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Books for Gifted Readers

A Menu of Children's Literature

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Hi, all keen readers - parents, carers and children alike. This list came about as a result of an animated discussion on the Oz-gifted mailing list about enjoyable reads for gifted children of our acquaintance. Before really thinking about the implications of the act, I had agreed to collate our suggestions and add to it from my own experience. I'm sure I'll get the job finished eventually, but in the meantime, here you go, with thanks to the Oz-gifted members who helped out with both titles and comments. At the moment the list contains mainly novels and short stories, although we all recognise the value of a really good picture book.

For the record, I am a primary school teacher from NSW, Australia, with a special interest in and love of children's literature. I have read most of the books on the list myself.

This list has been superceded by the interactive [book review database](#). Please extend this self-help initiative by contributing information and comments on the books you have found good (and bad).

Categories have been organised by fairly traditional genre standards, but I have used the following ratings to help give an approximation of content in addition to the brief rundown of each title. The coverage attempts to give you an idea about plot and possible problems for readers so that you don't have to have read *every* book you recommend to others.

A Australian author

G General: a good read for any age with nothing that is likely to upset sensitive readers. Which doesn't mean they're boring or simplistic.

F Fun: includes wacky ideas, amusing characters or plots

PB Picture book

PG Parental Guidance suggested: carers should decide whether they think this suitable for the younger reader.

PR Parental Read advised before handing on to impressionable minds. At least skim it, as the appropriateness for your child will depend on their maturity, sensitivity and carer values in terms of certain kinds of behaviour (sex, drugs, violence...) or emotionally challenging issues/themes.

R Has religious themes or subtext.

Extension I've tried to incorporate such books into the lists rather than keep them separate. In general these are classified as adult fiction, or books that I (as a teacher) regarded as excellent reads, but only for certain children.

Realistic Fiction

Family/Friends

ALCOTT, Louisa May *Little Women; Good Wives* [G; R]

Period story of the lives and dreams of four American girls whose father is away at war. The troubles they face from day to day, small and large, are still relevant today. Very strong themes of compassion, self-discipline and charity, as well as independence of spirit. The books include a great deal of detail left out in all three films (Katharine Hepburn, June Allyson and Winona Ryder).

Warning: *Little Women* includes death of a central character. By same author: More about the irrepressible Jo: *Jo's Boys; Little Men*; separate series: *Eight Cousins; Rose in Bloom* [all G]

BATES, Dianna *The Last Refuge* [A; PR]

The story of Mitch, a thirteen-yr-old girl whose father drinks and is abusive to all her family. Mitch's mum refuses to leave, until the day Mitch is badly hurt by her father and her mum finally decides it's time to go. A painful picture of life in a women's refuge, and the emotional and physical difficulties of leaving an abusive situation, the novel has a positive resolution without losing its realism. **Warning:** violence is explicit, including towards children.

Issues: alcoholism, domestic violence, self-esteem.

BAWDEN, Nina *The Peppermint Pig* [PG]

Father has gone to America to make his fortune, and Poll's family struggle to keep going from day to day. Mother buys a Peppermint pig - a runt - called Johnnie, who helps keep the family's spirits up until Father comes home. Johnnie's naughtiness, large piggish appetite and cleverness keep the family united despite their troubles. Same Author: *Carrie's War* [PG]

BRINSMEAD, Hesba *Pastures of the Blue Crane* [A; PG];

For older readers. Often studied in Yr9/10. A lonely girl who has spent her life in various boarding-schools, finds, on the death of a father she never knew, that she has inherited a property in North Queensland. She travels with her newly-discovered grandfather to see the property and finds herself facing the practical challenges of living in a rural community. **Issues:** racism, loneliness, identity and friendship. Same Author: *Longtime Passing*

BYARS, Betsy *The House of Wings* [PG]

Sammy is left with his grandparents while his parents go in search of new opportunities/life in Detroit. "Sammy is understandably distraught when he discovers that his parents have left without him...His bitterness turns quickly to rage and he loads all the blame for what has happened squarely on... his grandfather." The discovery of an injured crane, which his grandfather helps him nurse back to health, helps Sammy grow up. (summarised from *Book Tastings*, 111)

BYARS, Betsy *The Pinballs* [G]

"A worthwhile, moving story of how three ill-treated or deprived children develop a sense of responsibility for one another and feel that they can have some influence over the course of their lives. Memorable characters." (*PETA Guide to Children's Literature*, 63)

CHAMBERS, Adrian *Seal Secret* [PG]

William's parents take him on a holiday in Wales, where he is expected to befriend a Welsh boy, Gwyn. It becomes clear that Gwyn has secret plans to

start a seal farm, starting with a stranded seal pup he conceals from the adults. William, horrified, decides to rescue and release the seal, but encounters many problems along the way. **Issues:** differences, morality, environment, animal protection Same Author: *The Present Takers* (summarised from *Book Tastings*, 77)

COERR, Eleanor *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* [PG]
True story of a Japanese child who develops cancer as a result of a radiation from the fallout of the Hiroshima bomb, which fell when she was only two. Covers her fight for life and the affect that has on her family and friends.
Warning: main character dies

