

YEAR 3 HISTORY READ-ALOUD SUGGESTIONS

As part of the course, you are encouraged to select and read four books to your child(ren), one to go along with each of the four units in the course. It is recommended that you read for at least 20 minutes at the end of each lesson. However, to finish most books by the end of the unit, a longer reading time will be required. Some parents choose to do history lessons twice a week but the read-aloud book more often.

Books on this suggested list are ordered by Jenny Phillips' top picks, with #1 being the most highly recommended in each age category. Most book suggestions include a review by Jenny.

Year 3 History Book Pack

To make your homeschool experience easier and less expensive (two of the main goals of The Good and the Beautiful), we offer a *Year 3 History Book Pack*. This pack includes the following top-recommended book for each unit, each of which is recommended for all ages (Grades 1–12):

Unit 1: *Slave Boy in Judea*

Unit 2: *Black Hawk*

Unit 3: *Race for the Prairie*

Unit 4: *The Winged Watchman*

Unit 1 Suggested Read-Aloud Books

All Ages (Grades 1–12)

1. ***Slave Boy in Judea*** by Josephine Sanger Lau
(Published by The Good and the Beautiful Library)
Captured by Romans in the forests of Gaul, Madoc is sold as a slave to a Roman centurion stationed in Judea. Though he is not a hard master, Madoc is determined to escape and find his mother. However, the story takes a turn when Madoc and his master meet followers of Jesus and hear about the new way of living He taught. This story is not only engaging and packed with great messages, but it also teaches about the historical time period and the growing influence of the early Christian faith.

2. ***Herodotus and the Road to History*** by Jeanne Bendick

This book offers a fun way to learn about a great historical figure—Herodotus. Travel with Herodotus to discover what mysterious and exciting things he did and saw as he traveled to distant lands such as

Syria, Egypt, and Persia. This 77-page book features large print and nice black-and-white pictures on nearly every page.

Younger Children Only (Grades 1–4)

1. ***The Golden Bull: A Mesopotamian Adventure*** by Marjorie Cowley

The official description reads: “The story takes place in Mesopotamia 5000 years ago. The drought has lasted for months and the farmlands on the outskirts of the city of Ur have been devastated. The parents of Jomar and Zefa have no choice but to send their children away from their failing farm to seek employment in Ur. At fourteen, Jomar is old enough to apprentice with Sidah, a master goldsmith who works for the temple of the moon god.” This book contains no objectionable material and is packed with historical details about the life and history of Mesopotamia.

Older Children Only (Grades 7+)

1. ***Titus: A Comrade of the Cross*** by Florence Morse Kingsley

Set in Israel at the time of Christ's ministry, this compelling, heart-warming story follows the fictional characters Titus and his crippled brother Stephen who are the sons of a thief. Titus has been taught to hate Jews and is already part of his father's thieving ring, but Stephen is startled by news of a man who can heal the blind and crippled. Could Stephen be healed? The words of Jesus are the words he actually spoke in the King James Version of the Bible. This book was first published in 1895. The writing is beautiful, but some children may struggle with the elevated language and some chapters that deviate from the main plot. The story is engaging and fast-paced in many places, but slower in other places. The book is both tragic and joyful and includes topics of abuse and death (although not graphic). This book is definitely best for children of a mature age.

Unit 2 Suggested Read-Aloud Books

All Ages (Grades 1–12)

1. ***Black Hawk*** by Arthur J. Beckhard

(Published by The Good and the Beautiful Library)

Before dying, Pyesa, Black Hawk's father and chief of his people, commanded his son to defend their land from whites who were trying to force the tribe off their land. Black Hawk, however, has no taste for killing and scalping and goes through great internal conflict. The story of this great-hearted leader shows how some whites and Native Americans were peaceful and kind, while others were not. Based on true events, this powerful book teaches about a difficult time period and shares profound, unique messages about love, faith, mercy, humility, friendship, forgiveness, and faith.

2. ***Doe Sia*** by Kenneth Thomasma

Lost in a blinding snowstorm, two brave girls join together to survive: a Native-American girl and a handcart-pioneer girl from Denmark. This story is engaging, contains wonderful messages, and has high educational value. My ten-year-old daughter and I read this book together and loved it.

