

LITTLE WOMEN live action drama from the United States featuring Saoirse Ronan and Meryl Streep

THE BIG BAD FOX AND OTHER TALES feature animation for children from France and Belgium; dubbed in English

LIYANA feature animation from Nigeria with English subtitles; suitable for teens and adults

ADAMA feature animation from Reunion Island with English subtitles; suitable for teens and adults

OUR LITTLE SISTER subtitled live action feature drama from Japan; suitable for teens and adults

Here are summaries of twelve books projected to enter the church library during this same period:

Teacher, Teacher and Other Plays Contents: *Teacher, Teacher* by Ellison Carroll, broadcast on the Hallmark Hall of Fame in 1969; *A Matter of Pride* by Frank Gilroy; *The Other Foot*, adapted by Ray Bradbury from his short story of the same title; *The End of the World, or Seventeen Years Later* by Neil Selden; *The Poet* by Art Wallace; and *Death After School* by Joel Matus. The first of these is the finest dramatically, in which an African-American handyman proves more aware of the true needs of a mentally challenged thirteen-year-old than his hired private tutor. In the original teleplay, Ossie Davis played the handyman and David McCallum the pedagogue. Frank Gilroy's play concerns familial tensions when a socially backward boy with an unemployed, alcoholic father needs a formal suit for his junior high graduation ceremony. Ray Bradbury takes America's racial prejudice to task as white American astronauts from Earth arrive at an all-black settlement in space. What will be the order of the day: role reversal or cooperative equality? In Neil Selden's play, history repeats itself for teenage lovers over time. The more things change the more they stay the same. Joel Matus's drama posits the impact of televised western violence on impressionable teens in a less-than-persuasive scenario about school bullying. Comic relief comes from Art Wallace's telescript for an episode of the first Bill Cosby Show. Hypocritical football coach and Phys. Ed. Instructor Chet Kincaid is caught in a trap of his own fabrication, causing him to face denigrating remarks

from a male faculty member and macho students about his heretofore unsung foray into poetic expressiveness. Resulting damage control efforts are hilarious. Although these plays were aimed at teen readers, adults can thoroughly enjoy several of them, particularly those of Bradbury, Wallace, and Carroll.

Lilith was George MacDonald's final fantasy and a stunning one. Here, the author refashions Jewish folk traditions about Lilith, reputedly Adam's first wife and the feminine incarnation of evil. Her frustrated attempts to corrupt innocence are foiled time and again by a patient former spouse and actively countering daughter, as the novel's time travelling narrator learns gradually to accept his proper submissive relationship to Creator and Creation. This is a timeless exposition of MacDonald's belief in universal salvation, spelled out in formidable detail. *Lilith* is rewarding reading for mature adults.

To Be a Slave, edited by Julius Lester, strings together excerpts from various documentary accounts of former slaves with interspersed commentaries by Lester himself. His sources include Josiah Henson, the model for Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom, and Solomon Northrop, hero of the recent movie TWELVE YEARS A SLAVE.

Androcles and the Lion, complete with a forty-six page preface by its author, is George Bernard Shaw's overview and investigation into the teachings and life of Jesus as actively showcased in behavior of four Christians sentenced to death by decree of Rome's emperor. Giving the situation a comic twist, Shaw uses this platform to advance his own sociopolitical agenda, claiming it matches well the precepts of Christianity's primary teacher. Read it and draw your own conclusions.

The Muddy Road to Glory by Stephen Meader follows a raw teen recruit from Maine through some of the bloodiest battlefield experiences of the War Between the States, introducing teen readers to the unattractive realities of military action. The title is ironic, for there is no glory awaiting participants. They emerge, if even alive when peace arrives, sadder and wiser. In its accurate portrayal of the effects of warfare on civilians and soldiers alike, the book is equally instructive reading for teens and adults.

The Great Gilly Hopkins details the painful process by which a self-centered foster child gradually learns her birth mother's neglect is neither temporary nor

accidental. Gilly creates havoc she cannot undo, much to her eventual dismay, as attempted reunification with idolized absent mother only leads to sorrow, misunderstanding, and mortification. Relationships are too harshly portrayed here for preteens, but teens will find they mirror their own enlarging understanding of adult society.

The House of Sixty Fathers is a fictional chronicle of young Tien Pao's desperate efforts to make his way through enemy-held territory to his parents during the Japanese invasion of China in the 1930s. American troops are portrayed as uniformly generous and supportive, which was not invariably the case.

