

20 Books for Teens to Read Before They Turn 18

This is the ultimate bucket list of books for teens (and tweens) to read before they turn 18 - including a mix of classics, young adult fiction, and non-fiction. Parents may even want to re-read or cross some of these off their own list for the first time!

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak This book takes place in 1939 Germany. Death is a major character and books are saviors. This is an intense story that will take your teen into the heart of Nazi Germany.

The Hate You Give by Angie Thomas This may be one of the most powerful books of the decade, and it addresses themes of race and community in a poignant way that will speak to any teen. This book is an award winner and one for both parents and their children.

Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher This book is known for inspiring a Netflix Original Series about mental health and suicide. This is a book with graphic stories and imagery but understanding the reasons why Hannah Baker decides to commit suicide is something that will stay with readers in important and impactful ways for a long time.

The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros This book is a series of vignettes surrounding the experiences of Esperanza Cordero, a Latina girl living in Chicago. It will take readers along a coming-of-age story that explores happiness, heartbreak, and everything in between.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time by Mark Haddon This novel centres around a boy with autism and a mystery that the readers get to experience from the perspective of Christopher John Francis Boone. He doesn't understand human emotion and living this mystery through this angle is a thoughtful way for teens to understand the ways in which people can differ yet also be the same.

A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle Though this book recently became popular again due to the release of the movie version, the movie is not a substitute for this beautiful story about family and the process of embracing who you truly are through the angle of space and time exploration.

Educated by Tara Westover This is an unforgettable memoir for both adults and teens that has won many awards, including the recommendation of Barack Obama. Raised as a survivalist in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was kept out of school and survived a childhood of violence and isolation. This would be a wonderful book to read at the same time as your teen for the purpose of family discussion.

Wonder by R.J. Palacio Augie was born with a facial difference that kept him out of school for years. In fifth grade, he discovers what it's like to crave normalcy and how difference can be the most meaningful teacher of all.

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee To Kill a Mockingbird has been voted as one of the best novels of the twentieth century. Themes of prejudice, beauty, and inequality shine in this must-read classic for everyone aged preteen and above.

[I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban by Malala Yousafzai](#)

This memoir was written by the youngest ever recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. This story highlights the power that every person has to make a difference.

[Crenshaw by Katherine Applegate](#) This novel can be easily overlooked for its simplicity, but preteens will treasure the story that brings the experience of homelessness to light as well as the power and redemption of imagination.

[Being Jazz: My Life as a \(Transgender\) Teen by Jazz Jennings](#) This memoir of transgender advocate, Jazz Jennings, has inspired a TV show on TLC. It has also given voice to a trailblazer that has opened the conversation of gender identity to all in a real and wise way.

[I Wish You All the Best by Mason Deaver](#) This story is a celebration of friendship, heartbreak, and love and centres around Ben, a character who comes out as non-binary to their parents. Ben struggles with an anxiety disorder, but the friendship that blossoms in this book will be redeeming and inspiring for all readers.

[Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson](#) The author shares beautiful poetry that will speak to tweens and teens about her experience of growing up in the South as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s. The poems are charged with the themes of self-awareness and identity.

[The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie](#) This story begins on a Spokane Indian Reservation, and it is both heart-breaking and funny — a perfect combination for young teens.

[The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry](#) This is a story from 1943 that will take preteens into another world. The power of love is the theme, and the feeling of both fairy-tale and science fiction will appeal to many.

[The Four Agreements by Don Miguel Ruiz](#) The compelling advice in this book given by Don Miguel Ruiz is perfect for teens going off to college or beginning a new stage of independence. It is a book that can be re-read all throughout life without losing its power.

[The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky](#) This coming-of-age story is unforgettable as it explores what it's like to feel like you're on the fringe. The characters deal with loss and love and everything in between and can feel very relatable to teens.

[Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank](#) This classic is a testament to the human spirit and the power of hope. Though there are now many decades separating Anne's life in Nazi-occupied Holland and your teen's, the way Anne bares her soul will close that gap instantly.

[I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou](#) This memoir by Maya Angelou is another classic that explores loneliness and bigotry. It is both poetic and raw, and a must-read for everyone.

Reading can be a great way for teens to unplug and relax