

Book Recommendations

I am tempted to downplay the role of books in our children's lives. I'm not sure why. Perhaps I'm concerned that some parents will believe their parental duty is fulfilled by filling their library with the right books, or maybe I'm concerned that some child will find life stuck in the pages of fantasy, instead of lived out in the real world. I definitely don't want them more excited about fictional creations of human imagination than they are about God's Word. In any case, we have hundreds of books for our children. We must believe that they have some significant impact.

I want my kids to read some of the books I read when I was a kid. I suppose that is nostalgia, or maybe I want to share some common experience with my kids. Books like "Where the Red Fern Grows" and "My Side of the Mountain" somehow capture a part of my childhood.

Some books serve as educational experiences. They take my kids to far away places that I cannot, explain things that I don't remember, and tell stories that I don't have time for. They reinforce things that I am trying to teach, and fill in gaps that I don't even know exist.

I love biographies. Most great men and women are remarkably ordinary. That is what I like about them. We've bought our kids several sets of biographies because I want them to see the impact of various lives lived with faith and vision—just in case our lives are not inspiring enough. No parent strives to raise ordinary children. We want extraordinary kids. Maybe exposure to some extraordinary lives will help them along that path.

Occasionally we'll get a book or a series just to spark the interest of our children in reading. It might be silly, funny, or suspenseful, or it might be about Indians, dinosaurs, princesses, or whatever our children are enthralled with at the moment.

So when it's all said and done, I guess we take all this book stuff pretty seriously after all.

There are countless good Christian books out there for kids. I've listed a few of them on a book list that some friends helped me put together. (Thanks Laura and Jenn!) Christian books for adults tend to get more doctrinal and are much harder to recommend (I even have some reservations on some of the books I listed), but there are a zillion good books for kids.

If you wanted to start a children's library at church, you could have parents team together and each spend \$30 on listed items. That should give you a great start. You can also keep your eyes open for these titles at garage sales and second-hand stores.