

# Fifty Books (or so) to Know by the Time You are Twelve

Attention Parents: Many of these books are fun to read aloud together as a family. Selections are fiction chapter books unless noted otherwise. Enjoy!

## Suggested chapter books to read aloud to Kindergarteners

Atwater, Robert: <u><i>Mr. Popper's Penguins</i></u>	Osborne, Mary Pope: <u><i>Magic Tree House</i></u> (series)
Gannett, Ruth Stiles: <u><i>My Father's Dragon</i></u> (series)	Smith, Robert Kimmel: <u><i>Chocolate Fever</i></u>
Gardiner, John R. <u><i>Stone Fox</i></u>	White, E. B. : <u><i>Stuart Little</i></u>

**Aesop's Fables** [Grades 2-8] There are many good collections of Aesop's classic fables.

**Atwater, Richard:** *Mr. Popper's Penguins* [Grades 2-4]

The unexpected delivery of a large crate containing an Antarctic penguin changes the life and fortunes of Mr. Popper, a house painter obsessed by dreams of the Polar regions.

**Avi:** *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* [Grades 4-8]

Thirteen-year-old Charlotte Doyle, the only passenger on a voyage from England to America in 1832, must take serious matters into her own hands when she learns that the captain is murderous.

**Avi:** *Poppy* [Grades 1-4]

Poppy, a deer mouse, urges her family to move next to a field of corn big enough to feed them all forever, but Mr. Oca, a terrifying owl, has other ideas.

**Babbitt, Natalie:** *Tuck Everlasting* [Grades 4-7]

The Tuck family is confronted with an agonizing situation when they discover that a ten-year-old girl and a malicious stranger now share their secret about a spring whose water prevents one from ever growing any older.

**Banks, Lynne Reid:** *The Indian in the Cupboard* [Grades 2-6]

A nine-year-old boy receives a toy Native American, a cupboard, and a little key for his birthday and embarks on an adventure when the toy comes to life and befriends him.

**Blume, Judy:** *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* [Grades 3-5]

Peter finds his demanding two-year-old brother an ever-increasing problem.

**Brittain, Bill:** *The Wish Giver: Three Tales of Coven Tree* [Grades 3-6]

When a strange little man comes to the Coven Tree Church Social promising he can give people exactly what they ask for, three young believers-in-magic each make a wish that comes true in the most unexpected way.

**Brooks, Walter:** *Freddy the Pig* [Grades 3-5]

Follow a barnyard of talking animals on their many adventures. A favorite of Mr. Young when he was in elementary school.

**Brumbeau, Jeff:** *The Quiltmaker's Gift* [Grades 2-4] Picture book

A quilt-maker designs a beautiful blanket for a greedy king.

**Burnett, Frances Hodgson:** *A Little Princess* [Grades 3-6]

Sara Crewe, a pupil at Miss Minchin's London School, is left in poverty when her father dies, but is later rescued by a mysterious benefactor.

**Burnett, Frances Hodgson: *The Secret Garden*** [Grades 3-6]

A ten-year-old orphan comes to live in a lonely house on the Yorkshire moors where she discovers an invalid cousin and the mysteries of a locked garden.

**Cleary, Beverly: *Beezus and Ramona* (series)** [Grades 1-5]

Four-year-old Ramona has an imagination that makes her a menace to everyone around her, particularly her older sister, Beezus.

**Clements, Andrew: *Frindle* (and others by this author)** [Grades 3-5]

When he decides to turn his fifth-grade teacher's love of the dictionary around on her, clever Nick Allen invents a new word and begins a chain of events that quickly moves beyond his control.

**Curtis, Christopher Paul: *The Watsons Go to Birmingham-1963*** [Grades 4-7]

Presents Christopher Paul Curtis's novel about a Michigan African-American family's life-changing summer 1963 trip to see family in Alabama, and includes seven related documents, including a historical narrative, interviews, poems, and a memoir.

**Dahl, Roald: *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*** [Grades 3-6]

Each of five children lucky enough to discover an entry ticket into Mr. Willy Wonka's mysterious chocolate factory takes advantage of the situation in his own way.

