

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS



MORE  
THAN  
**150**

Chances to Get  
Kids Hooked on  
Reading for Life



# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS AND TEENS

## 150+ Chances to Get Kids Hooked on Reading for Life

Parents often ask us to suggest good books for their kids — ones that will engage, entertain, and maybe even enlighten them. So we've scoured our recommendation lists and consulted with teachers, librarians, and book critics to assemble what we consider essential titles for your home bookshelves or to download to your ereader, smartphone, or tablet. From the classics to more recent must-reads, fantasy to funny, we have more than 150 great book suggestions for your kids and teens, from bedtime stories to chapter books to true literature, and more. Just search our themed categories, and you'll find all of our picks arranged by age groups.

Our goal in creating this guide was to choose books that are proven to click with all kinds of kids — and can encourage them to become lifelong readers. The list is mainly fiction, because stories really grab kids. And we didn't shy away from controversial books, trusting that our age ratings and detailed reviews will help parents decide what's appropriate for their kids.

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# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

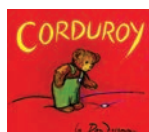
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## BEDTIME STORIES



### Corduroy



AGE

2

The beloved stuffed bear with a missing button is the hero of this timeless story about finding a friend. Corduroy's popularity has spawned many heartwarming, funny sequels, but none is as adorable as the original.

**Available from Amazon**



### Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site



AGE

2

As trucks finish up their day's work and wind down for bed, they bathe, close their doors, shut down their engines, and settle in for the night. This book deftly blends the fun of busy trucks with the familiar rhythm of a child's bedtime routine.

**Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes**



### Goodnight Moon

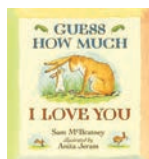


AGE

2

There's a reason generations of families have relied on this classic picture book as the ultimate going-to-bed story. Warm illustrations, calming rhythms, and interesting details make it perfect for any toddler's or preschooler's nighttime ritual.

**Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes**



### Guess How Much I Love You



AGE

2

A young rabbit and his father answer the timeless question of "How do I love thee?" with handstands, hops, and more in this heartwarming tale. The combination of this picture book's moving text and winsome illustrations is simply enchanting.

**Available from Amazon**

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

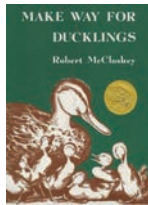
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## BEDTIME STORIES



### Make Way for Ducklings



AGE

2

Like all families, the Mallards need a safe home to raise their kids. Generations of children have loved this reassuring story — and delighted when humans join in to protect the little ducks as they journey through Boston to meet their dad.

**Available from Amazon**



### Red Sled



AGE

2

This fun book about animals taking a sled for a joy ride is wordless except for spelling out sounds like “scrunch” and “hmmm.” The illustrations are bright and engaging, and the animals’ freewheeling delight is infectious.

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**



### The Runaway Bunny



AGE

2

Gorgeous, imaginative illustrations capture young kids’ attention as you read them this poignant story about a little bunny who learns that his mother’s love will follow him wherever he goes, from the highest mountain to a beautiful garden.

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## BEDTIME STORIES



### Where the Wild Things Are

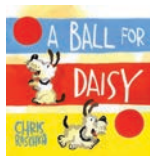


AGE

2

With enchanting, whimsical, and unique artwork, this children's classic stirs the imagination with lively and monstrous rumpus-ing. Kids will find the ending, with its "still hot" dinner, a reassuring sign of unconditional love.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### A Ball for Daisy

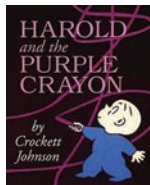


AGE

3

Winner of the 2012 Caldecott Medal, this wordless book about a dog whose favorite toy is ruined conveys emotion the same ways dogs do — with body language. Kids can follow the simple plot and understand Daisy's feelings.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Harold and the Purple Crayon



AGE

3

Imagination reigns in this timeless classic about a mostly silent little boy who creates his surroundings with his ever-present purple crayon. Kids will find comfort in Harold finding his way home by drawing the moon outside his bedroom window.

[Available from Amazon](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

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Ages 13-17



## BEDTIME STORIES



### Kitten's First Full Moon



AGE

3

Poor little kitten just can't reach that big, round saucer of milk in the sky. The marvelous Kevin Henkes illustrates this sweet, one-character story in black, white, and shades of gray that make it feel like a little black-and-white film for preschoolers.

**Available from Amazon**



### The Little Engine That Could



AGE

3

In this picture-book classic, the cheerful, hardworking Little Engine encourages children to try their best. And the delicious illustrations make a memorable, enjoyable tool for teaching about colors, objects, and numbers.

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**



### Blueberries for Sal



AGE

4

Kerplink! Kerplank! Kerplunk! go the berries into little Sal's pail, but her outing with Mom goes awry when she accidentally trades places with Little Bear. Kids will treasure this book's funny surprises and expressive illustrations.

**Available from Amazon**



### Make It a Nightly Ritual

When reading to babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and young grade schoolers, it's wonderful to have a kid on your lap, snuggled next to you on the couch, or drifting off to sleep in bed as you enjoy picture books together. You may have to read your kid's favorite a hundred times, but just go with it. Your kid will remember the closeness, as well as the story.

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

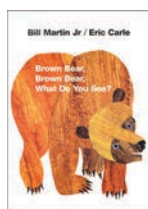
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## READ-ALOUDS



### Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?



AGE

2

With its rhythmic language and familiar images, this classic Eric Carle book makes a fun teaching tool for young children, who delight in pointing out the different colors and animals.

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes



### Chicka Chicka Boom Boom



AGE

2

Both the read-to-me set and beginning readers will enjoy the vibrant art and bouncy rhymes of this upbeat alphabet tale. The colorful letters' appealing personification turns them into much more than just the plain old ABCs.

Available from Amazon



### Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!



AGE

2

With a simple plot, large lettering, and bold illustrations, Mo Willems' first *Pigeon* book does double duty as a hilarious read-aloud and cute early reader. The fresh point of view — second-person narrative — sets the *Pigeon* books apart.

Available from Amazon



### Pat the Bunny



AGE

2

Here's what interactive meant in 1940: This sweet picture book encourages toddlers to explore their world and their senses by patting soft fur, smelling flowers, looking in a mirror, and touching the sandpaper of "Daddy's scratchy face."

