# Towards an Australian Charlotte Mason Curriculum

[JULY 6, 2020](https://journeydestination.org/2020/07/06/towards-an-australian-charlotte-mason-curriculum/) / [JOURNEY & DESTINATION](https://journeydestination.org/author/blogger2016c/)

[Accessed at <https://journeydestination.org/2020/07/06/towards-an-australian-charlotte-mason-curriculum/> on 04/09/2023]



This is a page in progress with ideas for living books, related to Australia in some way, that we’ve used. I’ll link to any reviews I’ve written and give a recommended age or an Ambleside Online year if you’re looking for Australian substitutes.

[Ambleside Online Year 11](https://journeydestination.org/2021/06/01/charlotte-mason-highschool-year-11/)

[Picture Books](https://journeydestination.org/2014/10/14/picture-books-are-just-for-young-children-rubbisha-guest-post/) – various ages

The March of Mother Duck by Colin Thiele – lovely book based on a true story; age 3 and up. Out of print.

[Emu](https://journeydestination.org/2015/06/09/australian-natural-history-the-emu/) by Claire Saxby – age 4 to 6 years

[Narrative Non-Fiction Natural History Books for Younger Children](https://journeydestination.org/2021/03/03/narrative-non-fiction-books-for-young-readers-australian-animals/) – great for introducing preschoolers and older children to native animals especially if they’re not ready for chapter books

[The Story of Australia](https://journeydestination.org/2013/05/07/australian-history-for-primary-age-children/) – ages 6 to 8 years; short chapters; well-illustrated

[Silvertail: The Story of a Lyrebird](https://journeydestination.org/2016/11/23/ausreading-month-silvertail-the-story-of-a-lyrebird-by-ina-watson-illustrations-by-walter-cunningham-1946/) – age 5 to 6 years; AO Year 0/1

[Magpie Island](https://journeydestination.org/2016/11/03/ausread-month-2016-magpie-island-by-colin-thiele-illustrated-by-roger-haldane/) by Colin Thiele – AO Year 1 or 2

[Radio Rescue](https://journeydestination.org/2017/08/04/radio-rescue-by-jane-jolly-illustrated-by-robert-ingpen/) by Jane Jolly; Illustrated by Robert Ingpen – ages 5-10 yrs

**John of the Sirius** by Doris Chadwick – I read this and its sequel below aloud. Good for children aged 7 and up. Newly reprinted.

**John of Sydney Town** by Doris Chadwick

[Monarch of the Western Skies](https://journeydestination.org/2015/09/03/australian-natural-history-monarch-of-the-western-skies-by-c-k-thompson-1946/) by C.K. Thompson – age 8 and up

[Warrigal the Warrior](https://journeydestination.org/2014/11/06/australian-natural-history-warrigal-the-warrior-by-c-k-thompson/) by C.K. Thompson – great read aloud for all ages

[All About Captain Cook](https://journeydestination.org/2015/01/22/an-educational-manifesto-ambleside-online-year-4/) by Armstrong Sperry

[A Little Bush Maid](https://journeydestination.org/2016/04/17/a-little-bush-maid-by-mary-grant-bruce-1875-1958-classic-childrens-literature-event-2016/) by Mary Grant Bruce – the first in a beloved series of books. We used this one as a substitute for *American Tall Tales* in [Year 3](https://journeydestination.org/2014/11/11/a-homeschooling-year-for-a-9-year-old-girl-ambleside-online-year-3/) and the others as free reads from around age 9. They are the sort of stories that grow with the reader

[Bush Stories](https://journeydestination.org/2014/11/11/a-homeschooling-year-for-a-9-year-old-girl-ambleside-online-year-3/) by Amy Mack – AO year 3

[James Ruse: Pioneer Wheat Farmer](https://journeydestination.org/2015/01/22/an-educational-manifesto-ambleside-online-year-4/) (1760 – 1808) by Jean Chapman; A fairly short story we’ve used in AO Year 4 & suitable for any age

[The Bush Boys](https://journeydestination.org/2014/11/11/a-homeschooling-year-for-a-9-year-old-girl-ambleside-online-year-3/) by James Tierney – AO free reads, age 9 and up; there are number of books in the series; bush skills, camping, along with adventure

