



# 2025 RECOMMENDED READING LIST

## AGES 9-12

While we have made an effort to suggest titles on this list with few, if any, objectionable elements, BJU Press does not hold an exclusivist position on objectionable elements in books. Instead, we evaluate their presence based on the criteria of gratuitousness, explicitness, and moral tone. As we read, we ask ourselves: does the objectionable element serve a purpose within the story; is the description more detailed than is necessary; and does the author condemn, shrug off, or promote sinful actions? Each title on this list has been reviewed according to these guidelines; however, we believe that parents/guardians are the best judges of what is appropriate for their children. We encourage everyone to use discernment when selecting reading material. If you'd like a more thorough explanation of our position, please see chapter four of [Handbook of Christian Education](#).

Some of the titles below may be out of print. Look for them in your local library or request them through an interlibrary loan service. You may also find some titles in used bookstores or online. A good online resource for out-of-print books is [bookfinder.com](http://bookfinder.com).

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### ABBREVIATION KEY

**B** Biography   **ER** Early Reader   **F** Fiction   **GN** Graphic Novels   **NF** Nonfiction   **P** Poetry   **PB** Picture Books

Titles in green are published by JourneyForth.

## **Adventures of an Arctic Missionary series** (F, 3 books)

GLORIA REPP

Missionaries Steve and Liz Bailey arrive in Koyalik, Alaska, with troubling questions. They must overcome many physical and spiritual challenges to share the gospel.

### ***The Adventures of Pinocchio*** (F)

CARLO COLLodi

Pinocchio, a simple piece of wood carved by Geppetto, becomes a living marionette. His curiosity, adventuresome spirit, and quick mind get Pinocchio in and out of trouble. Will he ever become a real boy?

### ***All-of-a-Kind Family*** (F)

SYDNEY TAYLOR

Taylor provides a glimpse into the everyday life of five Jewish sisters growing up in New York in the early 1900s.

### ***Ben and Me*** (F)

ROBERT LAWSON

In this fanciful tale, Amos the mouse finds his way into Ben Franklin's cap and from this new dwelling serves as Ben's advisor.

### ***The Book of Chocolate: the Amazing Story of the World's Favorite Candy*** (NP)

H.P. NEWQUIST

An account of the scientific breakthroughs, happy accidents, schemes, and drama that led to chocolate becoming the phenomenon it is today.

### ***Borrowing Bunnies: A Surprising True Tale of Fostering Rabbits*** (NF)

CYNTHIA LORD

This account of the joys and sorrows of

raising baby rabbits is paired with adorable photographs.

### ***The Bottom of the Sea*** (NF)

AUGUSTA GOLDIN

This book introduces students to the exciting world under the sea.

### ***Brave the Wild Trail*** (F)

MILLY HOWARD

Josh Bramlett and his family dream of buying ranch land, but before they do, they must sell their first herd. Armed with the 18 ft. bullwhips that mark them as Florida Crackers, the Bramletts follow a trail filled with wild animals, deadly insects, and dangerous outlaws.

### ***Caddie Woodlawn*** (F)

CAROL R. BRINK

Caddie is an adventurous tomboy living in Wisconsin in 1864. This is the first in a series of stories about her pioneer life that are based on the reminiscences of the author's grandmother.

### ***The Candy Bomber*** (NF)

MICHAEL O. TUNNELL

Learn the fascinating history of Operation "Little Vittles" and Lt. Gail Halvorsen, the pilot who started the candy drops.

### ***Charlotte's Web*** (F)

E. B. WHITE

A spider named Charlotte spins messages into her web to save her friend Wilbur.

### ***The Chronicles of Narnia series***

(F, 7 books)

C. S. LEWIS

These books are set in the fictional land of Narnia—a place where animals talk, magic is common, and good triumphs over evil.

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The series narrates the adventures of eight children from the real world who play pivotal roles in the unfolding history of Narnia.

### ***The Far Journey*** (F)

LUCILLE TRAVIS

Horace has always wondered what happened to his mother after she left him in the safety of Fleur Gardens. One day he will lead an expedition to find her. But first he must help his friends survive a rat attack, a pandemic, and the threat of extermination.

### ***A Father's Promise*** (F)

DONNALYNN HESS

Adolf Hitler's ominous statements seem only a distant threat to eleven-year-old Rudi Kaplan until the Nazi forces invade Poland and bomb his home city of Warsaw. Rudi must learn how to survive in hiding, how to be truly brave, and how to die to himself and trust the God who is mightier than any army.

### ***Fighting to Survive Space***

#### ***Disasters*** (NF)

ELIZABETH RAUM

An account of six "successful failures" from international space history

### ***Forbidden Gates*** (F)

DENISE WILLIAMSON

A Jewish boy is caught in the center of the growing conflict between the temple officials and the followers of the recently crucified Jesus.

