

Historical Fiction for Kids



COLONIAL TIMES

Avi – Night Journeys - Two young indentured servants escape into Pennsylvania in the late 1700's & get help from an unexpected source. Gr. 4-6

Dalgliesh, Alice - The Courage of Sarah Noble - In 1707, Sarah Noble and her father travel through the wilderness to build a new home for their family. Gr. 2-4

Edmunds, Walter - Matchlock Gun – (NEWBERY) The exciting, true story of a courageous boy who protected his mother and sister from the Indians of the Hudson Valley. Gr. 3-5

Field, Rachel - Calico Bush This is an adventure story of a French girl “loaned” to a family of American pioneers in Maine in the 1740's. Gr. 5-7

Fox, Paula - Slave Dancer - (NEWBERY) Kidnapped by the crew of an Africa-bound ship, a boy discovers to his horror that he is on a slaver and his job is to play music to help with the exercise periods of the human cargo. Gr. 4-7

Harness, Cheryl - Three Young Pilgrims - Mary, Remember, and Bartholomew are among the pilgrims who survive the harsh early years in America and see New Plymouth grow into a prosperous colony. Gr. 3-5

Koch, Betty - Beyond the Alleghenies (PB) — After the deaths of his parents, twelve-year-old David must leave his affluent life in Virginia and live on a farm in the Western PA wilderness, where trouble is brewing. Gr. 3-5

Lasky, Kathryn – Journey to the New World: The Diary of Remember Patience Whipple - Mem presents a diary account of the trip she and her family made on the Mayflower in 1620 and their first year in the New World. Gr. 4-7

Martin, Jacqueline Martin – Grandmother Bryant's Pocket - Suffering from nightmares after her dog is killed in a fire, a young girl in eighteenth-century Maine goes to live with her grandparents. Gr. 2-4

Waters, Kate - On the Mayflower: The Voyage of the Ship's Apprentice & a Passenger Girl - A twelve-year-old apprentice and a seven-year-old passenger experience the first voyage of the Mayflower. Gr. 3-5

REVOLUTIONARY WAR

Banim, Lisa – A Spy in the King's Colony - In British-occupied Boston in 1776, eleven-year-old Emily Parker is determined to find out if a family friend is a traitor to the American patriots. Gr. 3-5

Denenberg, Barry - The Journal of William Thomas Emerson: a Revolutionary War Patriot - William, a twelve-year-old orphan, writes of his experiences in pre-Revolutionary War Boston where he joins the cause of the Patriots who are opposed to the British rule. Gr. 4-6

Ernst, Kathleen - Betrayal at Cross Creek - Elspeth Monro, a Scottish settler and weaver's apprentice on the frontier in 1775, must find out who is betraying her Loyalist family during the months before the Revolutionary War. Gr. 5-7

Forbes, Esther – Johnny Tremain – (NEWBERY) After injuring his hand, a silversmith's apprentice in Boston becomes a messenger for the Sons of Liberty in the days before the American Revolution. Gr. 5-8

Gauch, Patricia Lee – This Time, Tempe Wick? - Everyone knew Tempe Wick was a most surprising girl, but they found out just how surprising when two mutinous Revolutionary soldiers tried to steal her beloved horse. Gr. 2-5

Gregory, Kristiana – Winter of Red Snow - Eleven-year-old Abigail presents a diary account of life in Valley Forge from December 1777 to July 1778 as General Washington prepares his troops to fight the British. Gr. 5-8

Moss, Marissa - Emma's Journal: The Story of a Colonial Girl - From 1774 to 1776, Emma describes in her journal her stay in Boston, where she witnesses the British blockade and spies for the American militia. Gr. 3-5

O'Dell, Scott – Sarah Bishop - Left alone after the deaths of her father and brother and fleeing from the British who seek to arrest her, Sarah Bishop struggles to shape a new life for herself in the wilderness. Gr. 5-8

Turner, Ann Warren – Katie's Trunk - Katie, whose family is not sympathetic to the rebel soldiers during the American Revolution, hides under the clothes in her mother's wedding trunk when they invade her home. Gr. 1-5

Waters, John – Night Raiders Along the Cape - When British raids off the coast of New England become more frequent, Asa must row through the night to warn his friends on the Massachusetts coast of an impending attack. Gr. 3-5