[Stowaway](https://journeydestination.org/2014/11/11/a-homeschooling-year-for-a-9-year-old-girl-ambleside-online-year-3/) by Karen Hesse – AO Year 4 read aloud

[Seven Little Australians](https://journeydestination.org/2017/11/25/ausreading-month-seven-little-australians-by-ethel-turner-1894/) by Ethel Turner

**The Little Black Princess** by Mrs Aeneas Gunn – free read; about age 9 years. Pre-view first. We used a ‘school version’ which was slightly edited. Published in 1905 & available [free online](https://archive.org/details/cu31924028623050)

[The Silver Brumby](https://journeydestination.org/2015/11/25/the-silver-brumby-by-elyne-mitchell-1913-2002/) series by Elyne Mitchell – age 10 & up or younger

[Come Danger, Come Darkness](https://journeydestination.org/2017/11/05/ausreading-month-come-danger-come-darkness-by-ruth-park-1978/) by Ruth Park – set in Norfolk Island, mid 1800’s

[Karrawingi the Emu](https://journeydestination.org/2015/06/09/australian-natural-history-the-emu/) by Leslie Rees – age 9 or 10

**Biggles in Australia** by W.E. Johns – Biggles & Co. defeat a conspiracy of dangerous agitators in the Australian outback. Age 10 and up

**A Final Reckoning: A Tale of Bush Life in Australia** by G.A. Henty – online [here.](http://www.online-literature.com/ga-henty/a-final-reckoning/) About age 10 and up. [Free Kindle](https://www.amazon.com/Final-Reckoning-Tale-Bush-Australia-ebook/dp/B0083ZSHJ0/ref=sr_1_71?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1488102640&sr=1-71&keywords=ga+henty+free+kindle+books&refinements=p_36%3A-0) version at time of writing

[Doctor Hunger & Captain Thirst](https://journeydestination.org/2015/10/14/ambleside-online-year-5-with-australian-substitutes-updated/) by Meredith Hooper – AO Year 5; excellent book on early Australian explorers

[Margaret Catchpole](https://journeydestination.org/2015/10/14/ambleside-online-year-5-with-australian-substitutes-updated/) (1762-1819) by Nance Donkin, AO Year 5

[River Rivals](https://journeydestination.org/2015/10/14/ambleside-online-year-5-with-australian-substitutes-updated/) by Ian Mudie, AO Year 5

[The Singing Wire: The Story of the Overland Telegraph](https://journeydestination.org/2015/10/14/ambleside-online-year-5-with-australian-substitutes-updated/) by Eve Pownall, AO year 5

[The Switherby Pilgrims](https://journeydestination.org/2014/11/27/australian-historical-fiction-the-switherby-pilgrims-by-eleanor-spence/) by Eleanor Spence – AO Year 5 Term 1 (1800 – 1840)

Jamberro Road – the sequel to the above book & set five years later

[Verity of Sydney Town](https://journeydestination.org/2014/08/29/australian-historical-fiction-for-primary-age-children-verity-of-sydney-town-by-ruth-c-williams/) by Ruth C. Williams – AO Year 5 Term 1

[Inside Out & Back Again](https://journeydestination.org/2020/07/06/inside-out-back-again-by-thanhha-lai-2011/) by Thanhha Lai – AO Year 6, Immigration

[Walkabout](https://journeydestination.org/2013/03/18/four-first-rate-living-books-to-read-aloud/) by James Vance Marshall – read aloud for all ages or AO Year 6

[Sun on the Stubble](https://journeydestination.org/2019/04/09/sun-on-the-stubble-by-colin-thiele/) by Colin Thiele – AO Year 6 but I recommend it be read aloud & slightly edited; great family read aloud.