DE JONG, Meindert *The Wheel on the School; Shadrach*

DISHER, Garry *The Bamboo Flute*

FOWLER, Thurley *The Green Wind* [A; G]
Book of the Year, 1986. Set in country fruit-picking area in the 1940s, the story explores the family life of Jennifer, red-headed, wilful and creative. Very much a book for young writers, or those who feel different or unconventional. Events and characters are funny, bittersweet and believable.
Issues: giftedness; individuality; war trauma. Same Author: *The Wind is Silver* [G]

GLEITSZMAN, Morris *Two Weeks with the Queen* [A; PG; F]
After the sudden illness and hospitalisation of his younger brother, the main character is sent to England to stay with relatives. Convinced that the Australian doctors don't know what they're doing, he goes looking for a Big Name who will solve all his brother's problems, eventually targeting the Queen herself. Various mad antics ensue, until he eventually accepts the truth about his brother's condition. **Issues:** death, grief, illness, homosexuality (two supporting characters) Same Author: *Blabbermouth* [G]; *Sticky Beak* [G]; *Worry Warts* [G]; *Water Wings* [PG]

HATHORN, Libby *Thunderwith*

KIDD, Diana *Onion Tears*

KLEIN, Robin *Hating Alison Ashley* [A; G]
The elegant Alison Ashley invades the narrator's school, quickly winning over everyone except her. Gradually, after humorous scenes at home, camp and in the classroom, it becomes clear that the narrator's less conventional family offer her more support and love than the immaculate, well-bred Alison has ever known. A healthy friendship finally emerges. **Issues:** making assumptions; self-esteem; friendship; acceptance Same Author: *Penny Pollard's Diary* [G]

KLEIN, Robin *Came Back to Show You I Could Fly* [A; PR]
Sometimes studied in Yr9. Seymour, a lonely 11yr-old sent to spend the school holidays with a friend of his mother's, meets Angie, a teenage girl living nearby. In Seymour's eyes, Angie is glamorous and charismatic, and he spends much illicit time with her, talking, shopping and going on outings. A gradual interdependency develops as they each rely on the other to help deal

with family problems, finally revealing the complex situations with which they are both coping and strengthening their own ability to cope. **Issues:** drug addiction, separation and divorce, honesty, friendship.

KLEIN, Robin *People Might Hear You* [A; R; PR: Extension]

A disturbing novel for mature readers. Frances, who lives with her Aunt Loris, is lonely and hopes that her aunt's recent marriage will provide her with the family she has longed for. Mr Tyrell, however, is a menacing figure in a house that is run by the bizarre rules of a fanatical religion that completely isolates them from the surrounding community. Frances at first tries to fit in, be "worthy", but begins to question more and more the motivations behind the sect, until she plots her escape. **Issues:** independence, self-esteem, abuse.

Warning: this book covers several very sophisticated issues and is most disturbing to read. It is strongly recommended that parents read this before encouraging children to do so, as each family will feel differently about it. It is certainly a stimulus for discussion.

KLEIN, Robin *Boss of the Pool* [A; G]

Story of a rather selfish girl who changes the life of a Down's Syndrome boy by teaching him to swim when she is forced to go to her mother's work during the school holidays. Catches the exasperated almost-teenager and innocent simple child beautifully. **Issues:** acceptance, fear.

MARSDEN, John *So Much to Tell You* [A; PG]

"Traumatised by a disfigurement inflicted by her father, sent to boarding school by her mother, this fourteen-year old, unable to speak, communicates only with her diary. Her 'plot' is unfolded delicately and skilfully until the satisfying resolution of this jigsaw puzzle of a book." (*PETA Guide to Children's Literature*, 130). **Issues:** acceptance, differences, personal conflict. Same Author: *Letters from the Inside*

MILNE, A.A. *The House at Pooh Corner* [G; F]

The delightful English tales of Christopher Robin, Pooh Bear and various other characters which have been loved by generations of children. Although "very English" in context and language, the characters are all lovable, mostly humorous and have mild and amusing adventures. Same Author: *When We Were Very Young* [G]; *Now We Are Six* [G]

MONGER, Christopher *The Englishman Who Went up a Hill But Came Down a Mountain* [PG; F]

Humorous story about two Englishmen on a mapping expedition in 1917 and the chaos that ensues in a small Welsh village when they decide that the local 'mountain' is actually a hill, in geographical terms. Whimsical tale, probably better enjoyed by parents and wider readers: MUCH better than the film of same name.

NORMAN, Lilith *Climb a Lonely Hill* [A; PG]

"Jack and Sue, children of the town drunk, are left alone in desolate country when their uncle is killed on their camping holiday. Vivid, convincing account of their struggle to survive and emotional growth through experience." (*PETA Guide to Children's Literature*, 68)

PARK, Ruth *Callie's Castle* [A; G]

Callie, the eldest in a loving, if somewhat noisy family, longs for a private place where she can think and grow up without the invasions of her younger siblings. Her beloved grandfather builds her such a place. **Issues:** family relationships, privacy, individuality and coping strategies. **Sequel:** *Callie's Family* **Same Author:** *My Sister, Sif* [G]; *Harp in the South* [PR]; *Playing Beatie Bow* [G]

PATERSON, Katherine *The Bridge to Terabithia* [PG]

