

Children's Book Week

Children's Book Week, Then and Now



To celebrate Children's Book Week this year, we're reflecting on some of the favorite books we read as kids. We may not remember all the details of stories read decades ago, but there are images, passages, and feelings that have stuck with us through the years. Interesting to note that many of the titles we chose as our favorite childhood reads, are books that were first published before we were born. So who turned us on to these memorable stories? A parent? A teacher? A librarian? Do you find any of your childhood favorites among the ones we feature here?



My Side of the Mountain initially interested me because I always loved nature and animals. While reading it, I remember feeling empowered and inspired to imagine that I, just a child, could live in the wilderness on my own. ? Kathy

Harriet in ***Harriet the Spy*** seemed real to me - not as chirpily cheerful or melodramatically tragic as many other child characters in books I was reading. She didn't always say or do the right thing, and she was nosy and selfish - but she mostly redeemed herself in the end. I could relate to her imperfections! ? Ellen

I loved the ***Little House*** series because of Laura Ingalls Wilder's descriptions of pioneer life and the warmth of her family. My grandparents lived on a rustic farm with cows, pigs, chickens, and a protective border collie named Shep. The Little House books kept me connected to my grandparents on that farm, even though I lived in a city far away. - Mary

As a young girl who loved animals, but especially horses, ***Black Beauty*** became one of my all-time favorite books. A fictional autobiographical memoir told from the point of view of a horse, the story describes Black Beauty's difficulties and experiences with humans, who often failed to recognize the unconditional love and loyalty that he was so willing to share. This book gave me a sense of responsibility, respect and compassion for all living creatures. I found it sad, hopeful, and in the end, comforting. ? Janet

Ballet Shoes was an oasis for me as a young ballet student. Each of the young protagonists (Pauline, Petrova, and Posy) were able to follow their passions, with the support of a collection of knowledgeable and caring adults who understood the importance of having Big Dreams. The urban London setting was thrilling - and the European characters inhabiting the book made me eager to reach out and explore the world. I can't help but think this book planted the seed for all the wonderful experiences I've had in life, thus far. I've travelled overseas, performed professionally in the theater, and now support the Big Dreams of my own children (which currently include being superhero millionaires who do charity work)! ? Christina

As a child, I loved camping with my family and spending time by the water. The idea of suddenly

finding myself alone on an island was both thrilling and terrifying. I admired Karana's courage and tenacity and wondered if I could have managed to survive on my own as she had. **Island of the Blue Dolphins** also gives a personal perspective on living in and out of sync with the ebb and flow of nature. As an adult, I have experienced several island camping adventures, satisfying my desire to enjoy time by the water. But I was content that I did not have to hunt any further than my backpack to find my own food. ? Lisa

Watership Down is a mixture of the best elements from *The Wind in the Willows* and *The Odyssey*. Since reading it at age 11, I haven't been able to look at hedges, meadows or overgrown alleyways without wondering what sort of tiny, cosmic dramas are unfolding beyond our vision. Truly inspiring. (Because of *Watership Down*, I got a cool looking rabbit on my arm as my first tattoo when I was 21.) ? Josh

I read **Little Women** several times between the ages of 9 -11 . Growing up with lots of cousins, most of whom were female, I found it easy to identify with Jo March and her family. Plus, the story has some sadness, romance and drama! This book made me an avid reader. ? Pat.

I think the idea of private spaces with little adult interference, like the ones in **The Secret Garden** or *The Boxcar Children*, is super appealing to kids. I was lucky enough to grow up in a house in the country with lots of land and tree cover perfect for creating little hideouts. So the idea of discovering and cultivating a secret garden was both relatable and compelling to me. ? Aubrey

Posted by Lisa C. on May 14, 2014

Children's Book Week

Fiction

Oh, the Thinks You Can Think

Lisa C.'s blog[Log in](#) to post comments
