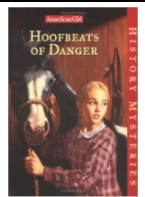
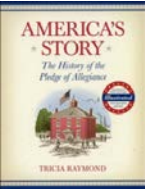
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5 ★ Aud		<b>The Hundred Dresses</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Eleanor Estes  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 2 Points: 3 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs), 1 (11+)	This Newbery Honor Book has been a beloved classic for more than 70 years. The book is 80 pages long with big print and pictures on most pages. In this touching story, readers learn about the damage caused by prejudice, racism, and teasing as the book illustrates the meaning of being understanding, standing up for what is right, and showing kindness. Readers also gain knowledge about school and daily life in the 1940s. This would be a great book to do as a read-aloud or to discuss with your children after reading.
5		<b>The Iron Dragon Never Sleeps</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Stephen Krensky  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Reading Level: 3 Educational Value: 3.5 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	When Winnie goes to California in the summer of 1867 she meets a young Chinese boy who becomes her friend despite the prejudices that many people had against the Chinese at the time. While this is not a top pick, it is interesting and worthy.
5 ★		<b>The Light at Tern Rock</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Julia L. Sauer  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Reading Level: 5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 1 (11+)	Published in 1951, this Newbery Honor Book tells the story of Ronnie and his aunt as they become stranded at the Tern Rock lighthouse. Ronnie's aunt is a great role model—patient, forgiving, optimistic, and cheerful. This quick and fun read features fantastic writing but is only 62 pages long with illustrations on most pages. Although it could be enjoyed any time of the year, this book has a strong Christmas theme.
5 📍		<b>The Littlest House</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Elizabeth Coatsworth  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 7 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12-14 yrs), 3 (15+)	This book is a sequel to <i>Twelve Months Make a Year</i> , but it also works as a stand alone. Three siblings are given the littlest house on the street for the whole summer. This adorable little house stands near the harbor. This story does not have a strong plot, but it is sweet, gentle, and imaginative.
5		<b>The Most Wonderful Doll in the World</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Phyllis McGinley  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 0 Points: 6 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9 yrs)	Originally published in 1950, this Caldecott Honor Book is a wholesome and charming story about a girl and her doll and the consequences of letting lies get bigger and bigger. The book promotes honesty and kindness and features beautiful illustrations.

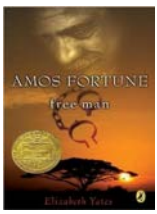

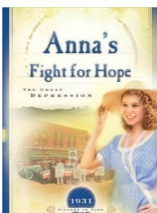
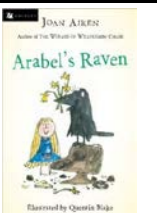
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5 ★		<b>The Prince and the Pauper (Classic Starts)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Retold from the Mark Twain Original  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9 yrs)	I am not a fan of abridged classics for older children or adults, but I highly recommend many of the Classic Starts series <i>only</i> for younger readers. My children have loved reading them, and they are wholesome, classic stories that will prepare and excite readers for reading the full versions one day. This abridged version of <i>The Prince and the Pauper</i> is engaging and contains great messages. Any Classic Starts included in this program are worth the same number of points.
5		<b>The Secret Seven Adventure</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Enid Blyton  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 1 Points: 3 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9 yrs)	Enid Blyton was a very popular British writer who wrote nearly 800 books for children in the early to mid-1900s. I do not recommend most of Blyton's books because they contain words such as "idiot" and "shut up," and show some slightly inappropriate behaviors as acceptable. However, I do recommend <i>The Secret Seven Adventure</i> . The story is simple but wholesome and interesting. The kids are polite, and the writing is nice. There are many books in the Secret Seven series, and I only recommend this one. The book is out of print, and is not likely to be found in your local library in America. However, you may find used copies on Amazon.com or <a href="http://www.abebooks.co.uk">http://www.abebooks.co.uk</a> .
5		<b>The Silver Balloon</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Susan Bonners  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 3 Points: 3 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9 yrs)	Gregory sends a silver balloon containing a message into the air, hoping someone will find it and write back to him. He is surprised when he receives a letter from a wheat farmer who found the balloon. The two start a letter correspondence and send each other "mystery gifts," such as arrowheads and wasp nests. But then the farmer sends Gregory a mystery gift that neither of them can identify, and the librarian can't help Gregory figure out the mystery gift this time. What is it, and how will Gregory find out? The writing and the story is pretty good but not fantastic. It is a short read that I think boys will like slightly more than girls.
5		<b>The Skippack School</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Marguerite De Angeli  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (7-9 yrs), 3 (10-11 yrs), 2 (12+)	Eli and his family leave Germany and come to America across the Atlantic Ocean. They make their new home in Penn's woods. This is a gentle story about life in early America. It is well-written, but it is slow-paced and may be difficult for some children to get through on their own.
5		<b>The Spartan Twins</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Lucy Fitch Perkins  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	This short book is a wholesome, fun story of twins that live in ancient Greece. Lucy Fitch Perkins is a wonderful writer, and the book has good educational value. The plot is simple, but interesting, and would likely be more interesting to children 10 and under. The book is available for free on <a href="http://gutenberg.org">gutenberg.org</a> . There is an extended story of Greek mythology told in the book, and there are some references to the beliefs of the ancient Greeks.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5		<b>The Tanglewoods' Secret</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Patricia St. John  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 8 (7-8 yrs), 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	In this gentle, well-written story, Ruth suffers from a terrible temper. However, a series of events teaches her powerful lessons. This book is full of beautiful language, compelling storytelling, and wonderful messages about nature, faith, overcoming weaknesses, and more. If you like this book, you will also like <i>Treasures of the Snow</i> , <i>Rainbow Garden</i> , and <i>Star of Light</i> by the same author. But I do not suggest <i>The Secret at Pheasant Cottage</i> because it contains some really heavy, depressing content.
5 		<b>The Trolley Car Family</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Eleanor Clymer  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-12 yrs)	The back cover reads, "Something is wrong. Cranky Mr. Jefferson is sure of it. Those noisy Parker children next door are much too quiet." Something <i>is</i> wrong at the Parker home. Pa has lost his job driving a trolley. He no longer has a job, and they no longer have a home, but they do have the trolley. So off they go, to live in the trolley, taking Mr. Jefferson along, too. This is a very fun, wholesome story that children should love.
5  Aud		<b>The Trumpet of the Swan</b> <i>Fiction</i>	E.B. White  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 8 (7-8 yrs), 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	My children (old and young) loved this masterfully told classic story by E.B. White, author of <i>Charlotte's Web</i> . Along with great story writing and wholesome messages, this book contains beautiful description that is not often found in popular children's books today, such as, "But one day a change came over the woods and the pond. Warm air, soft and kind, blew through the trees. The ice, which had softened during the night, began to melt. Patches of open water appeared. All the creatures that lived in the pond and in the woods were glad to feel the warmth. They heard and felt the breath of spring, and they stirred with new life and hope. There was a good, new smell in the air, a smell of earth waking after its long sleep."
5		<b>The Wind in the Willows</b> <i>(Classic Starts)</i> <i>Fiction</i>	Retold from the Kenneth Grahame Original  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (6-7 yrs), 5 (8-9 yrs), 2 (10 yrs)	I am not a fan of abridged classis for adults, but I highly recommend many of the Classic Starts series for younger readers. My children have loved reading them, and they are wholesome, classic stories that will prepare and excite readers for reading the full versions one day. Reviewer Wayne S. Walker wrote, "The relationship of Rat, Mole, and Badger illustrates good friendships, and in the end Mr. Toad learns an important lesson about being humble and modest. It is one of the loveliest stories that I remember ever having read." Parents and readers should be aware that the original <i>The Wind in the Willows</i> takes the Lord's name in vain one time.

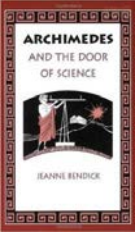
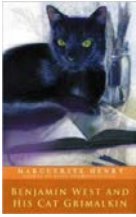
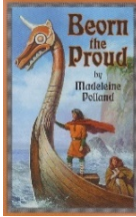

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5		<b>The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet</b>  <i>Science Fiction</i>	Eleanor Cameron  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 3 (7-9 yrs), 2 (10-12 yrs)	In print since the 1950s, this story follows two friends as they travel to an alien planet in their homemade space ship. Although I am not a big fan of science fiction, I did like this story. If your child likes science fiction, or if you want to expose your child to all different kinds of genres, this is a fantastic book for these reasons: 1) The story is fun and imaginative. 2) Readers actually learn some things about space and science. 3) The writing features a wonderful vocabulary. 4) Unlike so many modern books for youth, this book portrays parents as helpful, caring, and involved, and the children treat their parents with respect. Also unlike many books today, the children do not go have secret adventures without telling their parents. I have not read the sequel, <i>Stowaway to the Mushroom Planet</i> , but reviews appear positive, so it is a part of this reading program for the same point value.
5		<b>The Wreck of the Ethie</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Hilary Hyland  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Age Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 4 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	This book is based on the true story of a shipwreck that occurred on the remote western coast of Newfoundland in 1919. I really enjoyed the story. It's one of those books that leaves you feeling good after you read it.
5		<b>Tucker's Countryside</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	George Selden  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Age Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	This sequel to <i>Cricket in Times Square</i> is a wholesome, warm, and witty read. Harry Cat and Tucker Mouse take a journey to the country to help Chester Cricket, who lives in the Old Meadow, and whose home is about to be ruined by construction. The book has messages of friendship, overcoming obstacles, and working together.
5 ★ Aud		<b>Treasures of the Snow</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Patricia St. John  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 9 (6-8 yrs), 5 (9-10), 3 (11+)	My 8-year-old daughter and I read this book together, and it was truly a delight. The writing is beautiful, the story is very engaging and inspiring, and the educational value is high. The book takes you to a small village high in the beautiful Swiss Alps where two families and their stories intertwine. I loved the plots and how faith in Christ was a main theme. If you like this book, you will also like <i>The Tanglewoods' Secret</i> , <i>Rainbow Garden</i> , and <i>Star of Light</i> by the same author. But I do not suggest <i>The Secret at Pheasant Cottage</i> because it contains some heavy, depressing content.
5 ★ 📖		<b>Twelve Months Make a Year</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Elizabeth Coatsworth  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 7 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12-14 yrs), 3 (15+)	This is literature at its best. This gentle book features beautiful description, well-developed characters, and a sweet storyline that is both humorous and full of wonderful messages. The family in this book loves doing things together. The book follows their stories through twelve months of the year.

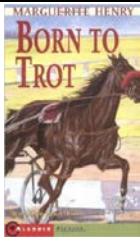

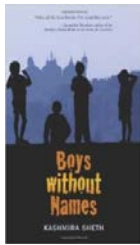

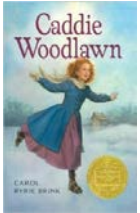
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
5 ★ Aud		<b>Twenty and Ten</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Claire Huchet Bishop  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> 9 (7-8 yrs), 7 (9-11 yrs), 5 (12-14 yrs), 4 (15+)	<b>Note: This book is integrated with The Good &amp; the Beautiful Level 4 Language Arts course.</b> This book is a treasure! Based on a true story during the Nazi occupation of France during WWII, the book tells the story of twenty French children who are taken to a big old house up in the hills, where they are watched over by a young, kind-hearted nun and are kept safe during the war. Eventually, ten Jewish children are also brought to the home to be hidden. The story supports faith in God, selflessness, courage, and loyalty. It is also a story of suspense and features lovely writing and a varied used of vocabulary. This book was first published in 1952. I love how this book exposes children to some of the realities of WWII in a way that is gentle, faith-based, and focuses on a beautiful, positive sub-story.
5		<b>Uncle Tom's Cabin: Young Folk's Edition</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Harriet Beecher Stowe  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	Published in 1852, <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> , had an immense impact on the nation and the eventual abolition of slavery. The book is also a great story that shows the realities of slavery while also showing how love and faith can overcome all trials. This version was written for a younger audience by Stowe herself and does not contain inappropriate language like the full version. There are two instances that could be considered taking God's name in vain, but I felt that the people were truly referring to God.
5 ★		<b>Vision of Beauty</b> <i>Biography</i>	Katherine Lasky  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 5 (5-7 yrs), 3 (8-9 yrs), 1 (10-11 yrs)	This well-written biography tells the story of Sarah Breedlove Walker, who finds incredible success, despite poverty and discrimination. I really enjoyed this book and so did my 11-year-old daughter.
6 ★		<b>A Little Maid Series</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Alice Turner Curtis  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 8 (7-8 yrs), 7 (9 yrs), 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	Alice Turner Curtis was a gifted American writer who wrote three series of children's books: Grandpa's Little Girls (1920-1930--out of print and unavailable as of the date of this review), <i>Yankee Girls</i> (1920-1930), and <i>A Little Maid</i> (1913-1937). My 8-year-old daughter and I have read and loved three of the A Little Maid series: <i>A Little Maid of Provincetown</i> , <i>a Little Maid of Mohawk Valley (includes a reference to seeing a real fairy)</i> , and <i>A Little Maid of Massachusetts</i> . This series of historical novels is especially for girls 7-13 and features delightful stories that are based on true events that took place in Colonial America. The series is not easy, fast-paced, thrilling reading that many youth today are used to. Instead, it features beautiful, wholesome, skillful writing, and gentle yet engaging stories of courage and character. Children who are not used to this type of reading might struggle with these books. But my eight-year-old daughter, who started with this type of reading from the beginning, adores these books.
6 ★		<b>Abby (SERIES)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Pamela Walls  <b>Moral Value:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1.5 <b>Points:</b> 7 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	Girls will especially love the sweet and adventurous story of Abby Kendall. When her family decides to move to their uncle's ranch in Hawaii, Abby is devastated about leaving her best friend Luke. But when he comes aboard the ship as a stowaway, an exciting adventure begins. The book has no unclean language or content and is filled with uplifting messages about friendship, courage, prayer, and trusting in God. This is the first book in the South Seas Adventures Series. We have also reviewed and loved the second book in the series titled <i>Abby Quest for Treasure</i> . It is refreshing to have a more modern book include so many natural, appropriate references to God and faith.

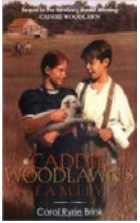
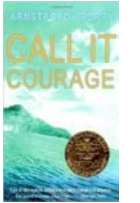
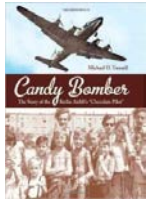
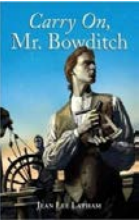
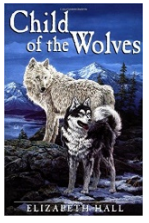
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6		<b>Addie Across the Prairie</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Laurie Lawlor <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	This well-written, engaging historical fiction explores what it was like to move from a settled area to the wild prairie. There is a little sibling rivalry (sticking out tongue, saying "I hate you"). It is resolved in a good way, so I don't feel it is too much of a concern. I like the references to trusting in the Lord and singing hymns. Overall, this is a great and worthwhile book, but I liked <i>The Cabin Faced West</i> more, which is on a very similar subject.
6  		<b>Alice-all-by-Herself</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Elizabeth Coatsworth <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 8 (7-8 yrs), 6 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	Elizabeth Coatsworth is one of my family's favorite authors. <i>Alice-all-by-Herself</i> is filled with clever writing and beautiful descriptions of nature like the other books by Coatsworth. This book tells the story of ten-year-old Alice, who lives in Damariscotta, Maine, and her family. Anyone who likes Laura Ingalls Wilder's Little House series will love reading about Alice's adventures ice fishing, going to the circus, befriending a Passamaquoddy Indian, and carving a present for her mother. Her kind, loving family and her delightful everyday adventures make this a book that girls will especially enjoy. The book, at the time of this review, was out of print but available to buy as a used book on Amazon.com. Many libraries also have this book.
6		<b>Along Came Galileo</b> <i>Biography</i>	Jeanne Bendick <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (7-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	This 95-page book features large print and nice black-and-white illustrations. Geared toward children ages 8-11, the writing is understandable and engaging. Overall, this is a great book.
6		<b>American Girl History Mysteries</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Various <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 4 (7-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	The American Girl History Mysteries series is the only American Girl series that I recommend. However, I have only read one book in the series: <i>Hoofbeats of Danger</i> . The book was wholesome and had some historical information. However, the story was not as meaningful and interesting as many other books.
6		<b>America's Story: The History of the Pledge of Allegiance</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	Tricia Raymond <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 4 (7-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	This non-fiction book (96 pages) is an easy and very informative read that traces the story of the Pledge of Allegiance. It is written in a way that is easy enough for younger children to understand while still being interesting for adults as well.



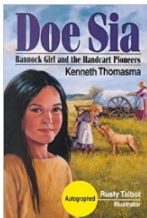
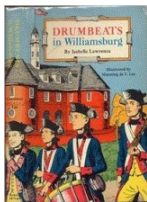
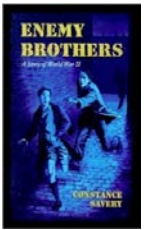
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 ★ Aud		<b>Amos Fortune, Free Man</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Elizabeth Yates  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit: 5 Educational Value for Level: 5 Points: 5 (10+)	This book contains everything I love in a book: completely clean language, powerful messages, insights into history and cultures, an intriguing plot, elevated vocabulary, and exemplary writing. This book is based on the true story of a 15-year-old African tribal king who is captured by slave traders and sold as a slave in America. Resisting bitterness and retaining hope and dignity, "Amos" leads an incredibly admirable and inspiring life. This book, with profound lessons, motivated me to want to be a better person. This is also a book I highly recommend to adults. The reading, although it contains elevated vocabulary, is an easy and relatively short read. However, because it will be enjoyed more by an older audience, I recommend it for ages 10 and older.
6 ★		<b>A Place for Peter</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Elizabeth Yates  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Age Level: 5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 7 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	<i>A Place for Peter</i> is the sequel to <i>Mountain Born</i> , but either of the books can be read as a stand-alone. This book continues the story of Peter, who is now a teenager, as he grows up and learns about service, responsibility, and courage. With his mother away helping a sick relative, Peter struggles to earn his father's trust and help care for the farm. This book is full of beautiful descriptions and lessons. As this book is about the coming of age of a teenage boy, it may be enjoyed more by children 10 and older.
6 ★		<b>Anna's Fight For Hope</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	JoAnn A. Grote  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 4.5 Points: 7 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-11 yrs), 5 (12-14 yrs), 3 (15+)	If you are looking for a wholesome, engaging book that takes place during the Great Depression, this is a great option. It's a sweet and engaging story. The official description reads: "Follow the fictional story of Anna Harrington to see how this time of upheaval affected a twelve-year-old girl who saw her friends and acquaintances devastated by economic events. This very personal story shows the beauty of friendship while at the same time teaching important lessons of Christian faith and American history." The book is available as a Kindle version.
6 Aud		<b>Arabel's Raven</b> <i>(SERIES)</i>  <i>Fiction</i>	Joan Aiken  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 1 Points: 3 (7-11 yrs)	<i>Arabel's Raven</i> and <i>Arabel and Mortimer</i> are well-written, hilarious books by the very talented writer Joan Aiken. I like how the main character, Arabel, is calm and positive. My children enjoyed these delightful, clever books.

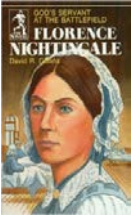
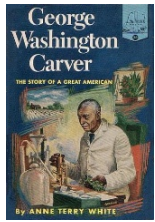
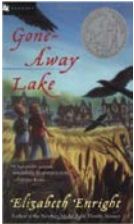

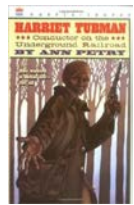


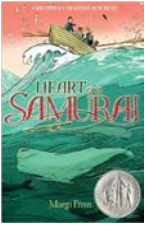
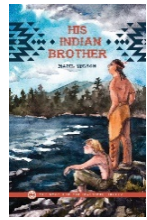

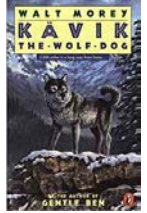

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6		<b>Archimedes and the Door of Science</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	Jeanne Bendick  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (8-9 yrs), 4 (10-12 yrs), 3 (13+)	Although this book is non-fiction, it is written in a way that holds the interest of younger readers. Readers learn not only about the ancient Greek mathematician and scientist Archimedes, but they also learn about history and science. An Amazon.com reviewer explains: "The accomplishments of Archimedes made him one of the most important founders of science. This captivating book tells the story of Archimedes' life and gives vivid imagery to his accomplishments through simple, effective text and delightful illustrations. From my 3rd grader to my 10th grader, they all eagerly finished the book with enthusiastic comprehension." NOTE TO PARENTS: At one point, when Archimedes makes a breakthrough, he was taking a bath at the bath house, and he was so excited about his breakthrough that he ran home, forgetting to put on his clothes, so he was running naked down the street shouting "Eureka" (which means "I have found it.") (page 58). I would normally object to a character running down the street naked, but Archimedes was so caught up in his thoughts, he wasn't purposely trying to be inappropriate.
6 ★		<b>Benjamin West and His Cat Grimalkin</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Marguerite Henry  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 8 (8-9 yrs), 6 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	This endearing story is based on the true childhood story of Benjamin West, who became known as the father of American painting. Benjamin comes from a Quaker family whose beliefs forbid the creation of images. But when Benjamin discovers he has a special gift for art, an intriguing journey begins. The first few pages might be a little hard to get into, but then I couldn't put the book down. It is a fantastic and intriguing story and features beautiful, skilled writing.
6 ★		<b>Beorn the Proud</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Madeleine Polland  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 8 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	In this fictional story, a Christian young woman, Ness, is captured by Vikings on the Irish coast. Ness' faith helps sustain her during her captivity. This book is extremely engaging, has great educational value, and relates powerful messages about reliance on God, courage, patience, and avoiding greed for power and wealth. The book is a fairly easy read that should be enjoyed even by reluctant readers.
6 ★		<b>Bound for Oregon</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Jean Van Leeuwen  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	Loosely based on the journals of a real person, <i>Bound for Oregon</i> is a very well-written, worthwhile book about life on the Oregon Trail. Not only is the story engaging, but the educational and moral value are fantastic. God and faith are woven heartwarming throughout the book. I suggest the book for ages 10+, as there are some topics such as death in the book that are appropriately treated but are not suited for small children.

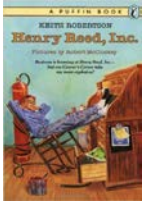
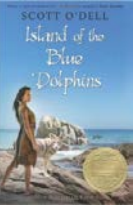

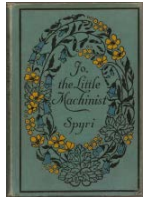
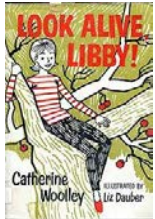
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6		<b>Born to Trot</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Marguerite Henry  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 8 (7-9 yrs), 6 (10 yrs), 4 (11+)	This heartfelt story of determination, based on a true story, is a wonderful children's classic. The book is packed with educational information on horses, but even non-horse lovers should enjoy this well-written, wholesome book.
6 ★ Aud		<b>Beyond the Orphan Train (SERIES)</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Arleta Richardson  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (5-7 yrs), 5 (8-9 yrs), 3 (10-11 yrs)	Beyond the Orphan Train is an endearing, uplifting series that includes the books: <i>Looking for Home</i> , <i>Whistle-Stop West</i> , <i>West Prairie Homestead</i> , and <i>Across the Border</i> . The books center around Ethan Cooper and his family in the early 1900s, beginning when Ethan is eight years old. Follow Ethan and his siblings in their adventures to stay together and find a family. God, prayer, and faith are gently woven into parts of the story. This series is highly recommended!
6 ★		<b>Boys without Names</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Kashmira Sheth  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (13+)	Set in modern-day rural India, this story follows 11-year-old Gopal and his family as they flee to the big city of Mumbai to find work and a better future. However, tragedy strikes when Gopal is captured and imprisoned as a child laborer. This story is very engaging, but it also teaches much about India, human nature, and principles such as honesty, hope, kindness, friendship, and loyalty. Although the book does dive into the deep topic of forced child labor, it does so without graphic detail or despair—keeping a positive note as Gopal maintains his sense of kindness and hope throughout his difficulties. I really liked this book, and felt like I gained a lot from reading it.
6 ★ Aud		<b>By the Great Horn Spoon!</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Sid Fleischman  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 5 (8-9 yrs), 4 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	In this exciting California Gold Rush adventure, twelve-year-old Jack and his butler, Praiseworthy, set out to strike it rich and save their family from their financial problems. Sid Fleischman's writing is hilarious and witty, and this book is filled with metaphors, idioms, and word play. It also teaches readers fascinating information about the Gold Rush.
6 ★ Aud		<b>Caddie Woodlawn</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Carol Ryrie Brink  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 9 (7-8 yrs), 7 (9-11 yrs), 5 (12-14 yrs), 4 (15+)	The back of this fantastic Newbery Medal book reads: "Caddie is brave, and her story is special because it's based on the life and memories of Carol Ryrie Brink's grandmother, the real Caddie Woodlawn. Her spirit and sense of fun have made this book a classic that readers have taken to their hearts for more than seventy years." Some reviewers say Caddie, a tomboy, has her character suppressed as she is trained how to be a "lady." I disagree, however. Instead, I see Caddie progressing and changing as she grows into womanhood and learns self-control. Caddie's own words at the end explain: "Folks keep growing from one person into another all their lives . . ." I thoroughly enjoy the beautiful, heartwarming scenes in this book that explore family ties and life in simpler times.

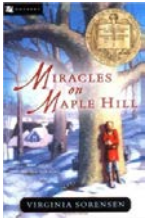
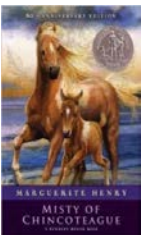



Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6		<b>Caddie Woodlawn's Family</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Carol Ryrie Brink</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 9 (7-8 yrs), 7 (9-11 yrs), 5 (12-14 yrs), 4 (15+)	This book is a sequel to <i>Caddie Woodlawn</i> . I agree with a review by the <i>New Yorker</i> that reads: "The writing is fresh and homely happenings ring true not only of a period and a way of life but of childhood anytime and anywhere." This book gives readers insight into life on the frontier in the mid 1900s. If you liked <i>Caddie Woodlawn</i> , you will like this book too!
6 Aud		<b>Call it Courage</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Armstrong Sperry</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 1 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (10 yrs), 4 (11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This short Newbery Medal winner is an interesting and well-written book. Mafatu, the son of a chief on an island of seafaring people, is deeply afraid of the ocean. After being taunted and looked down on, Mafatu finally decides to face his fears and starts out on a journey that will become a legend. It is sad that Mafatu's desires to do "great things," such as kill a wild pig, focus around what other people will think of him and how they will praise him, but that was a center of his society. I did not feel the book really had a good moral message, but it does not contain objectionable material, and it teaches a lot about the culture of the people. I do not recommend the book for children under 10 as it does have some scary parts with "people eaters."
6		<b>Candy Bomber</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	<b>Michael O. Tunnell</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 3 (7-9 yrs), 2 (10+)	This inspiring book is 103 pages long with many photographs and tells the true story of US Air Force Lieutenant Gail Halvorsen who wanted to bring some happiness to the children of Berlin after WWII was over and Berlin was in ruins.
6 ★		<b>Carry On, Mr. Bowditch</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	<b>Jean Lee Latham</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	This Newbery Award-winning fictionalized biography tells the true story of Nathaniel Bowditch, an American mathematician, astronomer, and navigation expert. "Nat" faces hardships as a young boy and is forced into an apprenticeship, but he remains cheerful and perseverant as he educates himself until he achieves his dreams. This inspiring story is skillfully written yet easy to read, with great descriptive language and imagery.
6		<b>Child of the Wolves</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Elizabeth Hall</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 8 (7-9 yrs), 6 (10 yrs), 4 (11+)	Granite, a Siberian husky puppy, has a happy life with his mother. But everything changes when a stranger comes to take Granite away. He escapes into the wilderness, and a tale of his survival ensues. This wholesome, engaging book is a great alternative to <i>The Call of the Wild</i> , which is on our not recommended list.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6		<b>Cinnabar, the One O'clock Fox</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Marguerite Henry</b>  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 8 (7-9 yrs), 6 (10 yrs), 4 (11+)	My daughter loved this witty, charming book based on an old legend about fox hunting in the area around George Washington's home—Mount Vernon. Like Marguerite Henry's other books, this book is extremely well-written and worthwhile.
6 ★		<b>Courage to Run</b>  <i>Biography</i>	<b>Wendy Lawton</b>  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (8-9), 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	This well-written book about Harriet Tubman is inspiring and will keep you turning the pages. Rich description, powerful messages, and high educational value make this book a great choice. I also love how God and faith are incorporated into the story.
6 ★		<b>Doe Sia</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Kenneth Thomasma</b>  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11-12 yrs), 3 (13+)	This is another great book in Kenneth Thomasma's series of books about Native American children. Lost in a blinding snowstorm, two brave girls join together to survive: a Native American girl and a handcart pioneer girl from Denmark. This story is engaging, and contains wonderful messages and has high educational value. My ten-year-old daughter and I read this book together and loved it.
6 ★ 🗺️		<b>Drumbeats in Williamsburg</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Isabelle Lawrence</b>  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	Children used to a diet of "junk food" books may not feel this book is as instantly entertaining as other books. However, those who are used to good and beautiful style books should really love this book—I did! This wholesome and exciting story is full of authentic historical details as it beautifully paints the story of fictional character young Andy Small. In the early Revolutionary War, Andy is sent to live in Williamsburg with relatives for his safety. But Williamsburg turns out to be anything but safe. Andy meets General Lafayette, carries an important message, cares for and hides a wounded British boy, and ends up taking a daring and unique role in the Siege of Yorktown. This is one of those books that really should not be out of print. The first half of the book is not as exciting as the second half, which really picks up. I adore the drawings at the beginning of each chapter.
6 ★ 🔊 Aud		<b>Enemy Brothers</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Constance Savery</b>  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	This book is a timeless treasure. Written in 1943, the author did not even know the outcome of World War II as she wrote about it. The characters are well-developed, engaging, and convincing, and the story is intriguing. I also love the fact that the book gives deep insight into history and human nature, and the characters have high moral character. The writing is fantastic. I highly recommend this book. The summary reads: "British airman Dym Ingleford is convinced that the young German prisoner, Max Eckermann, is his brother Anthony who was kidnapped years before. Raised in the Nazi ideology, Tony has by chance tumbled into British hands. Dym has brought him back, at least temporarily, to the family he neither remembers nor will acknowledge as his own."