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

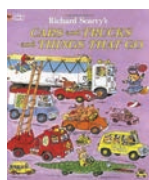
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## READ-ALOUDS



### Richard Scarry's Cars and Trucks and Things That Go



AGE

2

This is THE book for kids who love vehicles and are just starting to string together words and simple sentences. With lots to see and talk about on every page — from banana mobiles to pencil cars — it really gets their motors running.

**Available from Amazon**



### The Snowy Day



AGE

2

A young boy wakes to a world of freshly fallen snow and goes exploring throughout the cityscape in this gentle, glistening classic. With bold text and whimsical collages, Ezra Jack Keats captures the delight kids feel in the simplest pleasures.

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**



### There's a Wocket in My Pocket



AGE

2

Is there a Nooth Grush on your toothbrush? To properly appreciate Dr. Seuss' most wonderful imagination, you'd need a whole new language ... much like what the great author invents in this funny, totally original rhyming book.

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**



### The Very Hungry Caterpillar



AGE

2

This classic about a little caterpillar who chomps his way through a week of tasty food — from oranges to a slice of cherry pie — is irresistible to little kids. They love turning the flaps and poking their fingers through his “bite” holes.

**Available from Amazon**

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

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## READ-ALOUDS



### Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale



AGE

3

A toddler loses her favorite toy bunny on an outing with Dad but hasn't yet learned to talk, so she can't tell him what happened. Parents and kids can relate to the panic that's so artfully and humorously portrayed in this Caldecott Honor book.

**Available from Amazon**



### The Lion and the Mouse

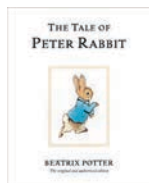


AGE

3

Aesop's fable takes on new depth in this 2011 Caldecott Medal winner. With luminous, earthy artwork, Jerry Pinkney portrays familiar subjects as adversaries, leaders, and part of a diverse community in the Serengeti.

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**



### The Tale of Peter Rabbit



AGE

3

Beatrix Potter's first story is about a mischievous rabbit who disobeys his mother's warning to stay out of McGregor's garden. Kids see themselves in this charming, suspenseful tale, which boasts some of literature's most memorable illustrations.

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**



### Curious George



AGE

4

What happens when you take a curious monkey out of the jungle and set him loose in the big city? He'll entertain generations of kids with his adorable antics and mishaps. Author-illustrator H.A. Rey's original is an enduring treat.

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

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Ages 13-17



## READ-ALOUDS



### George and Martha



AGE

4

Bright color washes added to expressive line drawings help convey the warmth between two best friends who happen to be hippos. In funny but gentle stories, these likable, sometimes bumbling pals teach kids about respect, courtesy, and kindness.

**Available from Amazon**



### Interrupting Chicken



AGE

4

This Caldecott winner about a little chicken who interrupts her dad's bedtime stories has a relatable main character and inventive plot. Kids crack up when lines blur between the chicken's "real" life and the stories within the story.

**Available from Amazon**



### Madeline

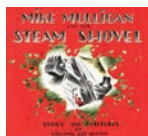


AGE

4

Kids instantly take to this rhyming story of 12 Paris school girls who live in an old house covered with vines and walk everywhere in two straight lines with their teacher, Miss Clavel. Bold, brave Madeline has an appendectomy in this series starter.

**Available from Amazon**



### Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel



AGE

4

Can Mike and his trusty steam shovel, Mary Anne, dig the cellar for the new town hall in one day? This nostalgic book with charming crayon pictures and an inspiring message shows kids that if they aim high and work hard, the sky's the limit.

**Available from Amazon**

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

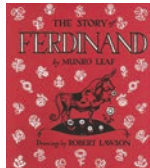
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## READ-ALOUDS



### The Story of Ferdinand

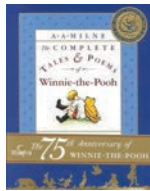


AGE

4

This classic story about a gentle bull offers a peek into another culture and a reminder that everyone's different. Kids and parents will appreciate the expressive illustrations and subtle messages of nonviolence and unconditional love.

**Available from Amazon**



### The Complete Tales & Poems of Winnie-the-Pooh



AGE

5

A.A. Milne's Pooh stories and poems are a nostalgic delight. The peaceful adventures of funny Pooh, wise Christopher Robin, and their various animal friends continue to tickle the fancies and warm the hearts of millions.

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**



### Ramona the Pest



AGE

5

Few writers can touch Beverly Cleary's smart, honest, but warm portrayals of family life. In this classic, dear, exasperating Ramona Quimby (star of eight books) starts kindergarten. The laughs begin when her teacher says, "Sit here for the present."

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**



### Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day



AGE

6

Everyone has bummed days, but Alexander's is slapstick entertainment. Kids will laugh when the poor boy wakes up with gum in his hair, trips on his skateboard, and finds his lunchbox empty; and they may learn to laugh at themselves, too.

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

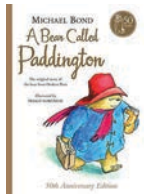
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

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## READ-ALOUDS



### A Bear Called Paddington

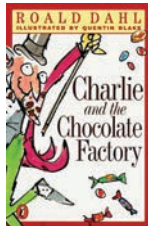


AGE

6

This first *Paddington* book introduces kids to the beloved adventuring bear, who's been charming generations of kids since the 1950s. The lively stories entertain while emphasizing quiet virtues of gentleness, kindness, tolerance, and resilience.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

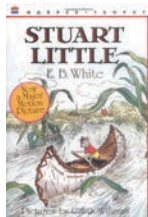


AGE

6

Roald Dahl's magical morality tale about poor Charlie Bucket and a fabulous, top-secret chocolate factory has captivated kids for generations. In this marvelously imagined world, people, both good and bad, get exactly what they deserve.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Stuart Little



AGE

6

E.B. White's classic about a talking mouse's adventures shows that determination and courage, not size, are what make a true hero. Generations of kids have followed brave, noble Stuart, who outwits hungry cats and makes his way in a human-sized world.

[Available from Amazon](#)



### Say It with Feeling

Many parents think kids no longer need to be read to once they've learned to read on their own. But kids still love it, and they benefit from hearing the rhythm of the language, learning correct pronunciation, and getting to relax and take in the story. Kids will get the idea that there's something worthwhile in books and remember the special time spent with a parent.