3. ***Naya Nuki: The Shoshoni Girl Who Ran***
by Kenneth Thomasma

This is a great book from Kenneth Thomasma's series of books about Native American children. It was not my very favorite book from the series, but it is definitely interesting and worthwhile. The story, based on true events, follows a Shoshone girl who is taken captive by a rival Native American tribe but escapes and travels alone for a month, trying to survive as she finds her way home.

4. ***His Indian Brother*** by Hazel Wilson

(Published by The Good and the Beautiful Library)

Brad and his father paddle up the river to land they have just purchased in the wilds of Maine. After building a simple cabin and starting a garden, Brad's father leaves to get the rest of his family. Brad is brave and industrious while his father is gone, but the young teenager starts to worry when

he sees signs of Native Americans passing through the area. Things, however, go terribly wrong for Brad, and it appears his father may never return. Will he need the help of the Native Americans to survive? Based loosely on a true experience, this exciting book shows how two very different teenage boys, both of whom think they are superior to the other, learn important life lessons about respect, tolerance, humility, brotherhood, hard work, and appreciation. Beautiful writing, wonderful messages, an engaging plot, and fantastic educational value make this book a top pick. This is just the kind of book that engenders the love of reading worthwhile, uplifting books.

Younger Children Only (Grades 1–4)

1. ***Tikta'liktak: An Inuit-Eskimo Legend*** by James Houston

Young Eskimo hunter Tikta'liktak, from the Canadian Arctic, is carried far out to sea on a drifting ice floe. Will his battle with despair, wild animals, hunger, and the fierce elements ultimately bring him back to his family?

Intermediate Ages and Older (Grades 5–12)

1. ***The Storyteller's Beads*** by Jane Kurtz

This 150-page fictional book is an intriguing and very informative look into some of the issues facing modern Africa. Two different teenage girls—Sahay and Rahel—from different tribes of Ethiopia, both with their own powerful stories, must flee from Ethiopia. They are separated from their families as they undertake the harrowing journey. Sahay has been taught to fear and hate Rahel's tribe, loathing to even look at her or touch her. However, Rahel is blind, and Sahay becomes the only person left who can help her. This is truly a beautiful, heart-warming story about tolerance, courage, faith, friendship, strong families, and compassion. I love how stories of the Bible are woven so naturally and beautifully into the story, giving Rahel courage to face her blindness and the journey she must make.

2. ***Mansa Musa and the Empire of Mali*** by P. James Oliver

In a mix of historical fiction, nonfiction, and biography, *Mansa Musa* pulls readers into the medieval empire of Mali. It focuses on the interesting life story of the emperor Mansa Musa, who ruled Mali in the early 1300s. The book is engaging and should be enjoyed by children ages nine and older as a read-aloud or ages eleven and older as independent reading.

3. ***Sing Down the Moon*** by Scott O'Dell

The Long Walk of the Navajo people is told through the fictional character Bright Morning, a young Navajo girl. This story is well-written and engaging and has very high educational value. It is definitely very sad and does not gloss over the wrongs endured by the Navajo people, but I didn't feel it was overly dark. This is a very insightful look into a difficult subject.

Older Children Only (Grades 7+)

1. ***I Needed a Neighbour*** by Patricia St. John

Patricia St. John, with her skillful writing, tells the story of one family in famine-stricken modern-day Africa. I had never read a book about refugees or refugee camps, so I was grateful for the knowledge and insight that I gained through reading the book. This story has some intense and sad parts, although I do not feel it is too graphically treated. I would recommend the book for children 10 years and older. The book features clean language, Christian messages, and a compelling story.

Unit 3 Suggested Read-Aloud Books

All Ages (Grades 1–12)

1. ***Race for the Prairie*** by Aileen Fisher

(Published by The Good and the Beautiful Library)

Becky and her family leave their farmland in the Ozarks to join nearly 100,000 people in a race for homesteads during the Cherokee Strip Land Run of 1893. With a fast horse named Sprinter, Becky's family hopes to get some of the best land, but unexpected events threaten their dreams. Interesting characters, an exciting plot, and feel-good messages all come together in this wonderful, historical-fiction book.

