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LET
THEM
BE KIDS

*Adventure, Boredom,
Innocence, and Other Gifts
Children Need*



A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

RESOURCES

Books to Read with Your Kids Before They Leave Home

Young Children

Frog and Toad, by Arnold Lobel

Horton Hears a Who, by Dr. Seuss

The Jesus Storybook Bible, by Sally Lloyd-Jones

Just in Case You Ever Wonder, by Max Lucado

Little Bear series, by Else Holmelund Minarik

Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel, by

Virginia Lee Burton

The Velveteen Rabbit, by Margery Williams

Winnie-the-Pooh, by A. A. Milne (also good for elementary-aged children)

You Are Special, by Max Lucado

Elementary-Aged Children

The Hundred Dresses, by Eleanor Estes

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea, by Jules Verne

The Boxcar Children, (and others) by
Gertrude Chandler Warner
Caddie Woodlawn, by Carol Ryrie Brink
Calvin and Hobbes comics, by Bill Watterson
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, by Roald Dahl
Charlotte's Web, by E. B. White
Chronicles of Narnia series, by C. S. Lewis
Farmer Boy, (and others) by Laura Ingalls Wilder
Garfield comics, by Jim Davis
The Green Ember series, by S. D. Smith
Heidi, by Johanna Spyri
The Last of the Really Great Whangdoodles, by
Julie Andrews Edwards
Missionary biographies (We love the Christian Heroes
Then and Now series, by Janet and Geoff Benge.)
One Wintry Night, by Ruth Bell Graham
The Secret Garden, by Frances Hodgson Burnett
The Shining Sword, by Charles G. Coleman
Stuart Little, by E. B. White
The Trailblazer Series, by Dave and Neta Jackson
Trumpet of the Swan, by E. B. White
Where the Red Fern Grows, by Wilson Rawls
A Wrinkle in Time, by Madeleine L'Engle

Older Children

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, by Mark Twain
Anne of Green Gables, by L. M. Montgomery
Born Again, by Charles W. Colson
The Fellowship of the Ring, by J. R. R. Tolkien
God's Smuggler, by Brother Andrew (also good for
elementary)
The Hiding Place, by Corrie ten Boom

Little Women and Little Men, by Louisa May Alcott

Number the Stars, by Lois Lowry

Pollyanna, by Eleanor H. Porter

To Kill a Mockingbird, by Harper Lee

The Wind in the Willows, by Kenneth Grahame

Wingfeather Saga, by Andrew Peterson

Wonder, by R. J. Palacio

Movies to Watch As a Family Before Your Kids Leave Home

Disclaimer: Kids and families differ in their tastes and preferences. Your kids may or may not be ready for the intensity in some of these movies, so always make decisions based on what is best for your particular kids.

Movies Appropriate for the Whole Family

101 Dalmatians, 1961

Akeelah and the Bee

Anne of Green Gables

Annie

The Aristocats

Babe

Bambi

Beauty and the Beast, 1991

Ben-Hur

Black Beauty

Brave Little Toaster

Charlotte's Web

Cheaper by the Dozen, 1949

Chronicles of Narnia movies

Cinderella, 1950

Christmas cartoons

DuckTales the Movie

Facing the Giants

The Fox and the Hound

Gifted Hands

Harvey, 1950

Heidi

Herbie movies

Homeward Bound 1 and 2

Hugo

The Jungle Book

Inside Out

It's a Wonderful Life

Lady and the Tramp

The Little Rascals

Mary Poppins, 1964

Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium

Mr. Smith Goes to Washington

My Fair Lady

Newsies

Night at the Museum

Oklahoma

Paddington II

The Peanuts Movie

The Perfect Game

Pollyanna

The Princess Bride

Ratatouille

Remember the Titans

Robin Hood, 1973

Seven Brides for Seven Brothers

Shirley Temple movies, *The Little Princess* especially

The Sound of Music

The Swiss Family Robinson

The Ten Commandments

Toy Story

White Christmas

Winnie the Pooh

The Wizard of Oz

Movies to Enjoy (for Age-Appropriate Children)
with Adult Supervision

(**Note:** research content and choose when these would be appropriate for your family's viewing.)

Amazing Grace

Angels in the Outfield

The Avengers movies

Chariots of Fire

Cool Runnings

Davy Crockett movies

End of the Spear

The Hiding Place

Hook

I Can Only Imagine

Iron Will

The Lord of the Rings trilogy

The Man from Snowy River 1 and 2

The Passion of the Christ

Paul, Apostle of Christ

Pride and Prejudice

The Pursuit of Happyness

Rudy

Sense and Sensibility

Star Wars movies

Twelve Angry Men

What About Bob?

