

Bookwomen

Eighty Books for the 21st Century Girls

On the occasion of its 80th Anniversary

1917-1997

and the Year of the Reader

Thank you for your interest in "Eighty Books for 21st Century Girls." Members of the Women's National Book Association throughout the United States are pleased to share this list of 80 important books with you as part of our organization's 80th anniversary celebration. As we also approach a new millenium, we thought it was a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the books we have enjoyed while growing up and share 80 favorite titles that provide smart, capable, and talented female role models for future generations of girls.

Picture Books

Bemelmans, Ludwig. *Madeline*. In the French orphanage where everything is done in a pattern, Madeline manages to be not only an individual, but an independent leader. (ISBN 0-140-50198-3)

Brett, Jan. *Trouble with Trolls*. Treva skis up Mount Baldy with her dog Tuffi on the way to visit her cousins. She must outwit a mischievous troll family who wants to make Tuffi their pet in order to get over the mountain. (ISBN 0-399-22336-3)

Cooney, Barbara. *Miss Rumphius*. As a young girl, Alice Rumphius dreamed of traveling around the world. She thrilled to her grandfather's tales of faraway places — but she also remembered his admonition that it was important that she do something to make the world more beautiful. When Alice grows up, she does travel the world, but she never forgets to live out her grandfather's instructions. (ISBN 0-14-050539-3)

Goble, Paul. *The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses*. In her native American village, it was the boys who cared for the horses, but one girl secretly learned because of her love for the ponies. (ISBN 0-689-71696-6)

Hoffman, Mary. *Amazing Grace*. Grace, known for her acting skills, is told by her classmates that she can't try out for the part of Peter Pan because she is black and a girl, but with the encouragement of the women in her family she auditions anyway. (ISBN 0-8037-1040-2)

Houston, Gloria. *My Great-Aunt Arizona*. Arizona is a happy little girl growing up in the Blue Ridge Mountains. After graduating from the one-room school near her home, she travels daily by mule to another school, until her mother's death brings her home. Eventually she does leave to train as a teacher, but returns to her hometown to teach for 57 years. (ISBN 0-06-443374-9)

Isaacs, Anne. *Swamp Angel*. In this tall-tale, Angelica Longrider, also known as Swamp Angel, performs astounding feats at early ages. She even wrestles a huge bear to save the winter supplies of Tennessee settlers. (ISBN 0-525-45271-0)

Kesselman, Wendy. *Emma*. Emma is 72 years old and has a large family who never visits quite long enough. When her family gives her a painting of her old village, she secretly decides to take up painting to do a better, more accurate depiction. Eventually, her secret is revealed and she learns that her family appreciates her talent. Emma, with her art, is never lonely again. (ISBN 0-440-40847-4)

Larche, Douglas. *Father Gander Nursery Rhymes: The Equal Rhymes Amendment*. A modern take on the traditional Mother Goose rhymes, Father Gander's versions are just as fun, but also non-sexist, non-violent, and non-racist. Jill and Jack both jump over the candlestick, and cooperation is emphasized. (ISBN 0-911-65512-3)

McCloskey, Robert. *Blueberries for Sal*. Sal and her mother go to pick blueberries on the side of the mountain. At the same time, on the other side, a mama bear and her cub are doing the same thing. What will happen when they meet? (ISBN 0-14-050169-X)

McCully, Emily Arnold. *Mirette on the High Wire*. Mirette lives in 19th century Paris, where she helps her mother run a boarding house. A retired high wire walker named Bellini arrives one day, hoping quiet practice will help him regain his lost nerve. Mirette is enchanted by the high wire and begins to practice on Bellini's when he isn't there. When she finally shows him what she has learned, he agrees to take her on as a pupil. But it is Mirette who shows Bellini how not to be afraid. (ISBN 0-698-11443-4)

