

There are few things better for your child than a reading habit. Reading develops not just the obvious things like vocabulary or the ability to organise and express thoughts, but the intangibles, like expanding the limits of the imagination.

That does not necessarily mean knowing your hobbits from your orcs, but developing your thinking, your ability to think or feel what it is like to be in other people's shoes – and that is a skill that can be applied to just about anything in adult life, from science to business.

As a rough idea of what a good reading habit entails, you should be looking at about 100 books completed between the ages of 8 and 13. After the age of 13 the amount of school work increases and the distractions mount. So, that 5 year period (20 books a year or 1 every 2.5 weeks) is crucial.

This list should give you a good starting point. These are books that have been reviewed well by both kids and parents. Many are classics. However, try to develop an interest in *authors*. If a child likes one book by a particular writer, then the odds are they'll like others. Many of the books on the list are part of a series of books. You may find that having read the first volume your job is merely to continue getting the rest of the series for them.

Any reading is better than no reading, but reading some books is better than reading others. This list has been compiled with 11+/Common Entrance in mind and so favours a kind of 'Old English' literature. Having said that there are plenty of examples of modern reading.

The list is roughly graded, with the early titles being more suitable for 8-10 year olds. The later books on the list are more sophisticated reading - you'll notice many of the earlier titles feature purely imaginative worlds and talking animals (there are no fewer than 3 books about pigs!) By 13 the titles are more 'real world' (there's quite a few War stories). I've deliberately not divided the list into male/female because I'm not sure it is a good idea to look at books that way. Your child may disagree.

The books are not here to teach 'values' – they exist just to open up the imagination – to take the reader to another world. Having said that, the list is roughly designed to take the reader on a journey and each title should build on the others. If you started *The Silver Sword*, for example, without an established reading habit, the bleakness of the setting of the book might stop you reading by about page 20.

As a general policy watch out for how many titles your child starts and abandons. You can waste a lot of energy looking for just the right book when in reality it is reading itself that your child either doesn't enjoy, or doesn't have the concentration levels to enjoy.

There's a few things you can do. Engage in your child's reading. You could buy two copies and read them simultaneously. You can ask questions about what you think will happen next. Judge a book by its cover – often they will pick a book that has an intriguing cover image. Google exhibitions or events about a theme in the book or the author themselves. Talk about the book at dinner.

But there is one golden rule. **DO NOT WATCH THE FILM BEFORE YOU HAVE READ THE BOOK.** The reasons should be obvious, but it is important, as pretty

much any decent children's book has been made into a film. Of course, once your child has read the book, watching the filmed version is a very good idea.

Reading is not work – that is why it is so good for you. The ideal situation is a child who reads to relax after doing their homework. Realistic? It might be!

When Vicky's father is arrested, accused of stealing over a million pounds from the bank where he works, she is determined to prove his innocence. But how? There's only one way - to attempt to break into the bank's computer files.

A.N.T.I.D.O.T.E - Malorie Blackman

Your mum's been caught on CCTV, breaking into a giant chemical company. They say she's working undercover for A.N.T.I.D.O.T.E, a group against animal testing - but how is that possible? She's not a spy - is she? Now she's on the run - and only you can uncover the truth. And you've got to crack a code to do it.

The Witches - Roald Dahl

This is not a fairy-tale. This is about REAL WITCHES. Real witches don't ride around on broomsticks. They don't even wear black cloaks and hats. They are vile, cunning, detestable creatures who disguise themselves as nice, ordinary ladies.

So how can you tell when you're face to face with one? Well, if you don't know yet you'd better find out quickly-because there's nothing a witch loathes quite as much as children and she'll wield all kinds of terrifying powers to get rid of them.

Cartoon Kid - Jeremy Strong

You'll never GUESS what Mr Butternut said at school today:

'This is your first day with me and I can see that there is something amazing about you . . . all of you are hiding a BIG SECRET.'

And do you know what it is? We are all SUPERHEROES. I nearly fell off my chair! Then we had to choose our superhero names. I'm Casper the Cartoon Kid, my best friend's Big Feet Pete and moaning Noella Niblet - she's the Incredible Sulk!

Now we can fight injustice AND Gory and Tory the Vampire Twins. They've stolen something that belongs to us and we want it back - WHAM-BAM-JELLY AND-JAM!