Wonderfully moving story set in rural America. Often studied in Yr6. Leslie, the new girl, challenges all Jess' ideas about girls in general, life and the way things are. Two "different" (creative/talented) kids in a small community, they forge a friendship which survives school bullying and family teasing. Together they create Terabithia, a world where they can be the most they can be, where Leslie shows Jess how to reach beyond the conventional into achievable dreams. **Warning:** sad ending (death of a character) will distress many readers. Great sense of resolution and renewal, however. **Issues:** giftedness, being different, identity, bullying, sibling relationships, death, guilt. **Same Author:** *The Great Gilly Hopkins* [PG]; *Come Sing, Jimmy Jo* [PG]; *Jacob Have I Loved* [PG]; *Park's Quest* [PG]

PEARCE, Phillipa *The Minnow on the Say* [G]

Two boys from very different social levels in England come together through a love of the river and a small boat. Strong story involving treasure hunt to find the lost wealth of the boy from high family. Questions preconceptions based on wealth/class.

PHIPSON, Joan *The Bird Smugglers* [A; G]

Set in a small outback town in Australia where a young girl enjoys peaceful country life with her father. Margaret is on her annual trip to London to visit her mother when she becomes convinced that a couple on the plane are smuggling birds out of Australia. Convincing the authorities this is the case becomes a problem. **Issues:** family separation, illegal wildlife trade. **Same Author:** *Hide Till Daytime* [G]; *A Tide Flowing* [PG]

POTOK, Chaim *My Name is Asher Lev* [PR; R: Extension]

The story of an artistically gifted Hasidic Jewish boy, whose talent is seen as sinful and evil by most members of his religious community. An absorbing and emotional novel that follows the hard path he travels in order to develop his gift and be true to himself without completely alienating his family and friends. **Warning:** emotionally challenging **Issues:** acceptance; giftedness/differences; discipline; expectations... **Same Author:** *The Gift of Asher Lev* [PG: Extension]; *The Chosen* [PR; mature readers only]; *The Book of Lights* [PR; mature readers only]

RUBENSTEIN, Gillian *Answers to Brut* [A; PR]

"Kel's 'borrowing' of Caspian's bull terrier, Brut, leads both his family and Caspian's into a morass of intrigue which is only resolved through the courage of Caspian and Kel's mother, Liz. There is plenty to think about in this gripping story - an Honour Book in the 1989 Book of the Year Awards."
(*PETA Guide to Children's Literature, 128*)

SOUTHALL, Ivan *Let the Balloon Go* [A; G]

"A spastic boy, over-protected by his mother, climbs a tree the first time she leaves him alone. Though he has to be helped down, he has made his parents realise that he needs freedom, even if this means 'saying no to himself before anyone else has to'. Southall makes John's climb a triumph by presenting it convincingly from his point of view." (*PETA Guide to Children's Literature*, 69)

SPENCE, Eleanor *Another Sparrow Singing* [A; PR]

Opens with lead characters having just left domestic violence situation (implied, later directly stated) with their mother. Lead girl is strongly affected by change in financial circumstances and the need to grow up and take responsibility overnight as her mother struggles to find work and build a new life for her two children. The children establish friendships within the local community and come to realise that becoming the best they can be involves acceptance, determination and the ability to forgive. **Issues:** domestic violence, divorce Same Author: *The October Child* [PG]; *The Leftovers* [G]

SPENCE, Eleanor *The October Child* [A; PG]

A talented pianist's life is completely disrupted when it becomes clear that his little brother is autistic. The child's behaviour changes the lives of all the family and their relationships with one another. Characters are realistically and sympathetically developed. Same Author: *The Leftovers* [G]

SPENCE, Eleanor *A Candle for St. Anthony* [A; PR; Extension]

An intense story that follows the developing relationship of two very different boys as they both come to realise their intellectual and creative potential in a small, conventional community. Their emotional interdependence causes ructions in their peer group, causing one boy to withdraw into the more conventional sun/surf/fun group, the other to go on alone. Both are deeply hurt and lessened by the rift/rejection. **Warning:** potential homosexual implications, nothing explicit ever stated; mature readers only.

TAYLOR, Theodore *The Cay* [PR]

"A tense and compulsive survival story, this is a study of the relationship between a white boy, influenced by his mother's prejudices, and an old Negro upon whom his life depends after they are shipwrecked." (*PETA Guide to Children's Literature*, 99)

THIELE, Colin [A, PG] *Storm Boy* [A; G]

Tale of a small boy living in an isolated river area with his curmudgeonly father. He befriends an aboriginal who lives the traditional way of life and learns from him a respect for living things and the land around him. Storm Boy rescues and raises several Pelican chicks, one of whom, Mr Percival becomes his permanent companion until shot by hunters. His relationship with the Pelican serves to heal the relationship between the boy and his father. There is a real sense that the bird's death is the sacrifice required to open the father's heart to his child. Same Author: *Pinquo* [PG]; *Sun on the Stubble* [G]

THIELE, Colin *Blue Fin* [A; G]

"An adventure story set in a small Australian tuna fishing community. The actions centres on the situations a young boy gets into as he tries to win the recognition and respect of his father... he hasn't become the strong,

indomitable figure that his father seems to want in a son. His father shows him little affection, but most significantly he is reluctant to allow him to come on fishing trips on his tuna trawler. Inevitably Snook is placed in a dangerous and challenging situation where he has to take control and combat hardships and inexperience to save his father's life." (*Book Tastings*, 68)

