

## **Books about Books**

Some helpful resources for discovering “new” Living Books. Sorry this is so long. I do so love books on books!

### Honey for a Child's Heart by Gladys Hunt (New Edition, Zondervan, 2002)

This classic Christian reference of great books for families to read. The first part of this reference is an apologetic for children's literature, the various types of books children need to read, and what to consider when choosing great books for your children. The second part contains Hunt's book recommendations, divided up by age level and type of literature.

\*Honey for a Teen's Heart by Gladys Hunt. Same author as Honey for a Child's Heart but this is a list geared to teens. Organized really well with lots of categories.

### Who Should We Then Read, Volume 1 by Jan Bloom

Unlike other book recommendation books that focus on age level and genre, this book highlights authors who wrote great books. Along with a short biography of each author, Jan Bloom includes a bibliography of all the author's books by genre and general age category. 157 authors as well as popular series. [www.booksbloom.com](http://www.booksbloom.com). Probably my favorite resource as this the “bible” of living books. The complete lists of books under each author is invaluable!

### Who Should We Then Read, Volume 2 by Jan Bloom

157 *more* authors of good living books.

### Books Children Love by Elizabeth Wilson (Rev. Edition, Crossway Books, 2002)

This is a Child-Light Book, and is written from the perspective of a Charlotte Mason educator trying to find the best living books for children. The organizing force behind this book is genre of literature. Wilson presents books on Animals, Art & Architecture, Bible, Biography, History, Fables, Mythology, and all sorts of other kinds of literature. Each title is described and appropriate age level is noted.

### The Read Aloud Handbook by Jim Trelease (6<sup>th</sup> Edition, Penguin Books, 2006).

One of my favorite resources for classic picture books and descriptions of each.

The Book Tree: A Christian Reference for Children's Literature by Elizabeth McCallum and Jane Scott (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Canon Press, 2008) another great book list with wonderful descriptions.

### Read for the Heart: Whole Books for WholeHearted Families by Sarah Clarkson (Apologia Press, 2009)

This book is a cross between Who Should We Then Read and Honey for a Child's Heart--books are organized by genre, then by author within those genres. Written by a homeschool graduate,

Clarkson's book recommendations come from her firsthand knowledge of those literary treasures that she and her family enjoyed.

Hand That Rocks the Cradle: 400 Classic Books for Children by Nathaniel Bluedorn (2008). All the titles and descriptions of the books read by the Bluedorns to their children.

Realms of Gold in Children's Books by Bertha Mahoney Miller (Doubleday, 1930) If you are looking for books from the "Golden Age of Children's Literature," this is a wonderful place to begin. The books are old, though many are still in print, or have been reprinted. The recommendations in this nearly 800 page book are very clearly categorized. Part I (for 1-4 years) is broken down into topics such as Mother Goose, Picture Books that Will Live Forever, Stories of Animals, etc. Part II (4-8 years) covers Poetry, Read-Alouds, Bible Stories, Animals, and much more. Part III (from 8 years old +) is the lengthiest section and covers both fiction and non-fiction subjects. There are great summaries of the books recommended in this reference, as well as illustrations from many of the chosen volumes.

Five Years of Children's Books by Bertha Mahoney Miller (Doubleday, 1936) Published in 1936, this is the second volume to Realms of Gold, and covers only the books published in the five years succeeding that book--this is why we refer to this time period in the 1930s as the "Golden Age of Children's Literature." Set up much like the first volume, Five Years of Children's Literature is also a lengthy reference--600 pages. If you are serious about reading, finding, and/or collecting quality children's literature, these books will be invaluable to you.

The Horn Book Review (ongoing publication since the 1930s) Growing out of Realms of Gold, the Horn Book Review is still being published. Older volumes are sometimes available for reference in public libraries and contain interesting interviews with authors, descriptions of books, and, in the Newbery Edition each year, the transcripts of the Newbery Winners' speeches.

\*In Review by the Editorial Staff of Bethlehem Books  
Back Issues may be available if you contact the company.

Children and Books by May Hill Arbutnot (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Scott, Foresman & Co., 1964)

This is the classic reference for the serious student of children's literature. Librarians and teachers have relied on this book for more than sixty years. First published in 1947, each subsequent edition includes the recent additions to the classic books recommended in the original. As with encyclopedias, each edition doesn't become longer with the new information, meaning they cut out some of the original books to make room for the new. The information on children's development as readers and the different genres make this a helpful resource even beyond the book lists.

There are lots of editions of this book but the third edition is one of my favorites.

\*A Literary Education by Catherine Levison - Charlotte Mason inspired list by one of the CM pioneers.

Let the Authors Speak: A Guide to Worthy Books Based on Historical Setting by Carolyn Hatcher (Old Pinnacle Pub., 1995)

This slim guide is very helpful in determining which living books to study for history with different aged students. Historical fiction and Biography choices are also included. The bulk of this book is the tables of book titles, authors, reading levels, time periods, settings, and brief descriptions. The tables are sorted three different ways: by time period/setting, author's name, and title.

All Through the Ages: History Through Literature Guide by Christine Miller (Nothing New Press, 2008)

This guide is sort of like an expanded version of Let the Author Speak. Miller provides a framework of Chronological History and gives us some background information about the various history periods/settings, major events, and then provides us with book recommendations on the history, biography, historical fiction, literature, and culture of these periods. An emphasis on Christianity and Biblical History is found throughout. Also included are sections of Geographical History, History of Science and Mathematics, History of the Arts, and Great Books of Western Civilization.

American History in Juvenile Literature: A Chronological Guide by Seymour Metzner

(H.W. Wilson Co., 1966)

American History in Juvenile Books and the companion, World History in Juvenile Books, were published in the 1960s and are excellent guides to good history & historical fiction books from the "Golden Age of Children's Literature." The American History book is sorted chronologically, the World History volume is listed by geographical region and further subdivided by historical time period. Both of these volumes include biographies as well as historical fiction listings. Age/Grade levels are noted making these resources invaluable for picking books for multiple ages in your home and school.

TruthQuest History Guides by Michelle Miller (TruthQuest History, 2005)

Written by the original "Homeschool Librarian" these guides are extensive lists of books organized by chronological order and grouped by historical topic, age level, and genre. Including both in-print and out-of-print resources in the subjects of history, historical fiction, biography, art, music, literature, science, and fun reading, these 11 guides furnish plenty of options in choosing living books for your children's education.

\*Great Books of the Christian Tradition by Terry Glaspey. These are more classical offerings.