Woodruff, Elvira – George Washington's Socks - Matt and four others find themselves transported back to the time of George Washington and the American Revolution, where they learn the sober realities of war. Grades 4-6

CIVIL WAR

Alphie, Elaine Marie – Ghost Cadet - Twelve-year-old Benjy, visiting the grandmother he has never met, meets the ghost of a Virginia Military Institute cadet who was killed in battle and helps him recover his family's treasured gold watch. Gr. 4-7

Banks, Sarah - Abraham's Battle: A Novel of Gettysburg - In 1863, as the Civil War approaches his home in Gettysburg and he realizes that a big battle is about to begin, a freed slave named Abraham decides to join the ambulance corps of the Union Army. Gr. 5-7

Donahue, John – An Island Far from Home - The son of a Union army doctor killed during the fighting in Fredericksburg learns the meaning of war and of friendship when he begins writing to a Confederate prisoner of war. Gr. 4-7

Gauch, Patricia Lee – Thunder at Gettysburg - Fourteen-year-old Tillie becomes involved in the tragic battle of July 1-3, 1863. Gr. 2-4

Hite, Sid - The Journal of Rufus Rowe: A Witness to the Battle of Fredricksburg- In 1862, sixteen-year-old Rufus Rowe runs away from home and settles in Fredericksburg, Virginia, where he documents in his journal the battle he watches unfold there. Gr. 5-7

Hunt, Irene – Across Five Aprils – This book tells of a boy's experiences during the Civil War in the backwoods of southern Illinois. One brother joins the Union forces, the other the Confederacy, and the family is divided. Gr. 5-8

Osborne, Mary Pope – My Brother's Keeper - In 1863, as the Civil War approaches Gettysburg, PA, nine-year-old Virginia records in a journal the horrible things she witnesses before, during, and after the big battle. Gr. 3-5

Polacco, Patricia – Pink and Say - Say Curtis describes his meeting with Pinkus Aylee, a black soldier, during the Civil War and their capture by Southern troops. Gr. K-5

Reeder, Carolyn – Shades of Gray - At the end of the Civil War, Will, having lost all his family, leaves his city home to live in the countryside with his aunt & the uncle he considers a "traitor" because he refused to fight. Gr. 4-7

Roop, Connie – Grace's Letter to Lincoln - As war clouds gather and the South threatens to secede, eleven-year-old Grace decides to help Abraham Lincoln get elected by writing and advising him to grow a beard. Gr. 2-4

Weinberg, Karen – Window of Time – (PB) While exploring the basement of his new house in Westminster, MD, Ben puts on an old jacket and boots that he finds and is suddenly transported back to the time of the Civil War. Gr. 5-7

MISCELLANEOUS – U.S.

Curtis, Christopher Paul – Bud, Not Buddy - (NEWBERY) Bud, an orphan living in Flint, MI, during the Great Depression, escapes bad foster care & sets out to find the man he believes to be his father--a renowned bandleader. Gr. 5-7

Hunter, Sara Hoagland – Unbreakable Code - Because John is afraid to leave the Navajo Reservation, his grandfather explains to him how the Navajo language, faith, and ingenuity helped win World War II. Gr. 2-4

Kirkpatrick, Hill – The Year of Miss Agnes - Ten-year-old Fred (short for Frederika) narrates the story of school and village life among the Athabascans in Alaska during 1948 when Miss Agnes arrives as the new teacher. Gr. 4-6

Minahan, John – Abigail's Drum - During the War of 1812, when British soldiers threaten their town in Massachusetts, Rebecca and her sister find a way to save both their father, the local lighthouse keeper, and the town. Gr. 2-5

Robinet, Harriette Gillem – Washington City is Burning - In 1814 Virginia, a slave in President Madison's White House, experiences the burning of Washington by the invading British army. Gr. 4-6

FRONTIER AND PIONEER LIFE

Avi – The Barn - In an effort to fulfill their dying father's last wish, Ben and his brother and sister construct a barn on their land in the Oregon Territory. Gr. 3-6

Brink, Carol Ryrrie – Caddie Woodlawn – (NEWBERY) This book chronicles the adventures of eleven-year-old Caddie growing up with her six brothers and sisters on the Wisconsin frontier in the mid-nineteenth century. Gr. 4-6