2. ***The Cabin Faced West*** by Jean Fritz

This is such a fantastic book! When Anne Hamilton's family moves to the West in 18th-century America, the area is so remote that only two families live there. Readers will love the characters, engaging plot, and vivid writing as they learn about a previous era and feel both the challenges and wonders of the new land through Anne's eyes. The warm family relationships are in stark contrast to many popular books. Themes include gratitude, adjusting to change, love of learning, hard work, strong families, and compassion.

3. ***By the Great Horn Spoon!*** by Sid Fleischman

In this exciting California Gold Rush adventure, twelve-year-old Jack and his butler, Praiseworthy, set out to strike it rich and save Jack's family from their financial problems. Sid Fleischman's writing is hilarious and witty, and this book is filled with metaphors, idioms, and wordplay. It also teaches readers fascinating information about the gold rush.

Younger Children Only (Grades 1–4)

1. ***Over the Hills to Nugget*** by Aileen Fisher

(Published by The Good and the Beautiful Library)

Ernie Brett never could have guessed what surprises lay in store for his family when his father moves them from the shanty mining camp of Skillet Gulch over the hills to Nugget to settle on a new ranch. Set

in the high Rocky Mountains of Colorado Territory during the gold rush years, this novel explores some of the risks, hardships, joys, and pastimes of the era. Through hard work and ingenuity, Ernie and Papa are able to provide for the family and improve the farm. When tragedy strikes, will the Bretts have the courage to stay on their beloved ranch?

2. ***Gold Mountain*** by Gwendolen Lampshire Hayden and Pearl Clements Gischler

(Published by The Good and the Beautiful Library)

Daniel and Besty's family are some of the very first people to arrive on a little mountain in Oregon where gold was discovered. It's not long until a whole town of muslin tents pops up. Will the family find gold, and if they do, can they find a place to hide it? I give *Gold Mountain* top scores in every category: educational worth, literary merit, moral excellence, and entertainment value.

3. ***Redwood Pioneer*** by Betty Stirling

(Published by The Good and the Beautiful Library)

Set in the 1870s, this story follows Mike O'Grady and his family as they leave their potato farm to settle in the redwood forest of California. Ten-year-old Mike is sad to leave the farm, but he soon finds an exciting new home where beautiful cascading waterfalls await discovery and grizzly bears roam free. Mike's adventures combine in a fun, wholesome book packed with good messages.

Intermediate Ages and Older (Grades 5–12)

1. ***Bound for Oregon*** by Jean Van Leeuwen

Loosely based on the journals of a real person, *Bound for Oregon* is a very well-written, worthwhile book about life on the Oregon Trail. Not only is the story engaging, but the educational and moral value are fantastic. God and faith are woven heartwarmingly throughout the book. I suggest the book for ages 10+, as there are some topics, such as death, that are appropriately treated but are not suited for small children.

2. ***Seaman: The Dog Who Explored the West with Lewis & Clark*** by Gail Langer Karwoski

I was hesitant to read a book centered around a dog, but it was a fantastic read. It was approached in a way that will appeal to children and bring the journey of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to life. It held my attention to the end, and I learned a lot. Good writing, combined with educational value, make this a great read. There is one instance that could be viewed as taking God's name in vain, but I personally felt it was not.

3. ***Path to the Pacific: The Story of Sacagawea*** by Neta Lohnes Frazier

The story of Sacagawea is told in an engaging and historically sound way. Although the book is not really fictionalized, it is not dry. Some original journal excerpts are included. I loved the book, but it may be a little over the heads of younger children.

Unit 4 Suggested Read-Aloud Books

All Ages (Grades 1–12)

1. ***The Winged Watchman*** by Hilda Van Stockum

This is a fantastic book about the Nazi occupation of Holland. The story and the characters are compelling, and the writing is beautiful. It is written in such a way that the reader gains a deep and personal understanding of the Nazi occupation and the trials and tribulations it brought, but not in a graphic, depressing way. Instead, the book focuses on the goodness and strength of people. The book is full of wonderful messages and character-building principles.