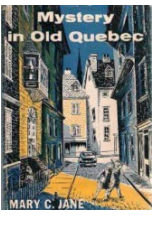

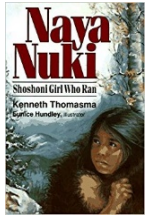
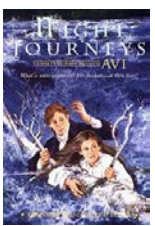

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6		<b>Florence Nightingale</b> <i>*Recommended only with parental discussion</i>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	David R. Collins  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (6-8 yrs), 6 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This beautifully written book is inspiring and packed with educational and literary value. Children of all ages should find the story engaging. I loved the messages about God, faith, sacrifice, kindness, courage, persistence, hard work, selflessness, humility, and love. I highly recommend this book but only with parental discussion because the book does make it seem that Florence Nightingale's choice to follow her nursing career rather than choosing to marry and raise a family was an acceptable or even a noble choice. Those who feel that marriage, family, and motherhood are the highest calling available to women will want to discuss that with children as they read. A fantastic biography—one without this concern, and one that I liked even better—is <i>Florence Nightingale</i> by Laura E. Richards.
6 ★ 🗺️		<b>George Washington Carver</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Anne Terry White  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 9 (7-8 yrs), 6 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	I love how this biography is engaging and told in story form. The book brings out Carver's wonderful example of noble character. There are a lot of books out there about George Washington Carver, but this is one of my favorites.
6 🔊 Aud		<b>Gone-Away Lake</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Elizabeth Enright  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 8 (7-8 yrs), 6 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This Newbery Honor Book, written in 1954, is wonderful! Two siblings go to the country to spend the summer with their cousin. They end up discovering a mostly abandoned community next to a dried-up lake where they befriend two elderly siblings. I love how this book treats family and shows the majesty and beauty of nature. The writing is fantastic and has a rich, varied vocabulary.
6 🔊 Aud		<b>Hardy Boys (SERIES)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Franklin W. Dixon  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 4 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-11 yrs), 2 (12-14 yrs)	The literary, educational, and moral value of these books is good but not excellent. According to other reviewers, the original first 58 books contain little to no objectionable material or content, but after book #58, Simon and Schuster began publishing new Hardy Boy Mysteries that were not actually written by Dixon. Reviewers say these new books, from #59 and on, contain objectionable material. One reviewer said: "I was appalled at how rude nearly all the people in the book were, including the title characters." I recommend sticking with the first 58 original books. Boys will especially love these wholesome mysteries.
6 ★		<b>Harriet Tubman</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Ann Petry  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (any age)	I highly recommend this book! Written in a style that is part biography and part fictionalized biography (the author invents some of the dialogue, etc. but stays true to the facts), the story is incredibly inspiring and interesting. I loved the references to God and faith throughout the book. The book is also packed with educational value as readers learn not only about Harriet Tubman but also about slavery, the time period, and the Civil War. These are the kinds of books that help shape noble character.

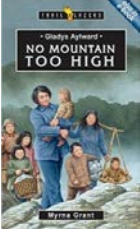
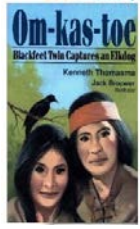
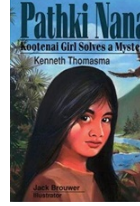
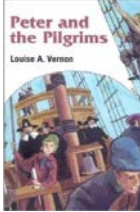

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 ★ Aud		<b>Heart of a Samurai</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Margi Preus  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Age Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (10+)	<i>Heart of a Samurai</i> is a captivating, skillfully written, and inspiring book based on the true story of Manjiro, a 14-year-old boy who is aboard a fishing vessel that sinks. After finding refuge on a remote island, Manjiro and his fellow Japanese friends are rescued from their desperate situation. However, the rescue is not what is expected and completely alters Manjiro's life. This book explores the themes of family, friendship, courage, endurance, and overcoming prejudices.
6 ★		<b>His Indian Brother</b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Hazel Wilson  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	Brad and his father paddle up the river to land they have just purchased in the wilds of Maine. After building a simple cabin and starting a garden, Brad's father leaves to get the rest of his family. Brad is brave and industrious while his father is gone, but the young teenager starts to worry when he sees signs of Indians passing through the area. Things, however, go terribly wrong for Brad, and it appears his father may never return. Will he need the help of the Indians to survive? Based loosely on a true experience, this exciting book shows how two very different teenage boys, both who think they are superior to the other, learn important life lessons about respect, tolerance, humility, brotherhood, hard work, and appreciation. Beautiful writing, wonderful messages, an engaging plot, and fantastic educational value make this book a top pick. This is just the kind of book that engenders the love of reading worthwhile, uplifting books.
6		<b>Jacob's Little Giant</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Barbara Smucker  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9+)	This short, worthwhile book is well written and interesting. It tells the story of a boy and his journey to protect giant Canada geese. This sweet story will be best appreciated by kids who are used to good and beautiful style books with less constant thrill and action.
6		<b>Kävik the Wolf Dog</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Walt Morey  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 8 (7-9 yrs), 6 (10 yrs), 4 (11+)	This engaging story tells the adventures of Kävik, who is half wolf and half husky. He is in a plane crash in Alaska and is barely alive when a boy finds him. The boy and his family nurse Kävik back to health. After a businessman takes Kävik to California, Kävik escapes and tries to make it back to Alaska.
6 ★		<b>Huguenot Garden</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Douglas M. Jones III  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	<i>Note: Catholics should be aware that this book takes a Protestant world view.</i> This book sat on my shelf for two years before I read it because the cover did not appeal to me. However, I'm so glad I finally decided to read this fantastic book; it is a treasure. Packed with educational and literary merit, this book tells the story of two twin sisters who are Huguenots living in La Rochelle, France in 1685. I was educated, entertained, and inspired by the sacrifice and faith of the characters. So many good values and messages are promoted in this book. It would make a great family read-aloud.


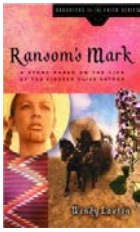
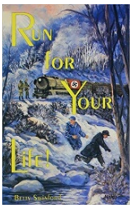

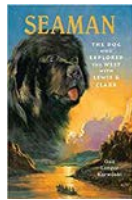
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6		<b>Henry Reed, Inc.</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Keith Robertson  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 3 (any age)	This is the fun, cleverly written story of 14-year-old Henry Reed, who has come to stay with his aunt and uncle for the summer. He and his new friend Midge spend the summer coming up with money-making plans, most of which go very wrong. Boys and girls will enjoy reading about Henry's adventures selling turtles, drilling for oil, hunting for truffles, and even creating a weather balloon to sell to the armed forces! Although it is an easier read, it promotes morals such as hard work, responsibility, kindness to animals, friendship, creativity, and love of nature. Some of the other books in the series portray some mild, disrespectful behavior as acceptable, but this first book in the series, <i>Henry Reed, Inc.</i> , does not.
6 Aud		<b>Island of the Blue Dolphins</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Scott O'Dell  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 6 (8-9 yrs), 4 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This award-winning book is based on the true story of Karana, a Native American girl who was unintentionally abandoned on a California island. The book has great educational, literary, and moral merit.
6 ★ Aud		<b>Jane of Lantern Hill</b> <i>Fiction</i>	L.M. Montgomery  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 9 (10-11 yrs), 7 (12+)	By the same author of <i>Anne of Green Gables</i> , <i>Jane of Lantern Hill</i> (a stand-alone) is a powerful, inspiring, masterfully-written story. This is one of my daughter's all-time favorite books and contains messages about homemaking, family, love of the Bible, love of nature, compassion, perseverance, and courage. Jane and her mother live in an ugly old house on an ugly old street with Jane's harsh and stubborn grandmother controlling their lives. When Jane finds out that her father is still alive and wants her to spend the summer with him, her life is changed forever. She falls in love with her father's little cottage on Prince Edward Island, and she wishes there were some way that she and her parents could all live happily there together. L. M. Montgomery's lively writing and vibrant description, along with Jane's loving and persevering spirit, make this a truly worthwhile read.
6 P		<b>Jo, the Little Machinist</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Johanna Spyri  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 3.5 Points: 5 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	This wonderful story by Johanna Spyri has messages about strong families, hope, and kindness. It is a simple but interesting story with a bittersweet ending. It is not my favorite of all the Johanna Spyri books, but it is definitely worthwhile and highly recommended.
6 P		<b>Look Alive, Libby!</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Catherine Woolley  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 2 Points: 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	When Libby goes to stay with her aunt in Cape Cod one summer, Libby learns how to adjust to country living. As the official description reads, "The days were filled with birdsong, fierce blue skies, and picnics on the beach. Before the summer was over, she learned a spirit of independence." Libby also learns lessons about courage, hard work, and friendship. I really enjoyed this book. It would probably be best enjoyed by girls. There are other Libby books by Catherine Woolley. I have only reviewed one other, which was great: <i>Libby Looks for a Spy</i> .



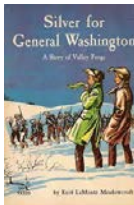
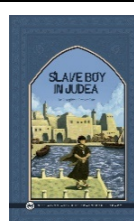
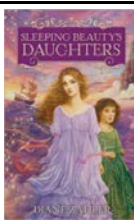
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 ★ Aud		<b>Miracles on Maple Hill</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Virginia Sorensen  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	After her father comes home from WWII broken in spirit, 10-year-old Marley and her family spend a summer at Maple Hill Farm where Marley's great-grandmother had lived. This clean, well-written book is a heartwarming story of healing, hope, friendship, and the importance of family. This is not a fast-paced book, but it is engaging and worthy of its Newbery Award in 1957.
6 ★ Aud		<b>Misty of Chincoteague</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Marguerite Henry  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 4.5 Points: 8 (7-9 yrs), 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	First published in 1947, this well-written Newbery Honor Book is based on the true story of Misty, a famous horse who gave birth to a foal named Stormy during a devastating storm. As the story unfolds, the book tells the account of Misty's part in helping rebuild the island of Chincoteague after the storm and massive flooding leave the people destitute. This wholesome book is gentle yet exciting. Morals are not emphasized, but the book naturally has some good messages. The local dialect is used a bit in the book, making it more difficult to read for younger children. Also recommended is <i>Stormy: Misty's Foal</i> , and <i>Misty's Twilight</i> .
6 ★		<b>Mountain Born</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Elizabeth Yates  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Age Level: 5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 7 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	Full of rich language, imagery, and words of wisdom, this book tells the story of Peter and his family who live on a farm, and how Peter raises a special lamb. This is a sweet and gentle story, and its slower pace helps readers to see the joy and beauty in everyday life.
6 Aud		<b>Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of Nimh</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Robert C. O'Brien  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 1 Points: 8 (7-8 yrs), 6 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This Newbery Medal book has been a beloved story since it was first published in 1971. The rats are determined not to live by stealing. It is an interesting and well-written story but definitely not at the top of my list.
6 ★ Compass		<b>Mystery at the Red House</b> <i>Mystery</i>	Cornelia Meigs  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 8 (7-8 yrs), 6 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This is one of the only books by Cornelia Meigs written for a younger audience, and it does not disappoint. When the Graham family goes on a search to find a new home in the country, Nina and Jeff discover a set of clues that lead them to a mysterious treasure and to a perfect red house to live in.

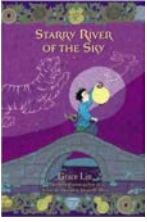


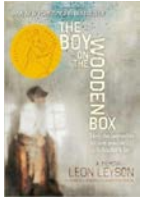



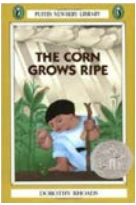
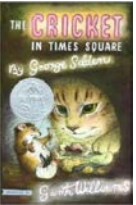
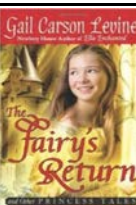


Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6		<b>Mystery in Old Quebec</b>  <i>Mystery</i>	Mary C. Jane  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3.5 Points: 8 (7-8 yrs), 6 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This out-of-print book is worth reading if you can find a copy. Written in 1955, this is an example of a wonderful book that should still be in print. The writing is fantastic, and the story is engaging. Two siblings go with their loving father on a business trip to Quebec, and a mysterious adventure ensues. I liked the messages about friendship and kindness to animals. The children do withhold some information from their father, but they do so to try to help someone. And they do end up telling their father in the end. Overall, children should find this book fun and engaging.
6 ↳ Aud		<b>Nancy Drew</b> <i>(SERIES)</i>  <i>Fiction</i>	Carolyn Keene  Moral Merit: 1 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 4 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-11 yrs), 2 (12-14 yrs)	I read two entire books in the series ( <i>The Hidden Staircase</i> , originally published in 1930, and <i>The Clue of the Broken Locket</i> , originally published in 1934), skimmed others, and read reviews. I found nothing objectionable in the books, but there is little moral or educational value. The main characters were respectful. There weren't any meaningful or inspiring messages, but there were no bad messages either. Carolyn Keene is the pseudonym of many different authors of the Nancy Drew mystery stories. I only recommend the original 25 books, which were written by authors that are pretty reliable for being wholesome. Be aware that the name of Carolyn Keene is also used for Nancy Drew Crew series and Nancy Drew Diaries which were written by totally different authors in the past 10-20 years and are definitely not recommended.
6		<b>Naya Nuki</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Kenneth Thomasma  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11-12 yrs), 3 (13+)	This is a great book from Kenneth Thomasma's series of books about Native American children. It was not my very favorite book from the series, but it is definitely interesting and worthwhile. The story, based on true events, follows a Shoshoni girl who is taken captive by a rival Indian tribe but escapes and travels alone for a month, trying to survive as she finds her way home.
6 ↳ Aud		<b>Night Journeys</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Avi  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 5 (8-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	In 1768, newly orphaned Peter York has been adopted by a deeply religious Quaker family. When two runaway indentured servants are reported to be fleeing through his community, Peter is determined to catch them and receive the award money for something he deeply desires. However, Peter questions the right path to take when he comes across one of the runaways. This wonderful story is a little slow in the first two chapters, but then it is captivating. I love the heartwarming and unexpected ending.
6		<b>Nightbirds on Nantucket</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Joan Aiken  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 1 Points: 5 (8-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	This story comes after <i>Wolves of Willoughby Chase</i> (highly recommended) and <i>Black Hearts in Battersea</i> (not recommended due to language), but it can be read without reading the one or two before it as the books contain some of the same characters but do not continue the same storyline. I love Joan Aiken's rich, clever writing in this book, which also contains wholesome messages. I have not read the books that come after this one, <i>Stolen Lake</i> and <i>The Cuckoo Tree</i> , but some reviewers say they get kind of dark. So I highly recommend reading <i>Wolves of Willoughby Chase</i> and <i>Nightbirds on Nantucket</i> from this series.


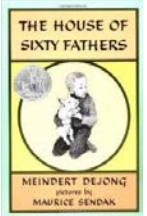


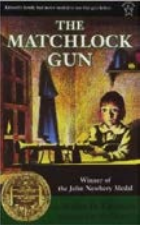
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 ★		<b>No Mountain Too High</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	<b>Myrna Grant</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 7 (8-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	I highly recommend this fabulous book that tells the true story of Gladys Alyward, a British maid who purchases a one-way ticket to China with her life savings in 1932. Determined to be a missionary, even though the mission did not accept her application, Gladys shows incredible courage, perseverance, sacrifice, love, faith, and devotion to God as she experiences an adventurous and miraculous life in war-torn China. Readers will not be able to put this book down—it is fascinating, deeply inspiring, and highly worthwhile.
6		<b>Om-Kas-Toe</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Kenneth Thomasma</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11-12 yrs), 3 (13+)	The official description reads: "Young Om-kas-Toe longs for the day when he can take his place as a brave. He doesn't have to wait long for adventure, however. While serving as lookouts he and his twin sister discover a strange animal that has never before been seen by the Blackfeet tribe." The book is clean, gives insight into the Indian culture, and supports honesty and courage.
6		<b>Pathki Nana</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Kenneth Thomasma</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11-12 yrs), 3 (13+)	This is one of my favorite books in Thomasma's series about Native Americans. The story is very engaging as we follow Pathki's struggle to survive alone in the wilderness. This would be a great choice for reluctant readers as well as avid readers.
6 ★		<b>Peter and the Pilgrims</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Louis A. Vernon</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 7 (7-9 yrs), 5 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	Louis A. Vernon is a great writer of historical fiction for youth. In this book, Vernon creates a plot so captivating that readers hardly realize just how much they are learning about history. While this could be done as a read-aloud for ages as young as 5, it is a good personal reading book for ages 9-14. As an adult, I thoroughly enjoyed this book and was surprised about how much historical knowledge I gained. This will be a must-read book for all of my children. The back cover reads: "Peter Cook has a good life as a bound boy. Although a youth who has to do hard labor, he is treated like a son by his master. Everything changes the day that Peter discovers his master has died of the dreaded disease, the black plague. Because Peter touched the corpse he is thrown out of the great house and left on his own."
6 ★ Aud Lib		<b>Pollyanna</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Eleanor H. Porter</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 9 (8-9 yrs), 7 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	Tragically orphaned but ever optimistic, Pollyanna changes an entire town when she goes to live with her rich, crabby aunt. This touching children's classic is a beautiful book that every child should read. I believe the story can have a life-changing effect on those who read it as Pollyanna reminds us of the power of gratitude, optimism, compassion, and faith.


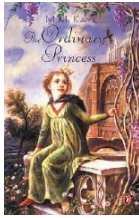


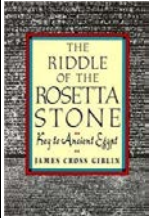
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 ★		<b>Race for the Prairie</b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Aileen Fisher  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 7 (7-9 yrs), 5 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	Becky and her family leave their farmland in the Ozarks in hopes to get a homestead during the Cherokee Strip Land Run of 1893. With a fast horse named Sprinter, they plan on claiming some of the best land, but unexpected events threaten their dreams. Interesting characters, an exciting plot, and feel-good messages all come together in this wonderful historical fiction book.
6		<b>Ransom's Mark</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Wendy Lawton  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 7 (8-9), 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	In the 1850s, pioneer girl Olive Oatman travels with her family on the Santa Fe Trail. When Olive and her sister are captured by Yavapai Indians, their lives take an unexpected and incredibly difficult turn. This story is inspiring, but it also has some very sad parts that will likely bring tears to your eyes. It is based on a true story. The writing and educational value are wonderful.
6		<b>Run For Your Life!</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Betty Swinford  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4.5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (8-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	When Karl, a young Jewish youth hiding in Franz's home, is captured during a Gestapo raid, Franz finds himself a prisoner, too, among hundreds of Jewish boys. The first couple of chapters are a little slower than the rest of the book.
6 ★ 📖		<b>Sam's Secret Journal</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Elizabeth Yates  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 8 (8-9), 6 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	This is one of those times when you wonder why a book has been out of print for so long. Then you realize a book like this would never sell today in a world that is crazed for books filled with violence, shock value, and fast-paced thrills. <i>Sam's Secret Journal</i> is a truly wonderful, old-fashioned book of the best kind. Elizabeth Yates, a Newbery Award winning author whose first book was published in 1938, was a gifted writer of wholesome, inspiring books. This is the fictional story of a 13-year-old boy who is inspired to improve himself and writes about it in his personal journal. My 13-year-old daughter found it engaging and couldn't say enough good about this story. If you can find it, I highly recommend it. My daughter told me the book made her think so much about her own life and how she can be a better person. Wow! This is the effect we want literature to have.
6 ★ 🔊 Aud		<b>Seaman: The Dog Who Explored The West With Lewis &amp; Clark</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Gail Langer Karwoski  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	I was hesitant to read a book centered around a dog, but it was a fantastic book. It was approached in a way that will appeal to children and bring the journey of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to life. It held my attention to the end, and I learned a lot. Good writing, combined with educational value, make this a great read. There is one instance that could be viewed as taking God's name in vain, but I personally felt it was not.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 ★		<b>Shadow of His Hand</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Wendy Lawton  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	This is the true story of Anita Dittman's life during World War II. This is one of the most inspiring Holocaust stories I have read, and it focuses on Anita's hope and increased faith in God as she learns that, no matter how chaotic her world seems, she has a Heavenly Father who is always watching out for her. This book is more appropriate for younger audiences than some books about World War II, as it is told more gently, with less violence and depressing details, while still illustrating the pain and suffering of the Jews.
6 Aud		<b>Shark Beneath the Reef</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Jean Craighead George  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (8-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	Fourteen-year-old Thomas Toraz lives at a fishing camp on an island off of Baja, California, with his grandparents. His father was killed by a shark, and Thomas is torn between carrying on the legacy of his father by becoming a fisherman or staying in school to become a marine biologist. Good moral messages are combined with adventure in this engaging story. Be aware that there are several references to the Mexican God Quetzalcoatl and the Lady of Guadalupe. I really enjoyed this story and liked the Audible narrator. Some of George's books contain profanity; this one does not.
6 ★		<b>Silver for General Washington</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Enid La Monte Meadowcroft  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	Originally published in 1944, this book tells the story of Valley Forge during the American Revolutionary War through the eyes of children living in Valley Forge with extended relatives. This book is currently out of print, but if you can find a used copy or find it at a library, it is a worthy read that features wonderful writing, very high educational value, and an engaging and wholesome story with great messages. My 9-year-old daughter and I read the book together, and we both really enjoyed the story. However, it is slower paced than many modern books today.
6 ★		<b>Slave Boy of Judea</b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Josephine Sanger Lau  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (7-9 yrs), 5 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	Captured by Romans in the forests of Gaul, Madoc is sold as a slave to a Roman centurion stationed in Judea. Though he is not a hard master, Madoc is determined to escape and find his mother. However, the story takes a turn when Madoc and his master meet followers of Jesus and hear about the new way of living he taught. This story is not only engaging and packed with great messages, but it also teaches about the historical time period and the growing influence of the early Christian faith.
6		<b>Sleeping Beauty's Daughters</b> <i>Fantasy</i> ▲	Diane Zahler  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Age Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	This is one of the rare books that have been released recently and are still appropriate and uplifting. This is a beautifully crafted retelling of the fairytale "Sleeping Beauty." It is both exciting and well-written. Although it is not very challenging writing, it does include a good amount of description, and it promotes morals such as kindness to siblings, loyalty, good overcoming evil, hope, and friendship. It does contain some mild romance, but it is appropriate and it is not a main focus of the book.


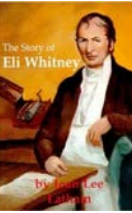

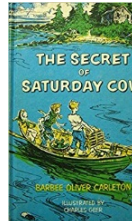
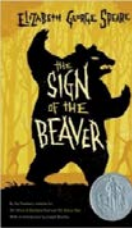
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 Aud		<b>Starry River of the Sky</b> <i>Fantasy</i> △	Grace Lin <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> 5 (8-9 yrs), 4 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	Grace Lin is a fantastic writer, and this is an enjoyable book with interesting characters and an engaging plot. However, be aware that it is a fantasy with a lot of mythical Chinese elements that some readers may find a little strange. Readers who do not like Chinese folk tales may not enjoy this book. When Rendi runs away from home, he finds himself working in a small village as a chore boy. The moon is missing, and as Rendi eventually solves the mystery, he also works out problems in his own life, gains new friends, and discovers what is important in life. Because the book contains a few mildly scary scenes, I do not recommend this book as a read-aloud for children under age 10.
6 ★		<b>Swiss Holiday</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Elizabeth Yates <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 8 (8-9), 7 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	This is a fun and adventurous story about siblings Michael and Merry Lamb, who are invited on a trip to the Swiss Alps with their uncle Tony. They learn about mountain climbing rules and techniques, but more importantly, they learn to have courage and help others, and they develop a stronger bond with each other. This book is full of interesting information about mountain climbing, beautiful description of the Swiss Alps, and heartwarming examples of kind and loving siblings. There are two more books in the series, but we have not read them yet: <i>Iceland Adventure</i> , and <i>American Haven</i> . Please note that these are simplified versions of the books <i>High Holiday</i> , <i>Climbing Higher</i> , and <i>Haven for the Brave</i> , which are much harder to find and are a reading level 8.
6		<b>Ten Mile Treasure</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Andre Norton <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 4 (7-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	When the Kimball family moves to Arizona to turn an old stagecoach stop into a hotel, Christie and her brother Neal discover an unexpected secret: a mysterious treasure chest hidden deep in a cave. Together with their Navajo friends, they follow clue after clue trying to find out more about their discovery. Although this book doesn't display a lot of high morals, it has nothing objectionable, it features great writing, and it will teach readers a lot about the Old West and ghost towns.
6 Aud		<b>The Boy on the Wooden Box</b> <i>Autobiography</i>	Leon Leyson <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 4 (12+)	I have not read this true autobiography, but my 14-year-old son really liked it and did not find anything objectionable. It also has high reviews from others. Booklist says, "This powerful memoir of one of the youngest boys on Schindler's list deserves to be shared. Leon Lesson grew up in Poland as the youngest of five children. As WWII breaks out, Lesson's ingenuity and bravery, combined with the kindness of strangers and a bit of serendipity, save his life, time and again."
6 🔍		<b>The Children of Willow Farm</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Enid Blyton <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> 7 (5-7 yrs), 4 (8-9 yrs), 3 (10+)	Enid Blyton was a very popular British writer who wrote nearly 800 books for children in the early to mid 1900s. I do not recommend most of Blyton's books because they contain words such as "idiot" and "shut up," and show some slightly inappropriate behaviors as acceptable. However, I do recommend <i>The Children of Willow Farm</i> , which is a wholesome story that teaches children about life on a British farm in the 1940s. The story contains some great messages, and my children really liked it. The book is out of print, and is not likely to be found in your local library in America. However, you may find used copies on Amazon.com or <a href="http://www.abebbooks.co.uk">http://www.abebbooks.co.uk</a> .

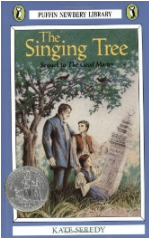
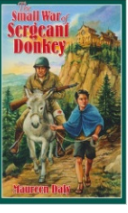
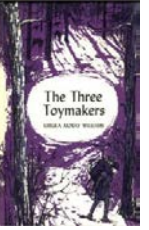
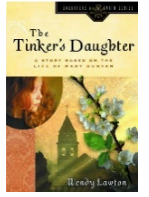
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 ★		<b>The Corn Grows Ripe</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Dorothy Rhoads <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This engaging, beautifully written book gives good insight into the ancient Mayan culture. The book also teaches great lessons as a lazy boy learns how to face overwhelming challenges with perseverance and also experiences the rewards of hard work.
6 Aud		<b>The Cricket in Times Square</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	George Selden <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 5 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	This is a fun and wholesome book. The back cover reads: "Tucker is a streetwise city mouse. He thought he'd seen it all. But he's never met a cricket before, which really isn't surprising, because, along with his friend Harry Cat, Tucker lives in the very heart of New York City—the Times Square subway station. Chester Cricket never intended to leave his Connecticut meadow. He'd be there still if he hadn't followed the entrancing aroma of liverwurst right into someone's picnic basket." The book supports loyalty and honesty. The books <i>Chester Cricket's Pigeon Ride</i> and <i>Harry Kitten and Tucker Mouse</i> are also recommended for the same points.
6		<b>The Fairy's Return</b> <i>Fiction</i> Δ	Gail Carson Levine <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 3 (10+)	This collection of short novellas contains delightful twists on old fairytales. Not only are the stories well-written, wholesome, and fun to read, but they contain great messages. This book is a compilation of these two books: <i>The Princess Tales Volume 1 (The Fairy's Mistake, The Princess Test, Princess Sonora and the Long Sleep)</i> and <i>The Princess Tales Volume 2 (Cinderellis and the Glass Hill, For Biddle's Sake, The Fairy's Return)</i> .
6 🌀		<b>The Golden Cap</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Constance Savery <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> 6 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	This is the story of Ellice Warren who has just moved into a new town and is starting a new school. She wants to become friends with the other girls, but when they start doing things she doesn't feel right about, she has to make a decision. Will she compromise her standards for acceptance from the other girls, or will she stand up for what she knows even if it brings humiliation? This book has a great plot, great writing, and great messages. This book is out of print, but it is worth finding.
6 ★ Aud		<b>The Horse and His Boy</b> <i>Fantasy</i> Δ	C.S. Lewis <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> 6 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	<i>The Horse and His Boy</i> is the third book in the classic fantasy series, The Chronicles of Narnia, however, this book stands on its own. Shasta, the adopted son of a poor Calormene fisherman is about to be sold into slavery when he meets a talking horse named Bree. Together, they escape and travel through several adventures until they reach the climatic ending. Swash-buckling adventure, expert writing, and moral lessons make this book a classic not to be missed.



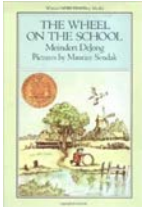
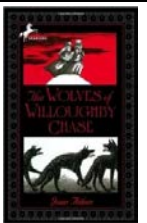
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 ★ 📖		<b>The House in Robin Lane</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Virginia F. Voight  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Age Level: 4 Educational Value: 2.5 Points: 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This delightful story, which takes place about 100 years ago, follows Jennifer after her parents have died and she is sent to go live with her bachelor uncle. The story takes a turn when her carriage is held up by bandits, and Jennifer flees and is lost in the wilderness. When Jennifer finally arrives in Ohio to meet her mysterious, prestigious uncle, she finds out that he plans to send her to boarding school. But Jennifer has other plans and tries to win over her uncle's heart. This is a feel-good, charming little story.
6 ★		<b>The House of Sixty Fathers</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Meindert DeJong  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Age Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11 yrs), 3 (12+)	<i>The House of Sixty Fathers</i> is a well-deserved Newbery Honor Book originally published in 1956 and considered a modern classic. I have loved all the books by DeJong that I have read. This story takes place in WWII as China is invading Japan and follows the fictional story of Tien Pao, a Chinese boy, who is separated from his family when his Sampan floats away during the night into enemy territory. The story is exciting and packed with educational value as readers learn more about the culture in China and the historical events of WWII. Tien Pao is a wonderful model of high character as he displays courage, kindness, perseverance, caring, and sacrifice for others. My family loved this book!
6 ★		<b>The Landing of the Pilgrims</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	James Daugherty  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (any age)	What a great nonfiction book! Award-winning author James Daugherty is a fantastic writer. He uses a rich vocabulary and has a way of writing nonfiction that makes the content interesting and easy to understand. Daugherty does a great job of describing the hard work and strong faith of the pilgrims.
6		<b>The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe (Chronicles of Narnia Series)</b>  <i>Fiction</i> Δ	C.S. Lewis  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 5 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	My husband just finished this book as a read-aloud to my children, and they absolutely loved it. All of the books in the Chronicles of Narnia series, with the exception of those that contain language ( <i>The Magician's Nephew</i> —4+ swear words & taking God's name in vain, <i>The Silver Chair</i> -1 swear word, <i>Prince Caspian</i> -1 swear word), are included in the program and are recommended to be read in this order: <i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i> , <i>The Voyage of the Dawn Treader</i> , <i>The Horse and His Boy</i> , and <i>The Last Battle</i> .
6 🔊 Aud		<b>The Matchlock Gun</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Walter D. Edmonds  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 2 (7-9 yrs), 1 (10+)	This short (62 pages with some illustrations) Newbery Medal winner, published in 1941, is a jewel. The writing and story are superior. This is a true story of the tremendous courage of a mother and son that takes place during the French and Indian War. Not only does it give a fascinating look at history, but it helps readers really feel what the challenges were like in those days. Some oppose this book because they feel it is "politically incorrect" to paint the Indians as cruel savages. Of course not all Indians were cruel and to be feared, but the Indians in this book were recruited by the French to attack English settlers. They were fearful enemies. I recommend doing this book as a read-aloud so you can discuss the issues. Just like the white settlers, many Indians were good and kind, but others were not.

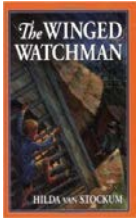
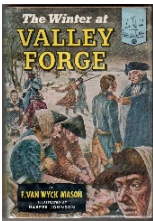


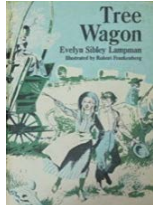
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 ★ Aud		<b>The Mitchells: Five for Victory (SERIES)</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Hilda Van Stockum  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3.5 Points: 5 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	The author of <i>The Winged Watchman</i> , Hilda van Stockum, wrote several novels that give the reader a sense of connection with her personal life as a child during World War II. In this novel, the Mitchells are a charming family in America whose father and uncle have gone to serve in the war overseas. It is full of great writing and fun wit. It would be enjoyable as a family read-aloud. Although it is historical fiction, it does not have a ton of historical facts. This is the first in a series of three, but it works wonderfully as a stand-alone. The next two books in the series have not yet been reviewed: <i>Canadian Summer</i> (second in the series) and <i>Friendly Gables</i> (third in the series).
6 ★ Aud		<b>The Ordinary Princess</b>  <i>Fiction</i>  ▲	M.M. Kaye  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	This delightful fairytale was such a pleasure to read. I highly recommend this imaginative and wholesome story about the king's seventh princess whose godmother proclaims this gift: "You shall be ordinary!" And so she is. But this story is anything but ordinary. The unpredictable plot is both exciting and heart-warming.
6		<b>The Ravenmaster's Secret</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Elvira Woodruff  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	This story, set in London in the 1700s, is based on a true story but contains fictional characters. The book is exciting and compelling and packed with educational value as it teaches about life in England during the historical time period, the English penal system and indentured servitude, the rivalry between Scotland and England, and the history of the Tower of London. The writing is really good, although the vocabulary is not as challenging as it could be. The book has good moral value, teaching about responsibility, friendship, family, and courage. This would be a good book for reluctant readers.
6 ★ Lib Lib		<b>The Railway Children</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	E. Nesbit  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit: 4.5 Educational Value: 4.5 Points: 5 (7-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	The joy and importance of family is portrayed so beautifully in this classic book, written with E. Nesbit's witty and fun way with words. Unexpectedly, Peter, Roberta, Phyllis, and their mother have to leave their comfortable life in London to go and live in a small cottage in the country after the children's father is mysteriously taken away. I agree with a reviewer who wrote: "This book will transport readers back to a much simpler time—an era of true family values. Don't expect the fantasy elements in this gentle story, just relax and enjoy a journey into the past, when children were taught to wait and hope." (Please note: This is NOT the same book as <i>The Boxcar Children</i> .)
6		<b>The Riddle of the Rosetta Stone</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	James Cross Giblin  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11-12 yrs), 3 (13+)	This 75-page book tells of the discovery and translation of the Rosetta Stone. This fantastic book is well-written and easy enough for children eight and older to understand (as a read-aloud) while still informative and engaging even for adults. The book features large print and great illustrations and images.


