

Keep your kids occupied with a great book — or a few! Our suggestions should keep them busy all year long. These titles will encourage your kids to love reading, while improving their language arts skills.

## Books for Ages 9-10

***Charlotte's Web*, by E. B. White** Wilbur, the pig, is desolate when he discovers that he is destined to be the farmer's Christmas dinner until his spider friend, Charlotte decides to help him.

***Tuck Everlasting*, by Natalie Babbitt** The Tuck family is confronted with an agonizing situation when they discover that a ten-year-old girl and a malicious stranger now share their secret about a spring whose water prevents one from ever growing older.

***Sarah, Plain and Tall*, by Patricia MacLachlan** When their father invites a mail-order bride to come live with them in their prairie home, Caleb and Anna are captivated by their new mother and hope that she will stay.

***Bill Peet: An Autobiography*, by Bill Peet** The well-known author and illustrator relates the story of his life and work.

***Bridge to Terabithia*, by Katherine Paterson** The life of a ten-year-old boy in rural Virginia expands when he becomes friends with a newcomer who subsequently meets an untimely death trying to reach their hideaway, Terabithia, during a storm.

***Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, by Roald Dahl** Each of five children lucky enough to discover an entry ticket into Mr. Willy Wonka's mysterious chocolate factory takes advantage of the situation in his own way.

***Where the Sidewalk Ends*, by Shel Silverstein** Irreverent, hilarious and wildly popular, this collection of Silverstein's verse is hard to put down.

***Dear Mr. Henshaw*, by Beverly Cleary** In his letters to his favorite author, ten-year-old Leigh reveals his problems in coping with his parents' divorce, being the new boy in school, and generally finding his own place in the world.

***Little House on the Prairie*, by Laura Ingalls Wilder** The adventures continue for Laura Ingalls and her family as they leave their little house in the Big Woods of Wisconsin and set out for Kansas. They travel for many days in their covered wagon

until they find the best spot to build their little house on the prairie. Sometimes pioneer life is hard, but Laura and her folks are always busy and happy in their new little house.

***James and the Giant Peach***, by *Roald Dahl* For young James Henry Trotter, life with the exceedingly nasty Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker is pure misery. James dreams of a better life, but he's totally unprepared for the wild adventures ahead of him when he drops the magic crystals he receives from a strange old man. Before long James is off on a weird, wonderful journey inside a giant peach with a bizarre group of companions!

***Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing***, by *Judy Blume* A nine-year-old is "given" a little brother and soon decides that she is expendable. But some things about little brother are lovable too.

***Shiloh***, by *Phyllis Reynolds Naylor* Eleven-year-old Marty Preston "finds a stray dog that seems to be abused and is determined to keep it at all costs. Because his family is very poor, without money to feed another mouth, his parents don't want any pets. Subsequently, there is a lot of conflict over the animal within the family and between Marty and Judd Travers, the dog's owner

***Mr. Popper's Penguins***, by *Richard Atwater and Florence Atwater* The unexpected delivery of a large crate containing an Antarctic penguin changes the life and fortunes of Mr. Popper, a house painter obsessed by dreams of the Polar regions.

***Harriet the Spy***, by *Louise Fitzhugh* Harriet M. Welsch is determined to grow up and be a famous author. In the meantime, she practices by following a regular spy route each day and writing down everything she sees in her secret notebook. Then one morning, her classmates find her spy notebook and read it out loud! Harriet's in big trouble. The other sixth-graders are stealing her tomato sandwiches, forming a spy-catcher club, and writing notes of their own -- all about Harriet!

***Stuart Little***, by *E. B. White* The adventures of the debonair mouse Stuart Little as he sets out in the world to seek out his dearest friend, a little bird who stayed a few days in his family's garden.

***Walk Two Moons***, by *Sharon Creech* After her mother leaves home suddenly, thirteen-year-old Sal and her grandparents take a car trip retracing her mother's route. Along the way, Sal recounts the story of her friend Phoebe, whose mother also left.

***Out of the Dust***, by *Karen Hesse* In a series of poems, fifteen-year-old Billie Jo relates the hardships of living on her family's wheat farm in Oklahoma during the dust bowl years of the Depression.

## **Online Books**

**Callahan Cousins: Summer Begins** This exciting, new book introduces four engaging Callahan cousins. The girls find plenty of lessons and adventures while spending the summer with their grandmother on Gull Island.

**Camp Confidential Natalie's Secret** Natalie Goode goes from life in the city to Camp Lakeview, where the secret she's been keeping might get in the way of new friendships.

**Camp Confidential Jenna's Dilemma** Jenna is determined to make camp fun this year, in spite of her parents' separation and the company of her twin brother and older sister.