
Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 03-04-2008 11:09

Where The Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak. The greatest children's book ever. I can recite the entire thing from memory.

The Voyage of QV66 by Penelope Lively. Fantastic in the anthropomorphism department and one of the most amusing post-apocalyptic novels ever written. The image of aggressive packs of dogs roaming the street of Manchester singing football songs is quite vivid and Stanley the monkey is a wonderfully flawed hero.

Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Gangster Octopus - 03-04-2008 11:19

Probably Biggles Fails To Return.

Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Crusoe - 03-04-2008 11:20

Tootles the Taxi. Proper old-school anthropomorphic cars.

And I adored the A.Mazing Monsters series as a child. Some amateurish artwork only added to the charm. I think I had the four original books - I certainly remember Webfoot, The Great Gulper and Wormball.

<http://www.amazingmonsters.com/monsters/>

Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 03-04-2008 11:25

GO - heh.

Wait, that's not actually a book, is it?

Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Gangster Octopus - 03-04-2008 11:32

'Tis.

Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 03-04-2008 11:37

Go on. It sounds like a Monty Python sketch.

What's it about?

Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by ursus arctos - 03-04-2008 11:37

D'Aulaire's Book of Great Myths
All-Star Baseball
Winnie the Pooh (not a surprise, I know)
The "Landmark" series of American History books for "young adults"; there were more than 200. I read them all.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Andy C - 03-04-2008 11:38

Blimey, GO, you were advanced. I wouldn't have called Frank McCourt a children's writer at all.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 03-04-2008 11:39

So you are a spiritual Winnipegger, Urs!

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by The Chubby Cyclist - 03-04-2008 11:40

The House At Pooh Corner by AA Milne and EH Shephard (slightly controversially going for the sequel)

and

How Tom Beat Captain Najork and His Hired Sportsment by Russel Hoban and Quentin Blake

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Gangster Octopus - 03-04-2008 11:47

Frank McCourtQue?

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by ursus arctos - 03-04-2008 11:58

<http://images.amazon.com/images/P/0684848783.01.LZZZZZZZ.jpg>

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Gangster Octopus - 03-04-2008 12:00

He's no Captain W.E. Johns...

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by imp - 03-04-2008 13:32

Of late - The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales. When I was a kid I read tons but can't really remember much. Didn't go for the classic series like CS Lewis, or much fantasy stuff. I liked stories about sullen, lonely kids. And the Pan books of ghost stories, the more grisly the better.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by toro toro toro - 03-04-2008 13:40

The Hounds of the Morrigan
The Three Royal Monkeys
every single Asterix book, but especially The Twelve Tasks of Asterix

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Gangster Octopus - 03-04-2008 13:51

imp wrote:

I liked stories about sullen, lonely kids. Isn't it surprising when something doesn't surprise you...

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 03-04-2008 14:06

Good call on Asterix, toro. Though I preferred the currently highly-relevant Obelix and Co, which is as good an explanation as any of the current sub-prime crisis.

Here's another question for the thread: Asterix or Tintin?

Tintin edges it for me, I think, but it's awfully close.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Reed Miller - 03-04-2008 14:07

Too many to mention, many of which I can't recall the titles.

But one that sticks out was Strange but True Sports Stories which had great cartoon illustrations. I must have read that 30 times.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by The Chubby Cyclist - 03-04-2008 14:11

Asterix in Switzerland and Asterix at the Olympics are my two Asterix books of choice.

I always struggled to enjoy Tintin, but never did with Asterix.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 03-04-2008 14:35

Read as a kid:

The William books

The Jennings books

Most of E. Nesbit, especially Five Children and It and The Phoenix and the Carpet

Mustn't forget Alice of course.

Read as an adult (with a kid):

Goodnight Moon

The Box of Delights

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Bafflin Smoke Signals - 03-04-2008 15:25

I used to love the Just William and Jennings and Darbyshire books, too. I think I preferred the latter.

I can remember a line from one even now. Jennings and Darbyshire are attempting to creep back into school late at night, up a staircase, but Darbyshire is wearing flippers on his feet.

Jennings, exasperated, orders him to take them off, because "...every time you take a step, you sound like a round of applause." Which I thought was comedy gold.

As for Asterix versus Tintin...

I was introduced to Asterix books as a student by a Welsh-speaking friend (who said the word-play in the Welsh translations were as good, if not better, than the English versions).

I'd never seen them before, and couldn't believe how they'd created an entire, logical world with such rigorous graphical attention to detail, yet still managed to go beyond that and include that joyful, slapstick violence and humour, so that soon you took the drawings for granted.

After I'd worked my way through the lot, someone said I might like the Tintin books. But although individual Tintin frames are things of beauty (lending themselves nicely to all sorts of marketable products) I find the stories so earnest and boring I struggle to finish one, and I've never wanted to own the books, while I have almost a complete collection of Asterix. It's Asterix for me, every time.

(Mind you, the last one, Le ciel lui tombe sur la tête, is rubbish.)

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 03-04-2008 16:07

I remember the flipper incident. I wonder what kind of teacher Anthony Buckeridge was? Well liked I suspect, but effective too?

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Gangster Octopus - 03-04-2008 16:12

Count me in with the William and Jennings books. I never really got on with Bunter, it seemed too much as though it was from a different planet.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Ginger Yellow - 03-04-2008 16:15

Asterix for me, partly because my parents made me read Tintin in French to improve my language skills, whereas I read a lot more Asterix in English. Also because I could never get past the fact that the villains would almost always have got away with their cunning plans if just they hadn't tried to kill Tintin. He's really not a very good reporter.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Andy C - 03-04-2008 16:19

Even when very young I could tell that the quality of writing of AA Milne and Kenneth Grahame was a cut above. And I reckon that Norman Hunter (when not chewing on the odd tibia) was pretty adroit, too, in the Professor Branestawm books.