### ***Frances Ridley Havergal: A Poet for the King*** (B)

EILEEN M. BERRY

An account in free verse of the ordinary life of a woman with extraordinary faith

### ***The Gadallan Trilogy*** (F, 3 books)

DAWN L. WATKINS

In *Shield*, Innera finds a dying Kapnosian soldier with an urgent message and determines to finish his mission. Meanwhile, Leorian and Mirus fight for the heart of Sarda. In *Medallion*, Prince Trave learns the true nature of leadership as he seeks to prove that he is the rightful king of Gadalla. In *Arrow*, Trave and his companions rally to rescue a kidnapped princess and battle new threats to their kingdoms.

### ***The Green Ember*** (F)

S.D. Smith

Heather and Picket live an idyllic life until the day they return from berry picking to find their home in flames and surrounded by wolves. This is the first installment of a multi-book series with several spin-offs.

### ***Ida Scudder: Missionary Doctor*** (B)

TERRI B. KELLY

Ida Scudder was born in Ranipet, India, but promised herself she would never return as a missionary like her parents. India was a place of spiders, snakes, sickness, and death. But when her mother becomes ill, Ida is forced to return. As she grows to love the people of India, Ida sees that her dreams of a comfortable life are nothing compared to the plans God has for her.

### ***In Grandma's Attic*** (F)

ARLETA RICHARDSON

This is the first book in the Grandma's Attic series. Readers will be entertained by the mishaps and adventures of Mabel, a young girl growing up on a farm in the early nineteenth century.

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### ***Ira Sankey Singing the Gospel*** (B)

KELLEY BRUSS

From the time he was very young, Ira Sankey loved to sing. And God had big plans for Ira's voice—plans that would take him all over America and Europe.

### ***Lassie Come-Home*** (F)

ERIC M. KNIGHT

Lassie finds her way back across miles of rough mountain country to her beloved young master.

### ***Little House in the Big Woods*** (F)

LAURA INGALLS WILDER

The Ingalls family's log cabin in Wisconsin was miles away from any neighbors. Struggles with blizzards, wolves, and loneliness were certain, but Laura finds plenty of adventure in the pioneer way of life. This is the first of nine books in the beloved Little House series.

### ***A Little Princess*** (F)

FRANCIS HODGSON BURNETT

Sara lived a life of privilege at her boarding school, but after her father's death, she suddenly finds herself impoverished.

### ***Maritcha*** (NF)

TONYA BOLDEN

Glimpse into the childhood of Maritcha Lyons, a freeborn black girl growing up in New York City in the late nineteenth century.

### ***Mary Poppins*** (F)

P. L. TRAVERS

Mary Poppins becomes the nursemaid for the Banks family. However, there are clues that things will be a bit unusual when she arrives via an east wind.

### ***Miss Pickerell Goes to Mars*** (F)

ELLEN MACGREGOR

Miss Pickerell returns from vacation to find that a rocket ship has landed on her property. Before long she is aboard the rocket and finds herself on Mars.

### ***Misty of Chincoteague*** (F)

MARGUERITE HENRY

Paul and Maureen are determined to capture the Phantom, a wild horse living on the island of Chincoteague in the Chesapeake Bay. They soon discover that she has a foal.

### ***Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH*** (F)

ROBERT C. O'BRIEN

Mrs. Frisby, a widowed mouse, seeks assistance from a mysterious colony rats concerning her sick son Timothy. For the sake of her husband, who escaped with them from a NIMH facility, the rats agree to help. But first, Mrs. Frisby must drug the farmer's cat with sleeping powder.

### ***My Father's Dragon*** (F)

RUTH GANNETT

Elmer Elevator travels to Wild Island to free a captive baby dragon. Along the way, he helps solve problems for the other animals on the island and thereby escapes being eaten.

### ***The Mystery of the White Elephant*** (F)

ELSPETH CAMPBELL MURPHY

A valuable cookie jar mysteriously disappears, and cousins Sarah-Jane, Titus, and Timothy work to find out what happened to it. This is the first book in the Three Cousins Detective Club series.

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### ***Nick Newton Is Not a Genius*** (F)

S.E.M. ISHIDA

Nick is not a genius like the rest of his family, but that won't stop him from discovering his grandfather's greatest secret with help from two new friends and his butler named Jude. The adventures continue in *Nick Newton the Highest Bidder*.

### ***Nurk: The Strange, Surprising Adventures of a (Somewhat) Brave Shrew*** (F)

URSULA VERNON

Nurk doesn't go on adventures like his fearless (and missing) grandmother. But when he accidentally opens her mail containing a request for help, he sets off to find the unknown sender.

### ***Peanut Butter Friends in a Chop Suey World*** (F)

DEB BRAMMER

Amy thinks being a missionary kid in Taiwan will be easy until she discovers that communicating is just the beginning of her struggles.

### ***The Phantom Tollbooth*** (F)

NORTON JUSTER

Milo, a young boy who doesn't know what to do with himself, discovers a phantom tollbooth in his bedroom and sets out on an adventure that he will long remember. Perfect for fans of *Alice in Wonderland*.