[I Can Jump Puddles](https://journeydestination.org/2015/06/22/i-can-jump-puddles-by-alan-marshall-1955/) by Alan Marshall – AO Year 6 but recommend read aloud & some editing or leave it until mid highschool

[Golden Fiddles](https://journeydestination.org/2016/04/27/golden-fiddles-by-mary-grant-bruce-1928-classic-childrens-literature-event/) by Mary Grant Bruce – AO Year 6

[To the Wild Sky](https://journey-and-destination.blogspot.com.au/2014/11/australian-childrens-literature-to-wild.html) by Ivan Southall

[**Ash Road**](https://www.bookdepository.com/Ash-Road-Ivan-Southall/9781922147493?a_aid=journey56) by Ivan Southall – recommended for [Year 6](http://readingaustralia.com.au/lesson/ash-road/) but Southall’s books are very realistic so perhaps pre-read unless you’re going to read it aloud.

**February Dragon** by Colin Thiele – this is about a bushfire someone carelessly started. Preview for sensitive children – my son thought it was too sad when he was about 12 or 13

[A Fortunate Life](https://journeydestination.org/2015/12/20/a-fortunate-life-by-a-b-facey-1894-1982/) by A.B. Facey – recommend read aloud; excellent book

**The Great Trek** by Ion L. Idries (1940) – A well-written, historically accurate and exciting story based on the diary of Frank Jardine who with his younger brother led an expedition from Rockhampton to Somerset on the Cape York Peninsular in 1864. Geography, History & best suited for ages 11 to 14 years.

**We of the Never-Never** (1908) by Mrs Aeneas Gunn – I used this as a read aloud with my older children and in Year 11 with my youngest for Australian Literature.

[The Bight](https://journeydestination.org/2018/08/27/amblesideonline-year-8-term-1-australian-geography-the-bight-by-colin-thiele-mike-mckelvey/) by Colin Thiele – AO Year 8 Geography, Term 1 (in place of the book AO uses on Columbus)

[Captain Cook](https://journeydestination.org/2013/01/26/ambleside-online-year-9-australian-history-geography-part-2-substitutions/) by Alistair MacLean – about ages 13/14 & up. MacLean is a great author for teenage boys.

[Buccaneer Explorer: William Dampier’s Voyages](https://journeydestination.org/2013/01/26/ambleside-online-year-9-australian-history-geography-part-2-substitutions/) – AO year 9; good for Geography  
  
[The Endeavour Journal of Joseph Banks](https://journeydestination.org/2013/01/26/ambleside-online-year-9-australian-history-geography-part-2-substitutions/) – AO Year 9 but could be used with a younger student

[My Love Must Wait: the Story of Matthew Flinders](https://journeydestination.org/2017/10/11/an-australian-classic-a-living-book-my-love-must-wait-the-story-of-matthew-flinders-by-ernestine-hill-1941/) by Ernestine Hill – Excellent writing! AO Year 9   
or age 14 and up. History, geography, biography.  
  
[Flynn of the Inland](https://journeydestination.org/2019/11/17/ambleside-online-year-10-an-australian-biography-flynn-of-the-inland-by-ion-l-idriess-1932/) by Ion L. Idriess – AO Year 10, Biography

[Pastures of the Blue Crane](https://journeydestination.org/2016/12/16/a-week-in-review/) by H. F. Brinsmead – about age 15 and up

[All the Green Year](https://journeydestination.org/2020/04/25/an-australian-living-book-all-the-green-year-by-don-charlwood-1965/) by Don Charlwood – AO Year 10 or read aloud for younger ages

[Robbery Under Arms](https://journeydestination.org/2014/02/07/robbery-under-arms-by-rolf-boldrewood-an-australian-classic/) by Ralph Boldrewood – AO Year 10; great boy book

[My Brilliant Career](https://journeydestination.org/2015/11/10/my-brilliant-career-by-miles-franklin-1879-1954/) by Miles Franklin – fits in AO Year 10; how not to treat a man…the heroine needed a good kick in the pants, but I liked how Franklin wrote this.

[Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence](https://journeydestination.org/2015/11/10/my-brilliant-career-by-miles-franklin-1879-1954/) by Doris Pilkington/Nugi Garimara – Year 11 (Aboriginal Studies)

[My Place](https://journeydestination.org/2018/11/14/my-place-by-sally-morgan-1987/) by Sally Morgan – mature readers or read aloud & discuss. There is a Young People’s edition but I haven’t read it. (Aboriginal Studies)

Currency Lass by Margaret Reeson – lovely account of a young Christian woman born in Australia and growing up in the convict colony of Sydney. My girls read this book and the one below when they were in their mid-teens. Update: used this in Ambleside Online Year 9 with my youngest.