**DiCamillo, Kate: *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*** [Grades 2-6]

Edward Tulane, a cold-hearted and proud toy rabbit, loves only himself until he is separated from the little girl who adores him and travels across the country, acquiring new owners and listening to their hopes, dreams, and histories.

**DiCamillo, Kate: *Because of Winn Dixie*** [Grades 2-6]

Ten-year-old India Opal Buloni describes her first summer in the town of Naomi, Florida, and all the good things that happen to her because of her big ugly dog Winn-Dixie

**DiCamillo, Kate: *The Tale of Despereaux : Being the Story of a Mouse, a Princess, Some Soup...*** [Grades 1-4]

The adventures of Despereaux Tilling, a small mouse of unusual talents, the princess that he loves, the servant girl who longs to be a princess, and a devious rat determined to bring them all to ruin

**Creech, Sharon: *The Wanderer*** [Grades 3-6]

Thirteen-year-old Sophie and her cousin Cody record their transatlantic crossing aboard the Wanderer, a forty-five foot sailboat, which, along with uncles and another cousin, is en route to visit their grandfather in England.

**Estes, Eleanor: *The Hundred Dresses*** [Grades 3-6]

An impoverished Polish girl wins a medal but moves before she can receive her award, and in so doing teaches her classmates a lesson.

**Fleischman, Sid: *The Whipping Boy*** [Grades 3-5]

A bratty prince and his whipping boy have many adventures when they inadvertently trade places after becoming involved with dangerous outlaws.

**Gannett, Ruth: *My Father's Dragon* (series)** [Grades K-2]

A young boy determines to rescue a poor baby dragon who is being used by a group of lazy wild animals to ferry them across the river on Wild Island.

**Gardiner, John Reynolds: *Stone Fox*** [Grades 1-4]

Little Willie hopes to pay the back taxes on his grandfather's farm with the purse from a dog sled race he enters.

**George, Jean Craighead: My Side of the Mountain** [Grades 3-8]

A young boy relates his adventures during the year he spends living alone in the Catskill Mountains including his struggle for survival, his dependence on nature, his animal friends, and his ultimate realization that he needs human companionship.

**King-Smith, Dick: Babe: The Gallant Pig** [Grades 1-5]

A piglet destined for eventual butchering arrives at the farmyard, is adopted by an old sheep dog, and discovers a special secret to success.

**Konigsburg, E. L.: From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler** [Grades 3-6]

Two suburban children run away from their Connecticut home and go to New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, where their ingenuity enables them to live in luxury.

**L'Engle, Madeline: A Wrinkle in Time** [Grades 4-6]

Three extraterrestrial beings take Meg and her friends to another world.

**Levine, Gail Carson: Ella Enchanted** [Grades 3-6]

In this novel based on the story of Cinderella, Ella struggles against the childhood curse that forces her to obey any order given to her.

**Lewis, C. S.: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (Chronicles of Narnia series)** [Grades 3-6]

Four English schoolchildren find their way through the back of a wardrobe into the magic land of Narnia and assist Aslan, the golden lion, to triumph over the White Witch, who has cursed the land with eternal winter.

**Lindgren, Astrid: Pippi Longstocking** [Grades K-4]

Escapades of a lucky little girl who lives with a horse and a monkey--but without any parents--at the edge of a Swedish village.

**Lowry, Lois: Number the Stars** [Grades 4-7]

In 1943, during the German occupation of Denmark, ten-year-old Annemarie learns how to be brave and courageous when she helps shelter her Jewish friend from the Nazis.

**McCloskey, Robert: Homer Price** [Grades 2-5]

Six episodes in the life of Homer Price including one in which he and his pet skunk capture four bandits and another about a donut machine on the rampage.

**Mowat, Farley: Owls in the Family** [Grades 2-4]

A young boy decides to raise two owlets as pets. Wol and Weeps provide fun and excitement for the boy in Saskatoon.

**Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds: Shiloh** [Grades 3-6]

Marty finds a lost beagle in the hills behind his West Virginia home, and tries to hide it from his family and the dog's real owner, a mean-spirited man known to shoot deer out of season and to mistreat his dogs.