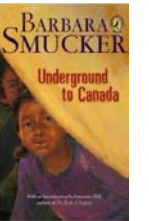
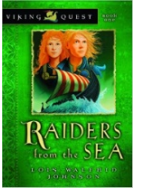
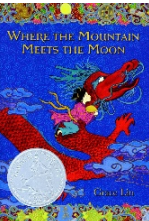



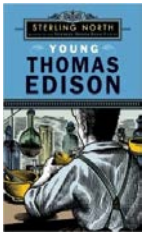

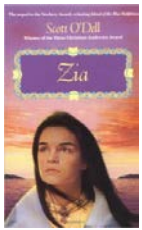

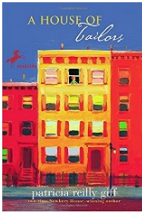
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6		<b>The Samurai's Tale</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Erick Christian Haugaard  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Age Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (12+)	This is a well-written tale of courage with great educational value. The back cover reads: "When the powerful Lord Takeda's soldiers sweep across the countryside, killing and plundering, they spare the boy Taro's life and take him along with them. Taro becomes a servant in the household of the noble Lord Akiyama, where he meets Togan, a cook, who teaches Taro and makes his new life bearable. But when Togan is murdered, Taro's life takes a new direction: He will become a samurai, and redeem the family legacy that has been stolen from him." My son thought the ending of this book was sad, but he still loved the book. There is some violence in the book, but it is not glorified or too descriptive. However, I still suggest this book for ages 12+.
6		<b>The Story of Eli Whitney</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Jean Lee Latham  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (8-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	The back of this book reads: "Eli Whitney transformed America's South by his invention of the cotton gin; he transformed America's North by his use of machines to create interchangeable parts." In this fictionalized biographical story, Newbery Award-winning author Jean Lee Latham tells Whitney's fascinating story in a way that keeps you reading. This is a very enjoyable and easy read that gives good insight into a great man and the time period he lived in. The book also teaches about perseverance, generosity, and kindness.
6		<b>The Secret History of Tom Trueheart</b> <i>Fiction</i> ▲	Ian Beck  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit: 4 Educational Value: 0 Points: 4 (8-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This is a great book for both good readers and reluctant readers! Not only are the plot and characters engaging, but I was impressed with how this modern-written book maintains a classic, timeless fairytale feel. While full of adventure and imagination, this book supports strong families and loyalty to family as well as courage, moral behavior, and persistence. This is a relatively quick read but also contains delightful language. This book is currently out of print, but used copies are available on Amazon.com or www.thriftbooks.com, and it might be available in your local library. This clean book contains no questionable language or content and supports good values. Be aware that the ending does not tie up all the loose strings, and readers will probably want to read its sequel, which is also a part of this reading program: <i>Tom Trueheart and the Land of Dark Stories</i> .
6 ★		<b>The Secret of Saturday Cove</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Barbee Oliver Carleton  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit: 5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 7 (6-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	This fantastic book is out of print, but definitely worth finding if you can. It is often available at www.thriftbooks.com. The writing is beautiful and the story is engaging. The storyline follows David, his younger sister, and his friend Poke. They live in Maine, and David's work as a lobster fisherman leads them into an adventure. This story contains messages about honesty, strong families, forgiveness, and overcoming your fears.
6 🔊 Aud		<b>The Sign of the Beaver</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Elizabeth George Speare  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (any age)	My son and I really enjoyed this book, which tells the fictional story of a 12-year-old boy, Matt, who is left alone to guard the new home that he and his father built, while his father goes to get the rest of the family. Set in the wilderness of Maine in the late 1700s, a series of events leave Matt injured and without food while his family is delayed all winter, but local Indians teach him their skills so he can survive. This historical fiction book is an easy and interesting read, an engaging way to learn more about Colonial America, and it supports good values. Please be aware of one veiled curse word, "demmed."




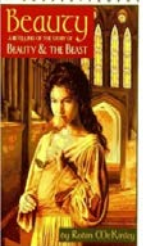
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 ★		<b>The Singing Tree</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Kate Seredy</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 9 (7-8 yrs), 7 (9 yrs), 6 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	<i>The Singing Tree</i> is a sequel to <i>The Good Master</i> , but it works wonderfully as a stand-alone as well. The story explores life on the Hungarian plains during World War I. The writing and the messages are powerful. I loved <i>The Good Master</i> , but I like <i>The Singing Tree</i> even more!
6		<b>The Small War of Sergeant Donkey</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Maureen Daly</b>  <b>Moral Value:</b> 3 <b>Literary Value for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3.5 <b>Points:</b> 4 (10 yrs +)	This historical fiction book takes place during WWII in Italy. It is definitely a worthwhile read but is not quite as engaging or moving as other books on the topic. The main character, an Italian boy named Chico, becomes friends with an American soldier and his donkey. Chico shows great bravery during the book after his American friend is hurt and trapped.
6 ★ 📖		<b>The Three Toymakers</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i> ⚠️	<b>Ursula Moray Williams</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> 7 (6-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	My children and I were delighted to discover the wholesome, engaging books of English author Ursula Moray Williams (1911–2006) who wrote nearly 70 books for young people. <i>The Three Toymakers</i> , the first in a trilogy, has a wonderful plot, skilled writing, engaging characters, and messages about friendship, loyalty, kindness to enemies, mercy, forgiveness, selflessness, generosity, courage, resourcefulness, hard work, and overcoming evil. The story begins when Peter Toymaker asks an orphan boy named Rudi to become his apprentice. Rudi brings his crippled sister, Elsa, and his five brothers to come live with Peter. Then the king announces a contest for the best toy, and a thousand gold pieces is the prize. This book would make a great read-aloud as it would interest both older and younger children. The other books in the trilogy are fantastic and part of the reading program: <i>The Toymaker's Daughter</i> and <i>Malkin's Mountain</i> .
6		<b>The Tinker's Daughter</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	<b>Wendy Lawton</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 7 (8-9 yrs), 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	This highly recommended book tells the heartwarming story of John Bunion's blind daughter. My 10-year-old daughter said this was one of her favorite books. Even reluctant readers should really enjoy this book. It is engaging from the first page and leaves you feeling inspired.


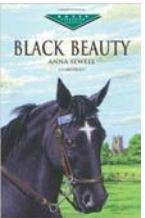

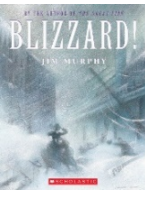
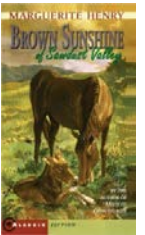
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 Aud		<b>The Trumpeter of Krakow</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Eric P. Kelly  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit: 4.5 Educational Value: 4.5 Points: 6 (11+)	This adventurous historical fiction Newbery Medal-winner takes place in 15th-century Poland. Although this book was written in 1928, I agree with an Amazon reviewer who wrote, "The sense of adventure and history have not faded with time." As the story starts out, teenage Phillip and his family are fleeing to Krakow after their house is burned down by the Tartars. Phillip's father brings along a secret that has been in the family's safekeeping for over 200 years, but it also puts his family in great danger and requires them to go into hiding. Fantastic writing; a complex, intriguing plot; great historical information; and memorable characters make this a highly recommended book. Honor, kindness, and integrity are highlighted as positive traits, and the negative effects of greed are profoundly displayed. This book does require the reader's attention (complex sentences, elevated vocabulary, extensive description) and is not effortless entertainment.
6		<b>The Ugly One</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Leanne Statland Ellis  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 5 (8-9 yrs), 4 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This is the story of twelve-year-old Micay who feels like she doesn't fit in with the rest of her Incan Village because of the scar on her face. Although not a very challenging or character-building book, it has an engaging plot and gives interesting insight into the Incan culture and contains no objectionable material.
6 ★		<b>The Wheel on the School</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Meindert DeJong  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 10 (7-8 yrs), 6 (9-10 yrs), 5 (12+)	This Newbery Medal book, written in 1954, is a delightful gem that takes place in a little Dutch fishing village named Shora. Why do storks no longer come to Shora? The school teacher challenges his small class to find out and do something about it. I did this as a read-aloud, and my children loved the story. I also loved the elevated vocabulary and model writing. The story gives insight into the history and culture of the Dutch people as well as teaching about kindness, putting your dreams into action, perseverance, and friendship. I also love how the youth come to be friends with the old people in the village. This is the kind of book that most kids today would turn up their noses at, feeling it was boring and too challenging. However, this is exactly the kind of gentle, wholesome, and meaningful book youth should be reading, instead of the high-action, easy-reading, violent, titillating, valueless books that are so popular.
6 ★ Aud		<b>The Wolves of Willoughby Chase</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Joan Aiken  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 4 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This little-known classic, written over 50 years ago, was a great discovery. With an exemplary writing style, Joan Aiken pulls readers into the lives of young heroines who face some unexpected trials with perseverance and kindness: Bonnie, who lives grandly in the manor house of Willoughby Chase in the English countryside, and Sylvia, her poor cousin from the city. This is an exciting and rewarding book that my husband did as a read-aloud with our older children, who loved it. Some parts of the book may be too sad for children under nine, but the story does end happily. This is the first book in a series of books that features some of the same characters, but they can all be read as stand-alones. Be aware that the second book, <i>Black Hearts in Battersea</i> , does contain swear words and is not recommended. The third book, however, <i>Nightbirds on Nantucket</i> , uses clean language, is fantastic, and is a part of this reading program for the same point value.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 ★ Aud		<b>The Winged Watchman</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Hilda Van Stockum <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	Wow! This is a fantastic book about the Nazi occupation of Holland. The story and the characters are compelling, and the writing is beautiful. It is written in such a way that the reader gains a deep and personal understanding of the Nazi occupation and the trials and tribulation it brought, but not in a graphic, depressing way. Instead, the book focuses on the goodness and strength of people. The book is full of wonderful messages and character-building principles.
6		<b>The Winter at Valley Forge</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	F. Van Wyck Mason <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 8 (7-9 yrs), 6 (10-11), 5 (12+)	This old, out-of-print book is a treasure if you can find it! The writing style is so fun and interesting; I feel it really makes history come alive. Children of all ages, old and young, should enjoy this book about George Washington and his army at Valley Forge.
6		<b>Toliver's Secret</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Esther Wood Brady <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 5 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	The inside flap reads: "When her grandfather is injured, 10-year-old Ellen Toliver replaces him on a top-secret patriotic mission. Disguised as a boy, she manages to smuggle a message to General George Washington." This is an interesting story with nice writing and some good messages.
6 ★		<b>Tree of Freedom</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Rebecca Caudill <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Merit:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (8-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	This is a fantastic Newbery Honor book. Hard work, persistence, loyalty to country, importance of education, bravery, and respecting and helping family members are themes my daughter found in the book. The book takes place during the Revolutionary War. Some of the reading is more difficult because some dialogue is written in "time-period" style. Please be aware that the word "Lordy" is used once, and the phrase "Lord 'a', mercy, let us be quick." I have read and really liked other books by Rebecca Caudill.
6 🗺️		<b>Tree Wagon</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Evelyn Sibley Lampman <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> 4 (7-8 yrs), 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	From Indiana to Oregon, Henderson Luelling and his eight children brought a wagon full of 700 young plants, including many varieties of fruit trees. Based on a true and fascinating story and told from the perspective of one of Luelling's daughters, this historical fiction novel is packed with educational value. This book is hard to find, but it is included on this list because it is worth tracking down, if possible.

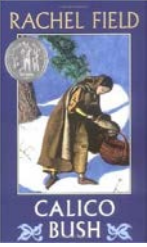
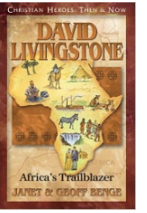
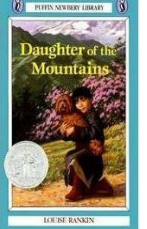
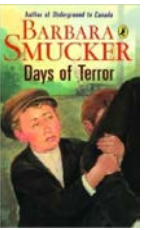
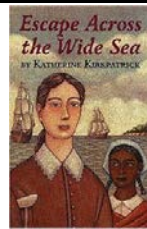
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6 ★ 📖		<b>Trina</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Patricia Miles Martin  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 5 (8-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	Trina is a Mexican girl living in the United States. Her father works on the railroad, so her family lives in a boxcar and is constantly moving. Trina longs for a friend more than anything but has never been in one place long enough, and she doesn't speak English very well. When Trina finally has the opportunity to gain a friend, she is heartbroken when they are getting ready to leave again. However, Trina's friendship has worked a miracle that changes her family's situation.
6 ★		<b>Underground to Canada</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Barbara Smucker  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This is another book by Barbara Smucker that I absolutely love! The story follows the escape of fictional slaves from Mississippi to Canada, but it is based on first-hand experiences found in the narratives of fugitive slaves. I love the way Smucker does not shy away from faith in God in her books. She shows the wonderful traits of kindness, compassion, sacrifice, perseverance, friendship, and integrity while also showing the cruelty of slavery. The book is very engaging and packed with educational value.
6		<b>Viking Quest (SERIES)</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Lois Walfrid Johnson  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4.0 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 3.0 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3.5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11 yrs), 2 (12+)	This is part of a 5-book series (Viking Quest Series). Each book leaves you hanging. If you start the series, you will likely want to finish all five books. In this fictional story, a Christian brother and sister from Ireland are captured by Vikings. A strong emphasis is placed on faith in God. This would be a great series for reluctant readers or those new to good and beautiful style books. The books go in this order: <a href="#">#1: Raiders from the Sea</a> , <a href="#">#2: Mystery of the Silver Coins</a> , <a href="#">#3: The Invisible Friend</a> , <a href="#">#4: Heart of Courage</a> , <a href="#">#5: The Raider's Promise</a>
6 🔊Aud		<b>Where the Mountain Meets the Moon</b> <i>Fantasy</i> Δ	Grace Lin  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1 <b>Points:</b> 5 (8-9 yrs), 4 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This New York Times bestseller follows the story of Minli who sets out on a quest to find the Old Man of the Moon in order to bring fortune to her hard-working, poor family. I thoroughly enjoyed this magical book, which was a Newbery Honor book.
6 🔊Aud		<b>Winter Danger</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	William O. Steele  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 7 (6-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	Caje lives alone with his dad in the woods in early America; they are "woodsies." They have no home, except for caves and hollowed out trees. This is the way Caje's dad likes it; he doesn't feel he needs people and hardly seems to value Caje. When Caje's dad sees signs that a cruel winter is on its way, he heads to a relative's farm. One day Caje's father leaves secretly, leaving Caje behind for good at his uncle's house. As Caje experiences the worst winter he's ever seen, he also experiences something he has never known before: a loving family. This story is adventurous and engaging and has good messages! I found no objectionable content. There is a little violence when Caje and his father are attacked by Indians, but I did not feel it was too graphic. A couple parts of the book may be too scary for children ages eight and under.

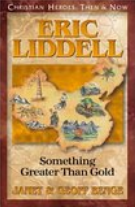
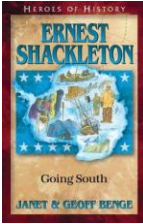

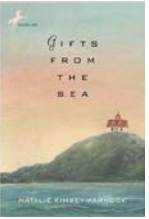
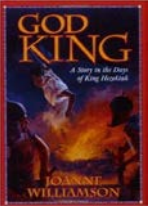
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
6		<b>Young Thomas Edison</b> <i>Biography</i>	Sterling North  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (7-9 yrs), 4 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This biography is a true non-fiction biography, not a fictionalized biography, that is written well and an interesting read. It is a very inspiring story in one sense: Edison was an incredibly motivated, hard-working man who pushed through many trials, such as losing his hearing and his hard-earned fortunes. On the other hand, part of the story was very sad: Edison's work and inventions seemed to absolutely consume his life and time, and family and other important things seemed to take a backseat. Also, he was, sadly, not a religious man. At first I thought I would not recommend this book because of those things. However, this book actually motivated me to want to work harder like Edison did, but at the same time, it served as a warning to be very careful not to let work or projects ever consume me like he did. I think people can learn from both his successes and weaknesses. You may want to do this as a read-aloud so you can discuss those things.
6 ★		<b>Zeke and the Fisher-Cat</b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i> <i>Fiction</i>	Virginia Frances Voight  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4.5 Points: 5 (7-8 yrs), 2 (9-10 yrs)	Fourteen-year-old Zeke and his family leave the Plymouth colony to build a new life in the wilds of Connecticut. When Zeke and his younger sister are captured by Pequots, Zeke wonders if his new Mohegan friend, Nemox, will prove loyal. Follow the adventures of Zeke, his Native American friend, and the fisher-cat they find in the forest. We are so pleased to be bringing back some books by Virginia Frances Voight, an author whose writing is truly "good and beautiful," featuring high literary, moral, and educational value. Books like this one can get even reluctant readers interested in worthy books.
6 🔊 Aud		<b>Zia</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Scott O'Dell  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 6 (8-9 yrs), 4 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	This book is a sequel to <i>Island of the Blue Dolphins</i> , although either one can stand on its own. Another one of Scott O'Dell's educational and fascinating books, this is the story of fourteen-year-old Zia and her brother Mando, who live in the Santa Barbara mission. They have heard stories of their aunt Karana who was left alone on an island, and when they find a boat cast up on the beach, they are determined to make a voyage to find her. This book promotes values such as kindness to animals, appreciation for nature, patience, service, importance of family, mercy, and forgiveness.
7 ★		<b>A Cup of Cold Water</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Christine Farenhorst  Moral Merit: 4.4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	This book tells the true story of the faithful, courageous British nurse Edith Cavell during World War I. Caught in the turmoil of the war while working in Belgium, Edith shows tremendous faith, courage, and selflessness as she helps others, even though she is surrounded by spies. The first half of the book is a little slower paced, but beautifully written. The second half is much more engaging.
7 🔊 Aud		<b>A House of Tailors</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Patricia Reilly Giff  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit: 4 Educational Value for Level: 2 Points: 5 (10+)	Patricia Reilly Giff is a very talented writer. Unfortunately, I don't recommend many of her books, but I definitely recommend this one! In <i>A House of Tailors</i> , 13-year-old Dina is sent to America and is excited to leave her tedious work in her mother's sewing shop in Germany. However, Dina's new life in America is not what she expected. This story has wonderful messages about hard work, family, perseverance, hope, endurance, attitude, friendship, and appreciating your gifts and talents. It also gives the reader insight into daily life in Brooklyn in the 1870s. The plot is clever and engaging.



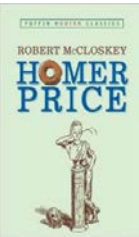
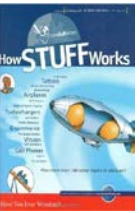

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 ★ Aud ★		<b>A Single Shard</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Linda Sue Park  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	Set in 12th-century Korea, 10-year-old orphan Tree Ear admires the work of the potters until he accidentally destroys a piece and pays his debt through servitude, embarking on new relationships and new adventures. Filled with wonderful characters, this historical fiction book promotes perseverance, courage, and kindness while teaching about cultures, places, and people. My 14-year-old son and I loved this book, but some girls may not like it as much as boys will.
7 ★ Aud		<b>Anne of Green Gables</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	L.M. Montgomery  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3.5 <b>Points:</b> 9 (9-10 yrs), 7 (11-12 yrs), 6 (13+)	Matthew and Marilla requested an orphan boy, but they were mistakenly sent a girl. Not just any girl, but dramatic, red-headed Anne Shirley. Matthew and Marilla end up falling in love with Anne and her free spirit in this old-fashioned, humorous, and wholesome classic. L.M. Montgomery is a master at descriptive writing with lines such as, "Its windows looked east and west, through the west one, looking out on the back yard, came a flood of mellow June sunlight, but the east one, whence you got a glimpse of the bloom white cherry-trees in the left orchard and nodding, slender birches down in the hollow by the brook, was greened over by a tangle of vines." Many popular modern books today are all about fast-paced, thrilling plots. Books like <i>Anne of Green Gables</i> help us slow down and take time to experience and explore the beauty of nature and human relationships. Note that starting with the second book in the series, more mature topics such as romance and marriage are included. The books go in the following order. (Books that contain taking God's name in vain and/or profanity are crossed out and are not a part of the reading program.) <i>Anne of Green Gables</i> , <i>Anne of Avonlea</i> , <i>Anne of the Island</i> , <i>Anne of Windy Poplars</i> , <i>Anne's House of Dreams</i> , <i>Anne of Ingleside</i> , <i>Rainbow Valley</i> , <i>Rilla of Ingleside</i> .
7 ★		<b>Away Goes Sally</b> <b>SERIES</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Elizabeth Coatsworth  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This sweet and funny book by the wonderful author Elizabeth Coatsworth was originally published in 1934. The book is a hidden treasure and absolutely delighted my girls. This book is set in the era shortly before the War of 1812 and is rich with details of life in early America. This book, about a girl named Sally who travels with her family to a new land, is the first in a series. We have only read and reviewed the first in the series, but all the books in the series (some are out of print but are available in libraries or to purchase used on Amazon.com or thriftbooks.com) are a part of this program for the same points: <i>Away Goes Sally</i> (#1), <i>Five Bushell Farm</i> (#2), <i>The Fair American</i> (#3), <i>The White Horse</i> (#4), <i>The Wonderful Day</i> (#5).
7 ★ Aud		<b>Beauty</b>  <i>Fiction</i>  △	Robin McKinley  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 5 (10 yrs +)	This ALA Notable Children's Book, first published in 1978, is a delightful retelling of the classic tale "Beauty and the Beast." Robin McKinley took the outline of the fairy tale and let her imagination run through it to create a totally original version that I thought was much more enlightening, believable, and complex than the Disney version. The ironically-named heroine in the story, Beauty, is not beautiful! But she is intelligent and kind-hearted. The adventure begins when her family is forced to move into the country to more humble circumstances. I loved the beautiful writing, warm and admirable characters, compelling plot, and positive messages about family, courage, love, kindness, love of learning, and true beauty.


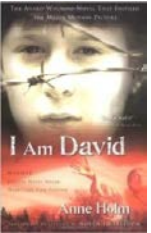

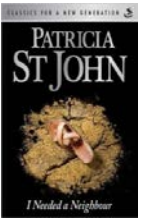

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7		<b>Big John's Secret</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Eleanore M. Jewett  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	Set during the Crusades, this story, published by Bethlehem Books, is a story of courage, brotherhood, mercy, faithfulness, and forgiveness. <i>Big John's Secret</i> is intriguing, and the moral, literary, and educational value of the book are very high. There is a slight bit of romance in the book.
7 ◀Aud		<b>Black Beauty</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Anna Sewall  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (any age)	This touching story is narrated from the viewpoint of the horse Black Beauty, who is loved and later mistreated. This book teaches the value of hard work, high morals, and kindness to animals. However, the book is challenging to read and sad. Reluctant readers or readers not used to good literature may find the book too slow-paced and boring. I feel it is a worthwhile read, but there are many books I would suggest before this one.
7 ◀Aud		<b>Black Star, Bright Dawn</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Scott O'Dell  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (6-9 yrs), 5 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	Scott O'Dell tells an exciting story about the Iditarod in this engaging book. My family and I enjoyed this book and learned more about the culture of the Eskimos.
7		<b>Blizzard</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	Jim Murphy  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (12+)	This nonfiction book gives a thorough and interesting look into the Blizzard of 1888. The book was very informative and was written in an engaging style.
7		<b>Brown Sunshine of Sawdust Valley</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Marguerite Henry  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 8 (8-9 yrs), 6 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	My children and I have never been disappointed with a Marguerite Henry book, including <i>Brown Sunshine of Sawdust Valley</i> —the last book she wrote. Molly Moore desperately wants a beautiful racing horse. When her father buys an old mare instead, Molly is disappointed. However, things turn out differently than expected. While this is not my favorite of all of Henry's books, this book is a great little story.

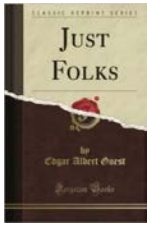
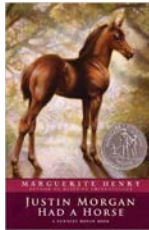



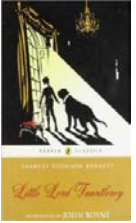


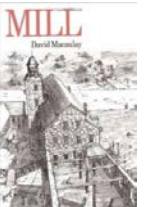
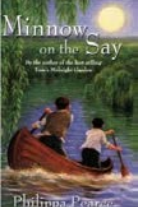
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 ★		<b>Calico Bush</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Rachel Field  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 10 (9-10 yrs), 8 (11-12 yrs), 7 (13+)	Originally published in 1931, this Newbery Honor book is a fantastic and very worthwhile book. Orphaned in a strange country, French girl Marguerite is forced to become an indentured servant. Readers learn much about life in the mid-1700s in Maine as they follow Marguerite's story of strength, hard work, endurance, courage, and kindness. The first chapter or two is a little difficult to get into, but don't give up, because the book quickly becomes intriguing. I loved the description in the book and the insights into human life. I also felt like I gained a lot of knowledge from the book.
7 ★ Aud		<b>David Livingstone</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Janet Bengé and Geoff Bengé  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 8 (9-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	I listened to <i>David Livingstone</i> on Audible and really enjoyed the book. David Livingstone was a famous Scottish medical missionary and explorer in Africa. I found his story interesting and inspiring, although I did feel a little sad that he spent so many years away from his family and his duties as a father. That may be a message you want to discuss with your children if you read this book together. The book is nicely written and would be enjoyed best by children ages 11 and older.
7 ★ Aud		<b>Daughter of the Mountains</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Louise Rankin  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 8 (8-9 yrs), 6 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	This fictional Newbery Honor Book from 1948 starts in the mountains of Tibet and follows the journey of young Momo's journey into India to find her stolen dog Pempa. The story is engaging and fascinating as well as wholesome and educational. This well-written story is very highly recommended!
7 ★		<b>Days of Terror</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Barbara Smucker  <b>Moral Value:</b> 5 <b>Literary Value for Reading Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 4 (any age)	This book was first published in 1979. Barbara Smucker is a fantastic author. I loved her book <i>Henry's Red Sea</i> . <i>Days of Terror</i> is an award-winning book on the same subject, but written at a higher grade level. This is a very moving book that supports high character and makes history come alive. The official description reads: "Days of peace turn to days of terror for a young boy caught in the tensions of revolutionary times. Set in 1917 and the years following, <i>Days of Terror</i> tells the story of ten-year-old Peter Neufeld and his family. Sickened by the horrors of anarchy, famine and the Russian revolution, the Neufelds decide to join the mass exodus of Mennonites to North America."
7 ★		<b>Escape Across the Wide Sea</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Katherine Kirkpatrick  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 8 (9-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	It is 1686. Nine-year-old Daniel's life is changed when the king's soldiers destroy his family's weaving shop and threaten to kill his father. As Protestant Huguenots, Daniel's family refuses to convert to the king's religion, and they are forced to flee France. On the journey, Daniel is wounded and permanently maimed. As we follow his family's two year journey to find a permanent place to settle, we are taken through France, Africa, and the Caribbean. This book is so engaging you hardly realize that it is packed with educational value about the time period. This one is highly recommended.


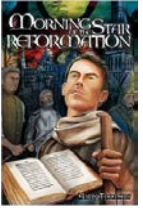
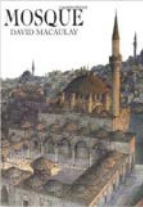
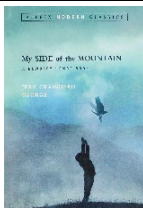
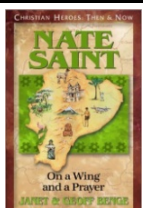
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 ★		<b>Eric Liddell</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Janet Bengé and Geoff Bengé  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 8 (9-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	I listened to <i>Eric Liddell</i> on Audible and really enjoyed the book. The Audible version is great. Eric Liddell was a Scottish athlete who broke world records and later became a missionary in China. I was inspired by his story about not competing in a race he was favored to win during the Olympics because it was on a Sunday. The book is nicely written and would be enjoyed best by children ages 9 and older.
7		<b>Ernest Shackleton</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Janet and Geoff Bengé  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 8 (9-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	This book tells the remarkable, true story of Ernest Shackleton and his famous Arctic expeditions in the early 1900s. I enjoyed learning more about this good man and the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration.
7 ★		<b>Gabriel and the Hour Book</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Evaleen Stein  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 8 (6-8 yrs), 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	<i>Note: This book is included in the reader for the Level 5 language arts course.</i> This classic book, first published in 1906, is truly a treasure. The main character, Gabriel, is a young Norman boy of the Middle Ages who works at the abbey, helping Brother Stephen create a special illuminated book for the king's future bride. This touching tale of friendship, faith, and kindness is so beautifully written, it is a pleasure to read. The story is engaging and should hold the attention of both old and young children. Evaleen Stein was a master at her craft, and this is my favorite of all her books. You can access this book for free on <a href="http://gutenberg.org">gutenberg.org</a> or <a href="http://mainlesson.com">mainlesson.com</a> .
7		<b>Gifts from the Sea</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Natalie Kinsey-Warnock  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 3 (12+)	Natalie Kinsey-Warnock is a fantastic writer. I have recommended several of her books on this list, and I have even used some of her writings as examples in my curriculum. <i>Gifts from the Sea</i> is targeted toward a little older audience: 12-adult. The story is intriguing. Twelve-year-old Quila lives alone with her father, the lighthouse keeper on Devil's Rock, after her mother's recent death. The morning after a storm, something comes floating to their shore: two mattresses strapped together with a baby inside. The book features great writing and gentle messages of love, hope, sacrifice, and family. Readers should be aware that the main character does talk briefly about her possible belief in ghosts. Readers learn about what life is like as a lighthouse keeper in an earlier era. This would be a good book for reluctant teenage readers or those new to good and beautiful style books.
7		<b>God King</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Joanne Williamson  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 4 (10+)	Author Joanne Williamson skillfully brings history alive in this book, which takes place in ancient Egypt and Biblical Jerusalem when teenage Prince Taharka unexpectedly becomes ruler of Egypt and Ethiopia. My son read this book when he was 13 and really enjoyed it. The book is published by the Christian publisher Bethlehem Books and does not contain any objectionable material or language.