There's a Boy in the Girl's Bathroom - Louis Sachar

Bradley Chalkers is the oldest kid in the fifth grade. He tells enormous lies. He picks fights with girls. No one likes him-except Carla, the new school counselor. She thinks Bradley is sensitive and generous, and knows that Bradley could change, if only he weren't afraid to try. But when you feel like the most-hated kid in the whole school, believing in yourself can be the hardest thing in the world.

Danny, the Champion of the World - Roald Dahl

Danny's life seems perfect: his home is a gypsy caravan, he's the youngest car mechanic around, and his best friend is his dad, who never runs out of wonderful stories to tell. And when Danny discovers his father's secret, he's off on the adventure of a lifetime. Here's Roald Dahl's famous story about a 9-year-old boy, his dad, and a daring and hilarious pheasant-snatching expedition. Just as important, it's the story of the love between a boy and his father who, in Danny's own words, is "the most marvelous and exciting father a boy ever had."

The Story of Tracy Beaker - Jacqueline Wilson

Tracy is ten years old. She lives in a Children's Home but would like a real home one day with a real family. Meet Tracy, follow her story and share her hopes for the future in this beautifully observed, touching and often very funny tale, all told in Tracy's own words.

The Sheep Pig - Dick King-Smith

When Babe, the little orphaned piglet, is won at a fair by Farmer Hogget, he is adopted by Fly, the kind-hearted sheep-dog. Babe is determined to learn everything he can from Fly. He knows he can't be a sheep-dog. But maybe, just maybe, he might be a sheep-pig.

The Twits - Roald Dahl

How do you outwit a Twit? Mr. and Mrs. Twit are the smelliest, ugliest people in the world. They hate everything -- except playing mean jokes on each other, catching innocent birds to put in their Bird Pies, and making their caged monkeys, the Muggle-Wumps, stand on their heads all day. But the Muggle-Wumps have had enough. They don't just want out, they want revenge.

The Borrowers - Mary Norton

Beneath the kitchen floor is the world of the Borrowers -- Pod and Homily Clock and their daughter, Arrietty. In their tiny home, matchboxes double as roomy dressers and postage stamps hang on the walls like paintings. Whatever the Clocks need they simply "borrow" from the "human beans" who live above them. It's a comfortable life, but boring if you're a kid. Only Pod is allowed to venture into the house above, because the danger of being seen by a human is too great. Borrowers who are seen by humans are never seen again. Yet Arrietty won't listen. There is a human boy up there, and Arrietty is desperate for a friend.

Charlotte's Web - E.B. White

Some Pig. Humble. Radiant. These are the words in Charlotte's Web, high up in Zuckerman's barn. Charlotte's spider web tells of her feelings for a little pig named Wilbur, who simply wants a friend. They also express the love of a girl named Fern, who saved Wilbur's life when he was born the runt

of his litter.

Emil and the Detectives - Erich Kastner

If Mrs Tischbein had known the amazing adventures her son Emil would have in Berlin, she'd never have let him go.

Unfortunately, when his seven pounds goes missing on the train, Emil is determined to get it back - and when he teams up with the detectives he meets in Berlin, it's just the start of a marvelous, money-retrieving adventure.

The Peppermint Pig - Nina Bawden

Johnnie was only the runt of the litter, a little peppermint pig. He'd cost Mother a shilling, but somehow his great naughtiness and cleverness kept Poll and Theo cheerful, even though it was one of the most difficult years of their lives.

Nancy Drew - Carolyn Keene

Nancy Drew is an amateur sleuth - a 16-year-old high school graduate living in the fictional town of River Heights with her father, attorney Carson Drew, and their housekeeper, Hannah Gruen. As a child loses her mother. Her loss is reflected in her early independence—running a household since the age of ten and as a teenager, she spends her time solving mysteries, some of which she stumbles upon and some of which begin as cases of her father's.

There are over 50 books in the series.

Flour Babies - Anne Fine

Let it be flour babies. Let chaos reign. When the annual school science fair comes round, Mr Cartwright's class don't get to work on the Soap Factory, the Maggot Farm or the Exploding Custard Tins. To their intense disgust they get the Flour Babies - sweet little six-pound bags of flour that must be cared for at all times.

The London Eye Mystery – Siobhan Dowd

Monday, 24 May, 11.32 a.m. Ted and Kat watch their cousin Salim get on board the London Eye. He turns and waves and the pod rises from the ground.

Monday, 24 May, 12.02 p.m. The pod lands and the doors open. People exit in all shapes and sizes – but where is Salim?