Conrad, Pam – Prairie Songs - Louisa's life in a loving pioneer family on the Nebraska prairie is altered by the arrival of a new doctor and his beautiful, tragically frail wife. Gr. 5-8

Fleischman, Sid – Humbug Mountain - A young boy and his wandering family foil villains and rout nasty varmints as they make a home for themselves in a beached boat on the banks of the Missouri. Gr. 4-6

Flory, Jane – The Great Bamboozlement - The Dowells sell their Pennsylvania farm and set off down the Monongahela River in search of a new home. Gr. 3-5

Kent, Peter – Quest for the West: In Search of Gold - In 1849 the poor Hornik family leaves Bohemia and emigrates to California in search of gold. Gr. 3-5

Leland, Dorothy Kupcha – Sallie Fox: The Story of a Pioneer Girl – (PB) A fictionalized account of the trek of 12 year old Sallie Fox by wagon train with her family from Iowa to California in the mid 1800's. Gr. 4-6

MacLachlan, Patricia – Sarah, Plain and Tall – (NEWBERY) When their father invites a mail-order bride to come live with them in their prairie home, Caleb and Anna are captivated by her and hope that she will stay. Look for the three sequels as well. Gr. 3-5

Myers, Anna – Red-Dirt Jessie - Jessie, a young girl living in the Oklahoma Dust Bowl during the Depression, tries to tame a wild dog and help her father recover from a nervous breakdown. Gr. 4-6

Smith, Helene – Hannah's Town - Young Hannah experiences the excitement, joys, and hardships of life in a frontier village in western Pennsylvania prior to the Revolutionary War. Gr. 4-6

Speare, Elizabeth George – Sign of the Beaver - Left alone to guard the family's wilderness home in eighteenth-century Maine, a boy is hard-pressed to survive until local Indians teach him their skills. Gr. 4-6

Woodruff, Elvira – Dear Levi: Letters from the Overland Trail - Twelve year-old Austin Ives writes letters to his younger brother describing his 3000 mile journey from their home in Pennsylvania to Oregon in 1851. Gr. 4-6

WWI & WWII

Avi - Who was that Masked Man, Anyway? - Frankie Wattleton gets in trouble at home and at school because of his preoccupation with his favorite radio programs while everyone else is focusing on WWII. Gr. 4-7

Ayres, Katherine – Voices at Whisper Bend (PB) - In their Pennsylvania town in 1942 twelve-year-old Charlotte and her classmates collect scrap metal for the war effort only to have it disappear from the school basement. Gr. 4-6

Bishop, Claire Huckel – Twenty and Ten (PB) Twenty school children hide ten Jewish children from the Nazis occupying France during World War II. Gr. 4-6

Borden, Louise - The Little Ships: the Heroic Rescue at Dunkirk in World War II - A young English girl and her father take their sturdy fishing boat and join the scores of other civilian vessels crossing the English Channel in a daring attempt to rescue troops trapped by Nazi soldiers at Dunkirk. Gr. 3-5

Giff, Patricia Reilly – Lily's Crossing - During a summer spent at Rockaway Beach in 1944, Lily's friendship with a young Hungarian refugee causes her to see the war and her own world differently. Gr. 5-8

Hahn, Mary Downing - Stepping on the Cracks - In 1944, eleven year old Margaret gets a new view of the school bully Gordy when she finds him hiding his own brother, an army deserter, and decides to help him. Gr. 5-8

Lee, Milly – Nim and the War Effort - In her determination to prove that an American can win the contest for the war effort, Nim does something which leaves her Chinese grandfather both bewildered and proud. Gr. 2-5

Lowry, Lois– Number the Stars – (**NEWBERY**) In 1943, during the German occupation of Denmark, ten-year-old Annemarie learns how to be brave and courageous when she helps shelter her Jewish friend from the Nazis. Gr. 5-7

Paulsen, Gary – The Cookcamp – A young boy goes to live with his grandma, a cook in a camp for workers building a road through the wilderness. Gr. 5-7

Polacco, Patricia – The Butterfly - During the Nazi occupation of France, Monique's mother hides a Jewish family in her basement and tries to help them escape to freedom. Gr. 1-3

