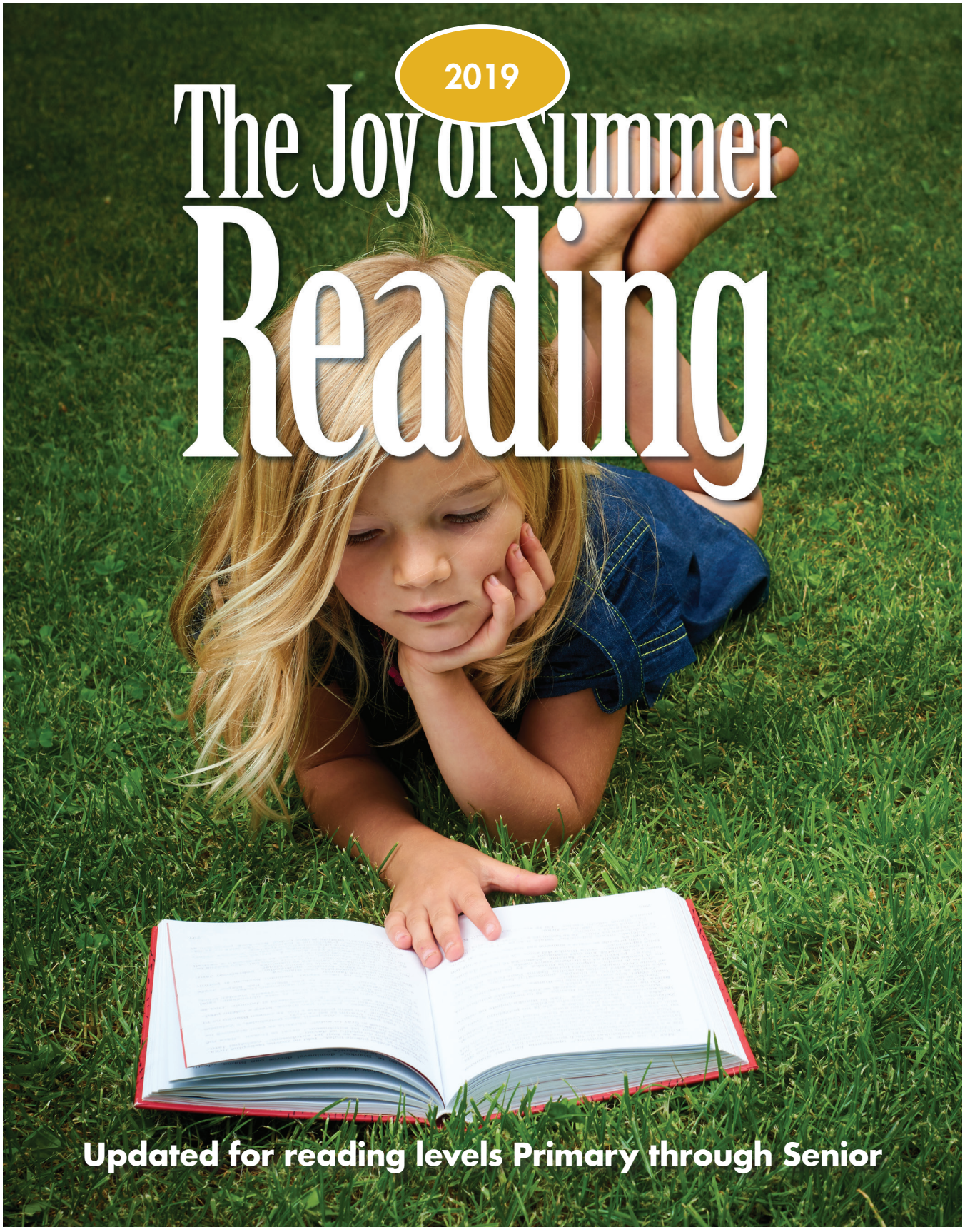
The Foundation for American Christian Education



2019

The Joy of Summer Reading

Updated for reading levels Primary through Senior

Summertime means sunny spaces, quiet hours, open windows, bird calls and insects buzzing, soft breezes in the branches, a beach, a hammock, or a swing — but to smart parents summertime also means time with books, reading aloud, or just reading.

Nothing is more supportive of a thorough education than giving children a love of books and opportunities to read widely. In fact summer is the best time to instill the habit of reading by encouraging independent reading skills. A great way to encourage independent reading even for the reluctant reader is the family reading aloud in a shared experience of enjoying a book together.

Whatever your family habits might be, a good book list is essential in every home for cultivating the joy of reading.