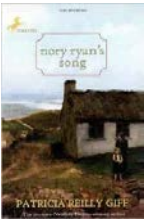
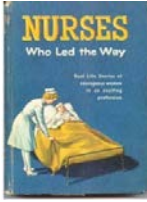
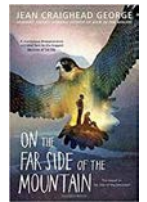

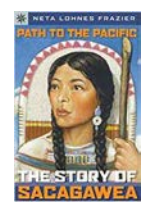
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7		<b>Heidi Grows Up</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Charles Tritten  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 4 (12+)	In 1930, many years after the author of <i>Heidi</i> (Johanna Spyri) died, her French translator adapted and pulled together some of her short stories to create a sequel to <i>Heidi</i> . Although I did not like the sequel, <i>Heidi Grows Up</i> , as much as I liked the first book, I really enjoyed it and found it to be a worthwhile read. It follows the lives of Heidi, Peter, Brigitte, Klara, and Grandfather as Heidi goes away to school, makes new friends, and faces important decisions about her future.
7		<b>Himalayan Adventures</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	Penny Reeve  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 9 (8-9 yrs), 7 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	With engaging and nice writing, this book takes you into countries in the Himalayas such as India and Nepal. So much educational value is packed into this book. I loved how much I learned. This is a fantastic way to teach children in an engaging way. The book is written from the point of view of the author, who spent five years in Nepal. God's hand is beautifully woven into the book. This book is part of a series, but the books are by different authors, and we have not yet reviewed any other book in the series.
7 Aud		<b>Homer Price</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Robert McCloskey  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 3 (9-10 yrs), 2 (11+)	My 12-year-old loved this book of six different tales. Reviewer Wayne S. Walker wrote: "The reader is given a humorous and affectionate look at life in Midwestern America during a time when things were a little slower. Find out how a pet skunk helped capture a band of bank robbers, what happened with Uncle Ulysses's new doughnut machine . . . among other interesting events." Most boys and girls will enjoy the humor in this wholesome, fun book, which is considered a "modern classic."
7		<b>How Stuff Works</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	Marshall Brain  Moral Merit: 0 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (any age)	This books stirs the imagination and is full of knowledge. This would make a great parent read-aloud. Each section is a good length for one night.
7 ★		<b>Hue &amp; Cry</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Elizabeth Yates  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (12+)	The official description reads, "When Melody Austin goes out into the woods, she can enjoy the beauty of the trees and the shimmer of her beloved lake, but she can't hear the birds singing, nor can she tell her parents what she has seen. For Melody is deaf, and she cannot utter an intelligible word. One day she discovers that a stranger, a young Irish boy, is hiding in the woods near the lake she often visits. Upon meeting him, she is both intrigued and perplexed, for she must face the question of what to do about him and the horse he has stolen." This is a sequel to <i>Patterns on the Wall</i> , but it works great as a stand-alone. The story includes an appropriate, purely wholesome love story that may be appreciated more by readers aged 14+ but is appropriate for all ages. I really loved this feel-good, inspiring book! I recommend it for teenagers and adults.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 ★		<b>Hurry Home, Candy</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Meindert DeJong  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 1 Points: 4 (any age)	This is a wonderful story about a stray dog who finds a permanent home. Meindert DeJong is a brilliant author who published wholesome books in the mid 1900s. Children should love this interesting and beautifully written story. Note: The A word is used in this book, but we have decided that it was not meant to be profanity. But some may consider it so.
7 ★ Aud		<b>I Am David</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Ann Holm  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (13+)	David, the main character in this engaging historical fiction set in the mid-1900s, is a twelve-year-old boy who has lived in an Eastern European concentration camp since he was a baby. He knows nothing about his background or the outside world. When David is given the chance to escape, he takes it. As he begins a suspenseful journey to try to make it to Denmark (freedom) without getting caught, we get to see the world through the eyes of a boy who has never before seen a baby or a flower or most foods. This well-written book teaches about understanding the effects of communism and the plight of refugees and about being grateful and trusting in God. Deep topics and sad events are explored in an appropriate, uplifting way, not in a graphic or dark way. Even if younger children could handle the reading level, the deep topics make it more fitting for 13+.
7 Aud		<b>I, Juan de Pareja</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Elizabeth Borton de Trevino  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (10-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	Published in 1965, <i>I, Juan De Pareja</i> was a worthy winner of The Newbery Medal. This book takes place in 17-century Spain and is based on the real life of one of the greatest Spanish painters of the time period. The publisher's description reads, "Told through the eyes of Velazquez's slave and assistant, this vibrant novel depicts both the beauty and the cruelty of 17th-century Spain and tells the story of Juan, who was born a slave and died a respected artist." The language is rich and the educational value is high.
7		<b>I Needed a Neighbor</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Patricia St. John  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 9 (6-8 yrs), 5 (9-10), 3 (11+)	Patricia St. John, with her skillful storytelling, tells the story of one family in famine-stricken Africa. I had never read a book about refugees or refugee camps, so I was grateful for the knowledge and insight that I gained through reading the book. This story has some intense and sad parts. Although I do not feel it is too graphically treated, I would recommend the book for children 10 years and older. The book features clean language, Christian messages, and a compelling story.
7		<b>Joan of Arc (DK Biography)</b> <i>Biography</i>	Kathleen Kudlinski  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (9-10), 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	I have studied Joan of Arc in depth, and I felt this book was a fair and truthful portrayal of her life and portrays her in a great light. The writing was nice, and the book contains some interesting insights into the time period as well as many illustrations. If you are looking for a book on Joan of Arc that reads more like a narrative, I suggest Joan of Arc: Warrior Saint by Jay Williams. Both books are great.

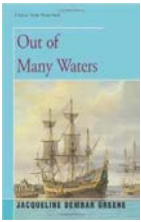


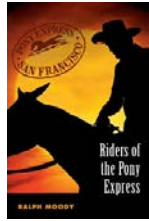

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 ★		<b>Just Folks</b>  <i>Poetry</i>	Edgar Guest  Moral Value: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 4 (any age)	Edgar Guest (1881–1959) is one of my favorite poets. Extremely well-known and loved while he lived, Edgar Guest penned over 11,000 poems. His poems were simple, yet well-crafted and profound. He commonly wrote about family, fatherhood, motherhood, patriotism, and things such as gratitude, persistence, and focusing on what matters most. Any of the following books are part of this reading program and count for the same points. These books can be found on Gutenberg.org for free. I wish there was a beautifully printed volume of his works—his poetry certainly merits it! <i>Just Folks, All That Matters, When Day is Done, A Heap of Living, Over Here, The Path to Home.</i>
7 ★		<b>Justin Morgan Had a Horse</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Marguerite Henry  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (any age)	<i>Justin Morgan Had a Horse</i> , a Newbery Honor book written in 1945, is a delightful classic based on a true story. I highly recommend this book. The back cover reads: "Joel Goss knows that Little Bub is a special colt, even though he's a runt . . . This is the story of the little runt who became the father of the world-famous breed of American horses." Marguerite Henry is a master storyteller and a fantastic writer. The book is packed with rich language, elevated vocabulary, and vivid descriptions. It is also packed with educational value, as readers learn about life in Vermont in early America. This book is not easy, fast-paced reading. Reluctant readers will struggle with this book. Readers who are used to only action-packed, quick reads may find this book boring. But readers who value good literature and challenging reading will find this sweet, profound story to be an absolute treasure. This is one of those books that I want to read again, just to experience the beautiful writing and heartwarming ending. Messages in this book include persistence, compassion, loyalty, patience, and selfless love.
7 ★		<b>Kate's Choice</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Louisa May Alcott  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 3 (any age)	This book is a compilation of three wonderful Christmas stories by Louisa May Alcott, the author of the classic book <i>Little Women</i> . The stories feature Alcott's fantastic use of language and wholesome messages. Due to its short length (121 small pages with larger print), this book is only worth three points in this reading program.
7 ★		<b>Ladycake Farm (The Good and the Beautiful Library)</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Mabel Leigh Hunt  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 3.5 Points: 4 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	<b>Note: This book will be part of the optional Level 8 Book Studies available through The Good and the Beautiful.</b> Little Joe's family has been saving money for a long time, and they are finally able to follow their dream of buying a 40-acre farm. As the only African American family in the rural town in the mid 1900s, they face challenges, but they face them with a kindness and optimism that changes the hearts of those around them. This charming story of friendship between races and neighbors is a treasure. The writing is witty and beautiful, and the characters are delightful.

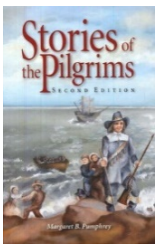

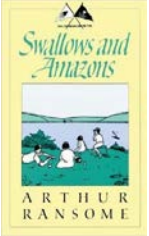
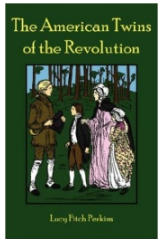
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 ★ Aud		<b>Little Lord Fauntleroy</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Frances Hodgson Burnett</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 5</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Points: 10 (8-9 yrs), 8 (10-11 yrs), 6 (12+)</b>	<i>Note: This book is integrated with the Level 6 The Good &amp; the Beautiful Language Arts curriculum.</i> During her own lifetime, author Frances Hodgson Burnett was best known for her book <i>Little Lord Fauntleroy</i> , but you might be more familiar with her book <i>The Secret Garden</i> . In her hugely popular book <i>Little Lord Fauntleroy</i> , a crusty English Earl is transformed through the innocence and kindness of a young, poor boy from New York City during the late 1800's. This book's rich vocabulary, endearing characters, interesting plot, and powerful message make it one of my top picks.
7 ★		<b>Maida's Little Shop</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Inez Haynes Irwin</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 2</b> <b>Points: 6 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)</b>	Through the opportunity of running her own little shop, Maida, the daughter of an incredibly wealthy man, turns from a pale, lonely, lame, listless girl, to a delightful, happy, healthy child. Maida is not allowed to let people know who her father is. It is delightful to follow her journey as she makes friends for the first time in her life. The book is very fun and very well written. However, it is more challenging. The first chapter is a little difficult to get through, but then the story takes off. This is the first in a series. I have not reviewed any of the other books but will add them as I review them. <i>Maida's Little Shop</i> does not leave you at a cliffhanger and works great as a stand alone.
7 ★ Aud		<b>Maggie's Door</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Patricia Reilly Giff</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 4</b> <b>Points: 6 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)</b>	This is the sequel to <i>Nory Ryan's Song</i> , but I feel it would also work great as a stand-alone book. This wholesome story paints a vivid picture of the time of the Great Irish hunger with believable characters and a compelling plot. I loved this book just as much as <i>Nory Ryan's Song</i> . I found nothing inappropriate in the book, unlike some other books by Patricia Reilly Giff.
7		<b>Mill</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	<b>David Macaulay</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 0</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Merit: 5</b> <b>Points: 1 (any age)</b>	David Macaulay is an award-winning author and illustrator whose books have sold millions of copies. This is a fantastic educational book. The descriptions are sometimes technical, but the elevated language and challenging concepts are good for the mind, and the wonderful illustrations are helpful in visualizing how things work.
7 📖		<b>Minnow on the Say</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Philippa Pearce</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 1.5</b> <b>Points: 3 (any age)</b>	First published in 1955, this mystery book is fun, clean, creative, and well-written. Philippa Pearce is a fantastic writer, and the book is skillfully crafted with plot twists and engaging characters. While it is not the focus of the book, good values are promoted, such as avoiding greed and being a good friend. My 13-year-old daughter loved the book.




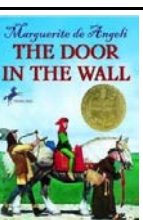

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 ★		<b>Moni the Goat Boy</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Johanna Spyri  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 3 (any age)	Note: This book is used in the Level 7 language arts course. Johanna Spyri, author of <i>Heidi</i> , is a very talented writer. <i>Moni the Goat Boy</i> is a fun short story, written with beautiful language, that promotes honesty. I highly recommend any of Johanna Spyri's books or short stories. They can be found for free on Gutenberg.com. This short story is a great way to expose Johanna Spyri's writing to boys who do not want to read Heidi.
7 ★ Aud		<b>Morning Star of the Reformation</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Andy Thomson  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (13+)	This fantastic historical fiction book helps the Reformation come alive with a focus on John Wycliffe. Readers also learn about the Black Death and its impact on the time period. I found this book very inspiring and captivating. I enjoyed the Audible version.
7		<b>Mosque</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	David Macaulay  Moral Merit: 0 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Merit: 5 Points: 2 (any age)	David Macaulay is an award-winning author and illustrator whose books have sold millions of copies. This is a fantastic educational book, but it is not the most interesting book by Macaulay. The descriptions are sometimes technical, but the elevated language and challenging concepts are good for the mind, and the wonderful illustrations are helpful in visualizing how things work.
7 Aud		<b>My Side of the Mountain</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Jean Craighead George  Moral Merit: 1 Literary Merit for Age Level: 4 Educational Value: 2 Points: 4 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	I can't imagine a parent really allowing a child to live in the wilderness alone all summer. Aside from this fact, the story is engaging and well written. It has little moral value, but it is an interesting read.
7 Aud		<b>Nate Saint</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Janet Benge and Geoff Benge  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Age Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (9-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	I listened to <i>Nate Saint</i> on Audible and really enjoyed the book. Nate Saint was an evangelical Christian missionary pilot to Ecuador. This book tells the story from his interesting childhood to his death while he was bravely attempting to reach out to the Huaorani people about the gospel of Jesus Christ. The book is nicely written and would be enjoyed best by children ages 10 and older.

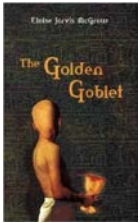

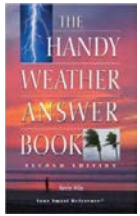


Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 ★ Aud		<b>Nory Ryan's Song</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Patricia Reilly Giff  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	Set in Ireland during the Great Hunger in the 1840s, this book tells the story of the fictional character Nory Ryan, a brave, positive, and persevering girl. Readers of all ages, even young children, should find the story very engaging. It would make a great family read-aloud. I loved the wonderful messages in the book and the way the author painted a picture of the dire difficulties of the time while giving the book an overall feeling of hope. It is an inspiring and wholesome book.
7 ★ 📖		<b>Nurses Who Led the Way</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Adèle and Cateau de Leeuw  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (8 yrs), 7 (9-10), 5 (11+)	This book features a series of true stories about nurses in history. The writing is exemplary, and the stories are inspiring and engaging. I highly recommend this book as a read-aloud. It would work well to do one story a month throughout the school year.
7 Aud		<b>On the Far Side of the Mountain</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Jean Craighead George  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Age Level: 4 Educational Value: 2 Points: 4 (9-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	Like I said with <i>My Side of the Mountain</i> , I can't imagine a parent really allowing a child to live in the wilderness alone all summer. Aside from this fact, the story is engaging and well written. I enjoyed this story just as much as <i>My Side of the Mountain</i> , and the story was clean and had some good messages.
7 ★ Aud		<b>Out of Darkness</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Russell Freedmen  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Age Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (8-9 yrs), 5 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This is a relatively short but inspiring biography of Louis Braille. School Library Journal wrote: "An extremely well-written and informative book that tells about Braille's life and the development of his alphabet system for the blind. Freedman's gift for making his subjects both accessible and intriguing comes through wonderfully in this book. Readers learn not only about Braille and his struggle to communicate through the written word once he lost his sight, but also how long it took for his revolutionary innovation to become universally accepted." I enjoyed this book. Even though it is written as a biography, not even a fictionalized biography, I think it would hold the attention of even younger children. The vocabulary is a bit elevated, so it may be better as a read-aloud for children ages 7-8.
7 ★ Aud		<b>Path to the Pacific: The Story of Sacagawea</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Neta Lohnes Frazier  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (5-7 yrs), 5 (8-9 yrs), 3 (10+)	The story of Sacagawea is told in an engaging and historically sound way. Although the book is not really fictionalized, it is not dry. Some original journal excerpts are included. I loved the book, but it may be a little over the heads of younger children. I recommend the book as a read-aloud for ages nine and older, and as independent reading for children twelve and older.

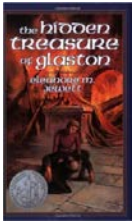
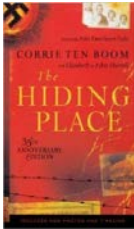
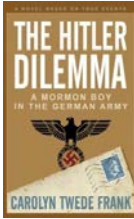




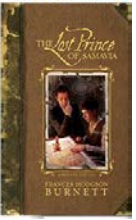

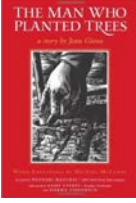
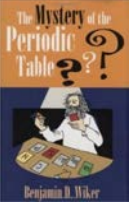

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 ★		<b>Out of Many Waters</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Jacqueline D. Greene  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (9 yrs), 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (13+)	This off-the-beaten-track book was a great find! Not only is this historical fiction book well-written and uplifting, but the plot is captivating, the characters are compelling, and the time period is interesting. Two Jewish sisters are kidnapped by religious friars and sent to a monastery in Brazil for “reeducation” during the Portuguese Inquisition in 1654. When the sisters implement an escape plan, a suspenseful adventure ensues. Don't judge this book by its cover; this is a fantastic and suspenseful story that most readers will really enjoy while also learning more about people, places, history, and Jewish religious customs. I do not recommend the sequel to this book because of an inappropriate scene.
7 ★ Aud		<b>Red Falcons of Tremoine</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Hendry Peart  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 7 (9-10 yrs), 5 (11-12), 4 (13+)	This fantastic book follows the fictional story of 15-year-old Leo, who is an orphan being raised in an abbey. As the story unfolds, readers are taken on a gripping adventure where courage, love, and forgiveness are found. The book takes place in the days of King Richard the Lionhearted in 12th-century England.
7 ★ Aud		<b>Red Hugh, Prince of Donegal</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Robert T. Reilly  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (7-8 yrs), 5 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	My son enjoyed this book, but it was not his favorite book from the Bethlehem Books series. Still, it is highly recommended. The official description reads: "Red Hugh was a true champion for Irish liberty from Queen Elizabeth's constricting reign in the late 1580s and beyond. Hugh's capture, imprisonment, and escape from the Dublin Castle, his triumph over a blizzard and frostbite, his dramatic rescue of his family's castle, his conflict with the evil Captain Leeds, and his inexhaustible love for Ireland make this a wonderful read-aloud book for the entire family. You learn an astonishing amount of Irish geography and culture while relishing this true adventure, as well."
7 ★ Aud		<b>Riders of the Pony Express</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	Ralph Moody  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (9-10), 4 (10-11 yrs), 2 (12+)	This is a wonderful telling of the first riders of the Pony Express. Ralph Moody is a great writer, and this is one of his few books that does not contain profanity. I recommend the book only for those very interested in the subject. As it is very detailed, some readers might lose interest part way through the book.
7 ★		<b>Sticks Across the Chimney</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Nora Burglon  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (7-9 yrs), 6 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	Originally written in 1938, <i>Sticks Across the Chimney</i> is set in rural Denmark at the end of the 19th-century. The book has been slightly updated for the modern reader but features excellent writing. My kids really loved this story. I love the book's educational value, delightful charm, humor, and wise messages.

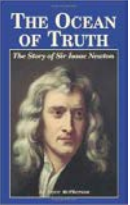



Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 Aud		<b>Stories of the Pilgrims</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Margaret B Pumphrey  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 10 (8-9 yrs), 8 (10-11 yrs), 6 (12+)	Originally published in 1912, this wonderful book gives vignettes of the life of the Pilgrims, starting from the early days in Scrooby. The writing is beautiful. The stories are told from the point of view of children and are interesting. However, because the writing is elevated, and there are many different, short stories, some children may fatigue of the subject matter before the entire book is read, or they may struggle with long periods of reading this book. I would suggest just reading a select number of stories from the book, or reading the stories here and there over an extended period of time. There are several versions of the book. A quick study of the different versions shows that they are all very similar. Some go by the title <i>Pilgrim Stories</i> . Although the stories are geared toward younger children, I put this book as Level 7 because of the elevated vocabulary and because, as a personal reading book, I don't believe it will hold the attention of many younger children. For younger children, it is best done as a read-aloud, even if they could read it on their own.
7		<b>The Beggars' Bible</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Louise A. Vernon  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11-12 yrs), 3 (13+)	This historical fiction book focuses on the life of John Wycliffe. The book is well-written and full of educational value. Because the plot is a bit complex and at times difficult to follow, I suggest this book for Grades 7 and above. However, younger children should be able to understand most of the book. Although I do recommend this very worthy book, I enjoyed <i>Morning Star of the Reformation</i> (another book on John Wycliffe) more.
7 ★ Aud		<b>Swallows and Amazons (SERIES)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Arthur Ransome  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit: 5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 7 (9-10 yrs), 5 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	This lesser-known but classic series, originally published in 1930, was a great find. My 12-year-old daughter loves these books, and I love the delightful, descriptive, wholesome writing. Set in the English Lake District in the early 1900s, the series follows two groups of siblings—one with a boat called Swallow and the other with a boat called Amazon. I agree with the Amazon.com reviewer who wrote: "It is a lovely wistful book that evokes the grandeur of childhood games in nature." The characters are well-developed and engaging as well as being respectful to elders, imaginative, and clever. These books are refreshing, innocent, and fun! My daughter and I have only reviewed the first five books in the series. The books go in this order and all count for the same points: <i>Swallows &amp; Amazons</i> , <i>Swallowdale</i> , <i>Peter Duck</i> , <i>Winter Holiday</i> , <i>Coot Club</i> (includes one use of the A word, which may or may not be considered profanity. It is not a problem to skip this book in the series if desired.), <i>Pigeon Post</i> , <i>We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea</i> , <i>Secret Water</i> , <i>The Big Six</i> , <i>Missee Lee</i> , <i>The Picts and the Martyrs</i> , <i>Great Northern</i> .
7 ★		<b>The American Twins of the Revolution</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Lucy Fitch Perkins  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (8-9 yrs), 6 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	Based on a true story set in the American Revolution, this historical fiction book, first published in 1926, is a true treasure. The writing is masterful and interesting, and the characters are lovable. The official description reads: "Twins Sally and Roger are asked by their father, General Priestly, to help their mother hide a shipment of gold which will be used to pay the American soldiers." The book promotes courage, strong families, loyalty, and patriotism. The story is so intriguing, children will hardly realize that they are learning much about the time period at the same time.


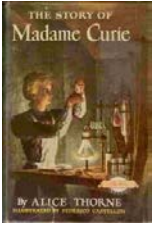
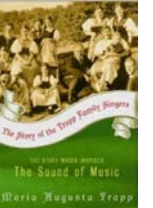


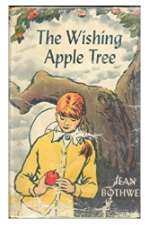


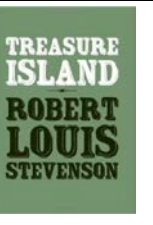
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 ★		<b>The Boy Who Dared</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Susan Campbell Bartoletti  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (8-9 yrs), 6 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	Author Susan Bartoletti took one episode from her Newbery Honor Book, <i>Hitler Youth</i> , and turned it into a powerful novel: <i>The Boy Who Dared</i> . This book tells the true story of 16-year-old Helmut Hubner. When he tries to expose the lies being spread by Germany in WWII, he is tried for treason. As Helmut goes through this experience, we see his commitment to faith and truth. The deep subject matter is treated in an appropriate way that makes the story both thought-provoking and eye-opening while also being inspiring.
7 ★ Aud		<b>The Bronze Bow</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Elizabeth George Speare  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (8-9 yrs), 6 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	This Newbery Medal winner, written in 1961, is a fantastic book that will draw both boys and girls into the story from the very first page. Daniel is a young Jew at the time of Christ who has an intense hatred toward the Romans and lives as an outlaw in the hills. This powerful story has an engaging plot, compelling characters, and a great message. It is one of my son's all-time favorite books.
7		<b>The Door in the Hedge</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Robin McKinley  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 0 Points: 4 (any age)	The official description reads: "Master storyteller Robin McKinley here spins two new fairy tales and retells two cherished classics." McKinley's writing is very skilled and features a great and varied vocabulary. Although these stories are mainly fun and imaginative, there are some good, indirect moral messages. Many of McKinley's books contain profanity, but this book uses only clean language.
7 ★ Aud		<b>The Door in the Wall</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Marguerite De Angeli  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (8-10 yrs), 5 (11+)	I highly recommend this Newbery Medal classic book, which is set in medieval times. Robin, son of a nobleman, loses the use of his legs after becoming ill. Circumstances separate him from his parents, and a plague causes all his servants to flee or die. A monk takes in the abandoned but somewhat spoiled boy, and the reader is taken on a journey of adventure, change, courage, and kindness. Beautiful writing, interesting plot, a look into history, and powerful messages make this book a highly worthwhile read. However, reluctant readers or those not used to classics may struggle with this book.
7		<b>The Gold Thread</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Compiled by Norman Macleod  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Age Level: 5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 9 (7-8 yrs), 7 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11+)	Five stories of young faith written in the 1800s come together in this delightful book. These stories are of the highest moral and literary value, with authors such as Johanna Spyri ( <i>Heidi</i> ) and Scottish pastor Norman Macleod, whose story "The Gold Thread," first published in 1861, was extremely popular and stayed in print continuously for nearly 50 years. Now these stories are back in print. These stories are wholesome family classics that can be enjoyed by readers of any age. The beginning of the book also gives interesting background information for each story. Some stories include fantastical elements while others do not.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 ★ Aud		<b>The Golden Goblet</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Eloise Jarvis McGraw  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (10 yrs+)	Ranofer, an orphaned boy and goldsmith's apprentice in the ancient Egyptian city of Thebes, has discovered a thief. But not just any thief—someone he knows well. His discovery leads him on a suspenseful journey to thwart the evil plans of the thief. Readers are left with not only greater knowledge about ancient Egypt but also with messages about working through trials, friendship, hard work, and courage. I especially love the wonderful ending.
7 ★ Aud		<b>The Golden Hawks of Genghis Kahn</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Rita Ritchie  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (9-10 yrs), 5 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	This treasure of a book is out of print, but it is available on Audible. I listened to it in the car with my kids, and it was fantastic. The plot is compelling and brilliant, and the writing is wonderful. The story takes place in the year 1218 as Jalair travels with a Mongol caravan to the land of Genghis Kahn while trying to hide his identity and true purpose for his travels. The story also has messages of kindness, forgiveness, and loyalty.
7		<b>The Handy Weather Answer Book</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	Kevin Hile  Moral Merit: 0 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (any age)	I love that this book is in question-and-answer format. The vocabulary and topics are a little challenging, but because the book is divided into very small sections, it helps make this book more readable for Level 7 readers and above. However, I think <i>some</i> of the scientific concepts are hard even for mature readers to understand. Readers will gain a lot of knowledge from this book, but it definitely isn't for younger children.
7		<b>The Happy Prince and Other Stories</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Oscar Wilde  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (10-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	The timeless tales in this book by gifted writer Oscar Wilde are wonderfully fanciful and contain worthy messages. I like some of the short stories more than others, but they are all worth reading. Oscar Wilde's writings are not always wholesome, but there are no worries about these stories. With great morals, a rich vocabulary, and imaginative storylines, this book makes a great read-aloud. Consider discussing the stories with your children after reading.
7 Aud		<b>The Hawk That Dare Not Hunt by Day</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Scott O'Dell  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (10-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	This historical fiction book centers around the dangerous journey of William Tyndale as he translates and prints the Bible in English. The story is seen through the eyes of the main character, Tom, a smuggler who makes a deal with Tyndale to help distribute the Bibles. The book is filled with adventure and suspense. This is an interesting and worthwhile read, and while it is wholesome and supports good concepts, it was not as inspiring as I hoped it would be. Boys will most likely enjoy this book more than girls.

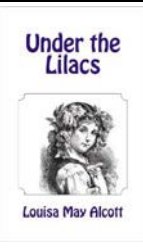


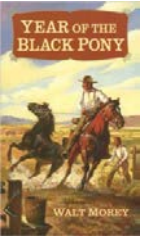
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 Aud		<b>The Hidden Treasure of Glaston</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Eleanore M. Jewett  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 4 (any age)	First published in 1946, this fantastic Newbery Honor mystery/adventure book is set in the Middle Ages. The writing is exemplary, and the plot will hold the attention of even reluctant readers. The book is clean, offers great historical detail, and is filled with positive messages, such as forgiveness, hard work, not setting your heart on worldly things, responsibility, respect for the elderly, prayer, and faith in God. This book is highly recommended!
7 ★ Aud		<b>The Hiding Place</b> <i>Autobiography</i>	Corrie ten Boom  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (13+)	Corrie ten Boom tells of her incredible and courageous involvement in the Nazi underground and her ensuing experience in a Nazi camp. This intriguing, true book is packed with faith in God and character-building messages. I suggest the book for ages 13+ because of the difficult, dire situations which Corrie faces, such as having to walk naked before guards and being cruelly treated. The material is not treated overly graphically or inappropriately, but it will be better processed by older children. Also, on pages 64-65, there is a sentence where it says the grandmother talks to her granddaughter about sex education the night before she is married. The conversation is not given—just referenced to briefly and appropriately.
7		<b>The Hitler Dilemma</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Carolyn Tweede Frank  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Age Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (14+)	The official description reads: "From the horrors of battle and the sorrow of separation from family to the privations of a prisoner of war, Carolyn Tweede Frank's groundbreaking novel <i>The Hitler Dilemma</i> is a poignant chronicle of one remarkable young man's struggle to reconcile his sense of duty with his staunch opposition to the evil tyrant destroying the country he loves." The writing is great and the story is profound. It is fascinating to see how the protagonist deals with his struggles.
7		<b>The Ides of April</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Mary Ray  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Age Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (14+)	This is an intriguing story of murder and mystery set in ancient Rome. The writing is great; it has a variety of sentence structures and a good use of vocabulary. In addition to teaching about the time period in general, it also teaches about historical figures, such as Julius Caesar and Caius Pomponius. Mary Ray wrote six books in her Roman Empire Sequence, but only two are available now: <i>The Ides of April</i> and <i>Beyond the Desert Gate</i> . Both the books can be read as stand-alones. Because of a little romance, the book is marked as 14+.
7		<b>The Iron Peacock</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Mary Stetson Clarke  Moral Value: 5 Literary Value for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (10+)	This historical fiction novel, published in 1966, is lesser known but is a fantastic book. While 16-year-old Joanna and her father are sailing from England to Boston, her father dies on the ship, leaving her orphaned. Joanna is forced to become an indentured servant working for the master of the Iron Works in Saugus, Massachusetts. This book gives a good picture of what it was like to be an indentured servant in Colonial America. Positive messages include finding contentment in any situation, courage, and kindness. Parents should be aware that there is a slight bit of romance in this book. However, it is very pure and wholesome, and there is not even any kissing.

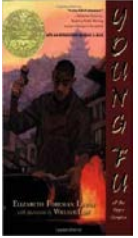

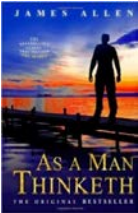
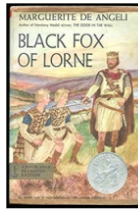
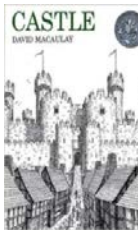
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7		<b>The Lost Prince of Samavia</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Frances Hodgson Burnett</b>  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Age Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (any age)	From the author of the classic <i>The Secret Garden</i> , comes a book of intrigue, honor, and adventure: <i>The Lost Prince of Samavia</i> . This book is lesser-known, but all the middle school students I know who have read it have loved it and recommended it to others. The book features a lot of action but also exemplary writing as well as messages about bravery and patriotism. The original book was titled <i>The Lost Prince</i> , but is out of print. This version is slightly abridged but still retains the majority of the beautiful language.
7 Aud		<b>The Magna Charta</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	<b>James Daugherty</b>  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (any age)	Readers will remember and understand the history of the Magna Charta after reading this book! James Daugherty is a fantastic writer. He uses a rich vocabulary and has a way of writing nonfiction that makes the content interesting and easy to understand. This is a really great book with very high educational value.
7		<b>The Man Who Planted Trees</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Jean Giono</b>  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 3 (10-11 yrs), 2 (12 yrs), 1 (13+)	This short fable (53 pages) tells the story of a man who spent his life planting one hundred acorns every day in a barren land in France. This touching and inspiring story contains skilled writing and wonderful messages. I really enjoyed the book.
7		<b>The Mystery of the Periodic Table</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	<b>Benjamin D. Wiker</b>  Moral Merit: 1 Literary Merit for Age Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (8-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	It can be hard to find nonfiction books that are entertaining and well-written, but this book is both. The authors write in a way that even young readers can understand. Information is not only learned about the periodic table but also about many scientists.
7 ★		<b>The Next Fine Day</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Elizabeth Yates</b>  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	I had to share this reviewer's comments from Amazon.com because I agree with her, and it made me smile: "I would take this book with me if my house caught on fire. I keep it by my bed! This outstanding treasure of children's literature is a too well-kept secret—a captivating story for readers of all ages. A rare treat for the senses, its descriptions are so vivid, the reader can feel the wind and breathe the air." My teenage daughter and I have loved all the Elizabeth Yates books we have read (except for <i>With Pipe, Paddle, and Song</i> ), but <i>The Next Fine Day</i> , is probably our favorite of all her books. The story tells of a lonely boy and his mother's heartache and an artist who comes along and starts to change everything. Wonderful messages and lovely descriptions fill the book.