Wonder

Conversations to Have with Your Kids Before They Leave Home

Instructions: Use these questions as starting points for discussions about important things. My hope is that these will stir up good conversations—not just that you would ask the questions and listen but that you would use the time as an opportunity to share your own beliefs with your children.

On Friendship

- Have you ever heard someone making fun of someone else? What did you do?
- Has someone ever told you something that wasn't true? How did you feel?
- Is it wrong to say something bad about someone if they're not around to hear it?
- Can you remember something nice someone said to you? Can you remember something mean someone said to you?
- Do you ever feel different from other kids? Do you think it's okay to be different?
- What makes a good friend? How can you be a good friend, and how can you find a good friend?
- What does it mean to have good manners?

On Family

- Do you think boys and girls act differently? What is Mom good at and what is Dad good at?
- Is there anything you could do that would make Mom or Dad stop loving you?
- What makes our family special?
- What is the purpose of sex, and who should be able to have sex? (Obviously this important topic is for kids who are mature enough to handle this conversation.)

On Ethics

- What should you do if you find something that doesn't belong to you? What do you think of the phrase "finders keepers"?
- Have you ever been tempted to steal something? Do you think stealing is ever okay?
- Do you think anything is really hidden or secret?
- Have you ever told a lie? What is the best thing to do if you have told a lie?
- Why is it important to do a good job in the small things in life, such as making your bed or doing your best on a paper?
- Which matters more: winning or doing the right thing?
- Who decides what makes something wrong or right?
- Why should we be kind to people who won't ever really be able to "pay us back"?
- Is it wrong to be lazy? Why or why not?

On Dreams

- Can money make you happy?
- What should you do if you need help making a decision?
- Do you think there is one person you are meant to marry?
- What are you good at? What are gifts that God has given to you?
- What qualities make a good husband or wife? Is it good looks, being popular, being funny? Or something else?
- Do you ever wish God had made you differently? Do you wish you looked different or had different traits or abilities?

On Faith

- Does God always answer prayers?
- Is heaven a real place? How do you get there?
- Is there anyone who has never done anything wrong?
- What do you think you should do if you feel guilty about something?

On Personal Choices

- What do you think makes good hygiene?
- What do you do if you're worried about something or afraid of something?
- Can you think of something scary you saw on TV that got stuck in your head? Why is it important to be careful what you put in your head?
- Which is more fun: watching TV or playing outside?

On Family History

- Tell each child his or her birth story.
- Tell the story of how you and your husband met.
- Tell your kids about a mistake you made and what you learned from that mistake.
- Tell your kids about each of your grandparents if you're able: their personalities, where they lived, their jobs, and a memory you have with them.

Things Children Should Always Have on Hand

- age-appropriate Bible
- baby doll
- baseball glove and ball, basketball and hoop, and soccer ball
(We have an indoor basketball hoop over-the-door version that has been replaced twice because it is so well loved.) Also someone to play these games with!
- books on their reading level
- creative-play, open-ended building toys (LEGOs, blocks, interlocking cubes, train tracks, Magna-Tiles)
- drawing and coloring materials: crayons, colored pencils, paper, and so on
- good music
- helmet, a bike, and a place to ride
- library card
- opportunity to dig in the dirt
- pocket knife (around age seven or older)
- puzzles
- running shoes
- sensory play items, such as Play-Doh and tools
- sewing basket or other handiwork
- stuffed-toy friend

Best Family Games

Younger Children

Candy Land
Chutes and Ladders
Connect Four
Hide-and-Go-Seek
Hopscotch
Hoot Owl Hoot
I Spy
Kick the Can
Race to the Treasure
Sequence for Kids
The Sneaky, Snacky Squirrel Game
Sorry
Sum Swamp
Trouble

Older Children

Apples to Apples
Battleship
Blokus
Capture the Flag
Catan
Checkers
Chess
Chicken Dominoes
Clue
Codenames
Exploding Kittens
Four Square

Hearts
Kemps
Kickball
Life
Mastermind
Monopoly
Pictionary
Quiddler
Quixx
Qwirkle
Risk
Rummy
Scrabble
Spaces
Stratego
Ticket to Ride
Ultimate Frisbee
UNO