TOWNSEND, Sue *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole, aged 13 and 3/4* [PG]
 "Describes, in diary form, a boy's struggle with the usual adolescent traumas of acne, girlfriends etc., coupled with the breakdown of his parents' marriage and his ambition to be 'an intellectual'. Sustained irony makes this an extremely funny book." (*PETA Guide to Children's Literature*, 99). Same Author: *The Growing Pains of Adrian Mole* [PG]

TURNER, Ethel *Seven Little Australians* [A; G]
 Period tale of life in a family of seven children. Judy is the leader of the lively group and is always organising well-meant escapades which get them into trouble. Her father sends her away to boarding school and Judy walks home, contracting a severe illness on the way. A holiday at a country property to overcome this brings tragedy to the family. Although the language and characterisations are somewhat dated now, it is a classic in Australian Literature and worth the able reader's time. **Warning**: death of a character - I still cry when I read it. **Issues**: personality, sibling relationships, death. Same Author: Read about Judy's escape from boarding-school in *Punch and Judy*; Follow the Misrule characters as they grow up in *The Family at Misrule*; *Little Mother Meg* [all G]

WHEATLEY, Nadia *Five Times Dizzy* [A; G]
 "Heart-warming story of a Greek family in Newtown, told from the point of view of Mareka, who finds a way of making her beloved grandmother happier in Australia. The sequel, *Dancing in the Anzac Deli*, demonstrates the family's pride in both its Greek heritage and its role in Australian society." (*PETA Guide to Children's Literature*, 71)

WHEATLEY, Nadia *My Place* [A; G]
 Historical picture book for older readers which "traces the history of an inner city terrace house from the early years of the colony of NSW to the present time. Each double page deals with a new generation of people living in the house. As well, we see the environmental changes that occur within the immediate neighbourhood as commercial and industrial interests, as well as urban development, affect the landscape. Some things, like an enormous old tree, remain constant, but much changes." (*Book Tastings*, 96)

WRIGHTSON, Patricia *I Own the Racecourse* [A; G]
 A retarded boy claims the racecourse in a game played by the children of the community, but seriously believes he has bought it. Story follows his consequent visits to the racecourse and how his friends go about helping him realise the truth without hurting him. **Issues**: friendship, differences, identity, ownership. Same Author: *The Rocks of Honey*

War

BAILLIE, Allan Little Brother
DAHL, Roald Going Solo
FRANK, Anne The diary of Anne Frank: The diary of a Young Girl
FRENCH, Jackie Soldier on the Hill
GREENE, Better Summer of My German Soldier
HAUTZIG, Esther The endless steppe
HOLKNER, Jean Aviva Gold
KERR, Judith When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit
LAWRENCE, Louise Children of the Dust
LINGARD, Joan Across the Barricades
MAGORIAN, Michelle Back Home
O'NEILL, Judith Deep Water
STRACHAN, Ian Journey of 1000 miles
BANKS, Maura's Angel
COERR Meiko and the Fifth Treasure
GALLICO, Paul The Snowgoose (and the small miracle)
HOLM, Anne I am David
VON TRAPP, Maria *The Sound of Music (aka The Von Trapp Family Singers)* [G]

Autobiography: the true tale of the Nun who married the Captain. The story goes with the family as they leave their beloved Austria and eventually reach America. Maria's irrepressible spirit and faith help them overcome the many obstacles in the path of war refugees as they struggle to earn enough to survive in their new country. A good one to share-read with younger/immature readers, as language may prove an obstacle.

RICHTER I was there; Freiderich
WATKINS, Yoko Kawashima So far from the Bamboo Grove
WESTALL, Robert A time of fire; Blitz; Children of the Blitz
WARBURTON, To trust a Soldier
HARVERY, Anne In time of War
LINGARD, Joan Across the Barricades
DE JONG, Meindert The House of Sixty Fathers
MATTINGLEY, Christobel *No Gun for Asmir; Asmir in Vienna; Escape from Sarajevo*

Biographical: The true story of a family who escape from Sarajevo when the Bosnian war broke out. Asmir is only six and takes on the responsibilities of a man in looking after his mother, baby brother and grandmother. The three books tell of his arrival escape, organised by the author's son, his life in Vienna, and finally the much-wished-for arrival of his father who had stayed behind to care for his mother. The books give very strong imagery of how war affects the innocent, those who don't hold the guns. **Warning:** Asmir is separated from his father for several years. Emotionally the books are demanding. By the same author: The miracle tree

FILOPOVIC, Zlata Zlata's Diary
LOWRY, Lois *Number the Stars* [PG]
 Tale of two families, one Christian, one Jewish, in Nazi-invaded Denmark. The children gradually become aware of the political threat as it impinges on their friendship. The Jewish family are forced to flee to Austria, and both girls are forced to face the adult world and all its frightening realities. The book has an upbeat resolution, but the sense of grief at man's inhumanity to man is quite strong at some points. Based on a true story.

The Diary of Anne Frank

COOPER, Susan *Dawn of Fear* [PG]

The life of a small group of friends during the Blitz in London. The war doesn't seem real, but makes an excellent subject for the boys' games. A clash between two groups in the neighbourhood echoes the unthinking violence of allies and enemies in the war, until things become too real: a bomb falls directly onto the house of one boy and the game can never continue.