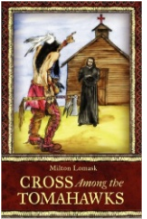

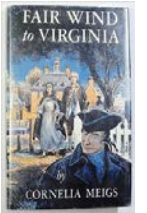
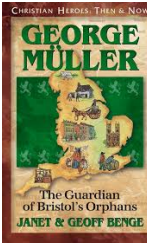
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 ★		<b>The Ocean of Truth</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Joyce McPherson  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 7 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	<i>The Ocean of Truth</i> by Joyce McPherson is well-written and reveals an extraordinary character in Isaac Newton, both as a renowned scientist and as a virtuous and Christian man. Readers will learn from this great man how to face adversity and adversaries with peace and good will. There are excellent excerpts from Isaac Newton's own writings both on scientific ideas and his religious convictions. I highly recommend this book!
7 ★ Aud		<b>The Orphan Train Adventures (SERIES)</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Joan Lowery Nixon  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 4 (any age)	A devoted widow who is no longer able to provide for her children makes the ultimate sacrifice and sends her children on the Orphan Train headed far away to the West, hoping they will be adopted by families that can better care for them. This historically accurate series follows the very engaging, well-paced stories of these children. Model writing, elevated vocabulary, and high moral lessons make these books modern classics. I highly recommend these books. I only read the first one, but I loved how packed the stories are with positive messages and educational value. This first book teaches about life in New York and the West in the 1850s. It also teaches about the political issues of the time and the Underground Railroad, as well as giving deep insight into concepts such as sacrifice, responsibility, adoption, love, discrimination, family, and forgiveness. The books are completely wholesome, but because of mature themes, such as a family being split up and hints of abuse, I recommend children be at least 10 to read these books when they can better process these issues.
7		<b>The Runaway</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Patricia M. St. John  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 4 (any age)	In this excellent book, talented writer Patricia St. John tells the story of Philo, a Phoenician boy who seeks Jesus to heal his sister. I agree with a reviewer who wrote: "Jesus does not appear directly, but the whole air is full of His grace and presence and therefore a sure hope and redemption, you can almost touch it. A story of true forgiveness and salvation. This is another gem by Patricia St. John, a master story-teller. Every Christian youth should read this work."
7		<b>The Story Girl</b> <i>Fiction</i>	L.M. Montgomery  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 10 (9-10 yrs), 7 (11-12 yrs), 6 (13+)	L.M. Montgomery, author of the beloved <i>Anne of Green Gables</i> series, wrote this stand-alone book, <i>The Story Girl</i> , in 1910. Two brothers go to live with their cousins whom they have never met before. One cousin, whom everyone calls "The Story Girl," tells them lively, captivating stories of their ancestors. My daughter loved this book! The writing is beautiful and enchanting. Unlike some of L.M. Montgomery's book, this book does not contain profanity.



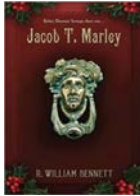


Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 		<b>The Story of Madame Curie</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Alice Thorne  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (9-10), 4 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This is the best biography of Marie Curie that I have read. The writing is fantastic, and the story is inspiring. The book is out of print and hard to find.
7		<b>The Story of the Trapp Family Singers</b>  <i>Autobiography</i>	Maria Augusta Trapp  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (any age)	The dramatic true story of the Trapp family (on which <i>The Sound of Music</i> is based) is told beautifully by Maria Trapp herself. The story is very interesting and inspiring. I love how the family is constantly turning to prayer, and exhibiting faith in God. Also, readers get a glimpse into different cultures, places, and time periods.
7  		<b>The Wishing Apple Tree</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Jean Bothwell  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 6 (9-10), 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	Summer is the happiest time of the year for Laurie Dodge, her siblings, and their cousin Philip; but one summer a boarder named Nora Cameron changes everything. The eleven-year-old girl from the city is unfriendly and stiff all summer and ends her visit with an outburst, revealing that what she dislikes most about the town is the rundown, filthy chapel. The children see their chapel with new eyes and realize that to show their respect to God, and to make amends with Nora, they must make the chapel a beautiful house of worship again. The writing in this book was beautiful, and the characters and plot were well developed. This book is out of print but highly recommended.
7		<b>Tom's Midnight Garden</b>  <i>Fiction</i>  Δ	Philippa Pearce  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 1 Points: 3 (any age)	Tom's brother has the measles, so Tom is shipped off to stay with his aunt and uncle in their apartment. Tom braces himself for a boring stay with nothing to do and no friends. However, when the antique grandfather clock strikes 13, Tom makes a magical discovery. This imaginative book is well-written, wholesome, and engaging, but it does not have any profound messages. This would be a good book for those just starting with good and beautiful style books.
7 		<b>Treasure Island (Unabridged)</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Robert Louis Stevenson  Moral Merit: 1 Literary Merit for Age Level: 5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 4 (10+)	This classic story, first published in 1883, is an enduring story of adventure and mystery. The book has little moral or educational value but has very high literary merit and no profanity. Some versions are abridged and stripped of the original, beautiful, and challenging use of language, so be careful about the copy you read.


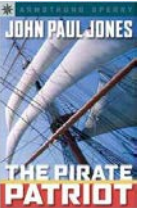
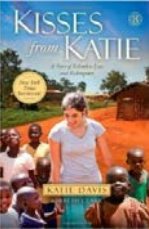
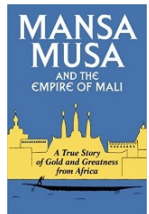
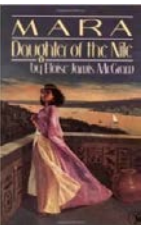





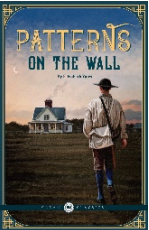
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7 ★ Aud		<b><i>Under the Lilacs</i></b> <i>Fiction</i>	Louisa May Alcott  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (8-9 yrs), 6 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	This is an old-fashioned classic that Louisa May Alcott fans will enjoy. The story gives a window into the 19th century, and like all of Alcott's books, supports good values and emphasizes redemption and kindness. The story is a little different than Alcott's other books and contains a little less serious of a tone. The story starts when two sisters, while having a tea party outside, discover a circus runaway, Ben, and his dog. I love how the book includes positive adults as main characters in the book. This is "feel good" literature at its best!
7 ★ Aud		<b><i>What Katy Did</i></b> <i>Fiction</i>	Susan Coolidge  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 9 (9-10 yrs), 6 (11-12 yrs), 5 (13+)	I believe every girl should read the classic book <i>What Katy Did</i> ! Although it did take me a few chapters to start getting into the story, it is on my list of top ten favorite books of children's fiction. This beautifully told story, set in a time and way of life long past, is one that left me inspired and wanting to be a better person in many ways. I do not want to say anything about the plot, because it would be hard not to give away the surprising major event the book is centered around. If the book seems a little slow at first (maybe even the first quarter of the book), keep reading—it will get much more interesting and will be well worth your time. Although I absolutely loved this book, I do not love the sequels to this book. <i>What Katy Did at School</i> , although the protagonist is kind and good, is filled with rude, vain girls, and I just did not find it interesting, inspiring, or educational. <i>What Katy Did Next</i> was better. It did give a lot of information on European countries, which was nice, but it still was not nearly as good as <i>What Katy Did</i> .
7 ★		<b><i>When I Was Your Age</i></b> <i>Autobiography</i>	Laura E. Richards  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 7 (9-10 yrs), 5 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	This book is one of my and my daughter's favorite books. Laura E. Richards was an incredibly gifted and moral writer born in 1850. She wrote over 90 books, including biographies, poetry, a compilation of short stories, and books of fiction. <i>When I Was Your Age</i> is an autobiography of her and her siblings' childhood and has profound messages about love of freedom and liberty, courage, gratitude, a positive portrayal of and respect for family and parents, love of nature, patience, creativity, service, selflessness, humility, love of learning, and love of the Bible. The book is humorous, heartwarming, and engaging.
7 ★ Aud		<b><i>Year of the Black Pony</i></b> <i>Fiction</i>	Walt Morey  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (10-11 yrs), 3 (12+)	This engaging and wholesome story pulls you into the Oregon desert in the early 1900s. I believe both boys and girls ages nine and older would enjoy the book. I found it hard to put down and felt like I learned a lot about the location and time period. The story contains gentle messages about family, forgiveness, kindness, and hope. The Audible version is great!



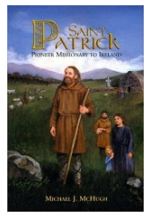
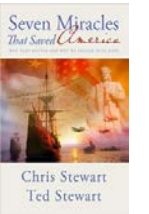

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
7		<b>Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Elizabeth Foreman Lewis  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (9 yrs), 5 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	First published in 1932, this historical fiction, set in China, is one of the earliest Newbery Medal winners. Moving from the peaceful countryside to the bustling city with his widowed mother, Young Fu is apprenticed to a coppersmith. As Young Fu faces a whirlwind of challenges and experiences, he learns lessons about honesty, courage, and morality. I loved the insight into the culture and the emphasis on moral character, as well as the heartwarming ending. Though not a super fast-paced adventure in all spots, it is very entertaining and well written—a great read for boys and girls.
8		<b>Abraham Lincoln</b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i> <i>Biography</i>	Wilbur F. Gordy  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 10 (9-10 yrs), 8 (11-13 yrs)	<i>Note: This book is part of a The Good and the Beautiful Level 8 Book Study:</i> This little-known biography on Abraham Lincoln, written in 1917, was a delightful find. I found the stories and information about Lincoln's life fascinating, truthful, and inspiring. The book teaches lessons about important concepts: wisdom, kindness, honesty, hard work, love of learning, and persevering through trials.
8 ★		<b>As a Man Thinketh</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	James Allen  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (12+)	This short, 62-page classic book falls under the category of philosophy or self-help as it explores the power of our thoughts in shaping our lives and character. With beautiful language and symbolism, Allen helps explain why and how we should become the master of our thoughts.
8 ★		<b>Black Fox of Lorne</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Marguerite de Angeli  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (10-11 yrs), 6 (12-13 yrs), 4 (14+)	This wonderful Newbery Honor novel is out of print but worth finding if you can. The plot is engaging, and the writing has very high literary, moral, and educational value. In the tenth century, two Viking twins shipwreck on the Scottish coast. When one of the twins finds himself in the hands of enemies, a series of adventures are set in motion. This wholesome book contains messages about faith, Christianity, forgiveness, mercy, loyalty, and strong family bonds.
8		<b>Castle</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	David Macaulay  Moral Merit: 0 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 3 (any age)	This Caldecott Honor book by David Macaulay is a fantastic educational book. The descriptions are sometimes technical, but the elevated language and challenging concepts are good for the mind, and the wonderful illustrations are helpful in visualizing how things work.

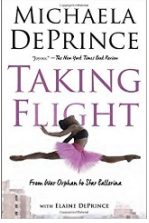

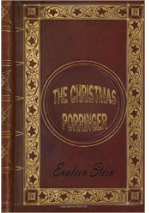

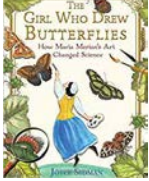
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
8 ★		<b>Children of the Storm</b> <i>Autobiography</i>	Natasha Vins  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (9-10 yrs), 7 (11 yrs), 5 (12+)	Natasha Vin's story is a must-read—a reminder that we are so blessed to have religious freedoms. Growing up in Soviet Russia as a Christian, Natasha and her family face severe persecution and trials. Natasha's uncompromising faith and noble character is inspiring, and her story gives deep insight into the injustices of communism. The book is wholesome, appropriate for all ages, and uses clean language. This is the kind of book that needs to fill our children's minds.
8		<b>Cross Among the Tomahawks</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Milton Lomask  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	I enjoyed learning more about the Canadian Jesuit missionaries in the mid-1600s as I read this book. It features great writing, great messages, and high educational value. The story is interesting but not fast paced. Reluctant readers may not enjoy the book, but serious readers who enjoy gaining new knowledge about cultures and historical time periods will gain much from this book.
8 ★		<b>Diary of an Early American Boy</b> <i>Autobiography/Nonfiction</i>	Eric Sloane  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (9-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	My 13-year-old daughter loved this book. She picked it up out of curiosity and started reading a little, and then she couldn't put it down. The literary and educational value are fantastic. History in Review wrote: "Eric Sloane has taken a fifteen-year-old farm boy's brief, concise notebook and expanded the daily entries with explanatory narrative and his own remarkable drawings. As a result, he has preserved the simplicity and charm of a bygone era."
8 ★ 🗺️		<b>Fair Wind to Virginia</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Cornelia Meigs  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (any age)	This book features challenging, complex writing, but it is well worth the effort. The descriptions in the book are beautiful. The book really makes the time period (just before the Revolutionary War) and real historical figures come alive, and it's packed with wonderful educational knowledge and insight as well as moral value. This is not a book for reluctant readers, but serious readers will appreciate its high value and enjoy its elements of mystery and the engaging characters.
8 ★ 🔊		<b>George Muller</b> <i>(Christian Heroes: Then &amp; Now)</i> <i>Biography</i>	Janet & Geoff Benge  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (9-10 yrs), 7 (11-12 yrs), 6 (13+)	<i>Note: This book will be part of a The Good &amp; the Beautiful High School Language Arts course.</i> This is one of the best books I've read this year. George Muller was an admirable man of great faith who went through a spiritual transformation and eventually did much work for orphans in England. His story is fascinating and deeply inspiring, and this telling of his story is very well written.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
8		<b>Hans Brinker or The Silver Skates</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>Mary Mapes Dodge</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 5</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Points: 9 (9-10 yrs), 8 (11-12 yrs), 7 (13+)</b>	In this classic book that takes place in Holland in the mid-1800s, Hans Brinker, age 15, and his sister, Gretel, age 12, yearn to participate in the ice skating race on the canal. But living in poverty, they only have homemade wooden skates. Although there are great elements of suspense and even mystery, the action is much more mild and slow-paced than most modern fiction today, and the story stops from time to time as it launches into the interesting description and history of Holland. Serious readers who are interested in learning about cultures, geography, and history, and who view this book as part fiction and part non-fiction, will enjoy the colorful and beautifully written portrait of early 19th-century Dutch life, as well as a tale of youthful honor and love for family.
8 ★ Aud		<b>Heidi (unabridged)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Johanna Spyri</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 5</b> <b>Educational Value: 4</b> <b>Points: 10 (7-8), 8 (9-10 yrs), 7 (11-12), 6 (13+)</b>	<i>Heidi</i> , one of my all-time favorite books, is a heartwarming story of a young girl in the Swiss Alps whose kindness, optimism, and love of life has a transforming effect on all those around her. This engaging story is skillfully written with imagery, beautiful description, and elevated vocabulary. Readers also learn about Switzerland, the Alps, and life in the 1800s. If girls could only read one book in a summer, this is the one I would give them.
8 ★ Aud		<b>Jacob T. Marley</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>R. William Bennett</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 3</b> <b>Points: 5 (12+)</b>	The back cover reads: "Marley was dead to begin with . . . These chillingly familiar words begin the classic Christmas tale of remorse and redemption in <i>A Christmas Carol</i> by Charles Dickens. Now R. William Bennett rewinds the story and focuses the spotlight on Scrooge's miserly business partner, Jacob T. Marley, who was allowed to return as a ghost to warn Scrooge away from his ill-fated path." I absolutely loved this book! It is very well-written, engaging, and inspiring.
8		<b>Joan of Arc: Warrior Saint (Sterling Point Books)</b> <i>Biography</i>	<b>Jay Williams</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3.5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3.5</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Points: 8 (9-10 yrs), 6 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)</b>	I listened to the Audible version of this book, and it was fantastic. This version was well-written and less dry than some accounts of Joan of Arc. I felt her story was portrayed truthfully. It was a compelling and inspiring story. However, I do not recommend all Sterling Point Books.
8 ★ Lib		<b>Pollyanna Grows Up</b> <i>Fiction</i>	<b>Eleanor H. Porter</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4.5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 5</b> <b>Educational Value: 2</b> <b>Points: 9 (11-12 yrs), 8 (13+)</b>	This sequel to <i>Pollyanna</i> is wonderful. I personally liked it more than <i>Pollyanna</i> . Pollyanna is now a young woman, and her crippled legs are now cured, but circumstances arise that make it hard for even Pollyanna to maintain a cheerful outlook. It works well as a stand-alone. Girls 12 and older who are serious readers and are used to good and beautiful style books will likely enjoy the book most. There is some completely wholesome romance in the book that is not at all sensationalized and appropriate for any age. The Librivox version is great.


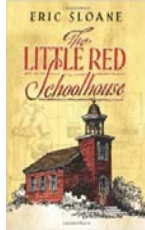
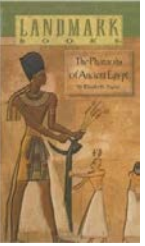
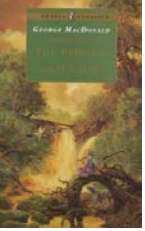
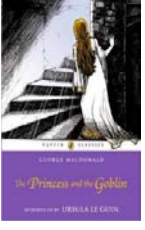
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
8 ★ Lib		<b>Poppy's Presents</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Mrs. O. F. Walton  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 2 Points: 6 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	Published in 1886, this short novel takes place in a poor part of New York. Poppy's father recently left the family, and Poppy's mother produces two presents for Poppy: newborn twin brothers. She loves them, but
8 Aud		<b>John Paul Jones: The Pirate Patriot</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Armstrong Sperry  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (12+)	John Paul Jones was an invaluable figure in the American Revolutionary War. This well-written book is part fictionalized biography and part nonfiction. I appreciated the knowledge I gained from the book, but I feel that many people may find it a little dry and difficult to get through. It's definitely a worthy book, and I do recommend it for serious readers who love American history.
8 ★ Aud		<b>Kisses from Katie</b> <i>Autobiography</i>	Katie J. Davis  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (10-11 yrs), 4 (12+)	Wow! This book was fascinating, life-changing, and bursting with both temporal and spiritual educational value. After Katie Davis, a homecoming queen and class president from Nashville, takes a short trip to Uganda over Christmas break during her senior year, her life is changed forever. She cannot ignore the needs of the people there and the feeling she has of her calling to help them. This marvelous autobiography tells Katie's miraculous and courageous story as she leaves behind her life of popularity, wealth, and privilege to live among the people of Uganda, eventually adopting 14 children in desperate need and helping hundreds of more children to learn of Christ and receive food and education. This book made me laugh. It made me cry. It greatly expanded my mind and deepened my knowledge. It motivated me in a profound way to want to be a better person. I can't recommend this book highly enough!
8 ★		<b>Mansa Musa and the Empire of Mali</b> <i>Biography/ Historical Fiction</i>	P. James Oliver  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (10-12 yrs), 5 (13+)	In a mix of historical fiction, nonfiction, and biography, <i>Mansa Musa</i> pulls readers into the medieval empire of Mali. It focuses on the interesting life story of the emperor Mansa Musa, who ruled Mali in the early 1300s. The book is engaging and should be enjoyed by children ages nine and older as a read-aloud or ages eleven and older as independent reading.
8		<b>Mara, Daughter of the Nile</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Eloise Jarvis McGraw  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (14+)	First published in 1953 by talented writer Eloise Jarvis McGraw, <i>Mara</i> brings ancient Egypt alive in a story of secrecy and danger. I love the descriptive writing, the elevated vocabulary, the historical details, and the engaging characters. There is no objectionable language or material. However, a bit of appropriate romance may make the book more appropriate for a little older audience.



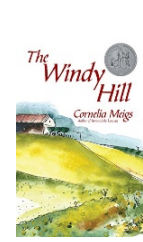
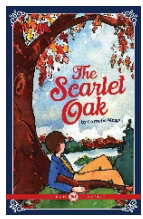

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
8 ★		<b>Mistress Pat</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	L.M. Montgomery  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 3.5 Points: 6 (12-13 yrs), 5 (14+)	This sequel to <i>Pat of Silver Bush</i> is highly recommended. It would not work well as a stand-alone, so read <i>Pat of Silver Bush</i> first. We liked the beautiful messages about the joys we can gain from family, homemaking, and nature—such different messages than many books promote today. This book does contain romance, but it is very wholesome and not sensationalized—the way romance should be.
8 ★		<b>Once Upon a Time: The Way America Was</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	Eric Sloane  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (8-9 yrs), 5 (10-11 yrs) 3 (12+)	This 64-page book is overflowing with educational value. The information is fascinating and the writing fantastic. Readers learn about the principles of frugality, home, and hard work in early America. I highly recommend this wonderful book for ages 10 and up. It would make a great family read-aloud for older children, as it is likely to spark some great discussions.
8 ★		<b>Pat of Silver Bush</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	L.M. Montgomery  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 3.5 Points: 6 (8+)	My 13-year-old daughter absolutely loved this book and said it is even better than <i>Anne of Green Gables</i> . <i>Pat of Silver Bush</i> is a heartwarming story that follows Pat from ages seven to eighteen as she experiences life on Prince Edward Island, Canada, in the early 1900s. This book is packed with wonderful messages about motherhood, love, family, trials, and the beauty of everyday life. Montgomery was a master at writing with descriptive and sensory language. This book is truly a delight. There is some romance in the book, but it is completely wholesome and good. I wouldn't hesitate reading the book to even young children.
8 ★		<b>Patterns on the Wall</b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Elizabeth Yates  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (12+)	<b>Note: This book is integrated with The Good and the Beautiful High School 1 Language Arts Course.</b> <i>Patterns on the Wall</i> is a fantastic book by one of my favorite authors. This wholesome, beautifully written story is compelling and deeply meaningful. The historical fiction novel revolves around a fictional young man and his triumphs during the true frozen year of 1816. This book made me want to handle my hardships in a more optimistic way. The book includes messages of kindness, gratitude to God, faith, appreciation of nature, hard work, love of learning, self-improvement, optimism, humility, long-suffering, and patience. I also learned a lot about the time period, the frozen year of 1816, apprenticeships in early America, and early American stencil artists. This books does contain romance, but in a very gentle, completely wholesome, and pure way. I would feel comfortable reading the book to the youngest of children, but I think it would be best enjoyed by ages 12+.


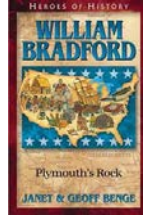
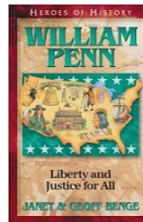
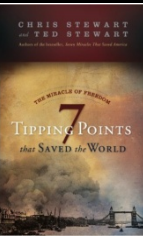
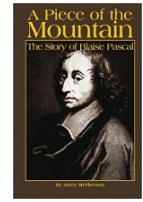
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
8 ★		<b>Prudence Crandall</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Elizabeth Yates  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 7 (9-10 yrs), 5 (11+)	This is another Elizabeth Yates book that I highly recommend. Yates, with her skillful, lovely writing, tells the true story of a brave Quaker teacher named Prudence Crandall who opens a school for African-American girls and faces a lot of challenges. The ending was a little disappointing, but it is how the true story ended, and the book is still very much worth reading. The educational and moral value are very high, and the story is intriguing.
8 ★		<b>Queen Hildegard</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Laura Elizabeth Howe Richards  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Age Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 8 (9-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	<i>Note: This book is included in the Level 6 language arts course.</i> Laura Richards was an incredibly gifted writer. This book is an example of truly good and beautiful writing. Originally published in 1917, the book tells a humorous and engaging story. The official description reads: "Spoiled New York City girl, Hildegard Graham, is sent to stay with her mother's old nurse in the country. When her parents must take a trip to California, Hildegard learns the value of simplicity, kindness, and a more democratic sensibility." I found this book tremendously inspiring and fun to read. I liked it even more than the classic book <i>Pollyanna</i> . This is definitely a book I will read-aloud to my own children. The Audible version is fantastic. Boys and girls of all ages, even older children, should enjoy this story.
8 ★ Aud		<b>Saint Patrick: Pioneer Missionary to Ireland</b> <i>Biography</i>	Michael J. McHugh  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 10 (9-11 yrs), 7 (12-13 yrs), 4 (14+)	This very worthwhile book was a delight to listen to on Audible. I have studied Saint Patrick pretty intensely in the past, and I found this book historically accurate. Although the book is written in an understandable and engaging manner, it will be best enjoyed by older children, as it goes into a lot of detail.
8 ★ Aud		<b>Seven Miracles That Saved America</b> <i>Nonfiction and Fiction</i>	Chris Stewart and Ted Stewart  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 9 (11-12 yrs), 8 (13+)	I can't recommend this book highly enough! Effectively weaving story vignettes with historical accounts, this book teaches about seven instances when God's protective care saved America. The messages and information illustrated are so important to understand. This is the kind of book that not only makes history come alive, but it also gives deep meaning to history and connects learning to God and character. The writing is skillful and elevated, but it is written in a way so that even teenagers would enjoy this insightful book and find it entertaining. The content is appropriate and uses clean language.
8		<b>Stick to the Raft</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Mrs. George Gladstone  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 6 (9-10 yrs), 5 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	This is another wonderful forgotten classic republished by Lamplighter Publishing. The preface reads: "Journey with a poor boy who is honored for his hard work and honesty. Just when things are going well, misfortune invades his life . . . Young in heart will applaud when they see how love triumphs over fear." The writing and story are both beautiful, but some people may find it less engaging than other books.

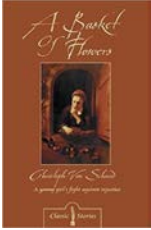

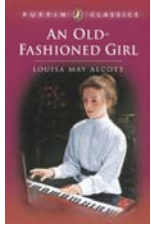

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
8 Aud		<b>Taking Flight: From War Orphan to Star Ballerina</b>  <i>Autobiography</i>	Michaela DePrince  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 2.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (14+)	Michaela DePrince's story is inspiring. From war-torn Sierra Leone, Michaela faced incredible difficulties as a child, eventually becoming an orphan as a toddler. With a skin condition that creates irregular patches of skin, she faced even more difficulties. After seeing a photograph in a magazine of a ballerina, Michaela becomes determined to become a professional ballerina herself one day--a dream that she eventually achieves through hard work and the sacrifice and care of others. <b>Please be aware that the difficulties Michaela describes having as a young child are very intense and scary, including a scene in which her teacher is killed in front of her and her unborn baby cut from her stomach. It is described very briefly, but it is a very brutal scene. I recommend this book for children ages 14+, but parents may want to review the book first.</b>
8 Aud		<b>The Birds' Christmas Carol</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Kate Douglass Wiggin  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 6 (9-10 yrs), 5 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	If you are looking for a beautiful and moving Christmas story, this beautifully written classic book is a great choice! Kate Douglass Wiggin is one of my favorite authors. In just 32 pages, the author skillfully pulls you into the lives of the Bird family and their heartwarming, gentle story that will leave you in tears, both from sadness and joy.
8 ★		<b>The Christmas Porringer</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Evaleen Stein  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 4 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	Evaleen Stein was an American writer of children's books from the early 1900s. Her books, some of which have been in print for over 100 years, are expertly written and packed with moral value. <i>The Christmas Porringer</i> tells the story of a little Flemish girl who lives with her loving grandmother—a lace maker who is very poor. When a robber steals the little girl's porringer (a small dish for soup), an unexpected change of events intertwines their lives together. This would make a great Christmas family read-aloud. The first two lines of the book are an example of how this is classic literature at its best: "Over the old Flemish city of Bruges the wintry twilight was falling. The air was stary with snowflakes that drifted softly down, fluttering from off the steep brown roofs, piling up in corners of ancient doorways, and covering the cobblestones of the narrow streets with a fleecy carpet of white." <b>This book is included in the Level 5 Shared Reader.</b>
8 🔍		<b>The Empty Tower</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Jean Bothwell  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (10-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	This out-of-print book was published in 1948 and is a wonderful story set in India. With skilled writing, Jean Bothwell tells the fictional story of Premi, a girl who lives at a boarding school and wants more than anything to buy a bell for their school's empty tower. While the writing is challenging, the story is engaging and has some nice messages. The book also has high educational value, teaching about the culture of India.
8		<b>The Girl Who Drew Butterflies</b>  <i>Biography/ Nonfiction</i>	Joyce Sidman  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points:	This book tells the fascinating story of Maria Merian, who lived in the late 1600s, when not much was known about bugs or where they came from. From a young age, Maria longed to know more about insects and their life cycle, so with incredible patience and dedication she pursues her dreams.

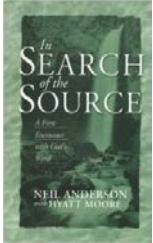

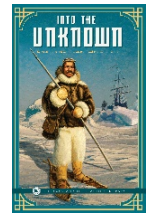




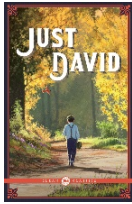

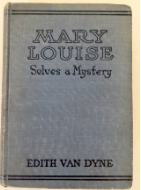

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
8 ★ Aud		<b>The King's Fifth</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Scott O'Dell  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (10-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	Boys will especially love this Newbery Honor book by famous author Scott O'Dell. Esteban de Sandoval, a young mapmaker in the mid-1500s, is to stand trial for withholding "the king's fifth" of the gold he found and supposedly has hidden. The book switches back and forth between the current day (as Esteban stands trial) and his journey through the mythical seven cities, supposedly filled with gold. This enveloping, suspenseful story gives a look at the time of early exploration and will make readers think twice about setting their hearts on riches. Children under 12 will most likely not understand the symbolism nor the complex plot. The cover of this book may not be exciting or interesting, but the book is very engaging, although it is challenging reading!
8 ★		<b>The Little Red Schoolhouse</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	Eric Sloane  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 3 (any age)	Talented author Eric Sloane explores the history and spirit of early American schools in this short but delightful book. A rich, elevated vocabulary makes this book more difficult but also more rewarding. This book is packed not only with educational value but with moral value as well. It explains how faith and the Bible played a major role in early American education. Scattered throughout the book are great insights into moral character. I think all children and adults should take the time to read this book. Like the author says: "The one-room schoolhouse is too much a part of America to be forgotten."
8		<b>The Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	Elizabeth Payne  Moral Merit: 1 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (10-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	This is a very readable nonfiction book that is written well and has a rich vocabulary. The stories and information about ancient Egypt are fascinating.
8 ★ Aud		<b>The Princess and Curdie</b> <i>Fiction</i> Δ	George MacDonald  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 7 (9-10 yrs), 5 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	This book, considered a classic, is a sequel to <i>The Princess and the Goblin</i> , but it could definitely be read as a stand-alone. The story does not build much on the other story, and the beginning of the book gives a brief summary of the first book. <i>The Princess and Curdie</i> features a male main character (instead of a female like in <i>The Princess and the Goblin</i> ). Like all of George MacDonald's writings, this book is a little strange (not in a bad way—he just has a very creative imagination!), but it is very interesting, fun to read, very well written, and full of profound symbols and insightful messages.
8 ★ Aud		<b>The Princess and the Goblin</b> <i>Fiction</i> Δ	George MacDonald  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 1 Points: 7 (9-10 yrs), 5 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	Filled with rich, beautiful language and meaningful Christian allegory, this fairytale-style book was one of J.R.R. Tolkien's childhood favorites. Boys may not think they would like it because it has the word "princess" in the title, but goblins in the mountains, a secret staircase in the castle, and a humorous and courageous 13-year-old boy named Curdie make this book a treasure for both girls and boys. This is a classic that is highly worthwhile and would be great as a read-aloud.

