**Summertime Favorites**

By **NEH Staff** at

**NEH Summer Booklist for Young Readers**

The year was 1988. Ronald Reagan was retiring after eight years as president, Mikhail Gorbachev led the Soviet Union, and Nelson Mandela was spending his twenty-fifth year in prison. *Rain Main* was a popular movie, and a third of Yellowstone National Park was burned when 250 fires spread wildly under drought conditions.

Here at NEH, a twenty-year, multimillion dollar effort to save endangered brittle books was just getting started. The agency was leading efforts to develop standard guidelines for Internet texts and supporting innovative state reading initiatives for parents and children. Toward the end of the school year, NEH published its first Summertime Favorites reading list. Selections were based on an informal survey of sixty public and private schools around the country. Every book had been published before 1960 and so had stood the test of at least one generation. Kept in circulation through reprinting and republication on the NEH website, Summertime Favorites for K-8 readers proved enormously popular.

From then on, the list was updated occasionally, but after more than two decades a great many new and beloved books have been published. NEH enlisted the help of the American Library Association to reconsider all the selections. Building on the 1988 list, our goal was to recommend children's books that met the standard of "lasting value." NEH staff members read every proposed title and strove to come up with a reading list, not just for the summer, but for a lifetime. The Endowment hopes that this effort, which will grow and evolve over time, has produced a selection of books kids will save to read to their own kids in the future. We welcome your thoughts and suggestions. Have we left off essential books? Are there enough that appeal to both girls and boys? Are some works no longer classic but just old? Please send your comments to [info@neh.gov](mailto:info@neh.gov?subject=NEH%20Summer%20Reading%20List). We cannot promise to reply to each query or to agree with all your suggestions, but we will take every one seriously.

For college bound students, please access EDSITEment’s recommended [summer reading list](http://edsitement.neh.gov/edsitements-reading-list-college-bound-students).

The entire Summertime Favorites list appears below. You can also view the list by age group:

* [Kindergarten - Grade 3](http://www.neh.gov/news/summertime-favorites#k-3)
* [Grades 4 - 6](http://www.neh.gov/news/summertime-favorites#grade4-6)
* [Grades 7 - 8](http://www.neh.gov/news/summertime-favorites#grade7-8)

**KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3**

**Recommended for K-3, either for reading by children or for reading to them.**

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| Aardema, Verna and Leo & Diane Dillon | *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People’s Ears: A West African Tale* |
| Aesop | *Aesop’s Fables* |
| Allard, Harry and James Marshall | *Miss Nelson Is Missing!* |
| Atwater, Richard and Florence | *Mr. Popper’s Penguins* |
| Barrows, Annie and Sophie Blackall | *Ivy + Bean* |
| Becker, Bonny and Kady MacDonald Denton | *A Visitor for Bear* |
| Bemelmans, Ludwig | *Madeline* |
| Blume, Judy | *Freckle Juice* |
| Brown, Marcia | *Stone Soup* |
| Brunhoff, Jean de | *The Story of Babar, The Little Elephant* |
| Burton, Virginia Lee | *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel* |
| Cameron, Ann and Ann Strugnell | *The Stories Julian Tells* |
| Cleary, Beverly | *The Mouse and the Motorcycle* |
| Cronin, Doreen and Harry Bliss | *Diary of a Worm* |
| DePaola, Tomie | *Strega Nona* |
| Dorros, Arthur and Elisa Kleven | *Abuela* |
| Duvoisin, Roger | *Petunia* |
| Estes, Eleanor and Louis Slobodkin | *The Hundred Dresses* |
| Freeman, Don | *Corduroy* |
| Gag, Wanda | *Millions of Cats* |
| Gannett, Ruth Stiles and Ruth Chrisman Gannett | *My Father’s Dragon* |
| Garza, Carmen Lomas and Harriet Rohmer | *In My Family / En Mi Familia* |
| Grahame, Kenneth and Michael Hague | *The Reluctant Dragon* |
| Grimes, Nikki and Javaka Steptoe | *A Pocketful of Poems* |
| Guest, Elissa Haden and Christine Davenier | *Iris and Walter* |
| Hamilton, Virginia and Leo & Diane Dillon | *The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales* |
| Harper, Charise Mericle | *Just Grace* |
| Henkes, Kevin | *Chrysanthemum* |
| Hoban, Russell and Garth Williams | *Bedtime for Frances* |
| Hodges, Margaret and Trina Schart Hyman | *Saint George and the Dragon* |
| Hoff, Syd | *Danny and the Dinosaur* |
| Hoffman, Mary and Caroline Binch | *Amazing Grace* |
| Howe, James and Marie-Louise Gay | *Houndsley and Catina* |
| Johnson, Crockett | *Harold and the Purple Crayon* |
| Keats, Ezra Jack | *The Snowy Day* |
| Kraus, Robert and Jose Aruego | *Leo the Late Bloomer* |
| Krauss, Ruth and Crockett Johnson | *The Carrot Seed* |
| Kvasnosky, Laura McGee | *Zelda and Ivy: The Runaways* |
| Le Guin, Ursula K. and S.D. Schindler | *Catwings* |
| Leaf, Munro and Robert Lawson | *The Story of Ferdinand* |
| Lear, Edward | *A Book of Nonsense* |
| Lin, Grace | *The Year of the Dog* |
| Lionni, Leo | *Frederick* |
| Lobel, Arnold | *Frog and Toad are Friends* |
| Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth | *Paul Revere’s Ride* |
| Lopshire, Robert | *Put Me in the Zoo* |
| Marshall, James | *George and Martha* |
| McDermott, Gerald | *Anansi the Spider* |
| Milne, A.A. and Ernest H. Shepard | *Winnie-the-Pooh* |
| Minarik, Else Holmelund and Maurice Sendak | *Little Bear* |
| Munsch, Robert and Michael Martchenko | *The Paper Bag Princess* |
| Myers, Christopher | *Wings* |
| Noble, Trinka Hakes and Steven Kellogg | *The Day Jimmy’s Boa Ate the Wash* |
| Numeroff, Laura Joffe and Felicia Bond | *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* |
| Parish, Peggy and Fritz Siebel | *Amelia Bedelia* |
| Pennypacker, Sara and Marla Frazee | *Clementine* |
| Piper, Watty and Loren Long | *The Little Engine that Could* |
| Portis, Antoinette | *Not a Box* |
| Potter, Beatrix | *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* |
| Prelutsky, Jack and Marc Brown | *Read-Aloud Rhymes for the Very Young* |
| Rey, H.A. | *Curious George* |
| Ringgold, Faith | *Tar Beach* |
| Rylant, Cynthia and Suçie Stevenson | *Henry and Mudge* |
| Say, Allen | *Grandfather’s Journey* |
| Scieszka, Jon and Lane Smith | *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* |
| Sendak, Maurice | *Where the Wild Things Are* |
| Seuss, Dr. | *Green Eggs and Ham* |
| Sharmat, Marjorie Weinman and Marc Simont | *Nate the Great* |
| Silverman, Erica and Betsy Lewin | *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa* |
| Silverstein, Shel | *Where the Sidewalk Ends* |
| Slobodkina, Esphyr | *Caps for Sale* |
| Smith, Jeff | *Little Mouse Gets Ready* |
| Steig, William | *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble* |
| Steptoe, John | *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale* |
| Stevenson, Robert Louis | *A Child’s Garden of Verses* |
| Thurber, James and Louis Slobodkin | *Many Moons* |
| Udry, Janice May and Marc Simont | *A Tree is Nice* |
| Ungerer, Tomi | *Crictor* |
| Van Allsburg, Chris | *The Garden of Abdul Gasazi* |
| Viorst, Judith and Ray Cruz | *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* |
| White, E.B. and Garth Williams | *Charlotte’s Web* |
| Willems, Mo | *There is a Bird on Your Head!* |
| Wood, Audrey and Don Wood | *The Napping House* |
| Yashima, Taro | *Crow Boy* |
| Yee, Wong Herbert | *Mouse and Mole: A Winter Wonderland* |
| Zion, Gene and Margaret Bloy Graham | *Harry the Dirty Dog* |
| Zolotow, Charlotte and William Pène Du Bois | *William’s Doll* |