McKissack, Patricia C. *Mirandy and Brother Wind*. Mirandy is determined to win the cakewalk dance contest. Her mother tells her, "There's an old saying that whoever catch the Wind make him do their bidding." Thus, Mirandy sets out to outsmart Brother Wind to win the contest. (ISBN 0-679-88333-9)

Miller, William. *Zora Hurston and the Chinaberry Tree*. Based on Zora Neal Hurston's autobiographical writings, this is the story of how a rebellious little girl grew into an accomplished storyteller. Zora's mother encouraged her to follow her dreams, even if others did not consider them appropriate for women. (ISBN 1-880000-33-4)

Mills, Lauren. *The Rag Coat*. Minna's family is so poor she doesn't even have a winter coat to wear to school. Her mother's friends donate bits of fabric so she can have a wonderful quilted coat, but the children at school make fun of her. Minna wins them over by sharing with them all the stories that go along with the quilt pieces. (ISBN 0-316-57407-4)

Munsch, Robert N. *The Paper Bag Princess*. This princess outsmarts a dragon who has destroyed her kingdom, burned off her clothes (hence the paper bag as attire), and carried off her prince. And when the dragon is vanquished and the prince freed — only to tell her she's a mess and not like a princess at all! — she tells him what for and then dances off into the sunset. (ISBN 0-920236-16-2)

San Souci, Robert D. *The Samurai's Daughter: A Japanese Legend*. Tokoyo's father breaks tradition to raise her in the samurai's code. When he is exiled, Tokoyo uses the lessons he taught her to go to his rescue. (ISBN 0-8037-1135-2)

Stewart, Sarah. *The Library*. Elizabeth Brown is a voracious reader, not interested in dolls or (later) dating, but follows her love of books from childhood through old age. When her house becomes overwhelmed by books (Books were piled on top of chairs/And spread across the floor./Her shelves began to fall apart, /As she read more and more.), she comes up with a wonderful solution. (ISBN 0-374-34388-8)

Yolen, Jane. *Owl Moon*. A girl goes along with her father one cold winter's night to see an owl for the first time. (ISBN 0-399-21457-7)

Early Readers Blegvad, Lenore. *Anna Banana and Me*. A timid young boy describes the things he admires about the adventurous Anna, his pal and mentor. (ISBN 0-689-71114-X)

Caines, Jeannette. *Just Us Women*. A young African-American girl and her aunt take off on a journey together. They share a spirit of adventure and spontaneity which they don't find with others in the family. (ISBN 0-060-20942-9)

Castaneda, Omar S. *Abuela's Weave*. Esperanza and her grandmother ("abuela" in Spanish) team up to weave some special creations and then make a trip to the market to sell them. Abuela is rumored to be a witch, so Esperanza must make the arrangements in the market on her own. (ISBN 1-880-00000-8)

Cleary, Beverly. *Ramona the Brave*. Spunky Ramona is excited about beginning first grade, but finds that school is not what she expected. She meets the challenges head-on and even wins a few points. (ISBN 0-440-47351-9)

Coles, Robert. *The Story of Ruby Bridges*. When Ruby was six, she became the first African-American girl to attend all-white Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans in 1960. This true story shows her courage and perseverance in the face of great hostility. (ISBN 0-590-43967-7)

D'Aulaire, Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire. *Pocahontas*. An easy-to-read biography of the Native American princess who saved the white settlers at Jamestown and travelled to England to meet Queen Elizabeth. (ISBN 0-385-26607-3)

Dalgliesh, Alice. *The Courage of Sarah Noble*. Eight-year-old Sarah travels with her father to build a new home in the Connecticut wilderness in this story of colonial America. When the new home is finished, Sarah bravely stays with the local Indians while her father goes back to bring the rest of their family. (ISBN 0-689-71540-4)

Henkes, Kevin. *Sheila Rae, the Brave*. Louise admires her fearless older sister Sheila Rae, but it is "scaredy-cat" Louise who finds the way home when the two of them get lost. (ISBN 0-688-14738-0)

