

# Historical Fiction for Children and Youth

There are thousands and thousands of picture books, children's book and books for youth on just about any historical event you can think of. It is always good to read them yourself first if you can but if not be prepared for whatever conversations come up. Some books talk about very hard things, such as *When Broken Glass Floats*. Don't be afraid to go to hard places with your children. They are more capable of conversing about life than we often give them credit for.

It is always a challenge to do family reading with mixed ages but it can be done and done well. You can learn more about the techniques involved in successfully reading as a family by reading the book *Becoming a Present Parent: Connecting With Your Children in Five Minutes or Less*. You can download Chapter Four – Touchpoints, **FREE**. It includes the Touchpoint – Family Reading Time.

<https://www.becomingapresentparent.com/>

After your family has read a book it is often really enjoyable to watch a TV series or movie about it.

**If I have personally read the book it is preceded by a star. If I LOVED the book it is preceded by two stars.**

- \*Sara Crew – Frances Hodgson Burnett
- \*\*The Hundred Dresses – Eleanor Estes - This is one of my all time favorite books and was about girls in my childhood. But it could be about girls and boys today. It brings us face to face with some important questions that we can ask ourselves about being Christ-like.
- \*Invisible Louisa – Cornelia Meigs -The story of Louisa May Alcott
- \*Boys Who Became Prophets – Lynda Cory Hardy – Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Literature
- \*\*Red Scarf Girl - Ji-Li Jiang
- All About Japan – Willamarie Moore
- Uprooted: The Japanese American Experience During World War II - Albert Marrin
- My First Book of Japanese Words: An ABC Rhyming Book - Michelle Haney Brown
- My Awesome Japan Adventure: A Diary about the Best 4 Months Ever! - Rebecca Otowa
- The Children of Topaz – George W. Chilcoat and Michael O. Tunnell
- When My Name Was Keoko – Linda Sue Park
- \*\*The Book Thief - Markus Zusak - This is an astoundingly beautiful and haunting book set in World War II. You will be amazed at how resilient the human spirit really is.
- \*\*Number the Stars - Lois Lowry - Another WW II novel
- \*\*Island of the Blue Dolphins - Scott O'Dell - I bought this book for 25 cents when I was in grade school and still have that old copy. A beautiful book.
- \*\*Old Yeller - Fred Gipson - It made me cry. The old Disney movie is a good family choice after you have read the book.
- \*\*Where the Red Fern Grows - Wilson Rawls - I had the privilege of hearing Wilson Rawls speak at a school assembly when I was in 5th grade. He matched the book perfectly!
- \*\*The Witch of Blackbird Pond - Elizabeth George Speare
- \*\*Julie of the Wolves - Jean Craighead George
- \*\*Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry - Mildred D. Taylor - This is a book about racism in America during the Great Depression.
- \*\*The Sign of the Beaver - Elizabeth George Speare - It is about a young boy who was left alone for a summer in the wilderness and was befriended by a Native American, named Attean, and his

grandfather. The novel has been adapted into a television film titled *Keeping the Promise*. Based on an actual event.