I could never have dreamt that there were such goings-on
in the world between the covers of books,
such sandstorms and ice blasts of words,
such staggering peace, such enormous laughter,
such and so many blinding bright lights,
splashing all over the pages.
in a million bits and pieces
all of which were words, words, words,
and each of which were alive forever
in its own delight and glory and oddity and light.

Dylan Thomas

Read to me riddles and read to me rhymes
Read to me stories of magical times
Read to me tales about castles and kings
Read to me stories of fabulous things
Read to me pirates and read to me knights
Read to me dragons and dragon-book fights
Read to me spaceships and cowboys and then
When you are finished– please read them again.

Jane Yolen

"Read to me tales about castles and kings
Read to me stories of fabulous things." Jane Yolen

Among the many, many purposes that make the joy of reading important in every home, we suggest three that could frame your summer reading choices:

Entertainment and Escape: enriching hours through books — visiting new places, having exciting adventures, and meeting unusual characters — all building experiences for life.

Shaping Character: reading to cultivate conscience and character choices through the life experiences represented in fiction and biography.

Expanding Interests: exploring personal interests apart from formal study to develop understanding in areas of knowledge that pique interest.

Research has shown many ways that reading improves your mind:

- At a young age reading is focused on phonemic awareness and fluency.
- As you get older reading teaches vocabulary. Most children learn the meaning of words indirectly through experience and through oral and written language. The quality of what they are reading is vital to teaching good vocabulary.
- Comprehension is the reason for reading. It is important that the student understands what they read, remember what they read and communicate with others. Good readers need to have a purpose for reading and need to be actively involved in the process.
- Writing improves more when connected to reading than to grammar study or extra writing practice.

Reading is like the performance of a symphony

Reading can be compared to the performance of a symphony orchestra. This analogy illustrates three points:

First, like the performance of a symphony, reading is a holistic act. In other words, while reading can be analyzed into sub-skills such as discriminating letters and identifying words, performing the sub-skills one at a time does not constitute reading. Reading can be said to take place only when the parts are put together in a smooth, integrated performance.

Second, success in reading comes from practice over long periods of time, like skill in playing musical instruments. Indeed, it is a lifelong endeavor.

Third, as with a musical score, there may be more than one interpretation of a text. "The interpretation depends upon the background of the reader, the purpose for reading and the context in which reading occurs." (Anderson 1984, 7)

Primary Reading Level

(6-8 year olds)

The Dot
by Peter Reynolds
Madeline
by Ludwig Bemelmans
Fredrick
by Leo Lionni
The Velveteen Rabbit
by Margery Williams
Swimmy
by Loe Lionni
Frog and Toad are Friends
by Arnold Lobel
A Treasury of Mother Goose
by Hilda Often
The Very Hungry Caterpillar
by Eric Carle
Petunia
by Roger Duvoisin
Angus and the Ducks
by Marjorie Flack

If You Give a Mouse a Cookie
by Laura Numeroff
Amelia Bedelia
by Peggy Parish
Nate the Great
by Marjorie Sharmat
The Poky Little Puppy
by Jannette Lowry
Make Way for Ducklings
by Robert McCloskey
****Pocahontas***
by Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire
****Benjamin Franklin***
by Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire
****George Washington***
by Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire
****Abraham Lincoln***
by Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire

****Columbus***
by Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire
****Snowflake Bentley***
by Jacqueline Briggs Martin

Please note: All the books in this suggested summer reading list can be found in your local library and bookstores everywhere. Books marked in **RED** with an asterisk (*) can be ordered from the FACE bookstore at FACE.net. Direct links are provided for your convenience.