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

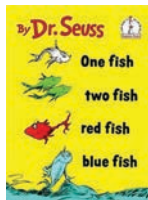
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## BOOKS FOR EARLY READERS



### One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish

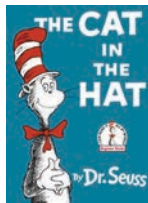


AGE

3

In this perfect early reader from Dr. Seuss, simple rhymes, colors, and objects are paired with real and imagined creatures (like a seven-hump wump) and presented in funny scenes. Rhymes invite kids to fill words in and sound words out.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Cat in the Hat

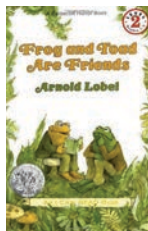


AGE

4

The classic rhyming book about a top-hatted cat who brings fun and mayhem to two bored children is a great early reader book. Children will be so amused by the chaos that descends while mother is out that the learning happens naturally.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Frog and Toad Are Friends



AGE

4

These two amphibians star in some of the simplest and most enjoyable chapter books for new readers. Focusing on themes of friendship and growing up, Arnold Lobel's writing is sweet but never cloying, and the vocabulary is basic but not babyish.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

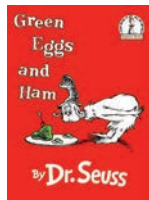
Ages 2-6

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Ages 13-17



## BOOKS FOR EARLY READERS



### Green Eggs and Ham



AGE

4

Even the pickiest eaters will get a kick out of this Dr. Seuss classic, in which the put-upon main character fights persistent Sam-I-Am's attempts to get him to eat the quirky title food. Fabulous rhymes, great humor, and a good message: "Try it!"

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Today I Will Fly!

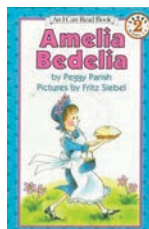


AGE

5

Like his *Pigeon* picture books, Willems' learn-to-read books are smart and entertaining, with broad-stroke illustrations and funny characters. Few words are used, yet somehow a lot happens in the world of this deadpan elephant and exuberant pig.

[Available from Amazon](#)



### Amelia Bedelia



AGE

6

The Rogers family's maid follows instructions to the letter; she trims a steak like a Christmas tree, draws drapes in a notebook, and dresses a chicken in a smart little suit. The first of many *Amelia Bedelia* books is funny wordplay for new readers.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## BOOKS FOR EARLY READERS



### Bink & Gollie



AGE

6

The stories this early reader/graphic novel hybrid are fun and silly, and kids get a feel for the challenges of being a good friend. There's just enough text — with a nice vocabulary — to convey meaning, and the quirky pictures are captivating.

**Available from Amazon**



### Ivy and Bean

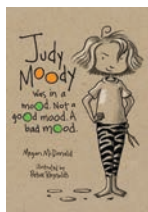


AGE

6

This award-winning book about two very different girls who become friends and have neighborhood adventures is the first in a consistently funny and engaging series. It's a great beginning chapter book for kids just emerging from early readers.

**Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes**



### Judy Moody was in a mood. Not a good mood. A bad mood.



AGE

6

Impulsive, feisty, often crabby, and completely charming, Judy Moody is like Ramona with attitude. Packed with witty cartoon illustrations by Peter Reynolds, this wickedly funny take on third-grade life is right on the money.

**Available from Amazon**

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

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Ages 13-17



## BOOKS FOR EARLY READERS



### Magic Tree House Series

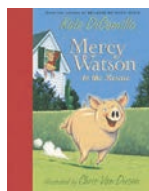


AGE

6

With straightforward writing and formulaic (in a good way!) stories perfect for new chapter-book readers, this extensive series adds a dash of fantasy to real historical people and places.

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes



### Mercy Watson to the Rescue: Mercy Watson, Book 1

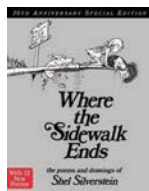


AGE

6

Kate DiCamillo's series about a pet pig whose owners treat her like a dog is most appealing to very young kids. This first book offers cheery pictures and funny moments, like a grumpy neighbor chasing Mercy while wearing curlers and a bathrobe.

Available from Amazon



### Where the Sidewalk Ends



AGE

6

Shel Silverstein's fanciful illustrated rhymes never fail to delight kids. From "sick" little Peggy Ann McKay (who canNOT go to school today!) to Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout (who will NOT take the garbage out), the poems are both funny and relatable.

Available from Amazon



### Make Room for Reading

Fit reading into your family lifestyle. Set aside time just for reading — turn off the TV, computer, and cell phone. Encourage focused reading time, either for independent reading or reading aloud. Read to kids at bedtime. Take preschoolers to story time hours at libraries and bookstores. For older kids, a parent-kid book club can be fun.

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

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Ages 13-17



## FUNNY BOOKS



### Babymouse Series



AGE

7

These irresistible graphic novels about the lovable Babymouse and her world are great for beginning readers. The illustrations and story fit perfectly together, and there are positive lessons throughout, especially about staying upbeat.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Clementine



AGE

7

Sara Pennypacker's funny, precocious third-grader hooks readers the way other kid-lit free thinkers like Ramona Quimby and Pippi Longstocking do. Kids will laugh and gasp at Clementine's antics, but fear not — she always lands on her feet.

[Available from Amazon](#)



### Pippi Longstocking



AGE

7

Generations have been fascinated by the free-spirited, unparented little girl who shakes up the humdrum lives of neighbor kids Tommy and Annika. Pippi invites kids to question authority, become “thing finders,” and use their imagination.

[Available from Amazon](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

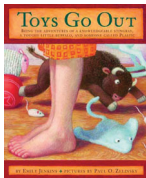
Ages 2-6

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## FUNNY BOOKS



### Toys Go Out

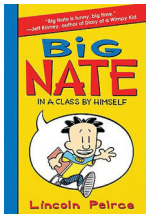


AGE

7

Written in a poetic but humorous style, these stories about the irrational fears, small jealousies, and petty competitions of a group of toys portray struggles that any kid will understand.

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes



### Big Nate: In a Class by Himself

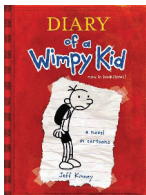


AGE

9

Like a milder, sweeter Wimpy Kid, Nate amuses readers with the slapstick perils and pitfalls that befall middle-schoolers. Nate's ability to maintain his sense of humor and self-esteem encourages kids to laugh off their own mishaps.