One book that I recall reading several times over was The Red House Boys by John Sweet - I'd like to get hold of a copy now to see if I can still detect whatever it was that I found so entertaining about it.

And another supporter of Jennings and Just William here, too.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by imp - 03-04-2008 18:03

Been trying to get the impettes into Jennings and William, but though they try to be vaguely amused for my benefit (given that I keep laughing as I read them), they're not what I'd call converts. The standard of writing in both is outstanding, in a very pooterish, English way. Still, at least I'm getting a kick out of them.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Reed Miller - 03-04-2008 18:41

I was very keen on the Danny Dunn series for one school year, either third or fourth grade. I read all 15 of them that year.

Danny and his friends Irene and Joe would get up to all sorts of adventures, scrapes and shenanigans with the professor/inventor who boarded in Danny and his mother's house.

It would be interesting to read them again. They were written from the mid fifties through the mid 1970s, so the science and technology presented as futuristic would now seem either very primitive or prescient or both.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danny_Dunn

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Tony C - 03-04-2008 18:42

I swear to God that Anthony Buckeridge was my favourite author until I was well into my twenties.

I'd have given anything in my early teens to go to public school, and realised my dreams of derring-do adventures after lights out (steady!), playing cricket on lush green fields and plenty of Latin vocab.

Wizard!

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by boris - 03-04-2008 21:12

My favourite kids' book was Sword in the Stone, which has remained my favourite telling of the Arthur tale. I also like A Kid for Two Farthings, although I'd be hard pressed now to give a synopsis, but I read it loads of times as a fledgling teenager.

Also all the Michael Hardcastle footy books, which allowed me to fantasise that I was actually any good at the game, transposing myself into the lead characters' roles.

Unfortunately, my kids don't seem to be particularly into reading, and I'm struggling to get them to put aside their Nintendos and Play Stations and pick up a book, even though I buy ones that I think will appeal to them.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by twohundredpercent - 03-04-2008 22:42

Wow. I'd forgotten all about Tootles The Taxi. The memories come flooding back.

Mine were Charlie & The Chocolate Factory and Danny The Champion Of The World. I never got on with James & The Giant Peach. The Twits was pretty good, though.

Should I ever be given a pile of dead racehorses as part of someone's will, I'll start a company called "Hugtight Sticky Glue".

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by ad hoc - 04-04-2008 06:58

As a child I enjoyed the William books, the Professor Branestawm books, the Arabel's Raven books, Winnie the Pooh, Roald Dahl's stuff, and Thomas the Tank Engine.

As a father I cannot say enough good things about the worksof Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler. I can recite "Room on the Broom" by heart, and the Gruffalo is pretty good too (they may have jumped the shark slightly with the Gruffalo's Child though).

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by boris - 04-04-2008 12:44

ad hoc wrote:

As a father I cannot say enough good things about the worksof Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler. I can recite "Room on the Broom" by heart, and the Gruffalo is pretty good too (they may have jumped the shark slightly with the Gruffalo's Child though).

Totally and utterly agree with all that. And don't forget "The Smartest Giant in Town" and "The Snail and the Whale", both of which add greatly to their canon. I must admit that I had high expectations of "The Gruffalo's Child", but it failed to live up to the high standards they'd set in their other books.

Others that my kids absolutely love include We're Going on a Bear Hunt, Peep-o, and Where's My Teddy. All top-notch stuff.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by hobbes - 04-04-2008 15:04

My all time favourite by a country mile is This Time of Darkness by H.M. Hoover. It was dark and compelling when I was a kid. I re-read it recently and it's as good as I remember. Really dystopian but rewarding none the less. It's like 1984 with a happy ending.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by EIM - 04-04-2008 15:23

I'm with Gramsci all the way on this thread. Check out the book bit on my profile. And although I loved Asterix, Tintin is my homeboy. Red Rackham's Treasure was, I think, the first I read, and I was hooked after that. I still am. I want to buy them all again for if and when I have kids.

Also a big shout out to Roald Dahl. Danny Champion of the World and Matilda especially. I love the strong anti-authoritarian undercurrents in them. Pure underdog fairy-tales. And better than anything that's fallen out of the pen of J.K. Rowling.

I remember getting The Witches and sitting on a beanbag to read it all in one sitting. Magical.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 07-04-2008 16:23

Good shout on The Hounds of the Morrigan, Toro.

as well as CS Lewis, Arthur Ransome, E.E. Nesbit and Roald Dahl I was a big fan of Philippa Pearce, especially Tom's Midnight Garden, and Frances Hodgson Burnett (A Little Princess is great). A more modern classic series is The Dark is Rising by Susan Cooper. For younger children, A.A. Milne is incomparable, and Peter Pan is great.

I confess a terrible weakness in this regard though. I collect antiquarian illustrated children's books from c.1900-c.1939. A rash and costly hobby for someone as perennially skint as I am.

My favourite illustrators: Rackham, Dulac, and more recently Jan Piekowski.

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Re:Judge Me by My Favourite Children's Books

Posted by Matej - 07-04-2008 17:48

Lloyd Alexander's The Prydain Chronicles

Asterix

Sport, by Louise Fitzhugh (a 'spin-off' from Harriet the Spy)

CS Lewis left me cold, Roald Dahl reminded me too much of claymation, and I never read a TinTin story.

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