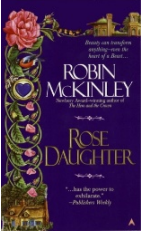
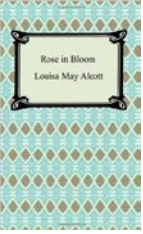
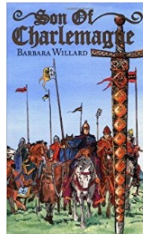


Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
8 ★ Aud		<b>The Vine Basket</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Josanne La Valley <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 5 (9-10 yrs), 3 (11+)	I listened to the Audible version of this beautifully written book and thoroughly enjoyed it. The story takes place in the region of China once known as East Turkestan. 14-year-old Mehrigul is forced to start working in the fields instead of attending school. Even though Mehrigul's father is an unkind gambler and drunkard, and Mehrigul faces extreme difficulties in this story, I love the hopeful feeling of the story as Mehrigul's grandfather and an American woman encourage Mehrigul's talents, and she never quits trying. And, in the end, the father starts to make some improvements. This wholesome and clean story is engaging and packed with educational value and wonderful messages about hope, family support, respect, and perseverance.
8		<b>The Voyage of Patience Goodspeed</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Heather Vogel Frederick <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3.5 <b>Points:</b> 7 (8-9 yrs), 5 (10-11 yrs) 3 (12+)	It's 1835, and 12-year-old Patience Goodspeed is not excited to depart from Nantucket, Massachusetts aboard her father's whaling ship. Patience misses her late mother and is heart-broken to leave behind her education in exchange for kitchen duty on the ship. But as the voyage continues, not only do unexpected adventures arise, but she grows closer to her father, learns courage, and finds a way to continue on her education. This story is well-written, wholesome, and engaging.
8 ★		<b>The Windy Hill</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Cornelia Meigs <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (10-12 yrs), 5 (13+)	The cover of this book is not that exciting, but this book is a little-known treasure. Cornelia Meigs (1884–1973) is a wonderful, brilliant author of wholesome, classic literature. <i>The Windy Hill</i> , published in 1922, is a Newbery Honor book. The book features beautiful description and a rich vocabulary while telling an intriguing story that starts with Oliver and his sister visiting their Uncle Jasper out in the country. But their Uncle Jasper isn't acting like he normally does, and Oliver wants to find out why. He meets and befriends a "Beeman," who is a fantastic storyteller, but Oliver begins to realize there is more to these stories than just fun; they are connected to the mystery surrounding his Uncle Jasper. This book teaches about the power of family, integrity, loyalty, love, forgiveness, compassion, and repentance. It is available free on Gutenberg.org.
8 ★		<b>The Scarlet Oak</b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Cornelia Meigs <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (10-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	This historical fiction novel, first published in 1938, is a beautifully written story of two French brothers who come with their family to America. When the family fortune is possibly lost, due to a family ship being seized by the Dutch, the older brother, Jeremy, goes to Europe in an effort to regain the ship. Hugh, the younger brother, seeks to help his family survive in the meantime. He becomes a gardener's helper at the estate of Joseph Bonaparte, a previous king of Spain and the brother of the exiled Napoleon. The story becomes more complex when Hugh discovers a mysterious man spying on the estate. This engaging story is packed with historical knowledge and contains messages about service, friendship, sacrifice, and strong family relationships.
8 ★		<b>Twice Freed</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Patricia St. John <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (10-12 yrs), 5 (13+)	As the book tells the engaging story of Biblical characters Philemon and Onesimus, the reader learns about the historical time period and the lives of the apostles and Christian converts. Patricia St. John is a fantastic writer. Not only does the book have high moral, literary, and educational value, but it is also a page turner. The book does refer briefly to "orgies" taking place, but it is referring to this definition, as we find it in Webster's dictionary: "secret ceremonial rites held in honor of an ancient Greek or Roman deity and usually characterized by ecstatic singing and dancing."

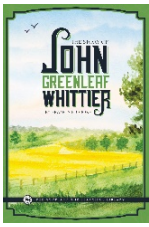



Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
8 ★		<b>Wild Geese Flying</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Cornelia Meigs  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (any age)	Cornelia Meigs' descriptive writing is such a pleasure to read. <i>Wild Geese Flying</i> , published in 1957, illustrates beautiful moral principles through endearing characters and engaging narrative. The story follows the Milton family as they move to a new town and struggle to fit in with their neighbors. Everyone in the town seems to have something against the Milton family, and Dick Milton is determined to find out why. He begins to find clues with the help of his brother Roddy and their mother, and readers will anxiously await each new piece of the puzzle. This gentle, lovely book is a far cry from action-packed best sellers today, filled with shock value. <i>Wild Geese Flying</i> is out of print (at the time of this review), but if you can find a copy, you can sit back and relax as you are taken back in time to the beauties of a close family in a more simple time.
8		<b>William Bradford</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Janet & Geoff Benge  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Age Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (9-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	This book is a mixture of mainly nonfiction, but also some fictionalized parts. I am a big admirer of William Bradford, and I really enjoyed this book. But reluctant readers may struggle with it a little bit and find some parts dry. It is packed with fantastic educational value and is a very worthwhile and interesting book.
8 ★		<b>William Penn</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Janet & Geoff Benge  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Age Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (9-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	Janet and Geoff Benge really have of way of making history come alive through their fictionalized biography accounts. <i>William Penn</i> is an interesting and inspiring story that is packed with educational knowledge. William Penn was a man with many admirable character traits—a man worthy of study. So far, I have read several books in this series (Christian Heroes: Now & Then), and I have liked all of them. The book is nicely written and would probably be enjoyed best by children ages 11 and older.
9 ★ Aud		<b>7 Tipping Points That Saved the World</b> <i>Nonfiction and Fiction</i>	Chris Stewart and Ted Stewart  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 9 (11-12 yrs), 8 (13+)	Brothers Chris and Ted Stewart brilliantly illustrate seven important tipping points in world history that led to the extraordinary time period of America. This fascinating book helps readers see God's divine hand in decisive historical events and the incredible and rare blessing of freedom that America has enjoyed. Not only was my knowledge increased greatly from reading this book, but I also felt that my faith in and gratitude toward God was deepened. In addition to having high moral, literary, and educational value, this book also has high entertainment value. The authors skillfully weave seven fictional stories with nonfictional historical details. This is not a book for just adults; teenagers should read this book and understand these concepts!
9		<b>A Piece of the Mountain</b> <i>Fictional Biography</i>	Joyce McPherson  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	This biography about Blaise Pascal, one of the most important scientists and mathematicians of the 1600s, is well-written and interesting, but it will likely only be enjoyed by serious readers.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
9 ★		<b>A Basket of Flowers</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Christoph von Schmid  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 8 (11-12 yrs), 7 (13+)	This very old book is an absolute treasure and one of my favorite books. French priest and teacher Christoph von Schmid began writing books to read to his school children in order to instill Christian values in them. His writings became so popular that his books were translated into 24 languages. <i>A Basket of Flowers</i> was first published in 1755 and tells the story of Mary, who is brought up by her gentle, devoted father who delights in growing flowers and teaching Mary the truths of the gospel through the symbolism he finds in his beloved garden. But Mary's sheltered, peaceful life suddenly changes when she is falsely accused of a crime punishable by death. Although the writing is over 250 years old, I did not find it that difficult to read. The writing is beautiful, the story is intriguing, and the messages are profound. I found myself underlining lines in the book that were packed with wisdom. Even though this book is relatively short, I gave it high points because I believe it is so worthwhile.
9 ★ Aud Lib		<b>A Christmas Carol</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Charles Dickens  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	One of the most beloved Christmas stories of all time, <i>A Christmas Carol</i> , is beautifully written with a rich vocabulary and profound messages of charity and kindness. I only like (and don't love) versions 5 and 10 of the Librivox recordings.
9 ★		<b>An Old-Fashioned Girl</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Louisa May Alcott  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 9 (9-10 yrs), 8 (11-12 yrs), 7 (13+)	Louisa May Alcott, author of <i>Little Women</i> , is one of my favorite writers. Her book, <i>An Old-Fashioned Girl</i> , is an inspiring story of 14-year-old Polly, a country girl who visits city friends who are much different than she is. However, Polly's "goodness" draws people to her as she stands up for her morals and is not swayed by more "fashionable" people. Many reviewers said that Polly's gentle, kind, and selfless character motivated them to want to be a better person. A little romance is included, but it is all very wholesome and appropriate—no passionate tension, boy craziness, etc.
9 ★ Aud		<b>Five Little Peppers (Unabridged)</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Margaret Sidney  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 10 (9-10 yrs), 8 (11-12 yrs), 7 (13+)	<i>Five Little Peppers and How They Grew</i> is a true classic. The writing is definitely old-fashioned and more difficult to read, but it is rich, complex, and powerful—writing at its best. The story and the characters are endearing, and the book is packed with wonderful messages and solid family values. This book, first published in 1880, follows the struggles and accomplishments of fictional Mrs. Pepper, a widow, and her children. All books in the series are included in the reading program and go in this order: <i>Five Little Peppers and How They Grew</i> , <i>Five Little Peppers Midway</i> , <i>Five Little Peppers Abroad</i> , <i>Five Little Peppers and Their Friends</i> , <i>Five Little Peppers: The Stories Polly Pepper Told</i> , <i>Five Little Peppers: The Adventures of Joel Pepper</i> , <i>Five Little Peppers At School</i> , <i>Five Little Peppers: Ben Pepper</i> , <i>Five Little Peppers in the Little Brown House</i> , <i>Five Little Peppers: Our Davie Pepper</i> , <i>Five Little Peppers Grown Up</i> , <i>Five Little Peppers: Phronsie Pepper</i> .

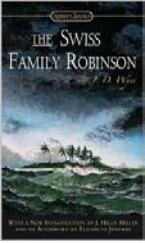

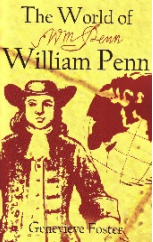
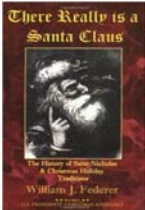
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
9		<b><i>In Search of the Source</i></b> <i>Autobiography</i>	Neil Anderson & Hyatt Moore  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (15+)	<i>In Search of the Source</i> is an autobiography of a Wycliffe Bible translator who lived for years in the heart of Papua New Guinea among the Foloपा people in an effort to learn their language and culture and translate portions of the Bible into their language. I found this book absolutely fascinating and full of educational value. I was inspired to learn of the lengths and sacrifices that people have gone to in order to bring the word of God to small groups of tribal people. However, because of occurrences of cannibalism, disturbing funeral customs, and some other shocking details, <b>parents should read this book first before deciding if their child should read it.</b> I did not feel the treatment of these details was sensationalized, but they are just by their nature quite shocking to read about. It made me think about how uncivil people can become when separated from a knowledge of God. I feel children ages 15+ will enjoy the book best.
9 ★		<b><i>Invincible Louisa</i></b> <i>Biography</i>	Cornelia Meigs  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (9-10 yrs), 7 (11-12 yrs), 6 (13+)	This Newbery Medal-winning biography of writer Louisa May Alcott is one of my 12-year-old daughter's favorite books. I strongly suggest reading one or two of Alcott's books before reading this biography—you will appreciate the biography more. This interesting and inspiring book is a well-written, challenging read that is well worth the time.
4 ★		<b><i>Into the Unknown</i></b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i> <i>Biography</i>	Various  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	<b>Note: This book is integrated with The Good and the Beautiful High School 1 Language Arts Course.</b> The adventures of three Arctic explorers--Fridtjof Nansen, Robert Edwin Peary, and Matthew A. Henson - are told in this compilation of biographical and autobiographical stories. These fascinating and inspiring accounts are packed with excitement and educational value. Why will the explorers die if they eat the snow when they are thirsty? Why was it sometimes necessary to blow up the ice to save their lives? What explorer lost all of his toes expect for one due to frostbite?
9 ★ Aud		<b><i>Jack and Jill</i></b> <i>Fiction</i>	Louisa May Alcott  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 3 Points: 8 (9-10 yrs), 7 (11-12 yrs), 6 (13+)	While not the most popular Louisa May Alcott book, this delightful book is very well-written and of the highest moral and literary value. Jack and Jill, close friends, are in a sledding accident that leaves them as invalids. As they recover, they learn important lessons about friendship, responsibility, and selflessness. The story is inspiring and packed with moral lessons and wisdom. This hope-filled, old-fashioned, beautifully written book is such a contrast with the plethora of shallow, violent, and disrespectful books found in bookstores and school libraries today. If you can raise a child who has a love and appreciation for a book like <i>Jack and Jill</i> , you have accomplished something wonderful!
9 ★ Lib		<b><i>Jessica's First Prayer</i></b> <i>Fiction</i>	Hesba Stretton  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Points: 3 (any age)	This short book (52-pages) is a little treasure. The story is interesting and beautiful. However, this is not easy reading and is of a very different style than the quick, thrilling, easy-reads of today. The author, who wrote over 60 books and stories, wrote <i>Jessica's First Prayer</i> in 1867. It sold well and was translated into many languages. The back cover explains, "Her moral tales and semi-religious stories, chiefly for the young, were printed in huge quantities and were especially widespread as school and Sunday school prizes."




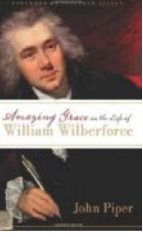
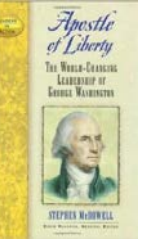
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
9 ★ Lib		<b>Just David</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Eleanor H. Porter  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4 <b>Points:</b> 10 (12-13), 8 (14-15 yrs), 7 (16+)	<b>Note: This book is integrated with The Good and the Beautiful High School 1 Language Arts Course.</b> From the author of <i>Pollyanna</i> , comes an absolute treasure: <i>Just David</i> . David was raised in a cabin up in the mountains. His loving, devoted father taught him to love nature and music. When David's father is ill, he decides to take David to his relatives that the boy has never met. But partway into the journey, his father dies. David does not know the names of his relatives or even the last name of his father, which his father had a reason for not telling him. This story is not just about what happens to David, but also what happens to all those who enter his life after this tragic event. This is literature at its very best: beautifully written, completely wholesome, delightfully engaging, and intensely inspiring.
8 Aud		<b>Kilmeny of the Orchard</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	L.M. Montgomery  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 4 (14+)	<i>Kilmeny of the Orchard</i> is a little different than some of L.M. Montgomery books, but I really enjoyed it. The description from the publisher reads: "When twenty-four-year-old Eric Marshall arrives on Prince Edward Island to become a substitute schoolmaster, he has a bright future in his wealthy family's business. Eric has taken the two-month teaching post only as a favor to a friend—but fate throws in his path a beautiful, mysterious girl named Kilmeny Gordon. With jet black hair and sea blue eyes, Kilmeny immediately captures Eric's heart. But Kilmeny cannot speak, and Eric is concerned for and bewitched by this shy, sensitive mute girl. For the first time in his life Eric must work hard for something he wants badly. And there is nothing he wants more than for Kilmeny to return his love." This is a light, wholesome romance.
9 ★ Lib		<b>Mary Louise Books</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	L. Frank Baum  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 1.5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11-12 yrs), 3 (13+)	<i>The Bluebird Books</i> , or <i>Mary Louise</i> series, written by L. Frank Baum using his Edith Van Dyne pseudonym, is a series of mystery novels popular with teenage girls in the 1910s and 1920s. I listened to <i>Mary Louise Solves a Mystery</i> on Librivox.org and really enjoyed it. The story is well-written and wholesome and has some good messages, but it is mainly just good, clean entertainment with high literary value but not strong in moral or educational merit. The books go in this order, although each works as a stand-alone book (purple=recommended, black=not yet reviewed): <i>Mary Louise</i> , <i>Mary Louise in the Country</i> , <i>Mary Louise Solves a Mystery</i> , <i>Mary Louise and the Liberty Girls</i> , <i>Mary Louise Adopts a Soldier</i> , <i>Mary Louise at Dorfield</i> , <i>Mary Louise Stands the Test</i> , <i>Mary Louise and Josie O'Gorman</i> , <i>Josie O'Gorman</i> , <i>Josie O'Gorman and the Meddlesome Major</i> .
9		<b>Otto of the Silver Hand</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Howard Pyle  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (11-12 yrs), 5 (13+)	This historical fiction novel, set in the middle ages, tells the story of the fictional character Otto, son of robber Baron Conrad. While the story reveals the cruelty and vengefulness that pervaded Medieval society, young Otto, who grows up surrounded by holiness and gentleness in a monastery, displays love, courage, and strength of character when he is thrust into the bitter feudal world. Written over 125 years ago by Howard Pyle (author of <i>King Arthur</i> and <i>The Adventures of Robin Hood</i> ), this book is an example of writing at its finest. The rich, vibrant, and skillfully crafted language paints a picture so real that you can hear the clash of iron; you can see the sunlight's rays of misty, yellow light and the treetops that roll in endless billows of green; you can smell the pungent smell of burned vinegar; and you can feel the folds of a coarse gray cloak and the cold stone walls. The mind-expanding elements of classical literature abound in this book: varied and complex sentence structures, elevated vocabulary, powerful and extensive description, figurative language, sensory description, and profound insights into places, cultures, history, and human nature. This is challenging reading.



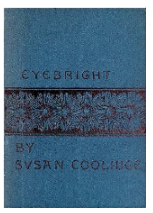
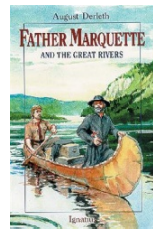
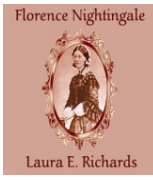
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
9 ★ Aud		<b>Rose Daughter</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Robin McKinley  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 0 <b>Points:</b> 7 (14+)	Robin McKinley is a master writer, and <i>Rose Daughter</i> is my favorite book of hers that I have read. The book contains no profanity (unlike most of her books, unfortunately). There is one word that some may consider profanity, but I did not. This unique and compelling retelling of "Beauty and the Beast" has well-developed characters and wonderful messages about courage, compassion, strong families, kindness, humility, hard work, and love of nature and animals. However, the story is so intriguing, readers will hardly realize how much they are learning about noble character as they read.
9 ★ Lib Lib		<b>Rose in Bloom</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Louisa May Alcott  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 9 (9-10 yrs), 8 (11-12 yrs), 7 (13+)	This is a sequel to Alcott's book <i>Eight Cousins</i> , and like all of Alcott's books, it is of the highest moral and literary merit. This book does contain appropriate romance and may be best enjoyed by adults and children ages 14+.
9		<b>Son of Charlemagne</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Barbara Willard  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 4.5 <b>Points:</b> 7 (9-10 yrs), 5 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	This thought-provoking book makes history come alive as it explores the life of Charlemagne and his sons and daughters in story form. The 183-page book is a fairly quick and easy read.
9 ★ Lib		<b>The Dragon's Secret</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Augusta Huiell Seaman  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Points:</b> 6 (9-10 yrs), 4 (11-12 yrs), 3 (13+)	<i>The Dragon's Secret</i> is a wholesome, skillfully written mystery published in 1920. Sixteen-year-old Leslie Crane goes to visit her aunt at a quiet bungalow by the sea in New Jersey. Leslie is baffled when a metal box, decorated with an elaborately carved dragon, is dug up by her dog. She is also puzzled by a light she keeps seeing in the supposedly empty bungalow next door. While this book does not center around strong moral messages, it is clean, and respect, kindness, honesty, and generosity are promoted. I really enjoyed the book as an entertaining read that had great literary value.
9 ★ Aud		<b>The Screwtape Letters</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	C.S. Lewis  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3 <b>Points:</b> 7 (14+)	After one of my children read this book, he was often applying bits of wisdom he learned from the book to our conversations. I love literature that makes us think and deepens our knowledge. This fantastic, classic book is a must-read for all teenagers and adults. The reading is challenging, but it is engaging as we read correspondence between the devil and a demon-in-training. This insightful book really made me think about my own life and how to triumph over evil. Parents should be aware that the book does discuss sexual relationships—obviously promoting sexual purity—but the book may be most appropriate for children ages 14+. Some people do not like C.S. Lewis or this particular book. This review is, of course, my personal opinion, and you are welcome to skip books by C.S. Lewis.

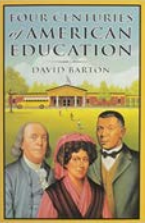
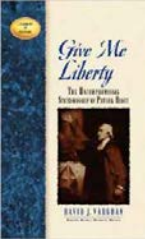
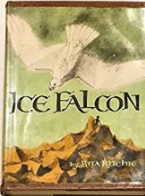

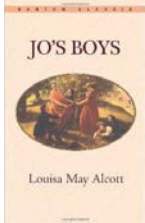
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
4 ★		<b>The Story of John Greenleaf Whittier</b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i>  <b>Biography</b>	Frances E. Cooke  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 7 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	<i>Note: This book is integrated with The Good and the Beautiful High School 1 Language Arts Course.</i> This book, with its vivid description and engaging writing style, transported me back to New England in the 1800s. There, I followed the story of a simple farm boy who grew into a courageous and noble man. This book is 'good and beautiful' literature at its best and is not to be missed!
9 ★ Aud		<b>The Story of My Life</b>  <b>Autobiography</b>	Helen Keller  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 5 (any age)	This autobiography about Helen Keller's triumph over blindness and deafness is not only fascinating and inspiring, but it also includes beautiful description, an elevated vocabulary, and deep insights into life. There are many references and allusions to the Bible throughout the book. Parents should be aware that in her adult life Helen Keller helped form the ACLU and was a self-proclaimed Socialist. Some argue that this is because Anne Sullivan's (Helen's beloved life-long teacher) husband was a Socialist and encouraged Helen and that she was only exposed to what was given and what was said into her hand. Whatever the reason, her autobiography covers a period of her life before this time and is wholesome and inspiring. Even great people like King David made major mistakes later in life but that does not mean we do not love and study the story of David and Goliath. Some parents may choose to skip over Helen Keller. I personally prefer exposing my children to this fantastic book but talking to them first about her later life and how people can change and be influenced. Note: This book includes letters from Helen Keller that are wholesome but do not need to be read to receive points for this book.
9 ★ Aud Lib		<b>The Story of Rolf and the Viking Bow</b>  <b>Historical Fiction</b>	Allen French  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 8 (8-9 yrs), 7 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	I give this book a hearty recommendation due to its educational and moral merit. Although the first chapter is a little slow and challenging, I really enjoyed the book after that. The plot may be too complex and confusing for children under ten years old. This book would work great as a family read-aloud for older children as it gives opportunities to talk about messages such as justice, forgiveness, love of family, selflessness, kindness, honesty, and the ill effects of greed and corruption.
9		<b>The Swamp Fox of the Revolution</b>  <b>Biography</b>	Stewart H. Holbrook  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 7 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	This interesting and well-written biography of Francis Marion not only gives insight into the life of a unique and inspiring man, but it also gives insight into the Revolutionary War. I loved the book and highly recommend it to those interested in American history.

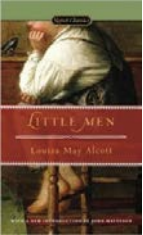
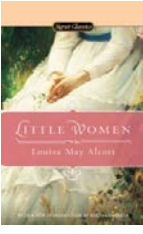
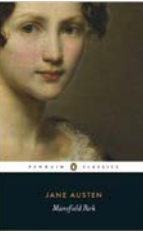





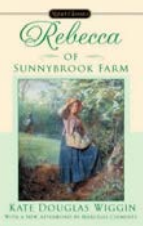
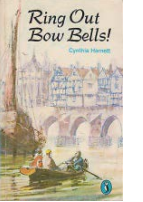
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
9 Aud		<b>The Swiss Family Robinson</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Johann D. Wyss  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Merit: 5 Points: 8 (12+)	Interestingly, author Johann David Wyss wrote only one book: <i>The Swiss Family Robinson</i> . However, his one book became one of the great classics of children's literature, the title of the book being known today by virtually everyone in the United States. Inspired by Daniel Defoe's book <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> , this book began when Wyss began creating and telling stories to his four sons about a family that was shipwrecked. Wyss used these stories as an opportunity to teach his children about moral character traits such as kindness, family unity, faith, and hard work. The Disney movie <i>Swiss Family Robinson</i> , to me, is not close to matching the true plot or greatness of this book. While geared more to boys, some girls would enjoy this book. Be aware that this book is long and difficult and not for reluctant readers.
9 ★		<b>The Sword of the Spirit</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Joyce McPherson  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (12+)	This book is written well and in easy-to-understand language. However, the concepts and long list of characters in the book are a little more difficult to follow, so I suggest the books for ages 12 or older. I think it would be most enjoyed by children 15+. After reading this book, I felt that I understood the life of William Tyndale very well. The author writes in the style of a fictionalized biography but bases all of the main events, details, and characters on true events and people.
9		<b>The World of William Penn</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Genevieve Foster  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (12+)	This book, published by Beautiful Feet Books, is extremely educational. The writing is interesting, but the book is suggested for those specifically studying William Penn or the time period, or those who love learning about historical figures. This is not a book for reluctant readers. Not only does this book teach about William Penn, but also about the world and time period in which he lived.
9		<b>There Really is a Santa Claus</b>  <i>Non-Fiction</i>	William J. Federer  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (12+)	I learned so much from this book. I can't believe I did not know this history before! Even though the book is a little disorganized, and the writing is a little dry in some places, I found the information very interesting and of much worth. I think everyone needs to have this knowledge of St. Nicholas and the evolution of how different countries have come to view Christmas and Santa Claus. The book is packed with true historical information that encompasses much more than just Santa Claus. However, I recommend this book for only serious, non-reluctant readers that are at a Level 9 reading level or higher. It would also be a great family read-aloud for older children (10+), especially during the Christmas season.

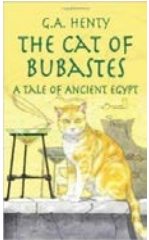
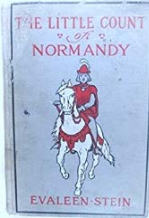
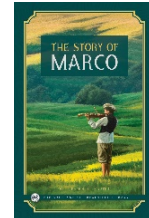
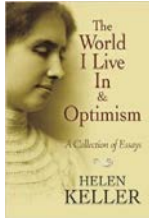
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
9 ★		<b>Thistle and Rose: A Story for Girls</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Amy Walton  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 6 (12+)	<i>Thistle and Rose: A Story for Girls</i> was published in 1895 by the gifted author, Amy Walton (1845–1925) (This is not the same author as O.F. Walton, who is also known as Amy Catherine Walton). I really enjoyed this gentle book that tells the story of 15-year-old Anna who leaves the city to live with relatives in the country while her father is abroad. Anna has never met her grandfather. In fact, before her trip, she had never even heard of him. What will happen when she meets him? This short, gentle story is packed with beautiful description, fantastic literary value, and great messages. The characters are well-developed and really come alive. God and faith are woven throughout the story. This story will definitely be enjoyed best by girls who are used to good and beautiful style literature.
9 ★		<b>Wings Like a Dove</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Christine Farenhorst  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (14+)	This book tells the true story of a largely forgotten but important and heroic woman of the Reformation, Jeanne d'Albret, who becomes queen of Navarre. This powerful story is inspiring as it skillfully tells of Jeanne's incredible courage and kindness in a time fraught with dangers and persecution. The plot is intriguing, and the story is packed with meaning and educational value. Even reluctant readers should love this book. <b>IMPORTANT NOTE:</b> Catholic families may want to avoid this book as it has a very strong Protestant point of view.
9 🕒		<b>Young Americans</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Cornelia Meigs  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	This book is a lovely collection of American history stories by Cornelia Meigs published in 1936. Like all of Meigs' books, the writing is exemplary. The book is packed with great messages and high educational value. The book, at the time of this review, was out of print, and very few used copies were available.
10 ★ 🔊 Aud		<b>Amazing Grace in the Life of William Wilberforce</b>  <i>Biography</i>	John Piper  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (12+)	This short biography (76 pages) gives a glimpse into the life of one of my favorite historical figures—William Wilberforce. In fact, I am quite in awe of this man and his story, and I am amazed that more people are not aware of him. This book is very well-written and inspiring, but an elevated vocabulary makes the book more challenging for young readers. For a longer biography on Wilberforce, I suggest Eric Metaxas' book <i>Amazing Grace: William Wilberforce and the Heroic Campaign to End Slavery</i> , which is a part of this reading program.
10 ★		<b>Apostle of Liberty: The World Changing Leadership of George Washington</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Stephen McDowell  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 9 (11+)	This book is an absolute treasure. McDowell, with skilled, rich writing, goes well beyond just telling the story of George Washington's life—he also illustrates, with inspiring, specific detail, the unique personal qualities that made Washington a successful leader and a man of such noble character. This book also beautifully explains the deeply rooted faith of Washington, and how it affected his decisions and actions and thus affected the destiny of the entire nation. I knew Washington was a man of faith, but I was surprised to learn just how much his faith played a role in his life. I like how McDowell uses factual accounts and information rather than just giving his opinion. This book inspired me in so many ways: to seek and value knowledge, to be humble, to have deeper faith, to give more service, and much more!