Warning: death of a child character.

MARSDEN, John *Tomorrow When the War Began* [A; PR; Extension]

A seven-part series, very different from most of Marsden's work. Australia is invaded when a group of country teenagers are camping in the bush. They arrive home to find the properties deserted, many of the animals dead. The group retreat to their campsite and begin guerrilla activities against the enemy. The books vary in standard and are rather like modern Alistair MacLean. Many schools won't give them shelf space, others require parental permission before children are permitted to borrow them. In my opinion they are quite a good read for mature readers, who have sufficient reading experience to ignore/not respond to the more violent, distressing or frightening scenes. **Warning:** most of the books are very violent; main characters die or are injured; explicit sex **Issues:** war, death, sex, alcoholism, violence, friendship In this series: *The Third Day, the Frost; Darkness Be My Friend; Burning for Revenge*

BAWDEN, Nina *Carrie's War***SERRAILLIER, Ian** *The Silver Sword* (Puffin)

I am David

Being Different**Issues (religion, drugs..)****Animals****HERRIOT, James** *All Creatures Great And Small* [PG; F]

Younger readers may have problems reading the dialect. Stories in the life of a country vet in the Yorkshire Dales. Full of hilarious detail about the escapades of the irrepressible Tristan, serious James and irascible Siegfried and the various farmers whose animals they treat. **Sequels:** *All Things Bright and Beautiful; All Things Wise and Wonderful*

DURRELL, Gerald *My Family and Other Animals* [G]

Based on his lifelong interest in and experiences with the wildlife of various continents, all Gerald Durrell's books contain amusing and informative descriptions. *My Family and Other Animals* is one of the first, telling the story of Durrell's childhood in the Greek islands where he first developed an interest in exotic animals. Same Author: *The Drunken Forest; The Bafut Beagles; A Zoo in my Luggage; Menagerie Manor; Three Singles to Adventure; Two in the Bush* (an account of Durrell's tour of Malaya, NZ and

Australia)

WHITE, E.M. *Charlotte's Web* [G]

The story of a very special pig, Wilbur, and a very special spider, Charlotte, who saves his life. A classic tale of farm life, loyalty and friendship set in rural America. Often studied in Year 4.

Babe

ADAMS, *Watership Down* [PG]

Beautifully crafted tale of the lives of a number of rabbits who escape Man's attempts to wipe out their burrow and go looking for a new home. At times frightening, often thought-provoking, it is filled with tales within tales. The novel has a great sense of renewal and valour and the characterisations are sensitive and well-developed. The book is much more complex than the animation. **Issues:** survival, independence, equality, leadership, individuality, peer pressure. Same Author: *The Plague Dogs*

Fly Away Home

The Incredible Journey [G]

A wonderful story about three animals who travel across heavily forested mountains in order to find their owners. The novel has much greater depth of character and plot than the Disney film, and the animals are shown through action rather than dialogue. Heart-rending at times, the reader becomes heavily involved with the animals and their need to reach home.

HENRY, Marguerite *Misty of Chincoteague*; *Sea Star:Orphan of Chincoteague*; *Stormy, Misty's Foal*; *King of the Wind*; *San Domingo: the Medicine Hat Stallion*; *Gordenzion: Pride of the Palio*; *Black Gold*; *Mustang: Wild Spirit of the West*

MITCHELL, Elyne *The Colt From Snowy River*; *Moon Filly*; *The Silver Brumby*; *Silver Brumby's Daughter*; *Silver Brumbies of the South*; *Silver Brumby Kingdom*; *Silver Brumby Whirlwind*

The Almost All-white Rabbity Cat

The Cat Who Walked for a Week

TOVEY, Doreen

DICKENS, Monica *Follyfoot* [G]

The life and adventures of a group of horse-lovers (mostly teenage) who run a home for "retired" horses in England. Each horse has their own special story and these unfold through the novel. Running the farm is difficult, financially, but somehow there is always just enough, even when there is another emergency case that requires special treatment. **Sequels:** *The Horses of Follyfoot*; *Stranger at Follyfoot*; *Dora at Follyfoot*

STEINBECK, John *The Red Pony*

HERALD, Kathleen *Sabre: the Horse from the Sea* [G]

Liza found Sabre on the beach one morning, a great big-boned horse, dark grey with gentle eyes. She looks after him, rides him and finally races him - and discovers she is not allowed to keep him. A book exploring a special relationship between a difficult horse and an orphaned child. The author wrote it when she was fifteen, and the writing is remarkably mature. Same

Author: *The Mandrake: A Pony*

Black Beauty

FARLEY, Walter *The Black Stallion* [G]

The story of a young boy and a remarkable Arabian stallion who survive a shipwreck. The boy ties himself to the horse, who swims to a deserted island where they gradually come to know and trust each other. On returning to civilisation, the boy trains the horse for the Grand National. Same Author:

The Island Stallion

DE JONG, Meindert *Hurry Home Candy* [G]

A puppy is frightened from his new home by the unthinking impatience and cruelty of the children's mother.

