

Ten great books to read to your children

By Chris Barnardo

There are so many fantastic books out there that any useful list of books is going to miss out many favourites. But here you'll find a short list of some of the best books that my

children and I have discovered and enjoyed. Have fun reading to your kids, put on funny accents for the different characters to fire up their imaginations (even though my

accents are terrible and wander around the globe, my kids love it and always beg for another story or another chapter).

Cautionary Tales For Children

Hilaire Belloc

Read these wonderful poems to your children and the stories and rhymes will stay with them for the rest of their lives. Filled with wit and irony, the tales are imbued with Edwardian English understatement and implausible situations.

Just William

Richmal Crompton, abridged by Martin Jarvis

A definite forerunner to Bart Simpson and every bit as funny, if not funnier, the original books were shortened to adapt them for radio, and it is the abridged versions which make for an excellent bedtime read.

The Twits

Roald Dahl

Famous for writing Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Matilda and The BFG (Big Friendly Giant), his inventive use of language and darker side to his stories engage perfectly with a children's way of looking at the world.

Emily The Strange

Cosmic Debris

Be spellbound by its graphic style, quirky story and defiant but adorable adolescent anti heroine.

Fox in Socks

Dr. Seuss

The classic story of Dr. Seuss's mischievous tongue twisting Mr. Fox, as he tries his irrepressible best to get the grumpy Mr. Knox to say the most difficult rhymes.

Sock Monkey Goes to Hollywood: A Star Is Bathed

Cece Bell

You'll love this book because of the lovely illustrations and the humour, and your kids will probably identify with the bath-hating Sock Monkey.

The Happy Prince, & other stories

Oscar Wilde

Famous for his ironic wit, and being imprisoned for being gay, Wilde wrote these fantastic fables for his own sons. The happy Prince still moves me to tears each time I read it.

The Little Prince

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

A beautiful story about the importance of commitment and love and keeping a childlike perspective as you grow up; to be read and re-read.

Artemis Fowl

Eoin Colfer

A clever boy, a strong girl and a trustworthy father figure are all glued together with an exciting storyline, Artemis Fowl is extremely well written older children's book.

Edgar Allan Poe's Tales of Mystery and Madness

Edgar Allan Poe, illustrated by Gris Grimly

Grisly, fantastically illustrated and dark, not everyone's bedtime reading, but fascinating to many kids interested in gripping stories.