**GRADES 4-6**

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| Alexander, Lloyd | *Prydain Chronicles* |
| Andersen, Hans Christian | *Fairy Tales* |
| Avi and Brian Floca | *Poppy* |
| Babbitt, Natalie | *Tuck Everlasting* |
| Baum, L. Frank | *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* |
| Birdsall, Jeanne | *The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy* |
| Boston, L.M. | *The Children of Green Knowe* |
| Brooks, Gwendolyn and Faith Ringgold | *Bronzeville Boys and Girls* |
| Burnett, Frances Hodgson | *The Secret Garden* |
| Byars, Betsy | *The Summer of the Swans* |
| Carroll, Lewis | *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* |
| Clements, Andrew and Brian Selznick | *Frindle* |
| Collins, Suzanne | *Gregor the Overlander* |
| Collodi, Carlo | *The Adventures of Pinocchio* |
| Cooper, Susan | *The Dark is Rising* |
| Creech, Sharon | *Bloomability* |
| Curtis, Christopher Paul | *Bud, Not Buddy* |
| D’Aulaire, Ingri and Edgar Parin D’Aulaire | *D’Aulaire’s Book of Greek Myths* |
| Dahl, Roald and Quentin Blake | *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* |
| DiCamillo, Kate | *Because of Winn-Dixie* |
| Dowd, Siobhan | *The London Eye Mystery* |
| DuPrau, Jeanne | *The City of Ember* |
| Eager, Edward | *Half Magic* |
| Erdrich, Louise | *The Birchbark House* |
| Estes, Eleanor | *The Moffats* |
| Farley, Walter | *The Black Stallion* |
| Fitzhugh, Louise | *Harriet the Spy* |
| Freedman, Russell | *Lincoln, A Photobiography* |
| Gaiman, Neil | *Coraline* |
| Gantos, Jack | *Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key* |
| George, Jean Craighead | *My Side of the Mountain* |
| Grahame, Kenneth | *The Wind in the Willows* |
| Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm | *The Complete Grimm’s Fairy Tales* |
| Henry, Marguerite | *Misty of Chincoteague* |
| Hiaasen, Carl | *Hoot* |
| Hoberman, Mary Ann and Wendy Anderson Halperin | *Strawberry Hill* |
| Howe, Deborah & James and Alan Daniel | *Bunnicula* |
| Hughes, Langston | *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems* |
| Ibbotson, Eva and Sue Porter | *Secret of Platform 13* |
| Irving, Washington | *Rip Van Winkle* |
| Jansson, Tove | *Moominland Midwinter* |
| Juster, Norton and Jules Feiffer | *The Phantom Tollbooth* |
| Kipling, Rudyard | *The Jungle Book* |
| Konigsburg, E.L. | *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* |
| Lamb, Charles and Mary | *Tales from Shakespeare* |
| Lawson, Robert | *Ben and Me* |
| Lenski, Lois | *Strawberry Girl* |
| Lewis, C.S. | *The Chronicles of Narnia* |
| Lin, Grace | *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* |
| Lindgren, Astrid | *Pippi Longstocking* |
| Lofting, Hugh | *Doctor Dolittle* |
| Lovelace, Maud Hart | *Betsy-Tacy* |
| Lowry, Lois | *Number the Stars* |
| Macaulay, David | *Castle* |
| MacLachlan, Patricia | *Sarah, Plain and Tall* |
| Mathis, Sharon Bell and Leo & Diane Dillon | *The Hundred Penny Box* |
| McCloskey, Robert | *Homer Price* |
| Merrill, Jean | *The Pushcart War* |
| Montgomery, L.M. | *Anne of Green Gables* |
| Murphy, Jim | *The Great Fire* |
| Nesbit, E. | *The Railway Children* |
| North, Sterling | *Rascal* |
| Norton, Mary | *The Borrowers* |
| O’Brien, Robert C. | *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH* |
| Park, Linda Sue | *When My Name was Keoko* |
| Paterson, Katherine | *Bridge to Terabithia* |
| Pearce, Philippa | *Tom’s Midnight Garden* |
| Perrault, Charles | *The Complete Fairy Tales* |
| Reiss, Johanna | *The Upstairs Room* |
| Rowling, J.K. | *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* |
| Ryan, Pam Munoz | *Esperanza Rising* |
| Sachar, Louis | *Holes* |
| Selznick, Brian | *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* |
| Sewell, Anna | *Black Beauty* |
| Sharp, Margery | *The Rescuers* |
| Sperry, Armstrong | *Call It Courage* |
| Spyri, Johanna | *Heidi* |
| Stewart, Trenton Lee and Carson Ellis | *The Mysterious Benedict Society* |
| Sutcliff, Rosemary | *The Wanderings of Odysseus* |
| Taylor, Sydney and Helen John | *All-of-a-Kind Family* |
| Travers, P.L. | *Mary Poppins* |
| Wilder, Laura Ingalls and Garth Williams | *Little House on the Prairie* |
| Woodson, Jacqueline | *Locomotion* |
| Wyss, Johann | *Swiss Family Robinson* |