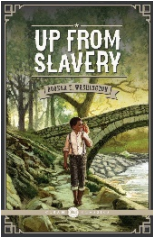
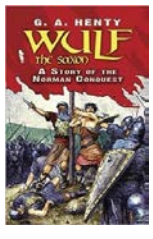
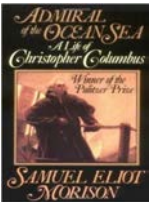

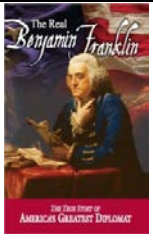
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
10		<b>Beneath My Mother's Feet</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Amjed Qamar  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 4 (13+)	This engaging fictional story gives a depiction of life in modern Pakistan. The story is eye-opening and inspiring. After her father is injured and her older brother runs away, fourteen-year-old Nazi is pulled out of school to help her mother in the humiliating job of cleaning houses. Will her cousin still want to move forward with their arranged marriage when he finds out? How will Nazi ever escape a life of servitude and receive an education? It could be viewed that the book stereotypes of rich people and men as altogether bad, but it could also be viewed that that is the only experience that Nazi has had with rich people and men. Overall, I enjoyed this story and learned a lot. I came away from the book with gratitude for the opportunities I have in life. The book has a few instance that could be considered taking God's name in vain, but I did not feel that was the case. The book is clean and free from inappropriate material, but mature topics make this book, in my opinion, best for those 13 years old and older.
10 ↳Aud		<b>Eight Cousins</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Louisa May Alcott  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 9 (9-10 yrs), 8 (11-12 yrs), 7 (13+)	As this classic book opens, Rose, recently orphaned, is a 13-year-old, sickly girl mourning the death of her father. Through the tutelage and love of a lively, forward-thinking uncle and the friendship of seven boisterous male cousins, we see Rose turn into a happy, healthy young woman. This wonderful, wholesome book is a timeless story packed with beautiful, fun writing and beautiful, profound messages. Young women will not only love this book's plot and characters, but its inspiring messages will stay with them for many years to come. However, this book is challenging to read.
10 ★		<b>Eyebright</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Susan Coolidge  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 9 (9-10 yrs), 7 (11-12 yrs), 6 (13+)	Classic American author Susan Coolidge (1835-1905) , author <i>What Katy Did</i> , wrote a little-known but excellent book named <i>Eyebright</i> , published in 1879. The book follows an optimistic, imaginative girl named Isabella Bright, nicknamed Eyebright, from ages 12-15. Her mother has died, and her father moves her from a Shaker village to an isolated island on the coast of Maine. Eyebright's adventures are both inspiring and educational. This is very challenging and rewarding literature. The first few chapters are a little difficult to get into, but then the story takes off and kept me captivated. I adore this book and am sad it is out of print. However, it is available on Kindle and Gutenberg.org.
10		<b>Father Marquette and the Great Rivers</b>  <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	August Derleth  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (10-12 yrs), 5 (13+)	This book tells the daring story of Canadian missionary Jacques Marquette. I really enjoyed the book and felt that I learned a lot, but it is not quick or easy reading. Reluctant readers may not enjoy the book.
10 ★		<b>Florence Nightingale the Angel of Crimea</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Laura E. Richards  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 9 (10-11 yrs), 8 (12+)	Although this nonfiction book is written with challenging vocabulary and skillful, complex writing, it has high entertainment value. Richards is a master storyteller. In this book, she brings Florence Nightingale and her time period to life through lively, wonderful writing. I have loved many of Richard's fiction books, but I was impressed that, even in a nonfiction book, she wove in her witty sense of humor. This book is definitely one of my top picks. I highly recommend the Audible version of the book.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
10 ★		<b>Four Centuries of American Education</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	David Barton  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Points: 6 (12+)	This powerful, well-researched book traces the history of education in America, focusing on the removal of God and religion from public education. I couldn't put the book down. Its short length, organization, and engaging writing make it a book that could be read in one day by an adult and a book that would be very beneficial for high school students to read and study.
10 ★		<b>Give Me Liberty: The Uncompromising Statesmanship of Patrick Henry</b>  <i>Biography</i>	David J. Vaughan  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 9 (12+)	My teenage children found this biography fascinating. Patrick Henry's life is not only interesting but filled with inspiring life lessons. This book takes a decidedly religious approach to Henry's life, focusing on his character and faith. This well-researched book features excellent writing that is compelling, clear, and easily understood. I think children ages 12 and older will be surprised at how interesting and inspiring they find this nonfiction book to be! This is very worthwhile reading.
10 ★		<b>Ice Falcon</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Rita Ritchie  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 7 (9-10 yrs), 5 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	I loved <i>The Golden Hawks by Genghis Kahn</i> so much that I wanted to read more by the author, Rita Ritchie. <i>Ice Falcon</i> is completely out of print and mainly unavailable. The adventurous story keeps you reading. I love that it is packed with educational value. It has some good messages, but is mainly just a wholesome, historical fiction adventure that features excellent writing. Parents should be aware that the main character comes across a frozen dead man in the ice. There are also some references to the Vikings' belief in demon-like spirits that roam some mountains.
10 Lib		<b>In the Reign of Terror</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	G.A. Henty  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 5 (10+)	Henty's books are said to be very historically accurate, and they are written from a Christian worldview. The books are very well-written and contain a rich, varied vocabulary as well as examples of high moral principles. This book is a little slow to start, but then it picks up for the rest of the book and is quite engaging. The book is a great way to learn more about the French Revolution and the time period.
10 Lib		<b>Jo's Boys</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Louisa May Alcott  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 9 (9-10 yrs), 8 (11-12 yrs), 7 (13+)	<i>Jo's Boys</i> is the final book in a series that starts with <i>Little Women</i> and <i>Little Men</i> . <i>Jo's Boys</i> starts ten years after <i>Little Men</i> . Like all books in the series, it is a sweet story that is incredibly well-written and is of high moral value. This book is geared to an older audience. While I feel it is appropriate for younger children, it will probably be enjoyed most by those age 13 and older.

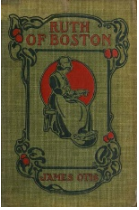
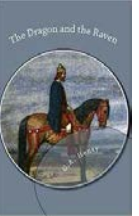
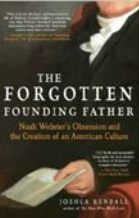
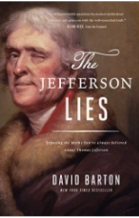
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
10 ★ Lib		<b>Little Men</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Louisa May Alcott  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 9 (9-10 yrs), 8 (11-12 yrs), 7 (13+)	With incredibly beautiful, descriptive writing, Alcott tells the endearing story of Plumfield, a home and school for boys, where Mr. and Mrs. Bhaer provide their boys with a very different type of education and a lot of love. Although this book is challenging reading, the characters are so fun and come alive in a way that you feel you are almost right there with them. Powerful messages in this book include devotion to family, self-control, unselfishness, patience, respect for parents, gentleness, creativity, love of learning, hard work, optimism, the joy and beauty of motherhood, proper use of money, and humility. Both boys and girls will enjoy the book's lively cast of boys (and some girls) and their sometimes wild escapades. This book continues the story of some of the characters from <i>Little Women</i> . However, it is a standalone book, and <i>Little Women</i> does not need to be read first. Give yourself plenty of time to read this outstanding book, but read it! This is a classic that should not be missed.
10 ★ Lib Lib		<b>Little Women</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Louisa May Alcott  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 9 (9-10 yrs), 8 (11-12 yrs), 7 (13+)	Louisa May Alcott was an amazingly gifted writer. The moral, literary, and educational value of <i>Little Women</i> is of the highest merit. As the official description reads: "The four March sisters—Meg, Amy, Beth, and feisty Jo—share the joys and sorrows of growing up while their father is away at war. The family is poor in worldly goods, but rich in love and character." This is a true classic—a pure, honest, timeless, rich story full of beautiful writing and moral lessons. On Librivox.org, I only recommend the Version 3 Dramatic Reading of this book.
10 Lib Lib		<b>Mansfield Park</b>  <i>Fiction</i>	Jane Austen  Moral Merit: 1 Literary Merit for Age Level: 5 Educational Value: 2 Points: 7 (14+)	Fanny, the heroine in <i>Mansfield Park</i> , is a poor girl who grew up under the care of her wealthy relatives while never being accepted by them as an equal. Fanny is a sensible girl with remarkable moral fortitude and feels out of place in a world of social accomplishments and flirtations. Like all of Austen's books, <i>Mansfield Park</i> paints a study of character and gives insight into the moral and social values of the time period. This books contains no profanity or taking of God's name in vain, unlike all of Austen's other books. On Librivox.org, I recommend version 2 of the book.
10		<b>Mary of the Mayflower</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Diane Stevenson Stone  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 4 Points: 6 (11-12 yrs), 4 (13+)	While this story about Mary Chilton, the first woman to set foot on Plymouth Rock, is a very worthy read, the writing style is not my favorite. The story is slow-moving with a very simple plot, and some of the language, which tries to be true to the time period, is hard to get through. However, the story is wholesome and has wonderful educational value. Serious readers who like historical details may enjoy the book, but there are many I would recommend before this one.


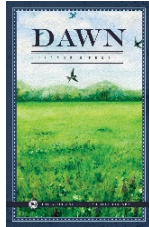
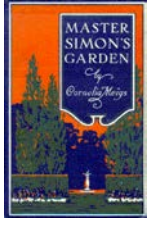

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
10 ★ Aud Lib		<b>Men of Iron</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Howard Pyle  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (11-12 yrs), 6 (13+)	In this classic book that takes place in 15th-century England, Myles Farworth leaves his wrongly exiled, blind father to train for knighthood and eventually restore his family's honor. The vocabulary is rich and varied, and the writing is filled with wonderfully complex and varied sentence structures, descriptive language, and beautiful uses of literary devices. Readers learn much about castle life in Medieval times as well as some history of the time period. Myles has an indomitable spirit and grows into a man of honor, humility, and integrity, and who refers to his trust and reliance on God. This is not an easy book. And although it is filled with adventure, kids used to a diet of easy entertainment will most likely really struggle with this book. However, it is a book of the highest literary, moral, and educational merit. The librivox.org recording is not fantastic but may be acceptable.
10 ★ Aud		<b>Mother Carey's Chickens</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Kate Douglass Wiggin  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 10 (10-11 yrs), 8 (12-13 yrs), 7 (14+)	Classic author Kate Douglass Wiggins (author of <i>Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm</i> ) brings to life a loving, lively family. I can't recommend this book highly enough. The writing is exemplary, and the moral value is fantastic. As readers follow the touching and often humorous story of a dedicated, nurturing mother and her children, readers learn about the power of family relationships, the beauty and joy of motherhood, gentleness, sacrifice, and so much more. At the time of this review, this book was out of print, but used copies may be available on Amazon.com, and the book can be read for free on Gutenberg.org.
10 ★ Aud		<b>Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Kate Douglas Wiggin  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 8 (9-10 yrs), 7 (11-12 yrs), 6 (13+)	The imaginative, lovable heroine of this fantastic classic book is sent to stay with her unmarried aunts in Maine and triumphs in spite of many trials and tribulations. I agree with this reviewer's opinion: "This book stays with you, the story is so rich and engaging." However, the difficult (but very beautiful) writing style and elevated vocabulary of a former time may make the reading a little tough for those who are not used to more challenging reading.
10 ★ Lib		<b>Ring Out Bow Bells!</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Cynthia Harnett  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (11-13 yrs), 7 (14+)	This book is a good example of not judging a book by its cover. The old, worn, out-of-print book sat on our shelf for years before we finally read it. We wished we hadn't waited that long! Not only is the writing masterful, but the story is very engaging and features a well-developed cast of characters. Set in 1415 in London, the story follows a boy named Dickon who becomes apprenticed to Dick Whittington, a past mayor of London. The complex plot unfolds as Dickon accidentally becomes involved in the intriguing and mysterious events of the time period. We loved the entertainment value, educational value, and the strong moral messages.



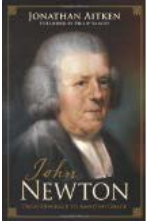

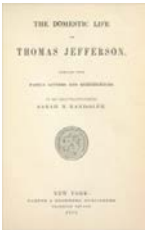
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
10 Aud		<b>The Cat of Bubastes</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	G.A. Henty  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (10+)	Many homeschool families use G.A. Henty's historical fiction books as part of their history instruction. Henty's books are said to be very historically accurate, and they are written from a Christian worldview. The books are very well-written and contain a rich, varied vocabulary as well as examples of high moral principles such as honesty, selflessness, and loyalty. Although <i>The Cat of Bubastes</i> is challenging reading, it is a fantastic, exciting story brimming with historical facts about ancient Egypt. I heartily agree with reviewer Principled American: "If you're looking to provide historically-rich literature for your home, the Henty series is an excellent option. Besides the obvious of reading an enjoyable book based on historical fact, these stories are an easy way to increase the reader's patience and attention span. Additionally, immersing oneself in skillful writing is a simple method of promoting good grammar."
10 ★ 📖		<b>The Little Count of Normandy</b> <i>Fiction</i>	Evaleen Stein  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 9 (9-10 yrs), 8 (11-12 yrs), 7 (13+)	<i>Note: This book will be a part of The Good &amp; the Beautiful High School language arts course.</i> This is literature at its very best! The writing is packed with skillfully written literary devices, sensory language, and descriptive language. The plot is intriguing and complex. The characters are compelling and well-developed. And the book is inspiring and powerful. For those who have learned to appreciate good literature, this book will be an absolute treasure. I agree with the <i>Lafayette Reader</i> that wrote, "Evaleen Stein's stories are music in prose—they are like pearls on a chain of gold—each word seems exactly the right word in the right place; the stories sing themselves out, they are so beautifully expressed." This is the story of a lad of noble birth who is kidnapped. But little did the kidnappers expect what would result from the lad's kindness and lovable nature.
10 ★		<b>The Story of Marco</b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i> <i>Biography</i>	Eleanor H. Porter  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (10-11 yrs), 5 (12+)	<i>Note: This book is integrated with The Good and the Beautiful High School 1 Language Arts Course.</i> "Two days after the band of gypsies dropped out of sight behind the hill, there appeared on the Gaylordville streets a slender, lean-faced boy with somber eyes, and hair that hung in curls of blackness all about his ears and neck. In his hand was a violin, and before one of the houses on a noisy street he stopped and began to play." <i>The Story of Marco</i> is a beautiful tale written by the author of <i>Pollyanna</i> .
10 ★ Aud		<b>The World I Live in &amp; Optimism: A Collection of Essays</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	Helen Keller  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (15+)	This book is comprised of fifteen very profound, inspiring, and worthwhile essays as well as a poem written by Helen Keller when she was a college student. Readers should be aware that in her adult life Helen Keller helped form the ACLU and was a self-proclaimed Socialist. Some argue that this is because Anne Sullivan's (Helen's beloved life-long teacher) husband was a Socialist and encouraged Helen and that she was only exposed to what was given and what was said into her hand. Whatever the reason, these essays were before that time period and do not contain socialistic ideas. Even great people like King David made major mistakes later in life, but that does not mean we don't love and study the story of David and Goliath. These essays by Helen are difficult but rewarding reading, offering eloquent and profound observations on gaining and maintaining happiness.


Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
10 ★ Aud		<b>Up from Slavery</b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i>  <i>Autobiography</i>	Booker T. Washington  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (12+)	<b>Note: This book is integrated with The Good and the Beautiful High School 1 Language Arts Course.</b> This very worthy autobiography should be on the reading list of every teenager and adult. The official description describes the book well: "In this eloquently written book, Booker T. Washington, born in a Virginian slave hut, describes events in a remarkable life that began in bondage and culminated in worldwide recognition for his many accomplishments. In simply written yet stirring passages, he tells of his impoverished childhood and youth, the unrelenting struggle for an education, early teaching assignments, his selection in 1881 to head Tuskegee Institute, and more." I found this book incredibly enlightening and inspiring.
10 ★ Lib Lib		<b>Wulf the Saxon</b>  <i>Historical Fiction</i>	G.A. Henty  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 4 Points: 5 (10+)	Many homeschool families use G.A. Henty's historical fiction books as part of their history instruction. Henty's books are said to be very historically accurate, and they are written from a Christian worldview. The books are very well-written and contain a rich, varied vocabulary as well as examples of high moral principles such as courage, honor, and integrity. Although the books are challenging reading (many compound-complex sentences, lengthy detail, and elevated vocabulary, all of which are fantastic for exercising the mind), the stories are very engaging. <i>Wulf the Saxon</i> takes place during the Norman Invasion on England. The book contains no objectionable language.
11		<b>Admiral of the Ocean Sea</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Samuel Eliot Morison  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 8 (13+)	Originally published in 1942, this Pulitzer Prize-winning biography of Christopher Columbus gives a truthful, authoritative, insightful, detailed, and engaging look into the life and voyages of Columbus. The author, an American historian born in 1887 who was also a sailor and scholar, recreated Columbus' voyages before writing the book. Replete with rich, stunningly beautiful language, the book is a delightful read and features exemplary writing. In a world that misconstrues the truth about Columbus, this 670-page book is a treasure and a worthwhile read for all teenagers and adults.
11 ★ Aud		<b>Amazing Grace</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Eric Metaxas  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 10 (13+)	This 320-page biography gives an in-depth look into the life of one of my favorite historical figures--William Wilberforce. In fact, I am quite in awe of this man and his story, and I am amazed that more people are not aware of him. This book is beautifully written and inspiring.
11 ★		<b>American Classic Series</b>  <i>Biography</i>	Andrew M. Allison and Jay A. Parry  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 10 (any age)	This series, which includes <i>The Real Benjamin Franklin</i> , <i>The Real George Washington</i> , and <i>The Real Thomas Jefferson</i> , is a treasure. As the official description reads: "Unfounded myths are now being repeated and embellished in school textbooks and educational television programs." These books (published by the National Center for Constitutional Studies, a nonprofit educational foundation dedicated to restoring Constitutional principles in the tradition of America's Founding Fathers) help readers understand the true history and details about these great founders of America. The writing is exemplary and engaging. The books are long and contain much detail, but they are not tedious or difficult to wade through. All three books in this series are part of the reading program and are worth 10 points each.



Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
11 Lib		<b>Ruth of Boston</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>James Otis</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (12+)	The Puritans' journey to America and their life in the Massachusetts Bay Colony is told in this book through the eyes of a 12-year-old girl, Ruth. The writing is challenging but engaging. I learned a lot from this book, which has extremely high educational value. Reluctant readers may struggle with the book, as it is not based around a fast-moving plot, but rather on a look at what daily life was like for the Puritans. The book, published in 1910, was written by American author, James Otis, who wrote dozens of children's historical novels. Although I recommend the book, I felt like it ended very abruptly. I like the Librivox.org narrator, but it is not a high-quality recording.
11 Lib		<b>The Dragon and the Raven</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	<b>G.A. Henty</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 6 (12+)	This historical fiction novel by classic writer G.A. Henty is set in 9th-century England during the rule of Alfred the Great. The book follows the story of a fictional Saxon lord as he helps fight against Danish invaders. Packed with educational value, Henty's story teaches much about the historical time period. King Alfred (who is an amazing historical figure) is in the book, but the story does not center around him. I recommend this book only to serious readers who are used to challenging literature—the writing is complex, and the vocabulary is challenging. While the story is engaging and fulfilling, it is not an instantly gratifying thriller.
11 Aud		<b>The Forgotten Founding Father</b> <i>Biography</i>	<b>Joshua Kendall</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 10 (12+)	With skillful and elegant writing, Joshua Kendall tells the lesser-known but deeply inspiring story of Noah Webster. This is a wonderfully challenging, true biography, not a fictionalized biography; however, my 12-year-old daughter is currently reading it and loves it! This worthwhile read is packed with the highest moral, literary, and educational value, making it one of the "best" books, in my opinion.
11 Aud		<b>The Jefferson Lies</b> <i>Nonfiction</i>	<b>David Barton</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 10 (12+)	In this <i>New York Times</i> best-selling book, David Barton sets out to "correct what he saw as the distorted image of a once-beloved Founding Father, Thomas Jefferson." In a time when people have forgotten their country's noble roots and have distorted and twisted the truth about this amazing historical figure, I cannot recommend this book highly enough. Even though it is long (416 pages) and is nonfiction, I found it fascinating and engaging. I highly recommend listening to the book with Audible; it's a great way to get through the book. I am impressed with the use of original documents and sources with which David Barton makes his case.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
11 ★		<b>The Little Duke</b> <i>Fictionalized Biography</i>	Charlotte Mary Yonge  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (12+)	<i>Note: This book will be part of a The Good &amp; the Beautiful High School Language Arts course.</i> Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823–1901) was a gifted English writer who published about 160 works during her lifetime. Her works reflect a deep and beautiful sense of ethical values and Christian beliefs. My oldest daughter and I have thoroughly enjoyed discovering her books. They are exquisitely written and packed with fascinating characters, meaningful stories, interesting plots, and beautiful examples of high, Christ-like character. <i>The Little Duke</i> , based on the true story of Richard the Fearless, was originally written for children, but it is considered very challenging reading today. I would suggest 10+ years old for read-aloud and reading level 11 or higher for personal reading. The official description reads: "Richard the Fearless, the great grandfather of William the Conqueror, became Duke of Normandy at just 8 years old, after the assassination of his father. The Little Duke tells the heroic tales of his trials at home in Normandy and at the court in France where he was a prisoner." I loved this book and its profound messages of improving character, mercy, forgiveness, and treating your enemies with kindness. If you can't find a copy of the book, most of Charlotte Yonge's books are available free online at Gutenberg.org.
12 ★		<b>Dawn</b> <i>(The Good and the Beautiful Library)</i> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Eleanor H. Porter  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 10 (12+)	Fourteen-year-old Keith Burton is going blind, but he does not know it at first. He thinks his father bought him a poorly printed copy of <i>Treasure Island</i> that has words printed with wavy lines. A great terror seizes Keith when he discovers that he is losing his eyesight and realizes that his bright future has suddenly changed. First published in 1919 by the author of <i>Pollyanna</i> , <i>Dawn</i> tells the moving story of Keith's struggle to find happiness and the dedication of those who so nobly sacrifice and persist in helping him. The well-developed, beloved characters in this deep, insightful book will make you laugh and maybe even cry. (This book was known in England as <i>Keith's Dark Tower</i> .)
12 ★		<b>Master Simon's Garden</b> <i>Historical Fiction</i>	Cornelia Meigs  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 10 (12+)	Cornelia Meigs is one of my all-time favorite authors. This book is one of her masterpieces. The story follows five generations, with all stories masterfully interwoven and connected to Master Simon's garden. The book starts with Master Simon, a puritan who immigrated from England to early America and planted a beautiful garden. The reading is very challenging but extremely rewarding. <i>Master Simon's Garden</i> has great messages, deeper and more complex than some of Meigs more light-hearted books. This book contains some wholesome, pure romance.
12 ★		<b>McGuffey and His Readers</b> <i>Biography</i>	John H. Westerhoff III  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 7 (12+)	This well-researched and well-written book explores the life and works of an extraordinary man whose faith-based readers impacted millions of Americans over more than a hundred year period. It is difficult reading, but well worth the time and effort for anyone interested in learning more about the history of education in America or an amazing and inspiring man. I suggest this book for adults or for teenagers who have been reading challenging Good & Beautiful books for quite a while.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
12   Aud		<b>John Newton</b>  <i>Biography</i>	<b>John Aitken</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 10 (15+)	<p>This book is an in-depth, detailed, very well-researched account of an absolutely remarkable and fascinating man: John Newton. The official description reads: "Most Christians know John Newton as the slave ship captain who famously converted to Christ on the high seas and then penned one of the greatest hymns of the faith: 'Amazing Grace.' Less well-known is Newton's significance in his own day as an evangelical icon, great preacher and theologian, and important influence on abolitionist William Wilberforce." This book is difficult and long but extremely worthwhile reading—a book I think everyone 15+ should read at some point. The book is very inspiring and is filled with deep and meaningful messages: repentance, mercy, faith, miracles, perseverance, hope, kindness, compassion, selflessness, sacrifice, prayer, cheerfulness, devotion to God, forgiveness, hard work, love, devotion to spouse, courage, love of nature, humility, service, developing talents, enduring trials well, patience, and more.</p> <p>Parents should be aware that there is no profanity or taking of the Lord's name in vain, but there are references to slave traders taking sexual advantage of slave women, including by John Newton himself. It is a heavy topic, but it is only referenced briefly in a few places and is not described. I felt it was appropriately handled—still, it may be a topic better processed by those ages 15+. Also, Newton had a friend who attempts suicide several times, but, again, I felt it was appropriately handled. There are also some descriptions of the conditions on the slave ships that are quite horrifying and a little shocking. These are descriptive, but they are brief and only in a few places and are not given for entertainment "shock value" but to explain the true gravity of the problems with the slave trade. The main focus of the book is on John Newton's faith and ministry. The book overall has a very positive, inspiring feel.</p> <p>"The British author, Jonathan Aitken, is a very skilled writer. He was a Member of Parliament for twenty-three years until he pleaded guilty to charges of perjury. He converted to Christ during an eighteen-month stay in prison.</p>
12 		<b>The Domestic Life of Thomas Jefferson</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	<b>Sarah N. Randolph</b>  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 5 <b>Literary Merit for Level:</b> 4 <b>Educational Value:</b> 5 <b>Points:</b> 10 (any age)	<p>This book, first published in 1871, is one of the most worthy, educational, and inspiring reads I have come across. Thomas Jefferson's life has been woefully distorted and falsified by historical revisionists today. It is important that children understand the truth about this extraordinary man. Jefferson's great-granddaughter wrote the book based on letters and writings by Jefferson and about Jefferson by those who knew him. I love books that are based on original sources. This book, although written so long ago, is more of a challenging read, but it is very engaging—not dry and dull. It kept me turning the pages. I was amazed at the devoted love he showed toward his family and country; I was inspired by the way he treated British prisoners; and I was motivated to work harder and learn more in my own life. This book can be read free on Gutenberg.org.</p>

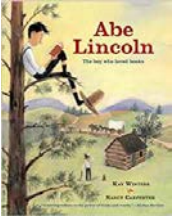
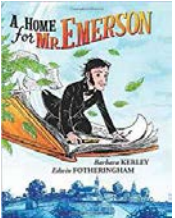
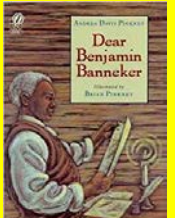
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
12		<b>The Mayflower Pilgrims</b>  <i>Nonfiction</i>	Edmund Janes Carpenter  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Points: 10 (any age)	This book published by Christian Liberty Press is extremely challenging and a little dry, but contains super high educational value. Those willing to tackle this book will be highly rewarded and gain deep knowledge about the pilgrims, their journey on the Mayflower, and their new life in Plymouth.

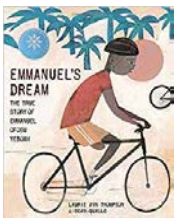
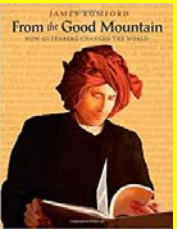

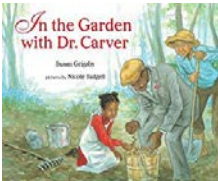
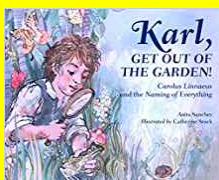
## "Top Picks" Picture Books for Read-Alouds


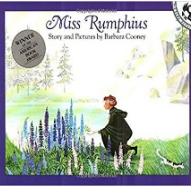
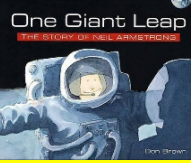
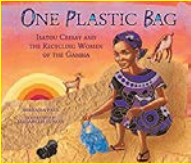
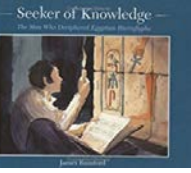
-This is just the START of this list. Many more will be added in future updates.

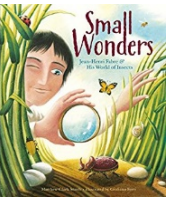



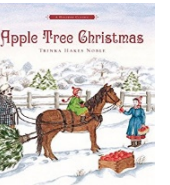
-The reading level is also listed if you want to use them as personal reading books rather than read-alouds.


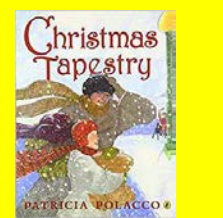
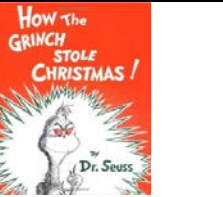
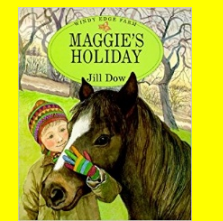
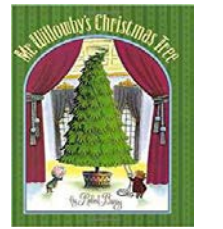
### Biography

	<b>Abe Lincoln: The Boy Who Loved Books</b>	Kay Winters (auth), Nancy Carpenter (illus)  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Reading Level: 3	What a fantastic book! The illustrations are absolutely wonderful, and the story of Abraham Lincoln and his love for books is engaging, educational, and inspiring! I highly recommend this book.
	<b>A Home for Mr. Emerson</b>	Barbara Kerley (auth), Edwin Fotheringham (illus)  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Reading Level: 6	Ralph Waldo Emerson grows up in Boston but longs to have a home closer to nature. This book tells the story of this great American author and is accompanied by fun, whimsical illustrations. It is a feel-good, inspiring book.
	<b>Dear Benjamin Banneker</b>	Andrea Davis Pinkney (auth), Brian Pinkney (illus)  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 5 Reading Level: 5	Accompanied by fantastic illustrations, this book tells the story of the African American scientist, Benjamin Banneker. The book focuses on the almanacs that he wrote and his stand against slavery. This book would be most appealing as a read-aloud to children eight years and older.


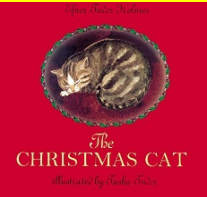


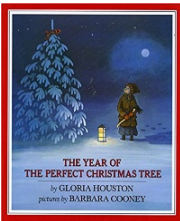
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<b>Emmanuel's Dream</b>	<b>Laurie Ann Thompson (auth), Sean Qualls (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3.5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 4</b> <b>Reading Level: 3</b>	Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah's true story is inspiring. The official description reads, "Born in Ghana, West Africa, with one deformed leg, he was dismissed by most people—but not by his mother, who taught him to reach for his dreams."
		<b>From the Good Mountain</b>	<b>James Rumford (auth &amp; illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Reading Level: 5</b>	This fantastic book is a great way to teach children about the Gutenberg press. The illustrations are interesting, colorful, and detailed; and the story is well-written. This is definitely a worthwhile book!
		<b>Hidden Figures</b>	<b>Margot Lee Shetterly and Winifried Conkling (auth), Laura Freeman (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Reading Level: 6</b>	Four female African American mathematicians—Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, Katherine Johnson, and Christine Darden—worked hard to use their minds and to overcome prejudice to help NASA launch the first men into space. This is a story everyone should read!
		<b>In the Garden with Dr. Carver</b>	<b>Susan Grigsby (auth), Nicole Tadgell (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3.5</b> <b>Educational Value: 4.5</b> <b>Reading Level: 3</b>	The great illustrations and simple story in this book offer a great way to teach children about Dr. George Washington Carver and his great work. The official description reads, "Sally is a young girl living in rural Alabama in the early 1900s, a time when people were struggling to grow food in soil that had been depleted by years of cotton production. One day, Dr. George Washington Carver shows up to help the grownups with their farms and the children with their school garden."
		<b>Karl, Get Out of the Garden!</b>	<b>Anita Sanchez (auth), Catherine Stock (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3.5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Reading Level: 5</b>	This inspiring biography is told in 40 pages with great illustrations. I love the story of Karl Linnaeus, and this is a great retelling of his story.

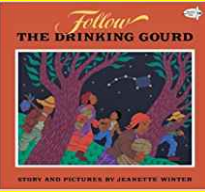
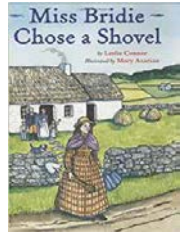

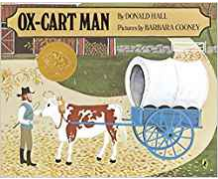
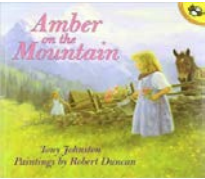
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<b>Mae Among the Stars</b>	<b>Roda Ahmed (auth), Stasia Burrington (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Reading Level: 3</b>	I love the illustrations in this book, the message, and the style in which it was written. This is a feel-good, worthwhile book that tells the story of the first African American female astronaut in just the right way for younger children.
		<b>Miss Rumphius</b>	<b>Barbara Cooney (auth &amp; illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3.5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 3</b> <b>Reading Level: 3</b>	Alice Rumphius longed to travel the world, live in a house by the sea, and do something to make the world more beautiful. And she did just that! With her pocket full of lupine seeds, Miss Rumphius, a real woman, wandered over fields and hills scattering the seeds. This is a lovely story with amazing illustrations.
		<b>One Giant Leap</b>	<b>Don Brown (auth &amp; illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 2</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Reading Level: 5</b>	This is a great way to teach children about the life of Neil Armstrong and his work as an astronaut. The illustrations are nice, and the story is engaging.
		<b>One Plastic Bag</b>	<b>Miranda Paul (auth), Elizabeth Zunon (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 2</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Reading Level: 5</b>	With vibrant pictures, this book tells the impact of Isatou Ceesay who decides to make used plastic bags useful by crocteching them into purses. She provides work and greater cleanliness to her community. This is a wonderful story.
		<b>Seeker of Knowledge: The Man Who Deciphered Egyptian Hieroglyphs</b>	<b>James Rumford (auth &amp; illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Reading Level: 5</b>	This book tells the true story of Jean-François Champollion, who, at 11-years-old, determined that he would be the first person to decipher Egypt's ancient hieroglyphs. This book is packed with educational value and is all about working hard and following your dreams.