Certain Lives by Margaret Reeson – the story of three generations of Australian women; AO Years 10 and 11.

[I Find Australia](https://journeydestination.org/2015/12/28/living-books-for-the-20th-century-geography-i-find-australia-by-william-hatfield-1892-1969/) by William Hatfield – AO Year 10 or 11; Geography

Generations of Men by Judith Wright – it’s been awhile since I read this but it deals with the author’s ancestors, early settlers in Australia. Wright was also a poet and it shows in her writing which is lyrical & lovely. My eldest daughter read it when she was around 16 years of age.

The Golden Quest by A.C.V. Bligh – a narrative of the pioneer days in the north and west of Australia. A good book for boys about “Roaring days of the West Australian Gold Rushes & life in the pearling industry.” AO Year 10 or 11; geography

[White Coolies](https://journeydestination.org/2023/01/09/my-reading-in-2022/) by Betty Jeffrey – a diary account written by an Australian nurse who with a group of others was a prisoner of war held by the Japanese after the fall of Singapore in WWII. It includes the story of Vivian Bullwinkel who was honoured with a statue at the Australian War Memorial.

AO Year 11.

[The Fortunes of Richard Mahony](https://journeydestination.org/2020/12/05/an-australian-classic-the-fortunes-of-richard-mahony-by-henry-handel-richardson/) by Henry Handel Richardson – engrossing epic book of 943 pages; AO year 11 or 12; Literature. Suitable for mature readers; some philosophical thoughts on science and faith and the main character delves into Spiritualism for a while, although it is mostly scoffed at by others.

[Australia’s Prime Ministers From Barton to Howard](https://journeydestination.org/2013/11/21/australian-history-for-high-school/) by Brian Carroll – Australian Government for highschool

**\* The following are for mature readers – upper highschool & beyond as they contain adult themes \***

[For the Term of His Natural Life](https://journeydestination.org/2014/11/02/ausreading-month-2014-for-the-term-of-his-natural-life-by-marcus-clarke/) by Marcus Clarke – brutal but realistic. Fits AO Year 10 chronologically but I’d leave it for a more mature reader.

[The Secret River](https://journeydestination.org/2015/10/10/the-secret-river-by-kate-grenville-2005/) by Kate Grenville – I’m not recommending this book at all, even though the writing is very good for the most part, as it has some very dark material, but am putting it here as it’s used in some schools in their curriculum for upper high school. There is a study guide [here](http://www.abc.net.au/tv/programs/secret-river/secretriver_studyguide.pdf) that will give an idea of some of the contents.

[A Town Like Alice](https://journeydestination.org/2013/05/23/an-australian-classic-a-town-like-alice-by-neville-shute/) by Nevil Shute – set during and after WW2 (Year 11)

[On the Beach](https://journeydestination.org/2013/11/02/a-literary-journey/) by Nevil Shute – a post-nuclear scenario set in southern Australia (scroll down the page)

[The Light Between Oceans](https://journeydestination.org/2018/02/16/australian-historical-fiction-the-light-between-oceans-by-m-l-stedman/) by M. L. Stedman – post WWI; check review as it contains some profanity; historical fiction

*The Rowland Sinclair* series of crime novels by Sulari Gentill are a great way to pick up some 1930’s Australian history:

[A Few Right Thinking Men](https://journeydestination.org/2016/09/22/a-few-right-thinking-men-by-sulari-gentill/)[A Decline in Prophets](https://journeydestination.org/2016/10/07/a-fortnights-review/)[Miles Off Course](https://journeydestination.org/2016/11/16/ausreading-month-2016-miles-off-course-by-sulari-gentill/)[A Murder Unmentioned](https://journeydestination.org/2017/11/14/a-murder-unmentioned-by-sulari-gentill/)

[A Dangerous Language](https://journeydestination.org/2020/06/29/a-foray-into-some-modern-books/)

[The Shiralee](https://journeydestination.org/2018/07/25/an-australian-classic-the-shiralee-by-darcy-niland-1955/) by D’Arcy Niland – set sometime around the Great Depression or just afterwards

Asia Pacific

[The Peasant Prince](https://journeydestination.org/2018/07/25/an-australian-classic-the-shiralee-by-darcy-niland-1955/) by Li Cunxin & Anne Spudvilas (scroll down page for review) – a lovely picture book based on the biography, ‘Mao’s Last Dancer.’  
  