Ted and his older sister Kat become sleuthing partners since the police are

having no luck. Despite their prickly relationship, they overcome their differences to follow a trail of clues across London in a desperate bid to find their cousin. And ultimately it comes down to Ted, whose brain runs on its own unique operating system, to find the key to the mystery.

The Story of Doctor Doolittle - Hugh Lofting

Doctor John Doolittle loves animals. He loves them so much that his home and office overflow with animals of every description. When Polynesia the parrot teaches him the language of the animals, Doctor Doolittle becomes a world-famous doctor, traveling even as far away as Africa to help his friends.

Coco Caramel - Cathy Cassidy

Coco is the youngest of the Tanberry sisters and while she thinks she's the most sensible, she's as headstrong as any of them. Coco is crazy about animals and loves her riding lessons. When Caramel her favourite pony at the stables is sold, Coco scopes out the new owner - and she's not happy about what she discovers. Coco needs to rescue Caramel from a horrid fate. With big sister Honey going off at the deep end and Summer only just recovering from her eating disorder, there's no-one at Tanglewood to help Coco out. Can she do it alone - or will a new friend help her?

Truckers - Terry Pratchett

To the thousands of the tiny nomes who live under the floorboards of a large department store, there is no Outside. Things like Day and Night, Sun and Rain are just daft old legends. Then a devastating piece of news shatters their existence: the Store - their whole world - is to be demolished. And it's up to Maskin, one of the last nomes to come into the Store, to mastermind an unbelievable escape plan that will take all the nomes into the dangers of the great Outside.

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe - C.S.Lewis

'They say Aslan is on the move. Perhaps he has already landed,' whispered the Beaver. Edmund felt a sensation of mysterious horror. Peter felt brave and adventurous. Susan felt as if some delightful strain of music had just floated by. And Lucy got that feeling when you realize it's the beginning of summer. So, deep in the bewitched land of Narnia, the adventure begins. They opened a door and entered a world--Narnia--the land beyond the wardrobe, the secret country known only to Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy. Lucy is the first to stumble through the back of the enormous wardrobe in the professor's mysterious old country house, discovering the magic world beyond.

Harriet the Spy - Louise Fitzhugh

Harriet M. Welsch is a spy. In her notebook, she writes down everything she knows about everyone, even her classmates and her best friends. Then Harriet loses track of her notebook, and it ends up in the wrong hands.

Before she can stop them, her friends have read the always truthful, sometimes awful things she's written about each of them.

The Jungle Book - Rudyard Kipling

Run with them. Or fear them--

Bagheera the Panther: A silken shadow of boldness and cunning.

Kaa the Python: A thirty foot battering ram driven by a cool, hungry mind.

Baloo the Bear: who keeps the lore and the Law, and teaches the Secret Words.

Rikki the Mongoose: The young protector who sings as he slays.

Akela and Raksha the Wolves: Demon warriors of the Free People.

Shere Khan the Tiger: The dreaded enemy of all.

And Mowgli the Man-cub: The orphan baby raised by the wolves, taught by Baloo, trained by Bagheera and Kaa. The sorcerer who knows the ways of the jungle and speaks the language of the wild.

Private and Peaceful - Michael Morpurgo

For young Private Peaceful, looking back over his childhood while he is on night watch in the battlefields of the First World War, his memories are full of family life deep in the countryside: his mother, Charlie, Big Joe, and Molly -- the love of his life. Too young to be enlisted, Thomas has followed his brother to war and now, every moment he spends thinking about his life, means another moment closer to danger.

The Secret of Platform 13 - Eva Ibbotson

A forgotten door on an abandoned railway platform is the entrance to a magical kingdom--an island where humans live happily with fairys, mermaids, ogres, and other wonderful creatures. Carefully hidden from the world, the Island is only accessible when the door opens for nine days every nine years. A lot can go wrong in nine days. When the beastly Mrs. Trottle kidnaps the prince of the Island, it's up to a strange band of rescuers to save him.

The Box of Delights - John Masefield

Strange things begin to happen the minute young Kay Harker boards the train to go home for Christmas and finds himself under observation by two very shifty-looking characters. Arriving at his destination, the boy is immediately accosted by a bright-eyed old man with a mysterious message: "The wolves are running."