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes



### Diary of a Wimpy Kid



AGE

9

Clueless middle-schooler Greg Heffley is the antihero of this series of laugh-out-loud page-turners. Readers will see the flaws in Greg's hilarious, half-baked schemes from a mile away and learn from them (even if Greg doesn't).

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

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Ages 13-17



## FUNNY BOOKS



### Frindle



AGE

9

Nick makes up a word just to bug his fifth-grade teacher. But when it causes a national uproar, he finds himself in a war of wits. This cleverly subversive story with solid values will have kids racing to the perfect finish.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing



AGE

9

Since 1972, kids with siblings everywhere have identified with disgruntled Peter Hatcher, whose life is constantly disrupted by his little brother, Fudge. Judy Blume's characters and situations are realistic and honest but also laugh-out-loud funny.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Go Graphic

Graphic novels are among the hottest trends in children's publishing. They can be a good transition into chapter books, and they can really get kids hooked on reading. There's a wide range of offerings, from silly to serious.

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

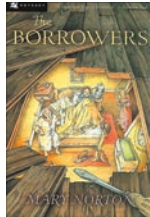
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## SCI-FI AND FANTASY STORIES



### The Borrowers



AGE

7

Mary Norton's concept of tiny people living unseen among us elegantly infuses magic into the everyday. Don't be surprised if your kids start leaving out trinkets and searching for Borrowers at home.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Wind in the Willows

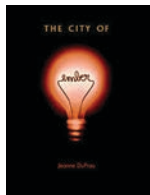


AGE

7

Originally written by Kenneth Grahame for his son in 1908, the adventures of Toad, Mole, Water Rat, and Badger have proven timeless. Nature, morality, and mysticism all play a role, but it's the animals' friendship that really drives this story.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The City of Ember



AGE

8

Part dystopian fantasy, part mystery, part code-breaking treasure hunt, this intriguing sci-fi fantasy is about a city in eternal darkness, kept lit by a failing electric system. A girl and her friend must decode instructions to save the city.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Coraline



AGE

8

Neil Gaiman's first children's book is a wonderfully creepy, surreal tale of a girl who stumbles into a parallel universe. Coraline is a refreshingly non-heartwarming heroine who triumphs because of her bravery and intelligence.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## SCI-FI AND FANTASY STORIES



### Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone



AGE

8

The first book in J.K. Rowling's beloved fantasy series is a thrilling adventure packed with magic, humor, friendship, and plot twists that even grown-ups won't see coming. An excellent read-together pick, but kids won't want to stop once they start!

Available from Amazon



### The Invention of Hugo Cabret



AGE

8

Brian Selznick's heartfelt, wordless story involves a plucky orphan, the history of early cinema, clock mechanics, and a bit of magic. This Caldecott-winning literary/graphic novel hybrid is propelled by breathless pacing and enthralling pictures.

Available from Amazon



### James and the Giant Peach



AGE

8

What a fantastical journey! James and his insect friends escape from a miserable existence only to encounter increasingly strange bouts of peril -- and a thankfully happy ending.

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes



### The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe: The Chronicles of Narnia, Book 1



AGE

8

This first book in C.S. Lewis' *Narnia* series introduces readers to a mythical world of talking animals and fantastical creatures, whose action-packed, epic battles between good and evil have enchanted generations of young readers.

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## SCI-FI AND FANTASY STORIES



### Peter Pan

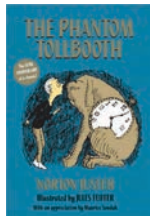


AGE

8

Witty and lyrical, J.M. Barrie's style is as memorable as his exciting story about rakish Peter, diabolical Captain Hook, and the resolute Darling kids. This must-read-aloud is a perfect distillation of childhood fantasies and adult nostalgia.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Phantom Tollbooth

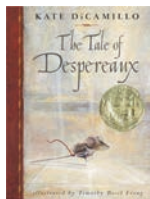


AGE

8

This enduring classic about bored young Milo's adventure in a strange land gleefully embraces imagination and intellectualism. Academic concepts are introduced through interesting characters and peculiar sights.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Tale of Despereaux: Being the Story of a Mouse, a Princess, Some Soup, and a Spool of Thread



AGE

8

The Newbery-winning author of *Because of Winn-Dixie* triumphs again with a charming novel about an especially small, especially independent mouse. Perfectly paced and plotted for middle-grade readers, it's also a great read-aloud choice.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## SCI-FI AND FANTASY STORIES



### The Wonderful Wizard of Oz



AGE

8

Frank L. Baum's novel may astonish those who know only the classic movie — which took great liberties with the story — but readers will come to love the great characters, tongue-in-cheek humor, and cheerful appreciation of American hucksterism.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Alice's Adventures in Wonderland



AGE

9

Loved by children and adults, *Alice* works as both delightful fantasy and delicious social satire. Either way you look at it, this topsy-turvy classic is full of amusing predicaments, strange characters, and thoroughly enjoyable nonsense.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Dark is Rising

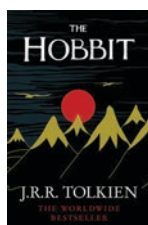


AGE

9

This second book in a five-book series is actually the best to start with. Fantasy, mythology, and folklore combine in exciting world where the story — about Sign-Seeker Will Stanton fulfilling his destiny — stands on its own.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Hobbit



AGE

9

This classic adventure, with the little hobbit as its hero, is the perfect J.R.R. Tolkien for tweens. They'll admire Bilbo's loyalty and cunning and the brave stand he takes against friends blinded by greed so he can help bring about peace.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

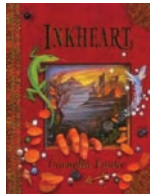
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## SCI-FI AND FANTASY STORIES



### Inkheart



AGE

9

A stalwart heroine is at the heart of this fantasy involving a curse that lets her family members go from our world into the world of a book. Book-loving kids will enjoy the literary references and celebration of books in the heroes' lives.

**Available from Amazon**



### The Lightning Thief



AGE

9

Percy Jackson's first adventure is a funny, fast-paced introduction to author Rick Riordan's imaginative world, in which the Greek gods are still around and their demigod children are sent on dangerous, exciting quests. Perfect for myth lovers.

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**



### Secrets at Sea



AGE

9

This gem from a Newbery winner offers an inventive plot and relatable mouse characters in search of a better life. The cute factor appeals to little kids, but there's also enough substance to engage middle-graders.

