

Wilfrid Laurier University
Department of English and Film Studies

Children's and Young Adult Literature Reading List

Updated: 2013

Key Primary Works

There is no established “canon” of children’s literature, but below are listed key primary texts that would be essential in any discussion of the field.

Zipes, Jack, et al., *The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature: Traditions in English Literature* offers important overviews of various genres.

18th century and earlier

Babees Book.

Aesop. Fables

Barbauld, Anna Laetitia. Lessons for Children

Chapone, Hester. Letters on the Improvement of the mind, addressed to a young lady

D’Aulnoy, Marie-Catherine. Contes des Fées

Day, Thomas. The History of Sandford and Merton

Defoe, Daniel. Robinson Crusoe

Edgeworth, Maria. “The Purple Jar”

Fenn, Ellenor. Cobwebs to Catch Flies

Fielding, Sarah. The Governess

Kilner, Dorothy. Life and Perambulation of a Mouse

Kilner, Mary Ann. Adventures of a Pincushion, Memoirs of a Peg Top

Newberry, John. A Little Pretty Pocket Book, and The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes

Perrault, Charles. Histoires ou Contes du Temps passé

Swift, Jonathan. Gulliver’s Travels. Bks 1 & 2 only.

Taylor, Ann and Jane. Original Poems for Infant Minds

Trimmer, Sarah. Fabulous Histories

19th century

Abbot, Jacob. Rollo’s Travels

Alcott, Louisa May. Little Women

Alger, Horatio. Ragged Dick

Anderson, Hans Christian. Selected Fairy Tales
Belaney, Archibald Stansfield. The Adventures of Sajo and Her Beaver People
Carroll, Lewis. Alice in Wonderland & Through the Looking-glass
Caldecott, Randolph. Sing a Song for Sixpence
Goodrich, Samuel. Tales of Peter Parley About America
Grimm. Selected Fairy Tales
Harris, Joel Chandler. The Tales of Uncle Remus
Hawthorne, Nathaniel. A Wonder Book for Girls and Boys
Hughes, Thomas. Tom Brown's School Days
Kipling, Rudyard. The Jungle Book
Lang, Andrew. Selected Fairy Tales
Lear, Edward. Selected Poems
MacDonald, George. The Princess and the Goblin
McClung, Nellie. Sowing Seeds in Danny
Nesbit, E. The Treasure Seekers
Oxley, James McDonald. Up Among the Ice Floes
Parr Trail, Catherine. Canadian Crusoes
Rossetti, Christina. Selected Poems: Sing Song
Saunders, Marshall. Beautiful Joe
Seton, Ernest Thompson. Wild Animals I Have Known
Sewell, Anna. Black Beauty
Sherwood, Mary Martha. The History of the Fairchild Family
Stevenson, Robert Louis. Treasure Island and A Child's Garden of Verses
Twain, Mark. Tom Sawyer
Dickens, Charles. Oliver Twist

20th – 21st Centuries

Adams, Richard. Watership Down
Alexander, Lloyd. The High King
Armstrong, William. Sounder
Barrie, J.M. Peter Pan
Barry, Lynda. One Hundred Demons. Sasquatch, 2005.
Baum, Frank. Wizard of Oz
Berton, Pierre. The Secret World of Og
Block, Francesca Lia. Weetzie Bat
Blume, Judy. Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret
Burnett, Francis Hodgson The Secret Garden

Burnford, Sheila. The Incredible Journey
Chambers, Aiden. Dance on My Grave
Cleary, Beverly. Ramona the Pest
Collier, James and Christopher. My Brother Sam Is Dead
Collins, Suzanne. The Hunger Games. Scholastics Press, 2010.
Cooper, Susan. The Dark Is Rising
Cormier, Robert. The Chocolate War
Dahl, Roald Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
DiCamillo, Kate. The Tale of Despereaux
Erdrich, Louise. The Birchbark House
Fitzhugh, Louise. Harriet the Spy
Forbes, Ester. Johnny Tremain
Frank, Anne. Diary of a Young Girl
Gaiman, Neil. The Graveyard Book
Garden, Nancy. Annie on My Mind
George, Jean Craighead. Julie of the Wolves
Grahame, Kenneth. Wind in the Willows
Hamilton, Virginia. Zeely
Hinton, S.E. The Outsiders
Hunter, Bernice Thurman. Booky
Lee, Dennis. Alligator Pie
Lee, Harper. To Kill A Mockingbird
Levine, Gail Carson. Ella Enchanted
Lewis, C.S. The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe
Lingren, Astrid. Pippi Longstocking
Lobel, Arnold. Frog and Toad Together
Lofting, Hugh. The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle
London, Jack. Call of the Wild
Lowry, Lois. The Giver
McKinley, Robin. The Hero and the Crown
Meyer, Stephanie. Twilight. Little Brown, 2006. Volume I .
Milne, A.A. Winnie the Pooh
Montgomery, L.M. Anne of Green Gables
Mowatt, Farley. The Dog Who Wouldn't Be and Owls in the Family
Nesbit, E. Five Children and It
Norton, Mary. The Borrowers
O'Brien, Robert C. Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH

O'Dell, Scott. *Island of the Blue Dolphins*
Paterson, Katherine. *Jacob Have I Loved*
Paterson, Katherine. *Bridge to Terebithia*
Paulsen, Gary. *Hatchet*
Porter, Eleanor. *Pollyanna*
Pullman, Philip. *The Golden Compass*. From *His Dark Materials* trilogy.
Richler, Mordecai. *Jacob Two-Two Meets the Hooded Fang*
Robertson, David and Scott Henderson. *1: Stone. 7 Generations*. Portage and Main, 2010.
Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*
Rushdie, Salman. *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*
Salinger, J.D. *Catcher in the Rye*
Service, Robert. *The Cremation of Sam Magee*
Singer, Isaac Bashevis. *Zlateth the Goat*
Silverstein, Shel. *Where the Sidewalk Ends*
Smith, Betty. *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*
Snickett, Lemony. *A Series of Unfortunate Events*
Taylor, Mildred. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*
Tolkein, J.R.R. *The Hobbit*
Travers, P.L. *Mary Poppins*
White, E.B. *Charlotte's Web*
Wilder, Laura Ingalls. *Little House on the Prairie*
Yep, Laurence. *Dragonwings*
+ Syndicated series, such as *Nancy Drew*, *Hardy Boys*, and *Bobbsey Twins*

20th – 21st Century Picture Books

(Select 15)

Bannerman, Helen. *The Story of Little Black Sambo*
Brown, Margaret Wise. *Goodnight, Moon*
Bunting, Eve. *Smoky Night*
Bunningham, John. *Come Away from the Water, Shirley*
Burton, Virginia. *The Little House*
Carle, Eric. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*
Carrier, Roch. *The Hockey Sweater*
de Brunhoff, Jean. *The Story of Babar*
Gág, Wanda. *Millions of Cats*
Goble, Paul. various selections, including the *Iktomi books*
Johnson, Crockett. *Harold and the Purple Crayon*

Keats, Ezra Jack *The Snowy Day*
King, Thomas. *A Coyote Columbus Story*
Macaulay, David. *Black and White*
McCloskey, Robert. *Make Way for Ducklings*
Munsch, Robert. *Mortimer, The Paper Bag Princess, Marmel, Marmel, Marmel, The Mud Puddle*
Potter, Beatrix. *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*
Rey, H.A. and Margaret. *Curious George*
Say, Allen. *Grandfather's Journey*
Scieszka, Jon and Lane Smith, *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*
Sendak, Maurice. *Where the Wild Things Are, In the Night Kitchen, and Outside Over There*
Seuss, Dr. *The Cat in the Hat*
Van Allsburg, Chris. *Mysteries of Harris Burdick*
Wiesner, David. *Sector 7*
Willems, Mo. *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus*
Williams, Margery. *The Velveteen Rabbit*

Key Theoretical and Critical Texts

Bettelheim, Bruno. *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*.
New York: Vintage, 1989.

Cart, Michael. *From Romance to Realism: 50 Years of Growth and Change in Young Adult Literature*. New York: Harper Collins, 1996.

Hollindale, Peter. "Ideology and the Children's Book" available in Peter Hunt, *Literature for Children: Contemporary Criticism* London: Routledge, 1992: 18-40.

Hunt, Peter. *Children's Literature: The Development of Criticism*. London: Routledge, 1990.

---. *Criticism, Theory and Children's Literature*. London: Blackwell, 1991.

McLeod, Scott. *Understanding Comics*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1994.

Moebius, William. "Introduction to Picturebook Codes." *Word & Image* 2 (1986): 141-158.

Nodelman, Perry. *Words About Pictures*. Athens: U of Georgia P. 1988. Chapter 2.

Nodelman, Perry and Mavis Reimer. *Pleasures of Children's Literature*. 3rd Ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2003.

Plotz, Judith. *Romanticism and the Vocation of Childhood*. New York: Palgrave, 2001. Chapter 1.

Rose, Jacqueline. *The Case of Peter Pan or the Impossibility of Children's Fiction*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1984. Chapter 1.

Stephens, John. *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction*. New York: Longman, 1992.

Tatar, Maria. *The Hard Facts of the Grimm's Fairy Tales*. Princeton: Princeton U P, 1987.

Zipes, Jack. *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion: The Classical Genre for Children and the Process of Civilization*. New York: Methuen, 1983.