Howevaer, the book is chiefly notable for finely shaded characterizations of the Chinese people themselves. Meindert de Jong's novel is geared to readers ages ten through fourteen, a fascinating trip with an ultimately upbeat conclusion.

When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit is an autobiographical memoir for preteens of experiences its author Judith Kerr had during the 1930s as her Jewish family is kept hopping from nation to nation to escape Nazi persecution. Its preadolescent narrator relates events from a child's limited viewpoint, making up with accuracy of familial detail for lack of political insightfulness. Today's young refugees may find significant common ground with her. This book has recently been filmed, winning acclaim from audiences in German theaters and at international film festivals in the United States. The drama directed by Academy-Award winner Caroline Link should make its way to dvd no later than next year.

Paradise Valley, by author-illustrator Valenti Angelo, provides snapshots from the Depression of life for a Mexican-American boy in a Nevada railroad town where his family happily occupies a renovated caboose. Its description of a hobo encampment nearby has a frightening realism transcending the era. Middle school students will learn a lot about economic conditions in the United States during this time period.

Henry Reed's Think Tank, the fifth of author Keith Robertson's series of comic misadventures befalling his titular hero during the dog days of summer, deals with Henry's setting up shop as a junior detective and all-around general problem-solver. This is very enjoyable light-hearted reading for middle-schoolers.

Good If It Goes is a National Jewish Book Award winner from the team of Gary and Gail Levine-Provost. Its junior-high age hero is absurdly fixated on basketball glory. An imminent bar mitzvah and the cancer diagnosis of his beloved grandfather couple with complicated romantic wooing of a first-love Gentile girl to toss seemingly unconquerable obstacles in his way. Using this framework, the authors affectionately delineate Jewish-American contemporary life, offering characters intensely likeable and agreeably familiar. Free of customary stereotypes often associated with Jewish fiction, this sports-cum-religion combo package is a thoughtful delight, adeptly blending drama and comedy.

The Hole Book by Peter Newell was a pioneering essay into what would become interactive novelty books for children. With text set in rhyming couplets, the 1908 narrative proceeds to delineate the ridiculous cause-and-effect chain of disasters initiated by a bullet from young Tom Potts' gun as it travels through various apartments, unexpectedly disrupting lives of neighbors. This one's fun for the entire family, with a hole in each illustrated page after the firing.

Poetry need not rhyme. Here are starters for children to follow in creating their own poems.

1. Early to bed and early to rise ...
2. B g n n i g a poem can be a work of ART
e i n
3. That ice cream cone tasted like ...
4. We agreed we should argue
all the day long and then some
'bout unicorns, mermaid songs, shifty eyes, and quicksilver tongues ...
5. She was bashful as a cougar and as gentle as a headache ...
6. Shouted the king to his knights, just a bit too recklessly,
"This ...
7. What is a pet? Can you spell it backwards twice?
Are you in one or beside one? Be it nasty, or quite nice?
If you treat it kind of kindly, will it ...

8. The secret of writing a wonderful poem
is not to think about what
you are writing but to
focus instead on your
dreams and the
way they
would
sound
and should
sound if you
spoke them to ...
9. With a rattle and a creak
followed by a roar and shriek
came ...
10. Three things I will not pardon –
no matter what the place –
are trampling through a garden
and ...
11. Start with a monster.
Like *expeditiously*.
Break it apart.
What do you see?
How many small words hide inside?
Like tide and us and pet and sit
and louse and deep and pie and die
and sole and lose and speed and pit
and lie and tip, pious and tie?
Take all these little ones you found
and begin a new poem to astound ...
12. An angry man is ...
13. A poem's a song
sometimes short and often ...

14. Though wind may howl
and night's black as coal ...
15. Seven, eleven, five, eight,
I know someone ...
16. Joy is always ...
It is never ...
and sometimes even ...
which makes it ...
17. Tar the rat.
Bare the bear.
Spill the pills.
Hear the ...?
Can you take it now from there?
18. Two tutus do not a trio make.
Two fors don't form an octet.
Eight aces can't ever match two fours.
One ...
19. It has a biting tingle
when popped into your mouth
and a jangly kind of ...
20. He was happier than a lark and as fat as a balloon
when one sunny, breezy morning ...

Or just set down whatever feeling you have about anything and make a song about it. Have fun with poetry and train your brain.