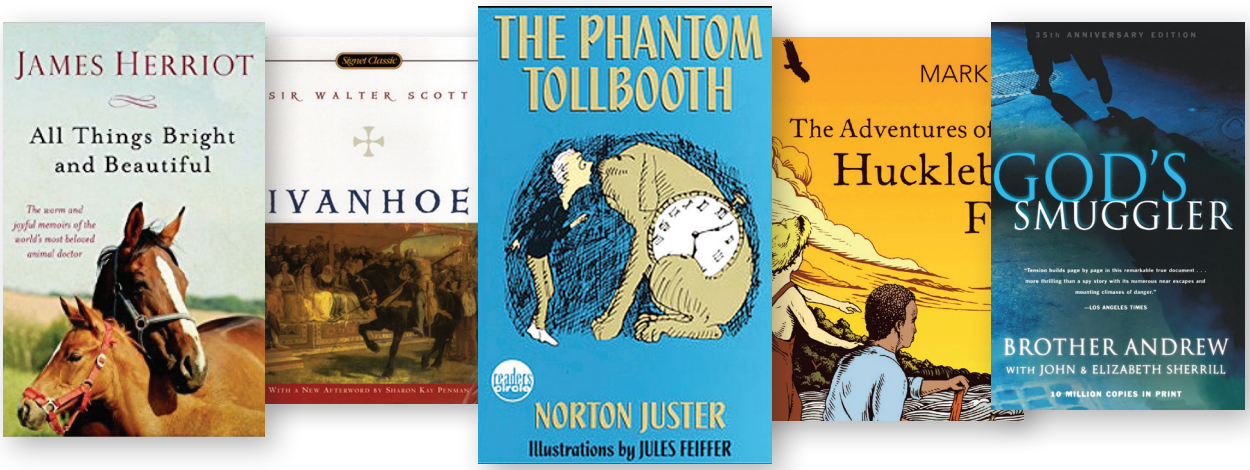
Elementary Reading Level

(9-12 year olds)

Charlotte's Web
by E.B. White
Shiloh
by Wilson Rawls
Harriet the Spy
by Louise Fitzhugh
Wonder
by R.J. Palacio
****Little House in the Big Woods***
by Laura Ingalls Wilder
Because of Winn-Dixie
by Kate DiCamillo
Plain and Tall
by Patricia Sarah MacLachlan
The Tale of Desperaux
by Kate DiCamillo
****The Magna Charta***
by James Daugherty
My Side of the Mountain
by Jean George
The Reluctant Dragon
by Kenneth Grahame
The Voyages of Dr. Dolittle
by Hugh Lofting
Gentle Ben
by Walt Morey
****Little Women***
by Louisa May Alcott

The Incredible Journey
by Sheila Burnfold
Five Little Peppers
by Margaret Sidney
Caddie Woodlawn
by Carol Brink
Blue Willow
by Doris Gates
Old Yeller
by Fred Gipson
****Wizard of the North***
by Pearl Schultz
The Cricket in Times Square
by George Selden
Julie of the Wolves
by Jean Craighead George
Anne of Green Gables
by Lucy Montgomery
Island of the Blue Dolphin
by Scott Odell
****Heidi***
by Johanna Spyri
Swiss Family Robinson
by Johann Wyss
Little Men
by Louisa May Alcott
****Hans Brinker***
by Mary Dodge
The Wind in the Willows
by Kenneth Grahame

****Treasure Island***
by Robert Louis Stevenson
Around the World in Eighty Days
by Jules Verne
Journey to the Center of the Earth
by Jules Verne
****Carry On, Mr. Bowditch***
by Jean Lee Latham
Cabin Faced West
by Jean West
Louisiana Purchase
by Peter Roop & Connie Roop
The Boy Who Fell Off the Mayflower
by PJ Lynch
Cinnabar, the One O'Clock Fox
by Marguerite Henry
Cabin Faced West
by Jean West
Justin Morgan Had a Horse
by Marguerite Henry
By the Great Horn Spoon
by Sid Fleischman
Caddie Woodlawn
by Carol Ryrie Brink
Rush Revere and Brave Pilgrims
by Rush Limbaugh



Junior Reading Level

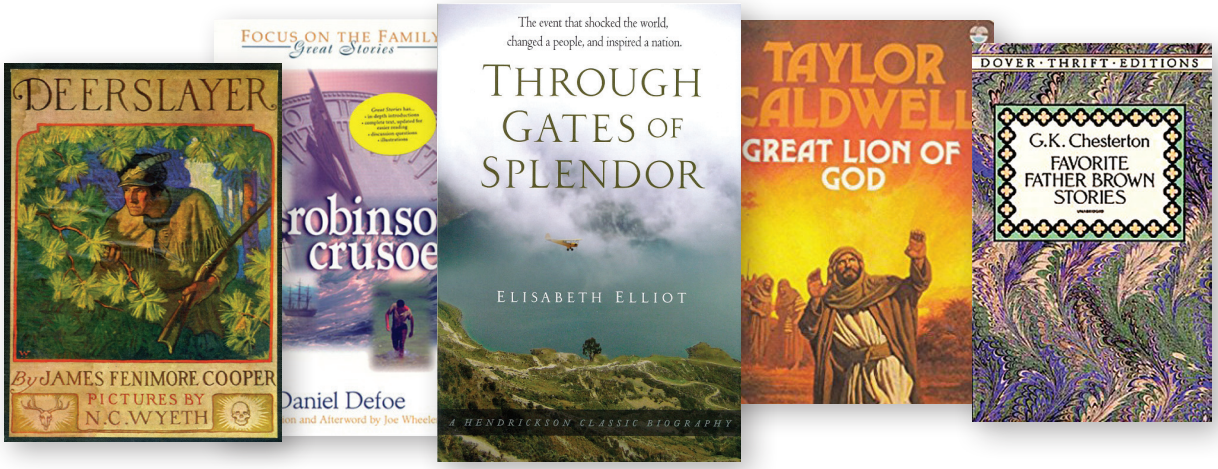
(13-15 year olds)