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**



### Tuck Everlasting



AGE

9

The Tuck family has discovered the Fountain of Youth — but is it a blessing or a curse? Ten-year-old Winnie must consider this question in a thought-provoking, lyrical novel with a richly imagined setting that's every bit as memorable as the story.

**Available from Amazon** | **Available on iTunes**

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## SCI-FI AND FANTASY STORIES



### Wonderstruck



AGE

9

Brian Selznick crafts two concurrent stories of deaf runaways, 50 years apart, one in words and one in pictures, that unfold and ultimately converge. This inventive novel is visually gorgeous and emotionally satisfying.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### A Wrinkle in Time

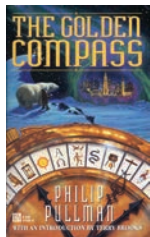


AGE

9

This exciting sci-fi story is one of the great works of kids' literature. Meg Murry's journey through time and space to rescue her father from IT, a giant pulsating brain, celebrates the power of individuality, bravery, and love.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Golden Compass: His Dark Materials, Book 1



AGE

10

Suspense, fantasy, adventure, and an endearingly feisty heroine come together in this richly imagined tale of a parallel world in which polar bears talk, magic is real, and no one is who they seem. Edgier than *Harry Potter*, but still lots of fun.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Redwall: Redwall, Book 1



AGE

10

It's mouse vs. rat in this magical animal kingdom, where unlikely heroes face seemingly insurmountable odds. Though a war is central to the plot, this fast-paced, vivid series starter delivers a message of peace.

[Available from Amazon](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## SCI-FI AND FANTASY STORIES



### A Wizard of Earthsea: The Earthsea Cycle: Book 1



AGE

10

Grounded in Celtic and Norse myths and written in flowing, formal language, Ursula LeGuin's masterful story unfolds gradually, creating a fascinatingly flawed hero and a beautifully realized world with its own rules, geography, and magic.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Ella Enchanted

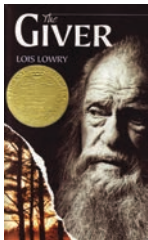


AGE

11

This rich, imaginative retelling of "Cinderella" turns the well-worn fairy tale into something fresh, fast-paced, and new. Ella is a strong, intelligent role model who's brave enough to rescue herself.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Giver



AGE

11

Lois Lowry won a Newbery Medal for this novel about the disturbing secrets behind the creation of a utopian world. Riveting and thought-provoking, it's a perfect catalyst for discussing the idea of exchanging freedom for security.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## SCI-FI AND FANTASY STORIES



### Ender's Game



AGE

12

A boy genius tries to crush an alien invasion in this award-winning science-fiction classic that speaks to teens' sense of righteousness while building a futuristic world that's both terrifying and compelling. It's a true page-turner.

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes



### The Fellowship of the Ring



AGE

12

It's the series that defined the modern fantasy genre: In this majestic, enchanting tale set in mythical Middle-earth, a band of adventurers must destroy a magic ring that could bring an end to all that is fair and beautiful in the world.

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes



### The Hunger Games



AGE

12

This is a perfect introduction to dystopian novels (and start of a trilogy), with a strong but vulnerable teen girl in the lead. Kids will tear through this thrilling, if brutal, story of oppression and resistance.

Available from Amazon



### Make Reading a Habit

Take your kids to the library once a week or once a month to get new books, go on regular outings to your local bookstore, hunt for low-cost books at used bookstores or second-hand shops, and show kids that finding a good book is like a treasure hunt.

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## COMING-OF-AGE BOOKS



### Charlotte's Web



AGE

7

This enduring, gentle tale will draw tears of both joy and sadness with its timeless, universal themes of friendship, love, and loss among barnyard animals and one very wise spider.

**Available from Amazon**



### Anne of Green Gables

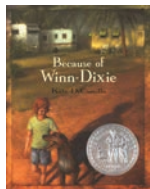


AGE

9

This classic 1908 children's novel remains a perennial favorite thanks to its memorable heroine: irrepressible red-headed orphan Anne Shirley. Kids can't help but be charmed by her mix of chatter, imagination, fierce loyalty, and enthusiasm.

**Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes**



### Because of Winn-Dixie

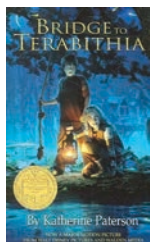


AGE

9

A Newbery Medal winner, this gentle character story is engrossing and sweet. In simple, lyrical language, India learns not to judge others on first impressions and to make friends by opening herself to others.

**Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes**



### Bridge to Terabithia



AGE

9

Friendship and fantasy help young characters survive difficult families and troubled social lives in this carefully rendered story. Stock up on tissues before kids reach the end.

**Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes**

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## COMING-OF-AGE BOOKS



### Bud, Not Buddy



AGE

9

Set in Depression-era Michigan, this page-turner is a smart, funny tale of an orphaned boy's search for a home. The portrayal of people at their best when circumstances are at their worst is poignant, hopeful, and heartwarming.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Harriet the Spy

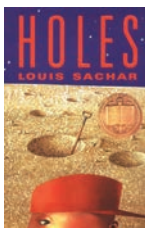


AGE

9

It seems a little notebook is Harriet's only comfort after she's rejected by her friends and her beloved nanny leaves. But thanks to the author's keen sense of the ridiculous, this perennial favorite remains cheerful and often hilarious.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Holes

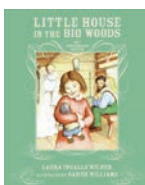


AGE

9

This story about a teen wrongly convicted of stealing is held together with unusual characters, inventive plotting, and Dickensian coincidences. A harsh situation is tempered by a complex mystery and the author's darkly humorous tone.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Little House in the Big Woods



AGE

9

Based on the life of author Laura Ingalls Wilder, this charming story — the first in a series — takes kids back to the late 1800s, when the Midwest was much less tame than it is today. An educational and entertaining look at history.

[Available from Amazon](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## COMING-OF-AGE BOOKS



### A Little Princess



AGE

9

This old-fashioned novel about a mistreated boarding school student celebrates the power of imagination. Sara Crewe is a bright, inventive, generous young heroine with the ability to transport herself through the magic of storytelling.

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes



### Maniac Magee

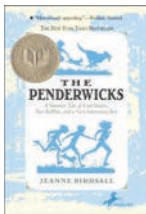


AGE

9

A homeless orphan becomes a legend in a town divided by racism in this sometimes funny, sometimes moving, always exciting Newbery winner. The story works on many levels, including as a no-easy-answers statement on race relations.