### ***The Railway Children*** (F)

E. NESBIT

Roberta, Peter, and Phyllis suddenly find their lives turned upside down after two strangers take their father away. No one will tell them where he has gone, or why.

### ***River of Danger*** (F)

DENISE WILLIAMSON

Suspicious of a missionary who comes to his village, a young Seneca warrior wonders if the stories the white man tells are true.

### ***Roots Are Food Finders*** (NF)

FRANKLYN M. BRANLEY

The roots of some plants spread widely while others grow deep. All roots provide the food and nutrition needed by plants. Some easy-to-do experiments for children are included in the book.

### ***The Secret Garden*** (F)

FRANCES H. BURNETT

Cousins Mary and Colin discover an abandoned garden that once belonged to Colin's deceased mother. In addition to the garden, a robin and a boy who loves nature cause a remarkable change in Mary and Colin.

### ***Shen of the Sea: Chinese Stories for Children*** (F)

ARTHUR B. CHRISMAN

This collection of Chinese stories reveals much about the thought and philosophy of the Chinese people.

### ***Sherlock Jones, Jr. Detective series*** (F, 4 books)

ED DUNLOP

Jasper Jones, best known as Sherlock, and his friend Penny solve various mysteries within their small town.

### ***Silent Road to Rescue*** (F)

DENISE WILLIAMSON

A young boy helps missionary Eric Liddell rescue a wounded soldier and evade Japanese troops.

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### ***Songbird*** (F)

NANCY LOHR

A boy in colonial Williamsburg searches for a way to free his imprisoned father.

### ***Tales from Dust River Gulch*** (F)

TIM DAVIS

Many slippery criminals keep Sheriff Saddlesoap busy, but the biggest threat to his town is the evil outlaw Gruffle O'Buffalo and his gang of steers. Can the sheriff defeat old Gruff when he comes to town? The adventures continue in *More Tales from Dust River Gulch*.

### ***Thimble Summer*** (F)

ELIZABETH ENRIGHT

Garnet's summer days of happiness begin as soon as she finds a silver thimble in the dried creek bed.

### ***The Tanglewood's Secret*** (F)

PATRICIA ST. JOHN

Ruth loves to play in the woods with her brother and friend. She struggles with laziness and a temper, but is able to overcome these sins with the help of the Good Shepherd.

### ***Two Sides to Everything*** (F)

DEB BRAMMER

While his mother recovers from an accident, Josh is sent to New Zealand to stay at his Uncle Hamish's sheep farm.

### ***Understood Betsy*** (F)

DOROTHY C. FISHER

Coddled Elizabeth Ann's life is turned upside-down when she goes to visit her Vermont relatives. The Putneys call her Betsy and expect her to do things she's never done before—like drive a wagon, take care of animals, and even do her own hair.

### ***The Wheel on the School*** (F)

MEINDERT DE JONG

After children from the Dutch village of Shora learn that storks once perched on the roofs of the people's houses, they begin a campaign to get the storks to return.

### ***The Wind in the Willows*** (F)

KENNETH GRAHAME

This classic work is about four rodent friends whose charming personalities and myriad adventures are made irresistible through Grahame's elegant style.

### ***The Window in the Wall*** (F)

Ginny Merritt

As her city lies on the brink of battle, Talia must decide what she believes and have faith stronger than the city's walls to survive what is coming.

### ***The Wingfeather Saga*** (F)

ANDREW PETERSON

The Igiby children live quietly on their family farm, doing chores, studying the three honored and great subjects of word, form, and song, and avoiding the Fangs of Dang, the lizard-like creatures that rule the land on behalf of the evil Gnag the Nameless. One day a quarrel with the Fangs sets them off on a journey to a legendary land. Along the way, they fight many battles, encounter remarkable people, and discover magic they didn't know existed.

### ***The Wizard of Oz*** (F)

FRANK L. BAUM

With the aid of a cyclone, Dorothy and her dog Toto are taken to the land of the Munchkins. To get back home, she and her three new friends must complete a dangerous task for the Wizard of Oz.

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## ***The Wonderful Chair*** (F)

FRANCES BROWNE

After Snowflower's grandmother leaves her with an enchanted chair, Snowflower visits a grand king and his court. The chair then entertains the king—and the reader—with stories of talking birds, enchanted lords, merpeople, fairy folk, and more!

## **The Young Refugee series**

(F, 3 books)

ED DUNLOP

In *Escape to Liechtenstein*, siblings Hans and Gretchen flee Nazi-occupied Austria with Jacob, a Jewish boy carrying a valuable secret. While still hiding from the Germans, Hans and Gretchen help rescue a downed airman in *The Search for the Silver Eagle*. In *The Incredible Rescues*, the siblings work with Swedish ambassador Raoul Wallenberg to rescue Hungarian Jews.

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