The Owl Service – Alan Garner

Something is scratching around in the attic above Alison's room. Yet the only thing up there is a stack of grimy old plates. Alison and her stepbrother, Roger, discover that the flowery patterns on the plates, when traced onto paper, can be fitted together to create owls-owls that disappear when no one is watching. With each vanished owl, strange events begin to happen around Alison, Roger, and the caretaker's son, Gwyn. As the kids uncover the mystery of the owl service, they become trapped within a local legend, playing out roles in a tragic love story that has repeated itself for generations.

How to Write Really Badly - Anne Fine

Chester Howard can see Joe's project 'How to Write Neatly' can only be a disaster. Joe makes a terrible mess of his work, jumbling letters and numbers up together. But a project called 'How to Write Really Badly' - now there's something Joe can do better than anyone else. And Chester is about to find there's a lot more to Joe than he expected.

Tom's Midnight Garden – Philippa Pearce

Lying awake at night, Tom hears the old grandfather clock downstairs strike . . . eleven . . . twelve . . . thirteen . . . Thirteen! When Tom gets up to investigate, he discovers a magical garden. A garden that everyone told him doesn't exist. A garden that only he can enter.

Going Solo - Roald Dahl

Here is the action-packed sequel to *Boy*, a tale of Dahl's exploits as a World War II pilot. Told with the same irresistible appeal that has made Roald Dahl one the world's best-loved writers, *Going Solo* brings you directly into the action and into the mind of this fascinating man.

Redwall - Brian Jacques

Redwall Abbey, tranquil home to a community of peace-loving mice is threatened by Cluny the Scourge - the evil-one-eyed rat warlord - and his battle-hardened horde of predators. Cluny is certain that Redwall will fall easily to his fearsome army but he hasn't bargained for the courage and strength of the combined forces of the Redwall mice and their loyal woodland friends. Part of a series.

The Wolves of Willoughby Chase - Joan Aitken

Wicked wolves and a grim governess threaten Bonnie and her cousin Sylvia when Bonnie's parents leave Willoughby Chase for a sea voyage. Left in the

care of the cruel Miss Slighcarp, the girls can hardly believe what is happening to their once happy home. The servants are dismissed, the furniture is sold, and Bonnie and Sylvia are sent to a prison-like orphan school. It seems as if the endless hours of drudgery will never cease.

With the help of Simon the gooseboy and his flock, they escape.

The Neverending Story - Michael Ende

The story begins with a lonely boy named Bastian and the strange book that draws him into the beautiful but doomed world of Fantastica. Only a human can save this enchanted place--by giving its ruler, the Childlike Empress, a new name. But the journey to her tower leads through lands of dragons, giants, monsters, and magic--and once Bastian begins his quest, he may never return.

The Animals of Farthing Wood - Colin Dann

A group of forest animals unite to help each other to safety in this classic tale of tolerance, cooperation, survival, and friendship. When bulldozers enter Farthing Wood, the animals must escape before their homes are destroyed. They promise to stick together and protect each other—but then they get caught in a fire and nearly drown crossing a river. Will their pact hold?

The Crowstarver - Dick King Smith

In 1926, a childless couple takes in an abandoned baby boy who, despite being mentally handicapped, grows to display special talents, and finds a happy niche for himself in their English countryside community.

Robe of Skulls - Vivian French

All is not well in the crumbling castle high above the mountain village of Fracture. The sorceress Lady Lamorna has her heart set on a new robe. A very expensive new robe. To get the cash she will stop at nothing, including kidnapping, blackmail and more than a little black magic.

Pigeon Summer - Anne Turnbull

It is 1930, the height of the Great Depression. Mary Dyer's father has left home in search of work, leaving his beloved racing pigeons in Mary's care – much to her mother's disapproval. During that long, hard summer there is barely enough money for bread, let alone pigeon feed, yet Mary clings to her dreams of racing glory, propelling her into ever deeper conflict with her mother.

Kensuke's Kingdom - Michael Morpurgo

When Michael is washed up on an island in the Pacific after falling from his parent's yacht, the *Peggy Sue*, he struggles to survive on his own. But he soon realises there is someone close by, someone who is watching over him and helping him to stay alive. Following a close-run battle between life and death after being stung by a poisonous jelly fish, the mysterious someone--Kensuke--allows Michael into his world and they become friends, teaching and learning from each other, until the day of separation becomes inevitable.

