



Run showed that if you're poor you can never make a single mistake
Caitlin Moran

50 books every child should read



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Our literary experts select the books that all children should have on their shelves. Have we missed your favourite? Tell us in the comments below what we've got wrong (and right)

1/ The Hobbit by J. R. R. Tolkien

Ignore the film and the whimsical elves and it's the greatest children's book ever written. Quiet, conservative Bilbo Baggins leaves respectability behind to join 12 dwarfs in their quest to regain their kingdom under the Lonely Mountain after their kindred were consumed by Smaug the dragon. Trolls, giants, goblins, huge spiders, wolves and trials by fire, water, hunger and fear punctuate their journey, but Bilbo's greatest moment comes when lost in the Misty Mountains, playing riddles for his life with the evil Gollum in the dark. Here, in despair, he finds a magic ring, which renders the wearer invisible — but which also carries the malign power later explained in *The Lord of the Rings*. *The Hobbit* is a book about how a small person becomes a hero. Funny, frightening, dense with detail and gloriously vivid, it is the one adventure story every eight-year-old should have. (Recommended for 7+ years) Amanda Craig, *The Times* children's book critic

47/ Wolf Brother by Michelle Paver

An orphaned 12-year-old boy and his wolf companion prowl Stone Age Europe in the first instalment of Paver's gripping and convincing *Chronicles of Ancient Darkness* series. The action unfolds through both human and wolf perspectives; the sights, tastes and smells of the forest are palpable. (7+ years) TG

48/ Vice Versa by F. Anstey

Subtitled *A Lesson in Fathers*, this late-Victorian classic takes some shrewd digs at parents who still insist that schooling is the best part of any child's life. For when Mr Bultitude, magically transformed into the body of his son Dick, arrives unwillingly at Crichton House he finds things very tough indeed. The magnificently pompous headmaster Dr Grimstone is no help at all as one comic disaster follows another to an uproarious end. (7+ years) NT

49/ The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

Katniss is one of two teenagers from her impoverished District to go as tribute to the Hunger Games, an annual televised fight to the death organised by the Capitol of Panem, formerly North America. She must win her audience over not only by outwitting other contestants but by pretending to fall desperately in love with Peeta, the gentle boy from her town. The ultimate dystopian thriller, it draws on Greek myth to tell an engaging story of passion, subterfuge and revenge. (11+ years) AC

1 of 2

You've seen the film now read the book ... Martin Freeman as Bilbo Baggins in *The Hobbit*

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