**Osborne, Mary Pope: Magic Tree House (series)** [Grades K-3]

Jack and Annie travel through time to meet numerous interesting people and visit new places.

**Park, Barbara: Skinnybones** [Grades 3-5]

Alex's active sense of humor helps him get along with the school braggart, make the most of his athletic talents, and simply get by in a hectic world.

**Peck, Richard: A Long Way from Chicago: A Novel in Stories** [Grades 2-6]

A boy recounts his annual summer trips to rural Illinois with his sister during the Great Depression to visit their larger-than-life grandmother.

**Peterson, John:** *The Littles* (series) [Grades 1-4]

When the Biggs go on a three-month vacation and an untidy family from the city moves into the house, the miniature family called the Littles must take action.

**Peck, Robert Newton:** *Soup* (series) [Grades 4-6]

The adventures and misadventures of two boys growing up in a small Vermont town.

**Polacco, Patricia:** *Pink and Say* [Grades 3-6] Picture book

Chronicles the friendship of Pink, a fifteen-year-old African-American Union soldier, and Say, his poor white comrade, as one nurses the other back to health from a battle wound and the two of them are imprisoned at Andersonville. Based on a true story.

**Robinson, Barbara:** *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* [Grades 2-6]

The six mean Herdman kids lie, steal, smoke cigars (even the girls) and then become involved in the community Christmas pageant.

**Rockwell, Thomas:** *How to Eat Fried Worms* [Grades 3-4]

Two boys make a bet and one sets out to prove that worms can make a delicious meal.

**Sachar, Louis:** *Holes* [Grades 4-6]

The story about an unlucky boy who goes from loser to hero when he beats the odds (and solves a mystery) at Camp Green Lake, a detention center where he is made to dig holes everyday.

**Sachar, Louis:** *Sideways Stories from Wayside School* series [Grades 2-5]

Humorous episodes from the classroom on the thirtieth floor of Wayside School, which was accidentally built sideways with one classroom on each story.

**Silverstein, Shel:** *The Giving Tree* [Grades K-6] Picture book

A young boy grows to manhood and old age experiencing the love and generosity of a tree that gives to him without thought of return.

**Silverstein, Shel:** *Where the Sidewalk Ends* [Grades K-8] Poetry Book

Collection of humorous poems and illustrations, featuring such characters as a boy who turns into a television and a girl who eats a whale.

**Smith, Robert:** *Chocolate Fever* [Grades 1-3]

From eating too much chocolate, Henry breaks out in brown bumps that help him foil some hijackers and teach him a valuable lesson about self-indulgence.

**Speare, Elizabeth George:** *The Sign of the Beaver* [Grades 3-7]

Left alone to guard the family's wilderness home in eighteenth-century Maine, a boy is hard-pressed to survive until local Indians teach him their skills.

**Van Allsburg, Chris:** *The Polar Express* [Grades K-12] Picture Book

A magical train ride on Christmas Eve takes a boy to the North Pole to receive a special gift from Santa Claus.

**Warner, Gertrude Chandler:** *The Boxcar Children* (series) [Grades 2-5]

Four orphans, two boys and two girls, set up housekeeping in an old boxcar and find numerous mysteries.

**Williams, Margery:** *The Velveteen Rabbit* [Grades 1-4]

By the time the velveteen rabbit is dirty, worn out, and about to be burned, he has almost given up hope of ever finding the magic called Real. Author may be found under Margery Williams Bianco

**White, E. B.:** *Charlotte's Web* [Grades K-4]

Wilbur, the pig, is desolate when he discovers that he is destined to be the farmer's Christmas dinner until his spider friend, Charlotte, decides to help him.

**White, E. B.: Stuart Little** [Grades K-4]

The adventures of the debonair mouse Stuart Little as he sets out in the world to seek out his dearest friend, a little bird who stayed a few days in his family's garden.

**Wilder, Laura Ingalls: Little House in the Big Woods (series )** [Grades 2-6]

A year in the life of two young girls growing up on the Wisconsin frontier, as they help their mother with the daily chores, enjoy their father's stories and singing, and share special occasions when they get together with relatives or neighbors.