Hoban, Russell. *A Bargain for Frances*. Frances, America's favorite girl badger, learns a valuable lesson about friendship. (ISBN 0-06-444001-X)

McKissack, Patricia C. *Flossie and the Fox*. Flossie, sent with a basket of eggs to a neighboring farm, is warned about a sly fox, but this spirited heroine is far too crafty to lose her eggs to this fellow. Can he prove he's a fox? she asks. (ISBN 0-803-70250-7)

Merrill, Jean. *The Girl Who Loved Caterpillars*. In this Japanese folk tale, a young woman resists social and family pressures as she befriends caterpillars and worms rather than taking up the hobbies of the ladies in the Emperor's court. (ISBN 0-698-11393-4)

Parish, Peggy. *Amelia Bedelia*. This highly popular series of stories about a wonderfully wacky housekeeper has entertained young readers for years. Amelia Bedelia shows us that life is full of surprises and that there is more than one way to deal with anything that happens. (ISBN 0-06-444155-5)

Ringgold, Faith. *Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky*. This story blends history and fantasy as Cassie Louise Lightfoot encounters Harriet Tubman and a mysterious train in the sky. (ISBN 0-517-88543-3)

Steig, William. *Brave Irene*. Her mother has finished a new gown for the duchess to wear to the ball, but who can brave the terrible snowstorm to deliver it? Little Irene shows her courage by setting out to make the delivery. (ISBN 0-374-40927-7)

Intermediate

Babbitt, Natalie. *Tuck Everlasting*. An 11-year-old must make life and death decisions after finding the secret spring that gives members of the Tuck family eternal life. (ISBN 0-374-48009-5)

Blume, Judy. *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*. When you are eleven going on twelve, the world is complicated enough without moving to a new town and making new friends like Margaret has to do. Margaret turns to God for some answers. (ISBN 0-440-40419-3)

Brink, Carol Ryrie. *Caddie Woodlawn*. Brink's book about her grandmother Caddie's adventures as a tomboy growing up on the Wisconsin frontier won the Newbery Award. Caddie is an enchanting heroine and her story is gracefully told. (ISBN 0-689-71370-3)

Burnett, Frances Hodgson. *A Little Princess*. Generations of girls have loved the story of little Sara Crewe. Demoted to servant at her boarding school after her father's death, she is finally rescued by a mysterious benefactor. (ISBN 0-590-48628-4)

Burnett, Frances Hodgson. *The Secret Garden*. An invalid boy and his orphaned cousin, both lonely, build a friendship as they work together to restore his dead mother's beloved garden. (ISBN 0-06-440188-X)

Creech, Sharon. *Walk Two Moons*. Thirteen-year-old Sal tells her grandparents the story of her friend Phoebe whose mother has disappeared. The loss of a mother is something Sal can understand; her own mother disappeared one morning and never returned. (ISBN 0-06-440517-6)

Fitzhugh, Louise. *Harriet the Spy*. Harriet is an independent young woman who is good at observing the details of other people's lives. She writes down everything in her diary. This is a humorous tale about what happens when the diary is discovered by someone else. (ISBN 0-06-440331-9)

Keene, Carolyn. *The Nancy Drew Mysteries*. Everyone's favorite girl sleuth, Nancy Drew, uses her own intelligence and resourcefulness (plus a little help from her friends) to solve mysteries everywhere she goes.

Konigsburg, E.L. *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*. A resourceful and curious young woman's adventures lead her and her brother to spend an exciting night in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. There they meet Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler and solve a Michelangelo art mystery. (ISBN 0-440-43180-8)

L'Engle, Madeline. *A Wrinkle in Time*. In this fantasy novel, Meg Murray, a smart but underachieving teenager, journeys to the far reaches of the universe — and the depths of the human mind. It's an imaginative tale of good against evil, in which Meg discovers the power of love and the importance of being herself. (ISBN 0-440-49805-8)