**GRADES 7-8**

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| Alcott, Louisa May | *Little Women* |
| Almond, David | *Skellig* |
| Bagnold, Enid | *National Velvet* |
| Bradbury, Ray | *Fahrenheit 451* |
| Cleaver, Vera and Bill Cleaver | *Where the Lilies Bloom* |
| Cooper, James Fenimore | *The Last of the Mohicans* |
| Defoe, Daniel | *Robinson Crusoe* |
| Douglass, Frederick | *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* |
| Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan | *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* |
| Dumas, Alexander | *The Count of Monte Cristo* |
| Eckert, Allan W. | *Incident at Hawk’s Hill* |
| Engdahl, Sylvia | *Enchantress from the Stars* |
| Forester, C.S. | *The Horatio Hornblower Series* |
| Frank, Anne | *The Diary of a Young Girl* |
| Frost, Robert | *Poems* |
| George, Jean Craighead | *Julie of the Wolves* |
| Hamilton, Virginia | *M.C. Higgins, the Great* |
| Hautzig, Esther | *The Endless Steppe* |
| Hilton, James | *Goodbye, Mr. Chips* |
| Hinton, S.E. | *The Outsiders* |
| Hoose, Phillip | *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice* |
| Hugo, Victor | *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* |
| Hunt, Irene | *Across Five Aprils* |
| Hunter, Mollie | *A Stranger Came Ashore* |
| Irving, Washington | *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* |
| Johnson, Angela | *Heaven* |
| Keith, Harold | *Rifles for Watie* |
| Keller, Helen | *The Story of My Life* |
| Korman, Gordon | *No More Dead Dogs* |
| LaFleur, Suzanne | *Love, Aubrey* |
| Le Guin, Ursula K. | *A Wizard of Earthsea* |
| L’Engle, Madeleine | *A Wrinkle in Time* |
| Lester, Julius and Tom Feelings | *To Be a Slave* |
| London, Jack | *Call of the Wild* |
| Malory, Sir Thomas | *Le Morte d’Arthur* |
| McCaffrey, Anne | *Dragonsong* |
| O’Dell, Scott | *Island of the Blue Dolphins* |
| Oppel, Kenneth | *Airborn* |
| Paterson, Katherine | *Jacob I Have Loved* |
| Paulsen, Gary and Drew Willis | *Hatchet* |
| Peck, Richard | *A Long Way from Chicago* |
| Peck, Robert Newton | *A Day No Pigs Would Die* |
| Pratchett, Terry | *The Wee Free Men* |
| Pyle, Howard | *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* |
| Rawlings, Marjorie Kinnan | *The Yearling* |
| Rawls, Wilson | *Where the Red Fern Grows* |
| Saint-Exupéry, Antoine de | *The Little Prince* |
| Schaefer, Jack | *Shane* |
| Schmidt, Gary D. | *The Wednesday Wars* |
| Scott, Sir Walter | *Ivanhoe* |
| Shelley, Mary | *Frankenstein* |
| Smith, Betty | *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* |
| Speare, Elizabeth George | *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* |
| Steinbeck, John | *The Red Pony* |
| Stevenson, Robert Louis | *Treasure Island* |
| Taylor, Mildred D. | *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* |
| Tolan, Stephanie S. | *Surviving the Applewhites* |
| Tolkien, J.R.R. | *The Hobbit* |
| Twain, Mark | *TheAdventures of Tom Sawyer* |
| Uchida, Yoshiko | *Journey to Topaz* |
| Verne, Jules | *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* |
| Webster, Jean | *Daddy-Long-Legs* |
| Wells, H.G. | *The War of the Worlds* |
| Wilder, Thornton | *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* |
| Yep, Laurence | *Dragonwings* |
| Zindel, Paul | *The Pigman* |
| Zusak, Markus | *The Book Thief* |

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