2. ***Shadow of His Hand*** by Wendy Lawton

This is the true story of Anita Dittman’s life during World War II. This is one of the most inspiring Holocaust stories I have read. It focuses on Anita’s hope and increased faith in God as she learns that, no matter how chaotic her world seems, she has a Heavenly Father who is always watching out for her. This book is more appropriate for younger audiences than some books about World War II, as it is gently told with less violence and depressing details, while still illustrating the pain and suffering of the Jews.

3. ***Henry’s Red Sea*** by Barbara Smucker

The back cover summarizes this fantastic story: “World War II is coming to an end, but many of the homes and villages of the Mennonites in the Russian Ukraine have been burned and destroyed. Many of the people have died or been taken prisoner. Those who remain are desperate to escape. So hundreds start west, looking for new homes where there is peace and safety.” This book is an example of how an author can write about a really complicated topic in a way that is inspiring and uplifting while still helping the reader deeply understand the difficulties people went through. This book is deeply faith-based, showing a reliance on and love for God. It was a truly delightful read, and I can’t wait to share it with my children.

4. ***Snow Treasure*** by Marie McSwigan

This story takes place in Norway during WWII and is based on a true story, although it contains fictional characters. The book is exciting, well-written, and packed with educational value as it teaches about the Nazi occupation of Norway and the way of life in a small Norwegian village in 1940. Peter and his friends are given the task to slip nine million dollars in gold past the Nazi soldiers as they ride their sleds. The story models courage and determination and contains no objectionable material.

5. ***Red Berries, White Clouds, Blue Sky*** by Sandra Dallas

This is my top recommended historical fiction book about the Japanese internment camps during World War II. Tomi Itano, a 12-year-old second-generation Japanese American lives on a strawberry farm in California. Everything changes for Tomi after the Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor, and she eventually finds herself in an internment camp, trying to adjust to a new life. This book shows the true, hard facts about a dark period of history, but mixes it with the powerful messages of hope, forgiveness, and service. This is a very worthwhile and engaging book for children of all ages.

Intermediate Ages and Older (Grades 5–12)

1. ***Surviving Hitler: A Boy in the Nazi Death Camps*** by Andrea Warren

In this true story, twelve-year-old Jack and his family are separated from each other when they are rounded up by the Nazis. Jack is shipped to the Blechhammer concentration camp, having no idea what has happened to the other members of his family. However, it is thoughts of reuniting with his family one day that keeps him fighting desperately for his life as he experiences terrible conditions in the camp. The back cover reads: “Award-winning author Andrea Warren has crafted an unforgettable true story of a boy becoming a man in the shadow of the Third Reich.” This book explores a very dark period of history in a way that I feel is appropriate

for children. I loved the messages of hope, strength, friendship, and courage.

2. ***Enemy Brothers*** by Constance Savery

This book is a timeless treasure. Written in 1943, the author did not even know the outcome of World War II as she wrote about it. The characters are well-developed, engaging, and convincing, and the story is intriguing. I also love the fact that the book gives deep insight into history and human nature, and the characters have high moral character. The writing is fantastic and I highly recommend this book. The summary reads: “British airman Dym Ingleford is convinced that the young German prisoner, Max Eckermann, is his brother Anthony who was kidnapped years before. Raised in the Nazi ideology, Tony has by chance tumbled into British hands. Dym has brought him back, at least temporarily, to the family he neither remembers nor will acknowledge as his own.”

Older Children Only (Grades 7+)

1. ***The Hiding Place*** by Corrie ten Boom

Corrie ten Boom tells of her incredible and courageous involvement in the Dutch underground and her ensuing experience in a Nazi camp. This intriguing, true story is packed with faith in God and character-building messages. I suggest the book for ages 13+ because of the difficult, dire situations which Corrie faces, such as having to walk naked before guards and being cruelly treated. The material is not overly graphic or inappropriate, but it will be better processed by older children. Also, on pages 64–65, there is a sentence where it says the grandmother talks to her granddaughter about sex education the night before she is married. The conversation is not given—just briefly and appropriately referenced.