Lindgren, Astrid. *(The Adventures of) Pippi Longstocking*. Probably an orphan, Pippi is undaunted by life in her ramshackle house with her horse and her monkey. She is capable of dealing with robbers, with policemen, and with well-meaning town folk who think she should be in school. (ISBN 0-670-87612-7)

MacLachlan, Patricia. *Sarah, Plain and Tall*. Sarah comes as a mail-order bride, suffers through homesickness and adapting to a new way of life, but grows as a wife and mother in this tale of the development of a loving family. (ISBN 0-06-440205-3)

Montgomery, Lucy. *Anne of Green Gables*. After being adopted by a brother and sister in the small Canadian town of Avonlea, impetuous Anne must work to adjust to her new life. (ISBN 0-8125-5152-4)

O'Dell, Scott. *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. Based on a true story, this is the classic story of Karana, 12, an Indian girl who in 1835 was left behind when her people moved from their Pacific Island. How Karana survived alone there for 18 years is a compelling tale of adventure and self-discovery. (ISBN 0-440-43988-4)

Paterson, Katherine. *Bridge to Terabithia*. Jesse wanted to be the fastest runner in the fifth grade. Then Leslie Burke moved in next door. When she wanted to race at recess, the other boys said no but Jesse stuck up for her. She beat him in the race but it was the beginning of a beautiful friendship. (ISBN 0-06-440184-7)

Paterson, Katherine. *Jacob Have I Loved*. Louise (Wheeze) is a twin seeking her own identity. She has a grandmother who is losing her mind, parents that ignore her, a sister who stole the man she loved, and she cannot let go of her grudges. She overcomes all these obstacles to get into medical school and to build a family of her own. (ISBN 0-06-440368-8)

Spyri, Johanna. *Heidi*. Heidi must leave her beloved grandfather and her happy home in the Alps to move to the city so she can go to school. Though she misses her home,

she comes to care for and even inspire the invalid girl, Klara, with whom she lives. (ISBN 0-06-023438-5)

Taylor, Sydney. *All-of-a-Kind Family*. The five little girls in *All-of-a-Kind Family* and its sequels are growing up in New York City at the turn of the century. They enjoy doing everything together and especially love holidays and surprises. A heartwarming book with vivid descriptions of Jewish holidays and traditions. (ISBN 0-440-40059-7)

Wilder, Laura Ingalls. *The Little House series*. The classic, nine-book series that begins with *Little House in the Big Woods* (ISBN 0-064-40001-8) recounts the childhood of Laura Ingalls, a spunky youngster who grew up during the U.S. westward expansion of the late 1800s. Laura and her sisters learn about love, courage, and self-reliance.

Young Adult

Alcott, Louisa May. *Little Women*. The four March sisters face joys and hardships while growing up in 1860s New England. Their courage and humor enable them to find their paths in life despite poverty and loss. (ISBN 0-440-44768-2)

Angelou, Maya. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. A moving autobiography of one of our nation's most talented African-American women. Poet Maya Angelou describes the tragedies of her childhood and adolescence, yet still sees many joys to be found in life. (ISBN 0-553-27937-8)

Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. This classic novel, published in 1813, tells the tale of Elizabeth Bennett and her four sisters as they reach adulthood and look to marry. (ISBN 0-14-043426-7)

Avi. *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*. Thirteen-year-old Charlotte sets sail from England for America in 1813. She's supposed to be in the company of friends of her parents, but when they are delayed, the *Seahawk* departs without them and Charlotte finds herself caught between a murderous captain and a mutinous crew. (ISBN 0-380-72885-0)

Bronte, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. When Jane comes to work for Mr. Rochester, romance is the last thing she expects to find. Her independent spirit cannot be quelled, even when a fearsome discovery puts her anticipated marriage into jeopardy. (ISBN 0-451-52655-4)

Bronte, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*. In this dark Gothic novel, Cathy falls in love with Heathcliff, a young man who has been taken in by her family. When she marries someone else, Heathcliff is unable to accept her decision. (ISBN 1-56138-035-0)