Available from Amazon



### The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy

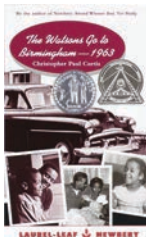


AGE

9

A National Book Award winner in 2005, this is a leisurely paced, old-fashioned story about children enjoying a summer of outdoor play. The kids' innocent but occasionally disobedient adventures are full of warm humor and nostalgia.

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes



### The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963



AGE

9

This rich, personal narrative captures the thoughts of a funny, normal kid who becomes overwhelmed when he witnesses a tragedy. The result is a poignant, kid's-eye view of a pivotal moment in civil rights history.

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## COMING-OF-AGE BOOKS



### Where the Red Fern Grows



AGE

9

Arguably the greatest boy-and-dog story of all time, this novel set in the Ozarks during the Great Depression is a true tearjerker. Be prepared to offer tissues and comfort, but know that this powerful tale of loyalty and bravery is worth the tears.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret.

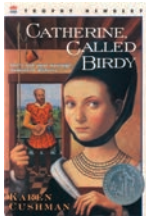


AGE

10

This coming-of age-classic has appealed to tweens since it was first published in 1970. Readers appreciate Margaret's honest narration about friendship, body image, boys, and religion — which they can relate to their own anxieties about growing up.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Catherine, Called Birdy



AGE

10

This Newbery winner about a 13-year-old girl in 13th-century England draws readers into a rich, well-realized world that's fascinatingly old fashioned, but the characters are universal and relatable. Great for tween girls who like historical fiction.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Esperanza Rising



AGE

10

This great work of historical fiction is educational as well as inspirational. Readers will sympathize with Esperanza, who must work hard after living a life of luxury, and be amazed by her strength as she adjusts to life as a migrant farmworker.

[Available from Amazon](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## COMING-OF-AGE BOOKS



### Island of the Blue Dolphins



AGE

10

Separated from her family, Karana uses her knowledge of the world around her to ensure her own survival on an island off the California coast. This Newbery Medal winner is full of vivid natural description and inspiring feats of inner strength.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Little Women



AGE

10

Set during and after the U.S. Civil War, the classic story of sisters Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy is a vivid look at 19th-century American life. Some of the gender roles are dated, but Jo's tomboy appeal endures, and the themes stand the test of time.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Revolution Is Not a Dinner Party



AGE

10

This award-winning fictionalized memoir dramatizes the author's experience growing up during China's Cultural Revolution. Kids will cheer young Ling as she defies bullies and the Red Guards and supports her family in this gripping coming-of-age novel.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Walk Two Moons



AGE

10

A 13-year-old girl explores her family, Native American heritage, and country in this complex Newbery winner. With three generations of memorable characters, relatable families and emotional depth, it's rich and rewarding on many levels.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## COMING-OF-AGE BOOKS



### The Wednesday Wars

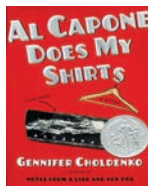


AGE

10

Gary D. Schmidt gets inside the head of a bright, goofy seventh-grader who does the opposite of what his classmates do: He opens his heart to the world, with the help of a prim, no-nonsense teacher who introduces him to the wonders of Shakespeare.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Al Capone Does My Shirts

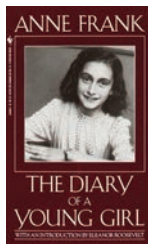


AGE

11

This hard-edged story about a family living on Alcatraz among convicts has mature themes (including dealing with an autistic sibling) but also explores what makes a person “good” or “bad” and the ways people can be imprisoned by their own lot in life.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl



AGE

11

Nothing can help modern kids understand the horror and injustice of the Holocaust better than these poignant notes from a real girl's experience.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry



AGE

11

This poignant novel about racism in 1930s Mississippi is the best kind of historical fiction, in which powerful lessons from the past are taught through an absorbing story with relatable, compelling characters.

[Available from Amazon](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

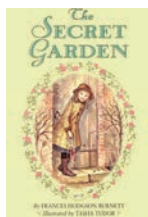
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## COMING-OF-AGE BOOKS



### The Secret Garden



AGE

11

This beautiful story about two selfish, disagreeable children who are transformed by the power of friendship and nature is a true classic. If you think a book from 1911 might be too stodgy to interest children, think again.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

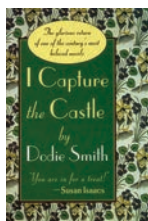


AGE

12

Mark Twain's lighthearted classic still stands up because Tom is a realistic, timeless character. Sardonic wit keeps the proceedings from ever seeming precious or teachy, and the action is full of engaging slapstick and suspense.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### I Capture the Castle



AGE

12

A bestseller from 1948, this captivating story of a teen's eccentric English family has been a favorite for generations. It has a surprisingly contemporary feel, and protagonist Cassie's concerns about life and love are entirely relatable.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Outsiders



AGE

12

S.E. Hinton's debut novel has resonated with tweens and teens since it was first published in 1967. Ponyboy and the Greasers' conflict with the Socs, the wealthy rival gang, uncover relatable themes of friendship, identity, and rebellion.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

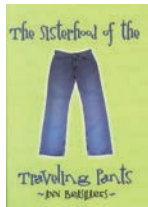
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## COMING-OF-AGE BOOKS



### The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants

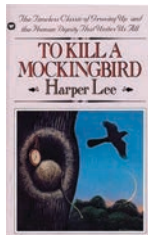


AGE

12

Teen and tween girls will see themselves in the dramatic stories of four friends whose powerful connection is symbolized by a pair of jeans that magically fits each different body beautifully.

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes



### To Kill a Mockingbird



AGE

12

This richly textured novel is a powerful look at racism and courage as seen through the eyes of children. When lawyer Atticus Finch defends a wrongly accused black man in 1930s Alabama, a small town is bitterly divided by prejudice.

Available from Amazon



### Under the Mesquite



AGE

12

Narrated in expressive free-verse poetry, this novel voices a girl's struggles with loss and poverty and her dreams for the future. It sensitively portrays a moving inner life and celebrates the release that writing can bring.

Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes



### Soak Up the Series

Reading series is a good way to keep kids engaged and turn them into lifelong readers. There are plenty of compelling ones with addictive characters and nail-biting cliffhangers to make kids hungry for the next installment.