Ruby Holler - Sharon Creech

"Trouble twins" Dallas and Florida are orphans who have given up believing there is such a thing as a loving home. Tiller and Sairy are an eccentric older couple who live in the beautiful, mysterious Ruby Holler, but they're restless for one more big adventure. When they invite the twins to join them on their journeys, they first must all stay together in the Holler, and the magic of the place takes over.

Lionboy - Zizou Corder

When his parents are kidnapped, what's ten-year-old Charlie Ashanti to do? Rescue them, that's what! He doesn't know who has taken his parents, or why. But he does know that one special talent will aid him on his journey - his amazing ability to speak Cat. Charlie calls on his clever feline friends--from stray city cats to magnificent caged lions--for help. With them by his side, Charlie uses wit and courage to try to find his parents before it's too late.

The Stones of Muncaster Cathedral - Robert Westall

Soon after steeplejack Joe Clarke begins work on one of the spires of Muncaster's medieval cathedral, terrible things start to happen and Joe realizes that there is a malevolent force connected to the spire's gargoyles.

The Hound of the Baskervilles - Arthur Conan Doyle

Holmes and Watson are faced with their most terrifying case yet. The legend of the devil-beast that haunts the moors around the Baskerville family's home warns the descendants of that ancient clan never to venture out in those dark hours when the power of evil is exalted. Now, the most recent Baskerville, Sir Charles, is dead and the footprints of a giant hound have been found near his body.

The Falcon's Malteser - Anthony Horowitz

When the vertically-challenged Johnny Naples entrusts Tim Diamond with a package worth over three million pounds, he's making a big mistake. Tim Diamond is the worst detective in the world. Next day, Johnny's dead, Tim

feels the heat, and his smart younger brother, Nick, gets the package—and every crook in town on his back!

The Ghost behind the Wall – Melvin Burgess

Twelve-year-old David lives with his dad in a big old apartment building called Mahogany Villas. When he discovers he can climb through the vent pipes in the building and get into other apartments and play tricks on people, he simply can't resist.

His main victim is Robert Alveston, a forgetful man in his nineties who is afraid that he is losing his mind. But David's nasty pranks soon disturb more than his elderly neighbor. One day he comes face-to-face with a ghost, at first friendly but more and more terrifying as it becomes clear that he has a particular grudge against Mr Alveston. Soon both the old man and David are in great danger.

Tulip Touch - Anne Fine

The story of a strange and disturbing friendship seen through the eyes of Natalie as she gets to know Tulip Pierce, a delinquent girl most others go out of their way to avoid. Nobody wants Tulip in their gang. She bunks off school, is rude to the teachers and makes herself unpopular with her classmates by telling awful lies. But none of this matters to Natalie who finds Tulip's behaviour exciting and dangerous. At first she doesn't care that other people are upset by Tulip's bizarre games but as the games become increasingly dangerous and sinister, Natalie realises that Tulip is going too far. Way too far... Tulip becomes even more destructive and after a row with Natalie she commits a terrible crime.

Mortal Engines - Philip Reeve

Thaddeus Valentine, London's Head Historian and adored famous archaeologist, and his lovely daughter, Katherine, are down in The Gut when the young assassin with the black scarf strikes toward his heart, saved by the quick intervention of Tom, a lowly third-class apprentice.

Racing after the fleeing girl, Tom suddenly glimpses her hideous face: scarred from forehead to jaw, nose a smashed stump, a single eye glaring back at him. "Look at what your Valentine did to me!" she screams. "Ask him! Ask him what he did to Hester Shaw!" And with that she jumps down the waste chute to her death. Minutes later Tom finds himself tumbling down the same chute and stranded in the Out-Country, a sea of mud scored by the huge caterpillar tracks of cities like the one now steaming off over the horizon.

The Dark Portal (The Deptford Mice Trilogy) - Robin Jarvis

In the sewers of Deptford, there lurks a dark presence that fills the tunnels with fear. The rats worship it in the blackness and name it "Jupiter, Lord of

All." Into this twilight realm wanders a small and frightened mouse—the unwitting trigger of a chain of events that hurtles the Deptford mice into a world of heroic adventure and terror.

Artemis Fowl - Eoin Colfer

Twelve-year-old Artemis Fowl is a millionaire, a genius—and, above all, a criminal mastermind. But even Artemis doesn't know what he's taken on when he kidnaps a fairy, Captain Holly Short of the LEPrecon Unit. These aren't the fairies of bedtime stories—they're dangerous! First of a series.