GRAHAME, Kenneth *The Wind in the Willows*

SMITH, Dodie *One Hundred and One Dalmations; The Twilight Barking*

Extension

FRANKLIN, Miles *My Brilliant Career; My Career Goes Bung*

SHAKESPEARE, William *Romeo and Juliet; Merchant of Venice; Twelfth Night;*

WINTON, Tim *That Eye, The Sky; Open Swimmer*

MALOUF, David *Fly Away Peter*

HORWOOD???? *Skallagrigg; Duncton Wood*

ELIOT, George *Silas Marner*

CLAVELL, James *Noble House; Tai-Pan; Whirlwind;*

Fantasy

WYNNE JONES, Diana *The Lives of Christopher Chant; Charmed Life* [G]

Delightful reads for fantasy lovers, creative use of language. Chrestomanci is the strongest magician in the Related Worlds and has nine lives. His responsibility is to supervise the lesser witches, warlocks and other users of magic. These two stories tell of the finding of two different Chrestomancis and their adventures. Lots of magic, trickery and active characters (including animals). Related stories: *Witch Week* [G]; *Magicians of Caprona* [G] By the same Author: *Tale of Time City* [G; sci-fi fantasy]; *Cart and Cwidder; Drowned Ammet; The Spellcoats; The Crown of Dalemark* [series; PG]; *Castle in the Air* [G]; *Howl's Moving Castle* [G]; *Fire and Hemlock* [PG];

TOLKIEN, J.R.R. *The Hobbit; The Lord of the Rings; Smith of Wootten Major; The Father Christmas Letters; The Tree that Sat Down; The Stream that Stood Still The Wickedest Witch in the World*

RODDA, Emily *Rowan of Rin; Rowan and the Travellers* [A;G]

More fantasy with a problem-solving/riddle theme. Rowan is an unusual boy in a village of strong, hardy people. He is weak and sensitive and relegated to looking after the Bukshah, the cattle upon whom the village depend for milk, cheese, and wool. The old witch, Sheba, knows better, however, and in both books he is required to show true courage by overcoming his worst fears in order to save the village from various dangers. **Issues:** independence, self-reliance/esteem; relationships and understanding others Same author: *The Best-kept Secret* [G]; *Pigs Might Fly* [G]; *Finders Keepers; The Timekeepers* [series: G]

COOPER, Susan *Over Sea, Under Stone* [G]

Wonderful series with loose links to Arthurian England. The initial novel

involves the search for the lost Grail by four children holidaying in Cornwall. The series develops the theme of an ongoing war between forces unseen - the Light and the Dark - in which humans occasionally become embroiled. All novels involve some kind of search or challenge, leading to the final confrontation in Wales. Vocabulary may be occasionally challenging (especially the Welsh!) but most can be scanned from the context. Very enjoyable. In the series: *The Greenwitch; The Grey King; Silver on the Tree; The Dark is Rising; Seaward* [G]

LE GUIN, Ursula Earthsea Trilogy

AIKEN, Joan Necklace of Raindrops; A Small Pinch of Weather; All This and More; The Wolves of Willoughby Chase; Black Hearts in Battersea; The Cuckoo Tree; Nightbirds on Nantucket; Is; The Whispering Mountain; The Stolen Lake;

MANLEY, Ruth The Plum Rain Scroll; The Dragon Stone
Alice Through the Looking Glass

LEWIS, C.S. Narnia series: The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe; Prince Caspian; The Silver Chair; The Voyage of the Dawn Treader; The Magician's Nephew; The Last War; The Horse and His Boy

HUGHES, Ted The Iron Man

EDDINGS, David The Belgariad (Pawn of Prophecy; Castle of Wizardry; Queen of Sorcery; Enchanter's Endgame; Magician's Gambit) and The Mallorean (Guardians of the West; King of the Murgos; Demon Lord of Karanda; Sorceress of Darshiva; The Seeress of Kell)

BROOKS, Terry Sword of Shannara; Elfstone of Shannara

PRATCHETT, Terry

JUSTER, Norton The Phantom Tollbooth

MASEFIELD, John The Box of Delights; The Midnight Folk (Fontana Lions)

GARNER, Alan The Weirdstone of Brisingamen; The Moon of Gomrath; Elidor; The Owl Service; A Bag of Moonshine; Red Shift

L'ENGLE, Madeleine A Wrinkle in Time; A Wind in the Door; A Swiftly Tilting Planet; The Arm of the Starfish; Many Waters

KAYE, M.M. The Ordinary Princess

LINDSAY, Norman The Magic Pudding

CARMODY, Isobelle Obernewtyn; The Farseekers; Ashling; Scatterlings; The Gathering

ENDE, Michael The Neverending Story; Momo; The Night of Wishes (or the Satanarchaeolidealcoholish Notion Potion)

BRIGGS, K. M. Hobberdy Dick;

ALEXANDER, Lloyd The Black Cauldron series (The Book of Three; The Black Cauldron; The Castle of Llyr; Taran Wanderer; The High King)

WRIGHTSON, Patricia Down to Earth

WHITE, T.H. The Sword in the Stone;

Moomintrolls

BERESFORD????? The Wombles etc

WAKEFIELD Bottersnikes and Gumbles

Extension

McCAFFREY, Anne The Rowan; Damia; Damia's Children; Lyon's Pride Dragonflight; The White Dragon; Moreta's Ride; Dragonsong; Dragonsinger;