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

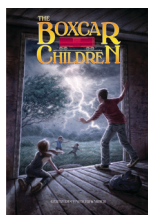
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## MYSTERY AND ADVENTURE TALES



### The Boxcar Children Series

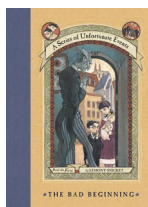


AGE

7

At the center of these short mysteries are the orphaned Alden children, who in the first book make a home in an abandoned boxcar in the woods. Their resourcefulness and ingenuity have delighted readers since 1942.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Bad Beginning: A Series of Unfortunate Events, Book 1



AGE

9

This gothic mystery (the first of 13 volumes) follows the perilous fate of the three Baudelaire orphans, sent to live with the evil Count Olaf. Grim, sinister, suspenseful, and terrifically entertaining.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Crispin: The Cross of Lead



AGE

9

Set in 14th-century England, this page-turner about a boy who's falsely accused of a crime offers mystery, suspense, plot twists, and a fascinatingly gritty picture of peasant life in this time period.

[Available from Amazon](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## MYSTERY AND ADVENTURE TALES



### From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler



AGE

9

It's a perfect premise: A brother and sister run away from home and hide in New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, where they live among priceless treasures. Amusing sibling dynamics and a superb mystery make for an enduring, thrilling adventure.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Mysterious Benedict Society



AGE

9

Smart and suspenseful, this clever mystery stars four gifted kids who will appeal to any readers who've ever felt as if they don't quite fit in. There are plenty of twists and turns, and underlying it all is a wicked but understated sense of humor.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### When You Reach Me



AGE

9

This 2010 Newbery winner has a wonderfully twisty plot involving a mystery, time travel, and realistic family dynamics. Readers will relate to Miranda's gradual, sometimes painful self-awareness and get caught up in this slightly sci-fi story.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## MYSTERY AND ADVENTURE TALES



### My Side of the Mountain



AGE

10

This classic Newbery Honor Book about a teen boy who leaves New York City's crowds and noise to live a solitary life in the Catskills is an exciting story of wilderness survival. It also offers an inspiring role model for boys in particular.

**Available from Amazon**



### Treasure Island



AGE

10

This classic adventure has everything you'd want in a book for kids: a mesmerizing story, brilliant literary writing style, rich settings, stalwart and upstanding values, a daring, gallant hero, and pirates!

**Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes**



### Grab onto a Genre

Kids go through phases of genres they're passionate about, from girl detective stories to historical fiction to sports biographies. Just go with it, and be happy they're devouring book after book. Try nonfiction for those who are curious about pirates, Vikings, robots, castles, animals, or whatever.

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## COMING-OF-AGE BOOKS



### American Born Chinese



AGE

13

Three parallel stories interlock in this first graphic novel to win a Michael L. Printz Award for Young Adult Literature. Clever and complex, it promotes solid values of tolerance and self-acceptance even as it exposes Asian stereotypes.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Book Thief



AGE

13

An ALA Best Book award winner, this novel couches the horrors of World War II Germany in the life of a book-obsessed girl. Narrated by Death (yes, Death), this devastatingly powerful book fascinates mature teens and adults.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The House on Mango Street



AGE

13

Growing up in a troubled, impoverished neighborhood, a young Latina dreams of a happier, more peaceful life. This lyrical, eye-opening story highlights the lack of opportunity for poor and uneducated Americans.

[Available from Amazon](#)



### Just Listen



AGE

13

There's an emotional complexity here that's often missing in teen-problem novels. Atypical heroes Annabel and Owen are absorbing and unique, and the author's exquisite details draw readers all the way into Annabel's painful world.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## COMING-OF-AGE BOOKS



### Monster



AGE

13

This provocative book about a teen being tried for murder is successfully told through different voices. The author captures the accused, Steve, with such empathy that readers will worry about him even as they draw their own conclusions.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Scorpio Races

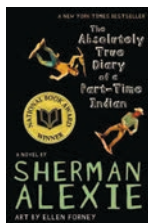


AGE

13

A fantasy horse story for teens who hate both fantasies and horse stories. A terrific mix of action, magic, and romance, this 2012 Printz Honor book about a band of killer water horses is exciting and original.

[Available from Amazon](#)



### The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian



AGE

14

Author Sherman Alexie's wit and clever illustrations lighten the poignant story of a promising teen trying to escape the poverty and desolation of the reservation in this National Book Award winner.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

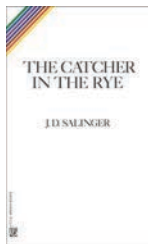
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## COMING-OF-AGE BOOKS



### The Catcher in the Rye

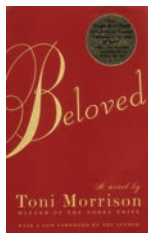


AGE

14

For decades, readers have identified with Holden Caulfield as he struggles with loss, identity, and alienation on the streets of New York. Widely considered one of the best works in American literature, it's a must-read for all teens.

**Available from Amazon**



### Beloved



AGE

15

This complex, difficult, and ultimately beautiful novel draws readers deeply into the experience of a family struggling with the repercussions of slavery in a post-Civil War time.

**Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes**



### The Color Purple



AGE

15

This gem about a beaten-down African-American woman's search for her identity in the rural pre-civil rights South portrays harsh realities, but it's uplifting, too, because of Alice Walker's genius at creating strong, inspirational female characters.

**Available from Amazon | Available on iTunes**

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

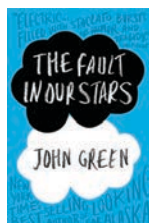
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## COMING-OF-AGE BOOKS



### The Fault in Our Stars

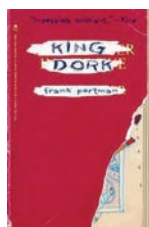


AGE

15

This tearjerker deals with death and dying and the risk of loving someone with a terminal illness. Honest narration and attention to detail make the harrowing events seem real — and the young narrator's inner strength particularly impressive.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### King Dork



AGE

15

Frank Portman's clever, sardonic humor will have even cynical teens sharing passages out loud. And the humor is counterpoint to the story's depth. This harsh view of high school includes mature themes in a sexual — and sophisticated — sense.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist



AGE

15

With fast-paced dialogue, lots of drama, and a punk NYC backdrop, this clever novel has great energy. Teens won't be able to put the book down until they know whether Nick and Norah can move beyond their past hurts and take a chance on love.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## COMING-OF-AGE BOOKS