- \*\*The Boxcar Children, Literary Series- Gertrude Chandler Warner - This was my oldest daughter Jodie's favorite set of books as a child. She asked for them as an adult and still has our family originals.
- \*\*Carry on Mr. Bowditch - Jean Lee Latham - I read this in my fifties and I loved it. I found it so wonderfully fascinating.
- \*Johnny Tremain - Esther Forbes
- \*Sarah Plain and Tall - Patricia MacLachlan - There is a series of truly delightful movies based on this book.
- \*\*The Little House Series – Laura Ingles Wilder - No American child should grow up without reading this series of books. : )
- The I Survived Books, literary series ie. I Survived the Sinking of the Titanic, 1912; I Survived the Revolutionary War, 1776; I survived the Children's Blizzard 1888
- \*\*A Long Walk to Water - Linda Sue Park - It includes the true story of Salva Dut, a part of the Dinka tribe and a Sudanese Lost Boy, and the fictional story of Nya, a young village girl that was a part of the Nuer tribe. The sale of this book helped to support the Water for South Sudan program.
- \*The Courage of Sarah Noble
- \*The Door In the Wall - Marguerite de Angeli
- Behind Rebel Lines - Seymour Reit
- The Bravest Dog Ever – The True Story of Balto
- \*Henry's Freedom Box - Ellen Levine – A children's story of the underground railroad.
- \*\*Amos Fortune Freeman - Elizabeth Yates
- \*Yellow Star - Jennifer Roy
- \*Caddie Woodlawn - Carol Ryrie Brink
- An Elephant in the Garden - Michael Morpurgo
- \*Fever 1793 - Laurie Halse Anderson – A book about the great plague.
- \*Heidi - Johanna Spyri – There are many movie versions of this book, some are far better than others.
- \*Anne of Green Gables - L.M. Montgomery - There are 8 books in this series. There is a very good TV mini-series and now a movie.
- \*The Secret Garden - Frances Hodgson Burnett – There are a few movie versions of this movie.
- \*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn – Mark Twain – There are a few movie versions of this book.
- \*The Little Princess
- \*Farmer Boy – Laura Ingalls Wilder - A story about Laura Ingalls Wilders husband, Almanzo.
- \*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer – Mark Twain - There are a few movie versions of this book.
- \*Treasure Island – Robert Lewis Stevenson – there are also movie versions of this book.
- \*Black Beauty – Anna Sewell
- Bud, Not Buddy - Christopher Paul Curtis
- The American Girls Series
- \*\*The Bronze Bow - Elizabeth George Speare
- \*Pollyanna – Anna Sewell - The Disney movie is wonderful.
- \*\*To Kill a Mockingbird – Harper Lee - One of my all time favorite reads although as a girl it broke my heart. Set in the 1930s during the Great Depression and is about the inequality of the white and black races.
- The Winter of Red Snow: The Revolutionary War Diary of Abigail Jane Stewart, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, 1777 - Kristiana Gregory
- \*\*Out of the Dust - Karen Hesse Another depression era book.
- \*\*The Prince and the Pauper - Mark Twain The movie is also very good.
- \*Strawberry Girl - Lois Lenski

- The Call of the Wild – Jack London
- \*\*Jacob Have I Loved - Katherine Paterson
- Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm - Kate Douglas Wiggin
- Indian Captive: The Story of Mary Jemison - Lois Lenski
- \*Ben and Me: An Astonishing Life of Benjamin Franklin by His Good Mouse Amos - Robert Lawson
- I Am David - Anne Holm
- \*Hans Brinker, or The Silver Skates - Mary Mapes Dodge – there is an older movie version of this book which is good.
- The Whipping Boy - Sid Fleischman
- \*The Yearling - Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings
- King of the Wind: The Story of the Godolphin Arabian - Marguerite Henry
- Eleanor: Crown Jewel of Aquitaine, France, 1136 - Kristiana Gregory
- The Endless Steppe: Growing Up in Siberia - Esther Hautzig
- \*\*Across Five Aprils - Irene Hunt - Covers the Revolutionary War
- \*The Story of Ruby Bridges - Robert Coles - A true story set in the 1960's when the federal government integrated schools in New Orleans.
- Good Night, Mr. Tom - Michelle Magorian
- \*\* Understood Betsy - Dorothy Canfield Fisher - I LOVED this wonderful book. It is all about being Present! Here is an article about Understood Betsy and being a Present parent - <https://www.maryannjohnsoncoach.com/work-presence-balance-is-it-doable/>
- Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes - Eleanor Coerr
- \*\* Jane Eyre - Charlotte Brontë
- \*Our Only May Amelia (May Amelia, #1) - Jennifer L. Holm - Book one in a series about May Amelia
- The Trouble with May Amelia (May Amelia, #2) - Jennifer L. Holm
- Brightly Of The Grand Canyon - Marguerite Henry - There is a beautiful movie about this book.
- \*Sing Down the Moon - Scott O'Dell
- \*\*A Lion to Guard Us - Clyde Robert Bulla
- Justin Morgan Had a Horse - Marguerite Henry - Another good book that has been made into a movie.
- The Royal Diaries Series - The Royal Diaries is a series of 20 books published by Scholastic Press from 1999 to 2005 i.e. Anastasia: The Last Grand Duchess, Russia, 1914 (Royal Diaries #5)
- \*\*The Children of Noisy Village - Astrid Lindgren
- \*\*Christmas in Noisy Village - Astrid Lindgren - Owned a copy of this wonderful children's classic.
- \*Hitty, Her First Hundred Years - Rachel Field – Another book that I bought for a couple of quarters in grade school through Scholastic Books.
- Tituba of Salem Village - Ann Petry
- \*The Courage of Sarah Noble - Alice Dalgliesh
- Freedom Summer - Deborah Wiles
- \*The Grapes of Wrath - John Steinbeck
- Kira-Kira - Cynthia Kadohata
- Landmarks Books Famous People Series ie. Joan of Arc – Nancy Wilson Ross
- \*The Landing of the Pilgrims – James Daugherty
- The Queen Elizabeth Story - Rosemary Sutcliff
- The Scholastic Biography Series ie. Thomas Jefferson, Man with a Vision – Ruth Crisman
- The Unforgettable Americans Series ie. The Great Little Madison – Jean Fritz
- \*The Railway Children - E. Nesbit
- \*\* A Lantern in Her Hand - Bess Streeter Aldrich
- \*A White Bird Flying - Bess Streeter Aldrich
- \*Clara Barton: Founder of the American Red Cross - Augusta Stevenson