Cather, Willa. *My Antonia*. This is a moving story of Antonia, an immigrant to America in the 1800s. She must take on responsibility for her family and their farm after her father's suicide. *My Antonia* is a tribute to the courage of pioneer women and to the diversity of the people who settled the frontier. (ISBN 0-395-75514-X)

Cleaver, Vera and Bill. *Where the Lilies Bloom*. Mary promises her dying father she'll keep her brother and sisters together in their Appalachian home. But keeping her word proves more difficult than the stubborn 14-year-old imagined. (ISBN 0-06-447005-9)

Cushman, Karen. *Catherine, Called Birdy*. In 13th-century England, a resourceful teenager schemes to prevent an arranged marriage to a man she hates. This award-winning novel presents an engaging protagonist and a fascinating, detailed picture of medieval life. (ISBN 0-06-440584-2)

Frank, Anne. *The Diary of a Young Girl*. Time hasn't dimmed the relevance or power of a Jewish girl's tragic account of her years in hiding from the Nazis; Anne's courage and optimism are still an inspiration. (ISBN 0-553-29698-1)

Greene, Bette. *Summer of My German Soldier*. When a German POW escapes from a WWII military camp in Arkansas, a 12-year-old Jewish girl is the last person anyone would suspect of harboring him. But lonely, troubled Patty sees Anton not as the enemy but as a frightened young man who needs help. (ISBN 0-440-21892-6)

LeGuin, Ursula K. *The Tombs of Atuan*. As a child, Tenar is stripped of her name and dedicated as high priestess to the dark powers of Atuan. When a wizard enters the forbidden tunnels, she must decide whether to renounce her allegiance and join his mission of peace. (ISBN 0-553-27331-0)

Lowry, Lois. *Number the Stars*. When the Germans begin relocating Danish Jews during World War II, Ellen Rosen goes to live with her friend Annemarie's family and pretends to be one of them. In the afterword the author explains where "fact ends and fiction begins." (ISBN 0-440-40327-8)

Pullman, Philip. *The Golden Compass*. In Lyra's magical world, everyone is born with a daemon familiar, a chameleon-like animal companion. With the help of her daemon, Lyra sets out on a quest to solve a mystery of missing children. The first in a trilogy, it will soon be a fantasy classic. (ISBN 0-345-41335-0)

Smith, Betty. *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. Young Francie, daughter of a working class family, is growing up in Brooklyn in the early 1900s. Francie finds hope and inspiration as she struggles to make her dreams come true. (ISBN 0-060-80126-3)

Voigt, Cynthia. *Dacey's Song*. After being abandoned, the four Tillerman children must live with their eccentric grandmother. Thirteen-year-old Dacey feels responsible for her younger siblings, but she also has some important truths to learn. (ISBN 0-449-70276-6)

Non-Fiction

Adler, David A. *A Picture Book of Helen Keller*. As a child, illness robbed Helen Keller of sight and hearing, but that didn't stop her from accomplishing many great things. Ages 4 to 8. (ISBN 0-823-40950-3)

Butts, Ellen and J. Schwartz. *May Chinn: The Best Medicine*. This inspiring biography shows how a determined young woman overcame prejudice and poverty to become one of the first female African-American doctors in the United States. Ages 8 to 12. (ISBN 0-7167-6589-6)

Dee, Catherine. *The Girls' Guide to Life*. With this accessible handbook, girls will learn how to organize a "girlcott" against a company whose policies or products are offensive or unfair to women, create a female family tree, start a math and/or science club for girls, confront a sexual harasser, and much more. Ages 10 and up. (ISBN 0-316-17952-3)

Epstein, Vivian Sheldon. *History of Women series*. *History of Women Artists for Children* profiles 30 European and American women artists through the ages, and features many full-color reproductions. (ISBN 0-960-10025-3). *History of Women in Science for Young People* profiles 29 women scientists from Ancient Rome to the present. Ages 10 and up. (ISBN 0-960-10027-X)

