

ready for chapter books?

By Mary Ashby-Green*

Is your child an independent reader and ready for chapter books at an early age? Here are some great suggestions of suitable chapter books for your budding bookworm.

Your primary school child might be a good reader and ready for the independent reading of chapter books, but sometimes it's hard to know what books are suitable. Finding age-appropriate books for the school-aged child though, especially if they are advanced readers, is important. Just because your child is a good reader and can read a certain book, it doesn't mean the material is right for them or that they are ready to read about older children's issues. Keep an eye on what they are reading, and take into account your child's experiences and personality. Thankfully there are plenty of books (both old and new) available that will extend your child's learning and comprehension, but are still written with the younger child's experiences and maturity in mind.

Most parents are aware of monitoring what their children watch on TV and online, and the same applies to book reading – if you don't know the book yourself, ask the bookshop, the librarian or other parent's opinions about whether they think the book is suitable for a particular age group.

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here are some of my clients' favourites that you can get from your local library. Many of these series also have websites that invite readers to interact with their favourite stories.

'The Magic Tree House' series by Mary Pope Osborne. Children can go to the website and earn stamps in a 'reading passport' by answering comprehension questions about the story.

'Just annoying', series by Andy Griffiths. Children can answer a few questions on the 'annoying test' so they can find out if the book is something they would enjoy. Very popular with boys, in particular.

'Horrible Histories' have over 60 titles by Terry Deary, Peter Hepplewhite and Neil Tonge and published by Scholastic books. These series are written for kids concentrating on the unusual, gory or unpleasant facts (but are often quite humorous) about events/ages in history. Horrible Science is the spin-off series and is proving equally as popular.

others include:

'Cobblestone St Cousins' series by Cynthia Ryland

'Horrid Henry' series by Francesca Simon

'Aussie Nibbles' series

'Famous Five' series by Enid Blyton

'A-Z mysteries' by Ron Roy

'Geronimo Stilton' series

'Diary of a Wimpy Kid' by Jeff Kinney

'Beast Quest' series by Adam Blake

'Knights of the Kitchen Table' series

'Flat Stanley' series by Jeff Brown

'Ball Park Mysteries' by David Kelly

'Andrew Lost' series by JC Greenberg

'Goosebumps' series by R.L. Stine

'The Cowgirl Aunt of Harriet Bean' by Alexander McCall Smith

The author Roald Dahl remains a favourite with just about everybody.