- \*\* Story of Albert Schweitzer (Book #33 in the World Landmarks Series) - Anita Daniel
- \*\*The Birds' Christmas Carol - Kate Douglas Wiggin - I bought this book for a quarter in grade school and still have my copy.
- The Man in the Box: A Story from Vietnam - Mary Lois Dunn
- Robinson Crusoe - Daniel Defoe
- \*\*The Wreck of the Hesperus – Henry Wadsworth Longfellow - My mother read this long narrative poem to us when I was a small girl. Most would think it was too old and sad for us but we loved it and wept over it and never forgot it!
- \*\*The Highwayman – Alfred Noyes - My mother read this long narrative poem to us when I was a small girl. Most would think it was too old and sad for us but we loved it and wept over it and never forgot it!
- Mary, Queen of Scots: Queen Without a Country - Kathryn Lasky
- \*\*The Secret Life of Bees - Sue Monk Kidd
- \*\*Tuck Everlasting - Natalie Babbitt
- \*\*When Broken Glass Floats - Chanrithy Him Heartbreakingly wonderful about the Vietnam war. It touched me for its cruelty and resilience. It covered the war of my teen years.
- \*\*Amy Carmichael Rescuer of Precious Gems - Christian Heroes Then and Now series - Janet and Geoff Benge
- \*\*Dietrich Bonhoeffer In the midst of Wickedness - Christian Heroes Then and Now series - Janet and Geoff Benge
- \*\*George Muller the Guardian of Bristol's Orphans - Christian Heroes Then and Now series - Janet and Geoff Benge - One of my all time favorite books. I read it two years ago when I was 66. You will be astounded at the faith of this amazing and fabulous man. I have NEVER stopped reading children and youth historical fiction because the stories are easy to get into and understand. No dryness here! : )
- \*Red Badge of Courage - Stephen Crane
- \*\* Helen Keller, The Story of my Life - Helen Keller
- \*\*Joan of Arc - Mark Twain or Nancy Wilson Ross
- \*\*All the Light We Cannot See – Anthony Doerr - Winner of a Pulitzer Prize, about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II. I LOVED this book.
- The Virginian – Owen Wister - After all of our children were grown Don and I learned about the power of family reading time and we read this book together.
- The Chosen – Chaim Potok - I read this book as an adult and hated it until I was able to talk to someone about it. I embraced this difficult book when I understood that sometimes, when someone loves us and knows what we can become, they give us hard things to do. It is a bit like us and Heavenly Father.