### Why We Broke Up

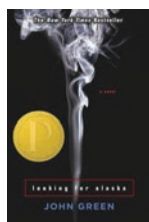


AGE

15

Daniel Handler (aka Lemony Snicket) wrote this tender yet clever story about first love — and first breakup. The teen heartbreak is offset by quick dialogue and references throughout to outrageous, invented classic films.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Looking for Alaska

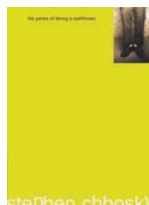


AGE

16

Funny, thought-provoking, and literary, this book deserves its awards and accolades. The characters may behave badly, but they're beautifully drawn, and their stories can help teens deal with big challenges like self-discovery and loss.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Perks of Being a Wallflower



AGE

16

This popular novel about a boy who's learning to move past a friend's suicide resonates with anyone who feels like a misfit. The mature content (sex, substance abuse) is essential, as characters experiment with ways of coping.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Act Like a Reader

Parents can influence kids' appreciation of books by sharing their own love of literature and modeling reader behavior — always having a book to read, taking books on vacation, reading before bedtime, making regular trips to the library and bookstore, and even reading in a long line to avoid boredom.

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

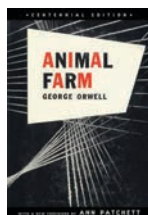
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## ENGLISH CLASS CLASSICS



### Animal Farm

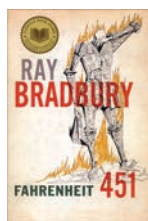


AGE

13

George Orwell's satirical allegory about a farm animal revolution that leads to tyranny is both a cautionary tale that's prime for discussion and a fascinating story, incisively told.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Fahrenheit 451



AGE

13

This National Book Award winner by Ray Bradbury depicts a future in which books are prohibited and the populace is placated with cheap, shallow entertainment. This novel is timeless, entertaining, and a powerful commentary.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Jane Eyre

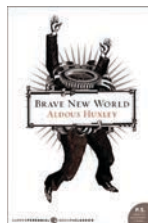


AGE

13

Charlotte Bronte's classic romantic novel is one of the greatest works of English fiction. Jane's independence, fortitude, and intelligence make her one of literature's strongest female characters, and Jane and Rochester's love is one for the ages.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Brave New World



AGE

14

Aldous Huxley satirized a future society completely given over to pleasure and consumerism. This humorous, chilling sci-fi story is as relevant today as when it was published in 1931.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

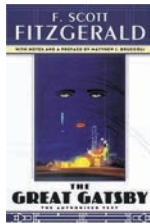
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## ENGLISH CLASS CLASSICS



### The Great Gatsby



AGE

14

The decadence of the Roaring Twenties comes to life in F. Scott Fitzgerald's ill-fated love story. Magnificently written and rife with symbolism, this American classic is required reading in high schools everywhere for a reason.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Pride and Prejudice

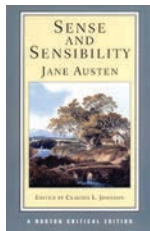


AGE

14

Teens who enjoy romance and drama will get wrapped up in this pitch-perfect portrayal of middle-class life and manners in 19th-century England. Expect swooning, swirling, and witty comebacks galore.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Sense and Sensibility

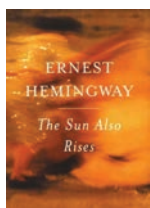


AGE

14

Full of feeling and humor, this story of manners is a treasured romantic page-turner. For two centuries, readers' hearts have broken for naive Marianne and long-suffering Elinor, and the book will surely find devoted readers for centuries to come.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Sun Also Rises



AGE

14

Ernest Hemingway's masterpiece about a group of friends who travel to Pamplona during the Running of the Bulls is an ode to the Lost Generation. His spare prose salutes the vibrant cafe culture of Europe and exposes the complexity of relationships.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## ENGLISH CLASS CLASSICS



### A Tale of Two Cities



AGE

14

Charles Dickens' masterpiece sets a story of romantic and familial love against the violent drama and politics of the French Revolution. The plot is suspenseful, the scope is far-reaching, and the characters are deeply affecting.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Wuthering Heights

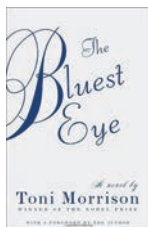


AGE

14

This gorgeous gothic novel bears little resemblance to familiar film versions that portray Heathcliff as a misunderstood hero. However, this classic is thrilling and twisted in wonderful ways that teens might not expect from an "old-fashioned" book.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Bluest Eye

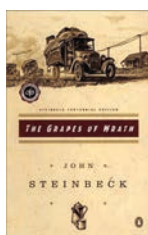


AGE

15

This novel by a Nobel Prize winner is a complex investigation of racial, personal, and sexual feelings and their relationship to self-esteem. Toni Morrison's debut offers a compelling story, rich characters, and an indictment of idealized beauty.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### The Grapes of Wrath



AGE

15

This Pulitzer Prize-winning novel about impoverished migrant farmworkers fleeing the Oklahoma Dust Bowl during the Great Depression movingly portrays history and desperation within the framework of an absorbing story.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)

# ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR KIDS & TEENS

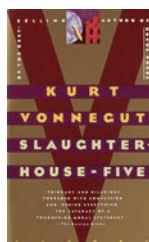
Ages 2-6

Ages 7-12

Ages 13-17



## ENGLISH CLASS CLASSICS



### Slaughterhouse-Five

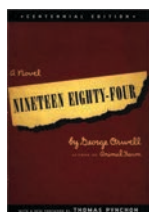


AGE

15

Often an entry point for teens into the works of Kurt Vonnegut, this cult classic mixes a historical war account with science fiction and laces it with black humor. The result is a dark, disjointed, and deeply unforgettable novel.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### 1984



AGE

16

The idea that constant surveillance protects people is no less provocative now than it was in 1948, when George Orwell envisioned a postapocalyptic world in which people are divided and watched for their own good.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Native Son



AGE

16

Richard Wright's classic novel of racism, tragedy, and violence is riveting and emotionally intense. Wright was a master at creating complex, unforgettable characters who reveal the psychological effects of oppression and poverty.

[Available from Amazon](#) | [Available on iTunes](#)



### Trust the Tried and True

Books are called classics because they continue to engage readers generation after generation. Try introducing your kids to books you loved as a kid, and see which ones click. You may be surprised by what turns out to be a good match.