Carrie's War – Nina Bawden

Albert, Carrie and young Nick are war-time evacuees whose lives get so tangled up with the people they've come to live among that the war and their real families seem to belong to another world. Carrie and Nick are billeted in Wales with old Mr Evans, who is so mean and cold, and his timid mouse of a sister, Lou, who suddenly starts having secrets.

Their friend Albert is luckier, living in Druid's Bottom with warm-hearted Hepzibah Green and the strange Mister Johnny, who can talk to animals but not to human beings. Carrie and Nick visit him there whenever they can for Hepzibah makes life exciting and enticing with her stories and delicious cooking. Gradually they begin to feel more at ease in their war-time home, but then, in trying to heal the rift between Mr Evans and his estranged sister, and save Druid's Bottom, Carrie does a terrible thing which is to haunt her for years to come.

The Whitby Witches - Robin Jarvis

At first glance, the small seaside town of Whitby seems quiet and charming, but eight year-old Ben and his older sister Jennet soon learn that things are not always as they seem. Moved about from foster home to foster home, Ben and Jennet hope to make a fresh start in Whitby. But Ben sees things and people others cannot. There's something unusual about Alice Boston, their new guardian. And what is that horrible howling Jennet hears late at night? Something wicked's brewing in Whitby.

Wolf - Gillian Cross

He came in the early morning, at about half past two. His feet padded along the balcony, slinking silently past the closed doors of the other flats. No one glimpsed his shadow flickering across the curtain or noticed the uneven rhythm of his steps.
But he woke Cassy.

And in the morning, Cassy is sent away. She lives with her nan, but whenever the mysterious stranger comes she is packed off to stay with her mother. It's happened before, over and over again, and there's never any explanation.

But this time it's different. This time she is being followed. And the wolf who stalks her through the streets of London disturbs her waking mind and intrudes into her dreams.

The Machine Gunners - Robert Westall

With Nazi planes raining bombs on England night after night, every boy in Garmouth has a collection of shrapnel and other war souvenirs. But nothing comes close to the working machine gun Chas McGill pulls out of a downed bomber. While the police search frantically for the missing gun, Chas and his friends build a secret fortress to fight the Germans themselves.

Sabriel - Garth Nix

Sent to a boarding school in Ancelstierre as a young child, Sabriel has had little experience with the random power of Free Magic or the Dead who refuse to stay dead in the Old Kingdom. But during her final semester, her father, the Abhorsen, goes missing, and Sabriel knows she must enter the Old Kingdom to find him.

The Haunting - Margaret Mahy

After a shy and rather withdrawn eight-year-old begins receiving frightening supernatural images and messages, he learns about a family legacy which could be considered a curse or a rare gift.

Prisoner of War - Martin Booth

Fourteen-year-old Ted joins the Royal Navy in 1914 as a cabin boy. His duties include carrying ammunition to the guns. Ted takes part in the Battle of Jutland, when his ship is sunk, he survives but is taken as a Prisoner of War.

I Am David - Anne Holm

David's entire twelve-year life has been spent in a grisly prison camp in Eastern Europe. He knows nothing of the outside world. But when he is given the chance to escape, he seizes it. With his vengeful enemies hot on his heels, David struggles to cope in this strange new world, where his only resources are a compass, a few crusts of bread, his two aching feet, and some vague advice to seek refuge in Denmark.

The Other Side of Truth - Beverley Naidoo

After the murder of their mother, twelve-year-old Sade and her younger

brother are smuggled out of Nigeria by their journalist father to escape the corrupt military government and growing violence. They are sent to their uncle in London, but when they arrive, he is missing and they are abandoned, passed between foster homes. Their father escapes to England to find them -- but he will be sent back to Nigeria unless Sade can find a way to tell the world what happened to her family.

Jake's Tower - Elisabeth Laird

The Silver Sword - Ian Serrailier

In 1942 Warsaw, World War II is raging, and people live in fear from day to day. Ruth, Bronia, and Edek have to fend for themselves when both of their parents are taken by the Nazis.

The Ruby in the Smoke Trilogy - Philip Pullman

Sally is sixteen and uncommonly pretty. Her knowledge of English literature, French, history, art and music is non-existent, but she has a thorough grounding in military tactics, can run a business, ride like a Cossack and shoot straight with a pistol.

When her dear father is drowned in suspicious circumstances in the South China Sea, Sally is left to fend for herself, an orphan and alone in the smoky fog of Victorian London. Though she doesn't know it, Sally is already in terrible danger.