The Penderwicks
by Jeanne Birdsall
Where the Fern Grows
by Wilson Rawls
Because of Winn Dixie
by Kate DiCamillo
Hatchet
by Gary Paulsen
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
by Mark Twain
Three Musketeers
by Alexandre Dumas
Big Red
by James Kielgaard
The Yearling
by Marjorie Rawlings
Bound for Oregon
by Jean Van Leeuwen
Understood Betsy
by Dorothy Fisher
Christy
by Catherine Marshall
My Friend Flicka
by Mary O'Hara
Freedom Train
by Dorothy Sterling
By Right of Conquest
by G.H. Henty
In the Reign of Terror
by G.H. Henty

All Things Bright and Beautiful
by James Herriot
****Virginia's General: Robert E. Lee and the Civil War***
by Albert Martin
The Scarlet Pimpernel
by Emmuska Orczy
****Men of Iron***
by Howard Pyle
****Noah Webster, Father of the Dictionary***
by Isabel Proudfit
Kidnapped
by Robert Louis Stevenson
Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry
by Mildred Taylor
Fortune
by Elizabeth Amos Yates
God's Smuggler
by Brother Andrew
David Livingstone
by Jeanette Eaton
Calico Bush
by Rachel Field
The Last Crusader
by George Grant
By Pike and Dyke
by G.A. Henty
In Freedom's Cause
by G.A. Henty

Captains Courageous
by Rudyard Kipling
The Hawk that Dare Not Hunt By Day
by Day by Scott O'dell
The Black Arrow
by Robert Louis Stevenson
Morning Star of the Reformation
by Andy Thomson
The Phantom Tollbooth
by Norton Juster
The Ark, the Reed, and the Fire Cloud
by Jenny Cote

* Available at FACE.net



Senior Reading Level

(16-18 year olds)

Frankenstein
by Mary Shelley

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
by Robert Lewis Stevenson

Kisses from Katie
by Katie J. Davis

The Screwtape Letters
by C.S. Lewis

The Chronicles of Narnia
by C.S. Lewis

A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich
by Alexandr Solzhenitsyn

