

Book List for Precocious Readers

We hear often from parents of children with advanced reading skills who are looking for recommendations on suitable reading material that is appropriate for their child's age. Chinaberry.com is a catalog of books and other treasures for the whole family. In 2003, those folks published this list of books from their catalog which would appeal to precocious readers in 3rd-5th grade or older. Some are classics you probably read as a child and others were written more recently. You'll find most of them at your public library or a used book store. And many of them would be fun to read out loud before bedtime at home or on vacation, especially a road trip.

Lloyd Alexander. THE REMARKABLE JOURNEY OF PRINCE JEN.

An intricate novel by a wonderful writer of fantasy, this book explores the delicate dance between self-doubt and courage ... pride and love ... in one boy's journey to adulthood.

William H. Armstrong. SOUR LAND.

A magnificent story of the healing power of friendship, a friendship that crosses over the lines that prejudice draws.

Natalie Babbitt. THE SEARCH FOR DELICIOUS.

When the definition of "delicious" needs to be determined for the writing of a new dictionary, everyone gets involved . . . and everyone disagrees. The story is funny, imaginative, and thought-provoking. with plenty of word-play for strong thinkers.

Natalie Babbitt. TUCK EVERLASTING.

Are they blessed or doomed? The Tuck family has tasted the waters of a magical spring that grants eternal life. The story explores the complexities of the age-old dream of living forever.

T.A. Barron. MERLIN SERIES.

Follow the path of a young boy who finds out he is the great wizard Merlin. The books in the Merlin series include (not necessarily in order): The Lost Years of Merlin, The Seven Songs of Merlin, The Fires of Merlin, The Mirror of Merlin, A Wizard's Wings, The Raging Fires, The Mirror of Fate, The Book of Magic, Great Tree of Avalon, and The Dragon of Merlin. The Wings of Merlin is the concluding book in which Merlin steps into his full power as a great magician and comes to know the power of forgiveness.

T.A. Barron. MERLIN'S DRAGON TRILOGY.

Includes Merlin's Dragon, Doomraga's Revenge and Ultimate Magic.

Forrest Carter. THE EDUCATION OF LITTLE TREE,

The fictionalized autobiographical account of a young boy and his life with his Cherokee grandfather, this book is a remarkable education in caring for and loving our planet and its people.

Padraic Colum. THE CHILDREN'S HOMER:

The Adventures of Odysseus and The Tale of Troy. The glory of Greek mythology becomes accessible to children through the writings of this master storyteller.

Padraic Colum. THE GOLDEN FLEECE: And the Heroes Who Lived Before Achilles.

Meindert DeJong. THE WHEEL ON THE SCHOOL.

A story about a group of children in Holland who decide they want to bring the storks back to their small village and how the children's quest inspires the village to unite.

Dorothy Canfield Fisher. UNDERSTOOD BETSY.

This is the triumphant story of Betsy, a girl who lives with her overly-protective and proper aunt in the early 1800's. When fate sends Betsy to live in the wilds of Vermont with her free-spirited cousins, her world is turned upside down as she discovers that her proper upbringing hasn't prepared her for her new life!

Esther Forbes. JOHNNY TREMAIN.

This is historical fiction at its best! You will feel as if you are right there in the days leading up to the Revolutionary War.

Paula Fox. ONE-EYED CAT.

A young boy covers up a mistake he makes and then must deal with painful consequences as he wrestles with his conscience.

Monica Furlong. WISE CHILD.

Meet Wise Child and Juniper within the pages of this delicately crafted fantasy novel.

Monica Furlong. JUNIPER.

Don't miss this powerful prequel to WISE CHILD. It stands beautifully on its own, so you don't have to have read the first book.

Frances Mary Hendry. QUEST FOR A MAID. In this 13th century adventure story set in Scotland, you'll learn of a young girl's efforts to help find her country a King.

Jamake Highwater. ANPAO

An exciting epic tale that combines many classic myths from the Native American tradition into one cohesive story, this unusual and fascinating book is enjoyed by teenagers and adults alike.

Mollie Hunter. THE WALKING STONES.

This story tells what happens when the old Earth wisdom meets the modern day culture. It speaks beautifully of ancient magic, relationships, and the right use of power.

Robin McKinley. THE HERO AND THE CROWN.

In this exceptionally imagined book about the kingdom of Damar, Robin McKinley shows herself to be a master of the fantasy genre.

Robin McKinley. THE BLUE SWORD.

The sequel of THE HERO AND THE CROWN, 500 years later.

Robin McKinley. ROSE DAUGHTER.

The classic tale of Beauty and the Beast and the haunting exploration of the transformative power of love is retold here in novel form.

Sterling North. RASCAL: The Classic Tale of an Unforgettable Friendship.

This Newbery Award Honor book tells the true story of a year from North's boyhood with a raccoon as just about his best friend, and eventually having to let go.

Scott O'Dell. STREAMS TO THE RIVER, RIVER TO THE SEA.

Venture with Lewis and Clark as Sacagawea guides their expedition. Perfect for historical fiction buffs.

Pat O'Shea. THE HOUNDS OF THE MORRIGAN.

Two children must race against time to save the world from imminent destruction at the hands of the Morrigan, the wicked and powerful Great Queen of the Fairy world. Thrilling adventure (though somewhat tense at times) with a moderate amount of violence and lots of humor.

Wilson Rawls. SUMMER OF THE MONKEYS.

A boy learns more than he ever bargained for when he discovers a tree full of monkeys. This is book about faith and dreams come true.

Salman Rushdie. HAROUN AND THE SEA OF STORIES.

A classic hero tale that offers powerful metaphors for the complexities of modern life. Rushdie's magical writing style brings alive this thinking child's fantasy.

Ruth White BELLE PRATER'S BOY

The consoling story of two cousins, Woodrow and Gypsy, each of whom has lost a parent they loved. Gypsy, having lost her father and never recovered, cannot understand Woodrow's calm acceptance of his mother's strange disappearance one morning in 1953. Everyone in Coal Station, Virginia, has a theory of what happened to her, but it is Gypsy who goes out after the facts. A powerful, loving book about the relationship of two friends.

Yates, Elizabeth. AMOS FORTUNE: FREE MAN

Based on the true story of a truly remarkable man's life, this book is a moving account of the life of an 18th century New England slave. Born the son of a king in Africa, Amos was captured by slavers and sold on the auction block in Massachusetts at age 15. Though robbed of his freedom, Amos was never robbed of his dignity, nor his faith. After 45 years of slavery, Amos was able to purchase his freedom. His life is a rare example of living with true dignity and love.