All the Weyrs of Pern; The Renegades of Pern;
The Ship Who Sang; with other authors: The Ship Who Fought; The Ship
Who Won; The Ship Who Searched

ANTHONY, Piers many series including The Incarnations; Mode series;
DONALDSON, Stephen Thomas Covenant Series; Mirror of her Dreams;
A Man Rides Through

SHELLEY, Mary Frankenstein

LAWHEAD, Stephen Taliesin series

GOODKIND, Terry Wizard's First Rule; Stone of Tears; Blood of the Fold

Sci-Fi

ADAMS, Douglas *The Hitch-hikers Guide to the Galaxy; The Restaurant
at the End of the Universe; So Long and Thanks for All the Fish*

ASIMOV, Isaac *The Stars Like Dust; The Caves of Steel; The Gods
Themselves; I, Robot (and series); Asimov's Mutants; The Caves of Steel*

BALL, Brian *The Star Buggy; Truant From Space*

BEAR, Greg *Eon*

BRADBURY, Ray *Island in the Sky*

"A visit to a space station is the prize Roy Malcolm wins in a special
competition. He is amazed and fascinated by all the technology in use at the
station." (*PETA Guide to Children's Literature, 102*) Same Author: *Fahrenheit*

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CHRISTOPHER, John *The City of Gold and Lead; The Pool of Fire; The
White Mountains; When the Tripods Came; The Guardians; The Lotus
Caves; Empty World*

CLARK, M *The Boy from the UFO Returns*

CLARKE, Arthur C., *2001: A Space Odyssey; 2010;*

DANN, Max *Ernest Pickle's Remarkable Robot (Yr3-4)*

DICKS, Terrence *Doctor Who... Warriors of the Deep*

FISK, Nicholas *Grinny*

"Written as a diary by Tim, who relates how the family's life changes when
hypnotic Great Aunt Emma (really a visitor from space) moves in. The
children find a way of defeating her. Dramatic, often amusing, Aunt Emma's
objective comments on earthly customs are thought-provoking." (*PETA
Guide to Children's Literature, 64*) Same Author: *Space Hostages; Trillions;
Wheelie in the Stars; Mindbenders; Cat Fang*

HARRISON, Harry *Teh Men From P.I.G. and R.O.B.O.T.*

"One graduation day, cadets are told two 'inspiring' stories, both comic and
send-ups of numerous works of science fiction. P.I.G. (the Porcine
Interstellar Guard) saves one planet. R.O.B.O.T. (Robot Obtrusion Battalion-
Omega Three) finds the cause of paranoid behaviour on another. Appeals to
fans of *Get Smart!*" (*PETA Guide to Children's Literature, 65*)

HEINLEIN, Robert *Assignment in Eternity; Have Space Suit, Will Travel;
The Man Who Sold the Moon; Star Beast; Citizen of the Galaxy etc*

HEINLEIN, Robert *Time Enough For Love*

HERBERT, Frank *Dune; (and series)*

HILL, Douglas *Galactic Warlord; Day of the Starwind; Death Wing Over
Veynaa; How Jennifer (and Speckle) Saved the Earth*

HUGHES, Ted *The Iron Man; The Iron Woman*

KLEIN, Robin *Halfway Across the Galaxy and Turn Left; Turn Right for
Zyrgon*

LAWHEAD, Stephen *Empyrion*

LAWRENCE, Louise *Star Lord*

L'ENGLE, Madeleine *A Wrinkle in Time; A Swiftly Tilting Planet; A Wind in the Door*

LEWIS, C.S. *Out of the Silent Planet; Perelandra; Voyage to Venus*

MAHY, Margaret *Aliens in the Family*

MARK, Jan *The Ennead*

"A mixture of science-fiction and political satire, this story tells of corrupt government on Erato - a planet in another galaxy. Behaviour is strictly controlled but, when Isaac rescues a young girl from another planet, she brings her ideas which run contrary to those to which the citizens of Erato are accustomed. (Mature readers)." (*PETA Guide to Children's Literature, 103*)

MASON, Anne *The Dancing Meteorite*

MAYNE, William *Skiffy*

"Earth's government sends children with pioneers when other planets are being settled. In spite of the adults' great technological power, the children's observations may reveal something extra. Skiffy and Autumn, the children in this story, make valuable discoveries. A gentle but fascinating story." (*PETA Guide to Children's Literature, 68*)

McDONALD, Caroline *The Lake at the End of the Universe*

MAY, Julian *The Golden Torc series (The Many-Coloured Land; The Golden Torc; The Non-born King;*

NAYLOR, Grant *Red Dwarf: Infinity Welcomes Careful Drivers*

NORTON, Andre *Plague Ship; Star Ka'at*

O'BRIEN, Robert *Z For Zachariah*

"A lone survivor of a nuclear holocaust is competently and resourcefully going about providing herself with the necessary requisites for survival when her peace is disturbed by the arrival of another survivor - a sinister figure in a strange suit. Anne keeps a diary of the terrifying events which follow." (*PETA Guide to Children's Literature, 98*)