Father Arseny
translated by Vera Bouteneff

A Girl of Limberlost
by Gene Stratton-Porter

Jane Eyre
by Charlotte Bronté

****Robinson Crusoe***
by Daniel DeFoe

To Have and to Hold
by Mary Johnston

****The Deerslayer***
by James Fenimore Cooper

****The Spirit of St. Louis***
by Charles Lindbergh

****Mother Carey's Chickens***
by Kate Douglas Wiggins

****Of Courage Undaunted: Across the Continent with Lewis and Clark***
by James Daugherty

Miracle at Midway
by Gordon W. Prange

Edward V. Rickenbacker: an Autobiography
by Edward V. Rickenbacker

Seven Came Back
by Edward V. Rickenbacker

Quo Vadis
by Henryk Siekiewicz

Pillar of Iron
by Taylor Caldwell

Great Lion of God
by Taylor Caldwell

Dear and Glorious Physician
by Lloyd C. Douglas

The Big Fisherman
by Lloyd C. Douglas

The Robe
by Lloyd C. Douglas

A Tale of Two Cities
by Charles Dickens

The Count of Monte Cristo
by Alexandre Dumas

Banner in the Sky
by James Ramsey Ullman

Run Silent, Run Deep
by Edward L Beach

Mama's Bank Account
by Kathryn Forbes

So Big
by Edna Ferber

How Green is My Valley
by Richard Llewellyn

Lord of the Rings
by J.R.R. Tolkien

The Bridges at Toko-ri
by James A. Michener

The Good Earth
by Pearl Buck

Shadows On the Rock
by Willa Cather

The Light in the Forest
by Conrad Richter

Tom Sawyer
by Mark Twain

The House of Seven Gables
by Nathaniel Hawthorne

Madam Curie
by Eve Curie

Ben Hur
by Lew Wallace

Alone
by Admiral Richard E. Byrd

Admiral of the Ocean Sea
by Samuel Eliot Morison

David Copperfield, The Personal History
by Charles Dickens

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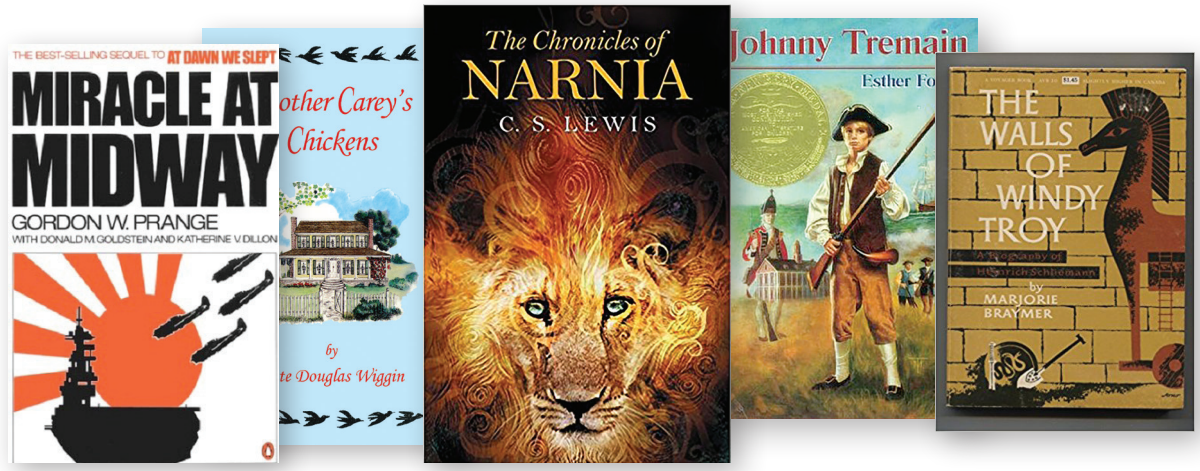

Senior Reading Level continued

(16-18 year olds)

Glory and the Dream: Abraham Lincoln
by Michael A. Musmanno
****Ivanhoe***
by Sir Walter Scott
Thread That Runs So True: Story of a Kentucky Mountain School Teacher
by Jesse Stuart
Walls of Windy Troy: Biography of Heinrich Schliemann
by Marjorie Braymer
Sense and Sensibility
by Jane Austin
Walden or Life in the Woods
by Henry David Thoreau
Beaver in the Woods
by Elizabeth George Speare
Out of the Silent Planet
by C.S. Lewis
Through Gates of Splendor
by Elizabeth Elliott
Johny Tremain
by Esther Forbes
Favorite Father Brown Stories
by G.K. Chesterton

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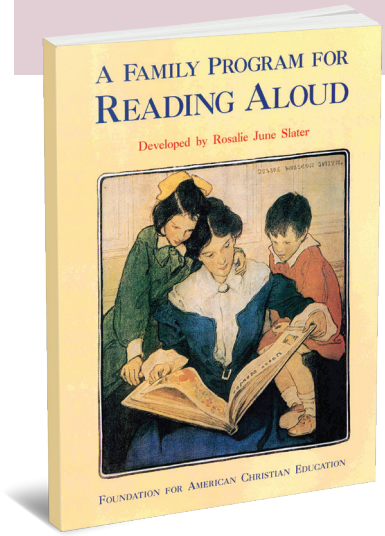

A Family Program for Reading Aloud The family is the educational center of our nation. Teach leadership and Christian character to your children through literature. This valuable volume discusses more than 200 classics by great authors that identify Biblical ideals and will give your children a better understanding of forming Christian character. Expand your child's interests and make your home the beginning place for developing leaders. For decades this book has been bonding and blessing families who discover the delight of enjoying books together. Paperback, illustrated, 120 pages, Only $19.95. Available at FACE.net.

The Foundation for American Christian Education (FACE) was founded in 1965 with the purpose of reminding Americans of their unique heritage of Christian liberty, documented in our nation's primary sources. FACE remains steadfast in its goal to re-arm Americans with the principles of liberty that formed our nation, enabling them to be Keepers of Liberty and excellent Christian scholars. Our threefold mission:

1. **Safeguarding His Story** by preserving primary sources that mark milestones in Constitutional history and self-government housed in the Hall-Slater Library and Teaching Center.
2. **Teaching Biblical principles** and America's Christian history to teachers, families, pastors and Christian leaders.
3. **Planting the seeds of Christian self-government** by publishing a Biblically-based curriculum to restore Biblical principles and Christian character to our Republic.

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Happy summer reading. Like us on Facebook and help spread the joy.

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