

Arisia '07

Beyond Hogwarts: A Young Fan's Reading List



Thanks for coming to the panel. I hope that we'll be able to give you some helpful suggestions for children's and young-adult genre fiction. And I also hope my fellow panelists will forgive me for putting this together without their input, but there just isn't time to wait.

I prefer older books; they tend to be better-written, use a wider vocabulary, and are just more fun. Here are some suggestions:

***Black and Blue Magic* by Zilpha Keatley Snyder.** A modern-day boy gets a potion which, when rubbed into his shoulder blades, allows him to sprout huge white wings - and fly. Ages 9-12. Memorable.

***No Flying in the House* by Betty Brock.** A little girl discovers that she's descended from fairies. How does she know? Because she can kiss her elbow.

***Boy Beyond the Moon* by Tom Allum.** Alternate title "Emperor of Space". 1960? From Great Britain. A very well done science fiction novel suitable for boys age seven and older, at a guess. A modern-day English boy named Guy befriends a famous, reclusive scientist who has moved in across the moors. In time, he discovers that the scientist has built a working space ship. It isn't long before Guy finds himself trapped on that spaceship along with a gang of escaped prisoners and the now-insane professor, on a trip to the tenth planet of the solar system: Imperator. Adventure and excitement in abundance. Unfortunately, this book is also incredibly rare, at least in the USA.

***The Story of Doctor Dolittle* by Hugh Lofting.** If I could talk to the animals... The many sequels are wonderful as well. Please note that modern editions of the first book are often censored; concerned parents may want to read the original and decide for themselves if they prefer that or the expurgated version (I prefer the original).

The following books are also wonderful, but since time is short I'll have to provide a bare-bones listing:

Author	Title	Notes
Grahame, Kenneth	<i>The Wind In The Willows</i>	Classic English novel of talking animals. Warning, some modern editions are badly cut.
Alexander, Lloyd	<i>The Chronicles of Prydain</i>	A five-volume fantasy series, beginning with <i>The Book of Three</i> .
Lewis, C.S.	<i>The Chronicles of Narnia</i>	Undisputed classics of children's fantasy. Some parents may be concerned by the Christian aspect of the story, which only becomes overt (though not offensively so) in the final book.
Tolkien, J.R.R.	<i>The Hobbit</i>	
Pearl, Jack	<i>The Space Eagle books</i>	SF. <i>Operation Star Voyage</i> and <i>Operation Doomsday</i>
Kipling, Rudyard	<i>The Jungle Book</i>	Classic, early fantasy from one of England's greatest writers. Also <i>The Second Jungle Book</i> .
Kipling, Rudyard	<i>Kim</i>	For older children, although not strictly genre this coming-of-age novel set in the colonial India of Kipling's youth is at least partly the inspiration for some of Heinlein's juveniles. A wonderful book.
Keith, Donald	<i>Time Machine To The Rescue</i>	Also <i>Mutiny in the Time Machine</i> . Originally published in Boy's Life. Well-written time travel.
Heinlein, Robert A.	All the juveniles	Heinlein wrote too many classic young-adult genre books to list here; he practically revived the modern form of the genre single-handedly. He also wrote adult novels, so make sure not to confuse those with the juveniles.
Dahl, Roald	<i>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</i>	Also the sequel, <i>Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator</i> , in which the Buckets and Mr. Wonka travel into space!
L'Engle, Madeleine	<i>A Wrinkle in Time</i>	The sequels were perhaps not as good, but may be worth exploring.
Rockwell, Thomas	<i>The Portmanteau Book</i>	A riotous (and extremely funny) collection of all sorts of stories, art, and oddities (including an invasion by aliens that are enormous hands and make everyone go to school) by the author of <i>How to Eat Fried Worms</i> .

I set up a community on LiveJournal for children's and young-adult genre literature after the "Addicting Your Child" panel at Arisia '06. It hasn't seen any activity since it was started, but it's there and available for anyone to use; I'll post this handout there after the con. You can find it at: http://community.livejournal.com/gateway_sf/. I hope to see you there!