RUBENSTEIN, Gillian *Space Demons*

STRONG, Jeremy *The Wolf*

VERNE, Jules *From the Earth to the Moon*

WELLS, H.G. *The Time Machine*

WILLIAMSON, J. *Trapped in Space*

WRIGHTSON, Patricia *Down to Earth*

WYNDHAM, John *The Day of the Triffids; The Kraken Wakes; The Chrysalids; The Midwich Cuckoo*

Adventure

BAILLIE, Allan *Adrift*

RANSOME, Arthur *Swallows and Amazons; Swallowdale; The Coot Club; Pigeon Post; The Big Six; Peter Duck etc.*

PHIPSON, Joan *The Bird Smugglers (1977 Scholastic); The Boundary Riders (1975 Puffin)*

SOUTHALL, Ivan *Finn's Folly*

THIELE, Colin *Seashores and Shadows*

McCLEAN, Alistair HMS Ulysses; The Guns of Navarone; Force Ten from Navarone; When Eight Bells Toll
CHARTERIS, Leslie The Saint books (Enter the Saint, The Saint Bids Diamonds, The Saint Goes West, The Saint in Pursuit, The Saint's Getaway, The Saint Goes Overboard etc.)

Thriller/Suspense

KELLEHER, Victor Taronga; The Green Piper; The Hunting of Shadroth

Humour

MILLIGAN, Spike Dip the Puppy; The Goon Show Scripts
ROBINSON, Barbara The Worst Kids in the World; The Worst Kids in the World Best School Year Ever
LURIE, Morris The 27th Annual African Hippopotamus Race
DAHL, R The Twits; The BFG
KLEIN, Robin Penny Pollard's Diary (1983 Oxford University Press) and others in that series
 The Worst Kids in the World
LAWSON, Henry The Loaded Dog (1970 Angus & Robertson)
LINDE, G Bicycles Don't Grow on Trees (1984 Dentl)
LOWRY, Lois The Anastasia Books (1986 Collins)
ODGERS, Sally Farrell The Powerful Pickle Problem (1987 Angus & Robertson)
PEYTON, K.M. Who Sir? Me Sir? (1985 Penguin)

Romance

PEYTON, K.M. (Puffin)Pennington's Seventeenth Summer; Flambards; Flambards in Summer; Edge of the Cloud;
ALCOTT, Louisa May Eight Cousins; Rose in Bloom
BATES, H.M. The Darling Buds of May

Extension

Cold Comfort Farm
DU MAURIER, Daphne Rebecca; My Cousin Rachel
AUSTEN, Jane Pride and Prejudice; Persuasion; Emma; Mansfield Park; Northanger Abbey; Sense and Sensibility
BRONTE, Emily Jane Eyre; Wuthering Heights
ORCZY, the Baroness The Scarlet Pimpernel

Mystery

ALDER, David The 'Cam Jansen' Mystery Books
ASIMOV, Isaac Tales of the Black Widowers; More Tales of the Black Widowers; Authorised Murder
ALCOCK, Vivien The Sylvia Game
CONAN DOYLE, Sir Arthur The Sherlock Holmes mysteries
CHESTERTON, G.K. The Father Brown Stories
O'CONNOR, J. The Amazing Bubble-Gum Caper (1983 Scholastic)
JACKSON BRAUN, Lillian The Cat Who.....series (Saw Red, Read Backwards, Liked Shakespeare, Lived High, Turned On and Off.....)
CHRISTIE, Agatha any of her 90 odd books!

Encyclopaedia Brown books

Extension

HOEG, Peter Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow
GUTERSON, David Snow Falling On Cedars
FORSYTH, Frederick The Day of the Jackal
MARSH, Ngaio Inspector Alleyn series
SAYERS, Dorothy L. Lord Peter Wimsey series
PETERS, Ellis Brother Cadfael mysteries; The Inspector Felse mysteries
CORNWALL, Patricia Kay Scarpetta series (PR)
WALTERS, Minette The Scold's Bridle; The Ice House; The Sculptress;
 The Echo

Biography/Autobiography

DAHL, Roald Boy;
HAMPFF, Helene 34 Charing Cross Road; Duchess of Bloomsbury Street;
 Q's Legacy;
VON TRAPP, Maria The von Trapp Family Singers (aka The Sound of
 Music)

Extension

McCOURT, Frank Angela's Ashes
DOMINIQUE-BAUBY, Jean The Diving Bell and the Butterfly

Myths and Legends**History****Ancient History**

SUTCLIFF, Rosemary Eagle of the Ninth;
Modern History

PATERSON, Katherine Lyddie (1991 Puffin)
Australian History

PARK, Ruth Playing Beatie Bow

Other Non-fiction

ASIMOV, Isaac The Stars in their Courses

Books Better Known as Films

ONDAATJE, Michael The English Patient
CHRICHTON, Michael Sphere; Jurassic Park; The Lost World; Congo
 How to make an American Quilt
GRISHAM, John The Pelican Brief; The Firm; Time to Kill; The
 Rainmaker; The Client
 Fly Away Home
 Jude the Obscure
 Portrait of A Lady
 Pinnochio
 Contact

RICE, Anne Interview with a Vampire
KENEALLY, Thomas Schindler's List (originally Schindler's Ark)
CLANCY, Tom The Hunt for Red October; Patriot Games
The Hunchback of Notre Dame
The Three Musketeers
VON TRAPP, Maria The von Trapp Family Singers (Sound of Music)

Classics

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