Schnur, Steven – The Shadow Children - While visiting his grandfather's farm, Etienne discovers a secret dating back to WW II and meets the ghosts of Jewish children who suffered a dreadful fate under the Nazis. Gr. 4- 6

Skurzynski, Gloria– Goodbye, Billy Radish - In 1917, Hank sees change all around him in his western Pennsylvania steel mill town and feels his older Ukrainian friend Billy drifting apart from him. Gr. 5-7

RECONSTRUCTION TO WORLD WAR I

Bader, Bonnie – East Side Story - A young girl and her older sister, working in the Triangle Shirtwaist factory, an early twentieth-century sweatshop on the Lower East Side of New York City, join a protest to try to improve the miserable working conditions. Gr. 3-5

Beatty, Patricia – Sarah and Me and the Lady from the Sea - In 1895, their father's business failure forces Marcella's family to live in their beach home above the Oregon border. They find it more rewarding than imagined. Gr. 4-6

Brubaker, Kimberly Bradley - Ruthie's Gift - Just before the beginning of World War I, eight-year-old Ruthie, who lives with her parents and brothers on a farm in Indiana, wishes for a sister & tries to behave like the lady her mother wants her to be. Gr. 3-5

De Angeli, Marguerite – Copper-Toed Boots – (**PB**) Relates the summer adventures of a young boy living in Michigan in the nineteenth century and how he came to acquire the two things he most wanted--a dog and a pair of copper-toed boots. Gr. 3-6

Duey, Kathleen – Ellen Elizabeth Hawkins: Mobeetie, Texas, 1886 – (**PB**) In Texas in 1886, Ellen finds her desire to be a cattle rancher discouraged by family members who do not think it a proper choice for a girl, but she proves her worth when drought threatens the ranch. Gr. 4-7

Duffy, James – Radical Red - The life of a twelve-year-old Irish girl living in Albany, New York, in the 1890s undergoes many changes when she and her mother become involved with Susan B. Anthony and her suffragist. Gr. 5-8

Gross, Virginia D. – The Day It Rained Forever – The Story of the Johnstown Flood – This book tells the experiences of a family living in the mountains above Johnstown when the poorly constructed dam breaks in 1898. Gr. 3-5

Hansen, Joyce – I Thought My Soul Would Rise and Fly - Twelve-year-old Patsy keeps a diary of the ripe but confusing time following the end of the Civil War and the granting of freedom to former slaves. Gr. 4-8

Hesse, Karen - Letters from Rifka - In letters to her cousin, a young Jewish girl chronicles her family's flight from Russia in 1919 & her own experiences when she must stay in Belgium when the others emigrate to America. Gr. 4-8

Isaacs, Anne – Treehouse Tales - Three chapters relate the experiences and adventures of three 1880s Pennsylvania farm children in their family tree house, which serves as a refuge, a source of adventure, a lookout post, and a frightening dragon's lair. Gr. 3-5

MISCELLANEOUS – FOREIGN

Avi - Crispin: The Cross of Lead – (**NEWBERY**) - Falsely accused of theft and murder, an orphaned peasant boy in fourteenth-century England flees his village and meets a larger-than-life juggler who holds a dangerous secret. Gr. 5-9

Conrad, Pam – Pedro's Journal: A Voyage with Christopher Columbus - The cabin boy on the "Santa Maria" keeps a diary to record his experiences when he sails with Columbus on his first voyage to the New World in 1492. Gr. 3-5

DeJong, Meindert – Wheel on the School – (NEWBERY) The storks are brought back to their island by the schoolchildren in a Dutch village. Gr. 4-7

Platt, Richard – Castle Diary - As a page in his uncle's castle in thirteenth-century England, Tobias records his experiences in his journal. Gr. 4-8

Konigsburg, E. L. – Proud Taste for Scarlet and Miniver – While Eleanor of Aquitaine is waiting in heaven for judgment to be passed on her second husband, three of the people who knew her recall the events of her life. Gr. 5-8

Park, Linda Sue - The Single Shard – (NEWBERY) Tree-ear, a thirteen-year-old orphan in medieval Korea, lives under a bridge in a potters' village, and longs to learn how to throw the fragile celadon ceramics himself. Gr. 5-7

Paterson, Katherine – Jip: His Story - While living on a Vermont poor farm in 1856, Jip learns his and his mom's identity and background. Gr. 5-9.

(8/05)

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