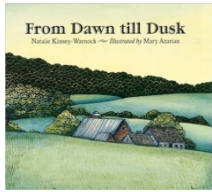
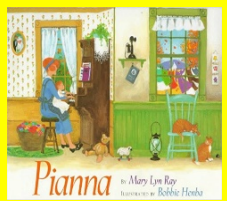
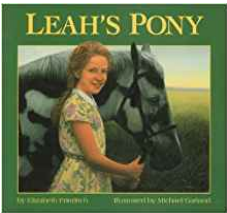
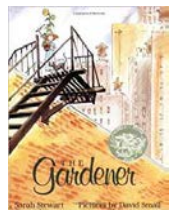

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<b>Small Wonders</b>	<b>Matthew Clark Smith (auth), Giuliano Ferri (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3.5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Reading Level: 5</b>	This wonderful book about famous entomologist Jean-Henri Fabre promotes a love of nature and is sure to help children love good and beautiful books! We suggest this book as part of The Good & the Beautiful Arthropods science unit.
		<b>Summer Birds: The Butterflies of Maria Merian</b>	<b>Margarita Engle (auth), Julie Paschkis (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Reading Level: 3</b>	This short book is a wonderful read! Learn about the true and inspiring story of Maria Merian, a young scientist in the Middle Ages, through lovely illustrations and engaging story telling.
		<b>The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind (Picture Book Version)</b>	<b>William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer (auth), Elizabeth Zunon (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4</b> <b>Literary Merit: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 2</b> <b>Reading Level: 5</b>	This story is so inspiring and is one I want all of my children to know. The official description reads: "When fourteen-year-old William Kamkwamba's Malawi village was hit by a drought, everyone's crops began to fail. Without enough money for food, let alone school, William spent his days in the library . . . and figured out how to bring electricity to his village. Persevering against the odds, William built a functioning windmill out of junkyard scraps, and thus became the local hero who harnessed the wind."
		<b>Vivaldi's Four Seasons</b>	<b>Anna Harwell Celenza (auth), Joann E. Kitchel (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 4</b>	This fantastic book is beautifully written and has great educational and moral value. The book also comes with a CD of Vivaldi's music. Vivaldi is inspired by the young girls to whom he teaches music—girls who are young orphans, some with physical disabilities and illnesses. My children loved this book, and it was a delight to read.
<b>Christmas</b>				
		<b>Apple Tree Christmas</b>	<b>Trinka Hakes Noble (auth &amp; illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 3</b> <b>Reading Level: 4</b>	This wonderful Christmas tale transports the reader to an apple tree farm where Christmas preparations are full of meaning and family ties are strong and beautiful. The illustrations are incredible, and the moral merit is as high as it gets.

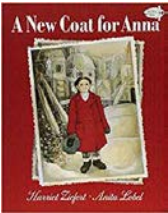
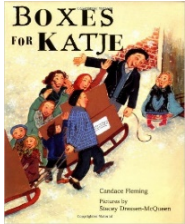
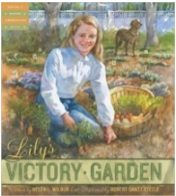
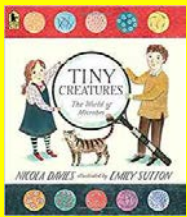
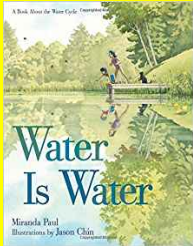
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<b>Christmas Farm</b>	Mary Lyn Ray (auth), Barry Root (illus)  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 3 Reading Level: 3	The official description reads, "When Wilma decides her garden needs a new beginning, she gathers string, scissors, shovels, sixty-two dozen balsam seedlings, and Parker, her five-year-old neighbor. Year after year, Wilma and Parker nurture their trees." Readers learn about the life cycle of trees and gain messages about friendship, patience, hard work, and love of nature, all while being entertained with a lovely story and wonderful illustrations.
		<b>Christmas Tapestry</b>	Patricia Polacco (auth & illus)  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 2 Reading Level: 6	This heart-warming story is beautifully written and has wonderful messages. The back cover reads, "When a leak ruins the sacristy wall in his father's church, Jonathan Jefferson Weeks thinks Christmas Eve service will be ruined. Luckily he and his father find a beautiful tapestry, perfect for covering the damaged wall and giving the church a festive look! But then, an old Jewish woman recognizes the beautiful cloth. Her discovery leads to a real miracle on Christmas Eve."
		<b>How the Grinch Stole Christmas</b>	Dr. Seuss (auth & illus)  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 0 Reading Level: 3	This classic Christmas story is a worthwhile read. My kids thought the story was fun, and they never get tired of it. It features clever writing and a great message.
		<b>Maggie's Holiday</b>	Jill Dow (auth & illus)  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 0 Reading Level: 3	The illustrations alone make this a book worth getting; I absolutely love the illustrations. The story is also sweet. This one comes highly recommended by me. I also liked <i>Hazel and Clover's Great Escape</i> by the same author.
		<b>Mr. Willowby's Christmas Tree</b>	Robert Barry (auth & illus)  Moral Merit: 0 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 0 Reading Level: 7	This story is just clean, fun entertainment. The illustrations are fantastic and the story creative and clever. Mr. Willowby's Christmas tree is too tall. The part he cuts off goes on quite an unexpected and fun journey through many different hands as it gets smaller and smaller.

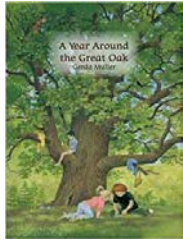
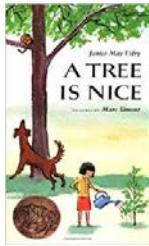
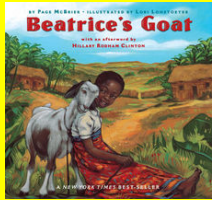
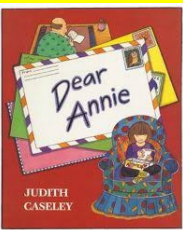



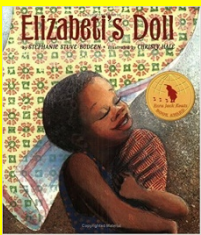
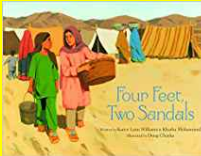

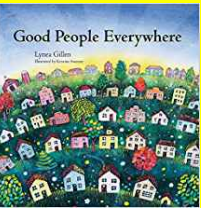

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<b>Silver Packages: An Appalachian Christmas Story</b>	Cynthia Rylant (auth), Chris K. Soentpiet (illus)  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 2 Reading Level: 5	This is another great book by Cynthia Rylant. In Appalachia, a boy named Frankie waits beside the tracks each year waiting for the train that will bring Christmas gifts to the children. He longs for a doctor's kit, but never receives one. Will he fulfill his dream of being a doctor? This gentle story is nice and has great messages.
		<b>The Christmas Cat</b>	Efner Tudor Holmes (auth), Tasha Tudor (illus)  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 2 Reading Level: 4	This sweet Christmas story features the illustrations of award-winning illustrator Tasha Tudor and centers around a gray stray cat who finds a home with a loving family. My family really enjoyed this book.
		<b>The Gift of the Magi</b>	O. Henry (author), P.J. Lynch (illus)  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 2 Reading Level: 7	O. Henry's classic tale of love and sacrifice is accompanied by fantastic illustrations. This book will best be enjoyed as a read-aloud for ages 7 and above.
		<b>The Scrawny Little Tree</b>	Ed Mehler (auth), Susie Pollard (illus)  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 0 Reading Level: 2	My kids loved this adorable, little book. The illustrations are charming, and the story is sweet, and has a wonderful message. The story is told in rhyme. A poor boy has always wanted a Christmas tree, and he has finally saved enough to buy a little one without many needles.
		<b>The Year of the Perfect Christmas Tree: An Appalachian Story</b>	Gloria Houston (auth), Barbara Cooney (illus)  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 4 Reading Level: 5	In a small Appalachian town, families take turns bringing the perfect Christmas tree to donate to the town. This year, Ruthie's family has been chosen, and they find the perfect tree high on a rocky crag. But when Christmastime comes, Ruthie's father has been called off to war and the tree remains on the high crag. How will the town get their tree? This book features a beautiful story and exceptional illustrations. I love the wonderful messages and strong family ties.
<b>Historical Fiction - The 1800s</b>				

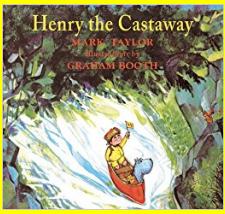
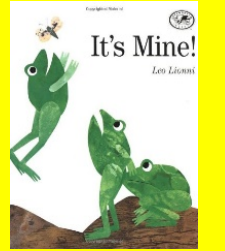
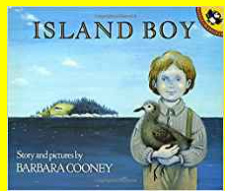
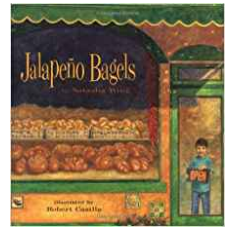

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<b>Follow the Drinking Gourd</b>	Jeanette Winter (auth & illus)  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 2 Educational Value: 5 Reading Level: 3	Wonderful, vibrant illustrations accompany this simple, yet heart-warming story of one African American family's escape through The Underground Railroad. The story is short, making it a great story for even young children.
		<b>Miss Bridie Chose a Shovel</b>	Leslie Connor (auth), Mary Azarian (illus)  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Reading Level: 3	Great illustrations made from woodcuts go along with this story about a young immigrant. When she leaves home in 1856, rather than bringing a clock or porcelain figure as a keepsake of her old home in Ireland, the practical Miss Bridie selects a shovel to accompany her to a new life in America in 1856. Children will be engaged as they follow the eventful, inspiring life of this woman and the ways she uses the shovel.
		<b>Nothing Here But Trees</b>	Jean Van Leeuwen (auth), Phil Boatwright (illus)  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 5 Reading Level: 4	I love the author Jean Van Leeuwen. In this gentle book, she paints a picture of a loving pioneer family and their struggle to create a new home in the untamed wilderness of Ohio. The illustrations are great. There is not a fast-moving or exciting plot, but the book is full of interesting information and high values.
		<b>Ox-Cart Man</b>	Donald Hall (auth) Barbara Cooney (illus)  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Reading Level: 3	This classic children's book follows one New England man through different seasons of the year. It is packed with educational value and has wonderful illustrations.
<b>Historical Fiction - The 1900s</b>				
		<b>Amber on the Mountain</b>	Tony Johnston (auth), Robert Duncan (illus)  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Reading Level: 4	This sweet book tells the story of a girl living on a beautiful but lonely mountain who gains friendship and the hope that she can learn to read. This book is packed with educational and moral value and has delightful illustrations. My little homeschool group loved this story.

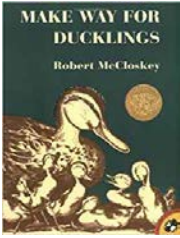
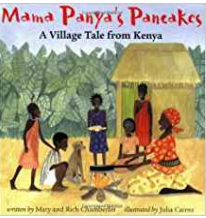
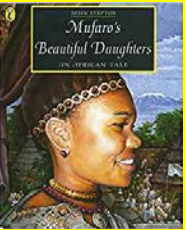
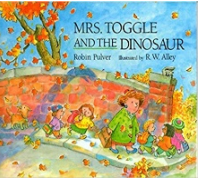
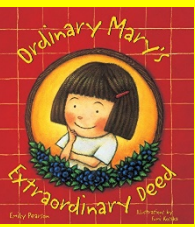
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<b>From Dawn till Dusk</b>	<b>Natalie Kinsey-Warnock (auth), Mary Azarian (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4.5</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Reading Level: 4</b>	I love the illustrations, descriptions, and messages in this book that captures the spirit and blessings of rural life in past decades. Children should enjoy this interesting, feel-good book. This book offers a great opportunity to talk to your children about how a book leaves them feeling; help them recognize when a book leaves them feeling happy inside and like they have gained knowledge.
		<b>Pianna</b>	<b>Mary Lyn Ray (auth), Bobbie Henba (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3.5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4.5</b> <b>Educational Value: 4</b> <b>Reading Level: 3</b>	This is a book that definitely belongs on The Good and the Beautiful book list! Vibrant, beautiful illustrations accompany a delightful story of a New England girl in the 1900s who falls in love with playing the piano and plays through all the seasons of her life. This is one of those books that could be read over and over again to both younger and older children.
<b>Historical Fiction - The Great Depression/The Dust Bowl</b>				
		<b>Leah's Pony</b>	<b>Elizabeth Friedrich (auth), Michael Garland (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Reading Level: 4</b>	With beautiful description, this book tells the fictional story of a girl and her beloved pony on the Great Plains during the Dust Bowl. This is a moving book with a wonderful message.
		<b>The Gardener</b>	<b>Sarah Stewart (auth), David Small (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4</b> <b>Literary Merit: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 3</b> <b>Reading Level: 3</b>	This Caldecott Honor book features a determined young heroine, Lydia, who is sent to the city to live with her grumpy uncle during the Great Depression. Lydia brings a suitcase full of seeds, and step-by-step brings a transformation to her uncle's bakery and to the place where she lives. This is a wonderful story of hope.
<b>Historical Fiction - The Middle Ages</b>				
		<b>Marguerite Makes a Book</b>	<b>Bruce Robertson (auth), Kathryn Hewitt (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 5</b> <b>Reading Level: 5</b>	My eight-year-old daughter fell in love with his book and has read it several times. It tells the fictional story of a young girl named Marguerite who lives in Paris in the 1400s. She helps her father, Jacques, in illuminating manuscripts for the nobility of France. The illustrations are wonderful.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
<b>Historical Fiction - World War II</b>				
		<b>A New Coat for Anna</b>	Harriet Ziefert (auth), Anita Lobel (illus)  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Reading Level: 3	In post World War II, Anna's mother is determined to have a coat for her daughter Anna. Anna's mother decides to trade the few valuables she has left for wool and for the services of a spinner, a weaver, and a tailor. This lovely book is packed with educational value.
		<b>Boxes for Katje</b>	Candace Fleming (auth), Stacey Dressen-McQueen (illus)  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Reading Level: 3	Friendships develop across the ocean when an American town takes it upon itself to support Katje's family, who live in war-torn Holland. The packages sent help the townspeople through one of the worst winters, which happens when the war ends. This book is a wonderful tool to help children think of others.
		<b>Lily's Victory Garden</b>	Helen L. Wilbur (auth), Robert Gantt Steele (illus)  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 5 Reading Level: 4	This book features nice illustrations and a beautiful story about an American girl's efforts to help during World War II. My children really enjoyed this book.
<b>Nonfiction</b>				
		<b>Tiny Creatures: The World of Microbes</b>	Nicola Davies (auth), Emily Sutton (illus)  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 5 Reading Level: 4	This is definitely a top-pick nonfiction book, and it is no wonder that it has won several major awards. With fantastic pictures, the reader is taken into the fascinating world of microbes. I love how engaging it is to children and how it makes a complex topic understandable and meaningful.
		<b>Water is Water</b>	Miranda Paul (auth), Jason Chin (illus)  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 4 Reading Level: 2	The illustrations in this book are absolutely incredible and support love of nature, gratitude, and the joys of childhood. My four-year-old loves to tote this book around and look at it often. The book also teaches the basics of the water system for young learners.

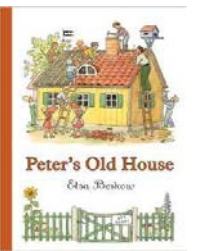
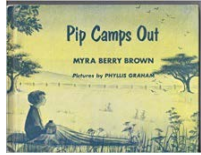
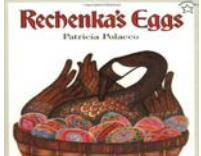
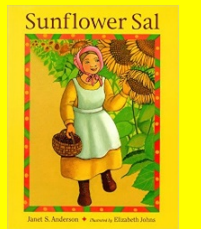
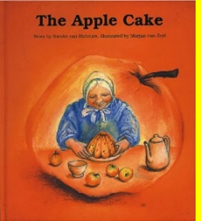
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
<b>General Fiction</b>				
		<b>A Year Around the Great Oak</b>	Gerda Muller (auth & illus)  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 3 Reading Level: 2	This is one of those books that you don't want to just check out from the library but that you want to own! The detailed, gorgeous, inspiring illustrations are the kind that children can study and delight in over and over again. The official description reads, "Benjamin and Anna love staying with their cousin Robin in his house near the forest. In the autumn, Robin takes them to see his favorite tree--a giant oak that is 300 years old. The children build a den under the oak tree's giant branches and watch the squirrels hide acorns in its wide trunk." This is a great book to inspire love of books and love of nature.
		<b>A Tree is Nice</b>	Janice May Udry (auth), Marc Simont (illus)  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 3 Reading Level: 2	This simple and short book is a Caldecott Medal winner and shows the joy and blessings that trees bring to our lives. The illustrations are wonderful.
		<b>Beatrice's Goat</b>	Page McBrier (auth), Lori Lohstoeter (illus)  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 3 Reading Level: 4	Set in Africa, <i>Beatrice's Goat</i> is a heartwarming story. A family is changed all because of a goat named Mugisa. The illustrations are beautiful, and the story supports strong families, hard work, tenderness, and appreciation.
		<b>Dear Annie</b>	Judith Caseley (auth & illus)  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 1 Reading Level: 3	"Grandpa's first letter to Annie when she was born had a picture of a rose on the front of it." So begins this lovely book which follows the relationship between Annie and her grandfather through his letters as she grows older. The illustrations are not amazing, but I love the message and good feeling of this book.
		<b>Dear Juno</b>	Soyung Pak (auth), Susan Kathleen Hartung (illus)  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 2 Reading Level: 3	Great illustrations accompany a great story about Juno and the letters he exchanges with his grandmother in South Korea. Some children may find this book too slow and unengaging, but this gentle story is worthwhile.

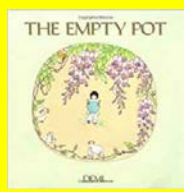
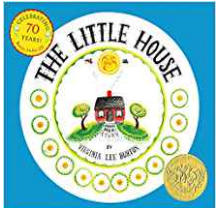
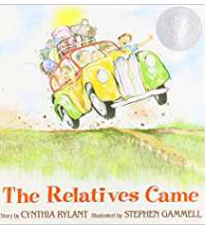
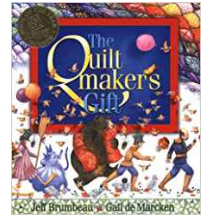
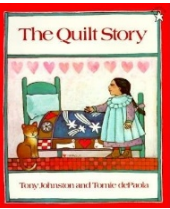
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<b>Elizabeti's Doll</b>	<b>Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen (auth), Christy Hale (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 2</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 2</b> <b>Reading Level: 2</b>	Young girls will especially enjoy this cute story about Elizabeti's special doll. The story takes place in Africa. After Elizabeti's mother has a baby, Elizabeti makes a special doll out of a rock.
		<b>Four Feet, Two Sandals</b>	<b>Karen Lynn Williams &amp; Khadra Mohammed (auth), Dough Chayka (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 4</b> <b>Reading Level: 3</b>	Lina grabbed whatever she could when clothing was brought by relief workers to the refugee camp. She was able to get one shoe, and it fit her perfectly. The matching shoe was found by another girl, and it fit her perfectly, too. This sweet story follows these two girls as they become friends and learn wonderful lessons about sacrifice and friendship. This fantastic story is a great way to show the difficulties and needs refugees face, and it does so in a way that is positive and inspiring.
		<b>Goin' Someplace Special</b>	<b>Patricia C. McKissack (auth), Jerry Pinkney (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 4</b> <b>Reading Level: 4</b>	As Tricia Ann goes to "someplace special" by herself for the first time, she experiences the segregation of her 1950s Southern town. It takes courage and a remembrance of what she has learned from her grandmother to press forward. I loved finding out what the "someplace special" was at the end of the story. It is a beautiful book in word and picture.
		<b>Good People Everywhere</b>	<b>Lynea Gillen (auth), Kristina Swarner (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 1</b> <b>Reading Level: 2</b>	This 32-page, short picture book shows good people working hard and doing good all over the world in different ways. The pictures are great, and my children loved it.
		<b>Hank's Big Day: The Story of a Bug</b>	<b>Evan Kuhlman (auth), Chuck Groenink (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 2</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 2</b> <b>Reading Level: 2</b>	The illustrations and writing in this book are both creative and fun. The story follows a day in the life of a bug named Hank and his interactions with a little girl. Kids are sure to love this book!

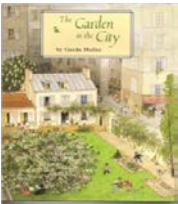
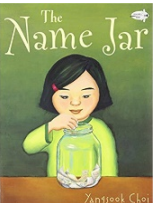
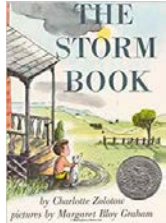
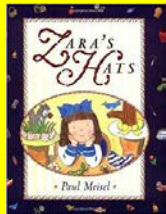
Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<b>Henry Books (SERIES)</b>	<b>Mark Taylor (auth), Graham Booth (illus)</b> <b>(SERIES)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 2.5</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 4</b> <b>Educational Value: 0</b> <b>Reading Level: 3</b>	This series is a fantastic example of books that can be full of creativity and imagination while staying true to life. The illustrations are wonderful. The story supports strong family relationships and love of nature. I recommend all the books in this series: <i>Henry the Castaway</i> , <i>Henry the Explorer</i> , <i>Henry Explores the Jungle</i> , and <i>Henry Explores the Mountain</i> .
		<b>It's Mine!</b>	<b>Leo Lionni (auth &amp; illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 0</b> <b>Reading Level: 3</b>	"In the middle of Rainbow Pond there was a small island." So begins this short but sweet fable. Three quarrelsome frogs learn a great lesson from a large toad.
		<b>Island Boy</b>	<b>Barbara Cooney (auth &amp; illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 5</b> <b>Educational Value: 3</b> <b>Reading Level: 6</b>	If you were to have only one shelf of picture books in your house, I would recommend this one being on the shelf! The lovely story is beautifully written and full of great messages. The pictures are stunningly beautiful and full of great messages in and of themselves. This story of self-reliance, hard work, and family life in early America is longer and will best hold the attention of children seven or eight and older.
		<b>Jalapeno Bagels</b>	<b>Natasha Wing (auth) , Robert Casilla (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 3</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3</b> <b>Educational Value: 2</b> <b>Reading Level: 3</b>	Pablo works with his parents in their bakery and tries to decide what baked item to bring to his school for International Day. This gentle story is interesting and has wonderful messages about culture and family.
		<b>Let's Go Home</b>	<b>Cynthia Rylant (auth), Wendy Anderson Halperin (illus)</b>  <b>Moral Merit: 4</b> <b>Literary Merit for Level: 3.5</b> <b>Educational Value: 1</b> <b>Reading Level: 3</b>	Cynthia Rylant brings out the feelings, smells, sounds, sights, and joys of home in this wonderful book that supports great values and the power of a loving home. The illustrations invite you to explore every room. Your child might just sit down with this book for quite a while.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<b>Make Way for Ducklings</b>	Robert McCloskey (auth & illus)  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 3 Reading Level: 3	This classic children's book is just wholesome, fun, gentle entertainment. The official description reads, "Mrs. Mallard was sure that the pond in the Boston Public Gardens would be a perfect place for her and her eight ducklings to live. The problem was how to get them there through the busy streets of Boston. But with a little help from the Boston police, Mrs. Mallard and Jack, Kack, Lack, Nack, Ouack, Pack, and Quack arrive safely at their new home."
		<b>Mama Panya's Pancakes</b>	Mary and Rich Chamberlain (author), Julia Cairns (illus)  Moral Merit: 3 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 3 Reading Level: 3	My children love this story about sharing that takes place in East Africa. The back of the book reads: "How can Mama Panya cook pancakes for everyone when she has barely enough money to feed her son?"
		<b>Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters</b>	John Steptoe (auth & illus)  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 2.5 Reading Level: 4	My children have always loved this book. This story, set in Africa, is a Cinderella-like tale (without any magic) that teaches the value of kindness. The illustrations are wonderful. This book is definitely a top picture book choice.
		<b>Mrs. Toggie and the Dinosaur</b>	Robin Pulver (auth), Robert Alley (illus)  Moral Merit: 2.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 0 Reading Level: 3	It was refreshing to read a book where the teachers are displayed as kind and are respected and loved by the students. This story, while not having strong, direct messages, is funny and fun. I love the illustrations and the overall feeling. It is also imaginative and contains no inappropriate material. I didn't love the book by the same author, <i>Mrs. Toggie's Beautiful Blue Shoe</i> , because the principle acted very strange (trying to get a shoe out of a tree by calling to it and by tempting it with food like you would a cat).
		<b>Ordinary Mary's Extraordinary Deed</b>	Emily Pearson (auth), Fumi Kosaka (illus)  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 4 Reading Level: 3	What difference can an ordinary girl make on an ordinary day? Find out in this charming little book. This book reminds me of the <i>If You Give a Mouse a Cookie</i> type of stories, except with a feel-good, wonderful message that every little act we do impacts so many other people and may just come back to reward us.



Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<i>Peter's Old House</i>	Elsa Beskow  Moral Merit: 5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 2 Reading Level: 3	
		<i>Pip Camps Out</i>	Myra Berry Brown  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3 Educational Value: 1 Reading Level: 3	This is a simple story with great illustrations and gentle messages about family and nature.
		<i>Rechenka's Eggs</i>	Patricia Polacco  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4.5 Educational Value: 4 Reading Level: 5	This is a great story to share with children about a different culture and time period. An old, kind lady named Babushka paints beautiful Easter eggs for a big contest in Moscow. Babushka befriends and nurses a wounded goose, and by accident the goose destroys all of Babushka's eggs. This story has a beautiful message of kindness. My eight-year-old daughter loved the story and could retell it six months after hearing it because the story touched her heart. The writing is fantastic, and the illustrations are unique.
		<i>Sunflower Sal</i>	Janet S. Anderson (auth), Elizabeth Johns (illus)  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit: 3 Educational Value: 2.5 Reading Level: 3	The back cover reads: "Sal feels she's too big and too clumsy to sew the quilts she longs to make. But Pa and Gran know she'll find her special talent . . . Then, one day, Sal takes a look at the glorious giant sunflowers that have sprung up behind the barn and starts on a whole new path." This is a great story with lovely illustrations.
		<i>The Apple Cake</i>	Nienke van Hichtum (auth), Marjan van Zeyl (illus)  Moral Merit: 3.5 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 3 Reading Level: 4	This book is a favorite at our house! An old woman in a charming village wants to bake a cake, but she has no apples. She has plums, however--a whole tree of them. She sets out to trade. The cute story takes you on a journey through the village, teaching gentle messages along the way. The illustrations are absolutely wonderful!

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<b>The Empty Pot</b>	Demi (auth & illus)  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit: 3 Educational Value: 2 Reading Level: 2	This fantastic picture book tells the story of a little boy named Ping in China. He longs to win the emperor's contest to see who can grow the best flower from a seed given by the emperor. Why is Ping's flower not flourishing like other people's flowers? This cute story has a great message about honesty.
		<b>The Little House</b>	Virginia Lee Burton (auth & illus)  Moral Merit: 2 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 2 Reading Level: 3	This book is a classic for a reason! My children love this story and don't mind rereading it. The little house sits in the country, but the city comes closer and closer until it finally surrounds the little house with tall buildings, and busy, noisy traffic. But there is a happy ending for the little house.
		<b>The Relatives Came</b>	Cynthia Rylant (auth), Stephen Gammell (illus)  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 3.5 Educational Value: 1 Reading Level: 3	Even just flipping through this book brings a smile to my face and a warmth into my heart. This simple book with fun, fabulous illustrations shows the joys of having extended family come to visit. Some parents may not like all the illustrations, because they show some fat bellies poking out of shirts and some people in boxers as they are sleeping. I personally didn't find the illustrations offensive at all, however.
		<b>The Quiltmaker's Gift</b>	Jeff Brumbeau (auth), Gail De Marcken (illus)  Moral Merit: 4 Literary Merit for Level: 4 Educational Value: 1 Reading Level: 5	A rich but unhappy king hears about the amazing quilts made by a seamstress who gives her remarkable quilts away to the needy and poor. When the king demands that the quiltmaker make a quilt for him, she refuses . . . unless he agrees to give away all he owns. Bright, whimsical watercolor illustrations add to this wonderful story. This is a favorite at my house.
		<b>The Quilt Story</b>	Tony Johnston (auth), Tomie dePaola (illus)  Moral Merit: 4.5 Literary Merit: 3 Educational Value: 2 Reading Level: 2	This short, sweet book follows the story of a beloved patchwork quilt as it travels through the generations.

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<b>The Garden in the City</b>	Gerda Muller (auth & illus)  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Reading Level:</b> 4	This book makes me wish I was a child again with time to just sit and look at a book. The detailed illustrations are absolutely delightful. The illustrations and the story inspire love of nature, kindness, optimism, strong family relationships, and hard work. The story is quite long, and although it is written well, the plot is not as engaging as some books. But the illustrations alone make the book a top pick. It would make a great book to bring on a road trip because children could study the illustrations for a long time.
		<b>The Name Jar</b>	Yangsook Choi (auth & illus)  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 4 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 3.5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 3.5 <b>Reading Level:</b> 4	Having just moved from Korea, Unhei wonders if her American classmates will like her. She wants to fit in and does not tell people her Korean name. Instead, she says she will choose a name by the following week. Her classmates help by putting possible names in a glass jar. Unhei thinks about a new American name, but one day her glass jar mysteriously disappears and Unhei learns a lesson about having confidence in herself. This a heartwarming tale that teaches children acceptance and love.
		<b>The Storm Book</b>	Charlotte Zolotow (auth), Margaret Bloy Graham (illus)  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 5 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Reading Level:</b> 4	I adore this book! This is a perfect example of the kind of literature we should be putting into our children's hands. The illustrations and story are truly "good and beautiful." In a captivating way, the author paints a picture of a storm and how it affects a little boy in the country, an old fisherman on the sea, a young couple in the mountains, and so on. This is a literary treasure!
		<b>Zara's Hats</b>	Paul Meisel (auth & illus)  <b>Moral Merit:</b> 2 <b>Literary Merit:</b> 3 <b>Educational Value:</b> 2 <b>Reading Level:</b> 3	Selig the hatmaker makes wonderful, high-quality hats, and his daughter Zara loves to help him. But one day the feathers run out, and Selig has to travel far and wide to find more. While he is gone, Zara shows just how far a little imagination can go to save the day. This is a cute and fun story that my children really enjoy. The illustrations are fantastic.

### Wholesome But Not on the "Top Picks" List

The books in this section are clean and have worth, but Jenny did not find them AS engaging or worthy as the other books on the list that have pictures and full reviews.

<i>A Chair for my Mother</i> by Vera B Williams	
<i>A Rainbow of My Own</i> by Don Freeman	
<i>An Ellis Island Christmas</i> by Maxinne Rhea Leighton	
<i>Basil &amp; Maggie</i> by Elise Primavera	
<i>Crow Boy</i> by Taro Yashima	
<i>John Philip Duck</i> by Patricia Polanco	

Level	Image	Book Title	Author	Review
		<i>Justin Morgan and the Big Horse Race</i>	by Ellen F. Feld	
		<i>Letting Swift River Go</i>	by Jane Yolen	
		<i>My Uncle Nikos</i>	by Julie Delton	
		<i>One Day in the Alpine Tundra</i>	by Jean Craighead George	
		<i>Our Little Athenian Cousin of Long Ago</i>	by Julia Darrow Cowles	
		<i>Petunia</i>	by Roger Duvoisin	
		<i>Raggedy Ann's Tea Party Book</i>	by Elizabeth Silbaugh	
		<i>The Story About Ping</i>	by Marjorie Flack	
		<i>Terry and the Caterpillars</i>	by Millicent E. Selsam	
		<i>The Year of the Perfect Christmas</i>	by Gloria Houston	
		<i>The Cow Who Fell in the Canal</i>	by Phyllis Krasilovsky	
		<i>The Seasons with V. B. Bird</i>	by Marci Ridlon	