Fireside, Bryna. *Is There a Woman in the House... or Senate?* Absorbing profiles of 10 women members of Congress, including the first woman in Congress, Jeanette Rankin; the first African-American woman, Shirley Chisolm; as well as Patricia Schroeder, Bella Abzug, and others. Chronicles their childhoods and career setbacks as well as successes. Ages 9 to 14. (ISBN 0-8075-3662-8)

Giese, Jo. *A Woman's Path*. A photo-essay which celebrates the twists and turns in a life process that women have to go through to find the work they are uniquely suited to do. Fifty American women of achievement are profiled and ten girls talk about their

dreams. Ages 10 and up. (Forthcoming from Golden Books Family Entertainment in Spring 1998.)

Hautzig, Esther. *The Endless Steppe*. This is an autobiography of a Jewish girl whose family is exiled to an isolated Russian prison camp during World War II. Esther, her mother, and grandmother, manage to help each other survive the brutal conditions. Young Adult readers. (ISBN 0-06-440577-X)

Ignus, Tayomi. *Book of Black Heroes, Vol II: Great Women in the Struggle*. Black women throughout history are profiled: famous and not-so-famous women freedom fighters, educators, artists, athletes, entrepreneurs, policy makers and scientists. Ages 10 and up. (ISBN 0-940-97526-2)

Karnes, Frances et al. *Girls and Young Women Leading the Way: 20 True Stories About Leadership*. Real-life stories of girls and young women who are leaders in projects to benefit their communities. Includes tips on how to be a leader yourself. Ages 8 to 14. (ISBN 0-915-79352-0)

Larkin, June. *Sexual Harassment: High School Girls Speak Out*. A former teacher interviews teenage girls about sexual harassment. The result is a sobering view of the prevalence of harassment and how it is often ignored by school officials. Ages 14 and up. (ISBN 0-929-00565-1)

Levinson, Nancy Smiler. *She's Been Working on the Railroad*. Relates the story of how women have worked on the railroad in ever-increasing numbers and in an expanding range of jobs, from the mid-1800s to the present. (ISBN 0-525-67545-0)

Sherrow, Victoria. *Phyllis Wheatley: Poet*. Kidnapped from Africa by slave traders and brought to Boston in 1761, Phyllis was purchased by the Wheatley family. She learned to read and then to write poetry. With the help of the Wheatleys, she became the second American woman to have her writing published in London. Ages 9 to 12. (ISBN 0-7910-2036-3)

Showell, Ellen H. *From Indian Corn to Outer Space — Women Invent in America*. Stories about women inventors from colonial days to the present time, with descriptions of inventions, biographical data, creative activities, patent drawings, and photographs. Ages 9 to 12. (ISBN 0-942-38910-7)

Our sincere thanks goes to everyone who contributed their time and talents to the success of this 80th Anniversary project: our national board of directors, our members who submitted titles, and to the following panelists who reviewed submissions and selected the final 80 titles on this list:

- Andrea Brown Andrea Brown Literary Agency,
- Melva L. Naylor Your Home Public Library
- Michelle Ozols Dove Books
- Maureen Pastine Southern Methodist University
- Catherine Petrini Author of Young Adult Books
- Elsie R. Prizio Elsie R. Prizio & Company
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- Bella Stringer Ingram Book Company
- Lois VanStipdonk Wayne-Westland Library
- Beverly Whitfield Ingram Book Company
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Women's National Book Association

The Women's National Book Association was founded in 1917 when women were not permitted to attend the American Booksellers Association's annual convention. Today our organization includes women and men in ten chapters in Atlanta, Binghamton, Boston, Dallas, Detroit, Los Angeles, Nashville, New York, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. We work with and value books and are committed to promoting reading and supporting the role of women in the community of the book.

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For more information about the Women's National Book Association, please contact the chapter president in your area, access our web site, or write to our national office at 160 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.