[The Hole in the Hill](https://journeydestination.org/2017/10/16/a-new-zealand-living-book-for-children-the-hole-in-the-hill-by-ruth-park-1917-2010/) by Ruth Park – set in New Zealand; around age 10 and under

[Maori and Settler: A Tale of the Maori Wars](https://www.bookdepository.com/Maori-and-Settler-G-Henty/9781406895964/?a_aid=journey56) by G.A. Henty. Age 10 years and up. [Free for Kindle](https://www.amazon.com/Maori-Settler-Story-New-Zealand-ebook/dp/B004TIN51U) last time I looked. Also [here.](https://archive.org/details/maoriandsettlers00hentiala)

[Little Brother](https://journeydestination.org/2016/11/27/little-brother-by-allan-baillie/) by Allan Baillie (Cambodia) AO Year 6

[In Search of the Castaways](https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/v/verne/jules/v52cs/) by Jules Verne (also known as Captain Grant’s Children) set in South America, Australia and New Zealand

[Ten Fingers for God](https://journey-and-destination.blogspot.com.au/2017/08/ten-fingers-for-god-by-dorothy-clarke.html) by Dorothy Clarke Wilson – medical missionary biography; AO Year 7 – as a devotional & as a book set in Asia (India)

[The Small Woman](http://journey-and-destination.blogspot.com.au/2017/07/the-small-woman-by-alan-burgess-1957.html) by Alan Burgess – exceptional biography of Gladys Aylward, missionary to China for twenty years. 20th Century; age 12 or 13 years and up

[By Searching](https://journey-and-destination.blogspot.com/2018/09/christian-classics-by-searching-by.html) by Isobel Kuhn – autobiography of the author’s girlhood & the lead up to missionary work in China. Age 14 years & up; AO Year 10. Other books include, *Ascent to the Tribes, Nests Above the Abyss,* and others.

[Red Scarf Girl](https://journey-and-destination.blogspot.com.au/2017/07/red-scarf-girl-memoir-of-cultural.html) by Ji-Li Jiang – Cultural Revolution seen through the eyes of a young girl. For ages 13/14 years and up

[Colour Scheme](https://journey-and-destination.blogspot.com/2019/06/colour-scheme-by-ngaio-marsh-1943.html) by Ngaio Marsh – a golden age detective novel by one of the ‘Queens of Crime.’ A Kiwi author, this story is one of a few she set in New Zealand. Age 14/15 yrs & up.

Mao Tse-Tung and His China by Albert Marrin – we’ve used a few other books by this author (e.g. [Stalin](https://journeydestination.org/2016/10/03/stalin-russias-man-of-steel-by-albert-marrin/)) and they are good. Mao we used for the study of the 20th Century/ AO Year 11; suitable for around ages 15 and up

[Life & Death in Shanghai](https://journeydestination.org/2017/08/27/living-books-for-the-20th-century-life-and-death-in-shanghai-by-nien-cheng-1986/) by Nien Cheng – AO Year 11; 20th Century

[Death of a Guru](https://journeydestination.org/2013/05/03/death-of-a-guru/) by Rabindranath R. Maharaj – AO Year 11 or 12 – Christian worldview, philosophy & biography, Hinduism. Excellent book!

**Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China** by Jung Chan – 20th Century; Adult or pre-read for late high school. I really liked this when I read it years ago and recently one of my adult daughters bought me another of the authors more recent books, which I haven’t read yet:

**Big Sister, Little Sister, Red Sister** – Three women at the heart of twentieth century China

**Killing Fields, Living Fields** by Don Cormack – adult or pre-read for late high school. Poignant, exceptional writing, and as you would expect, horrific in places, but it is ultimately a story of hope and rising up from the ashes.(Cambodia)

[First They Killed My Father](https://journeydestination.org/2018/04/02/first-they-killed-my-father-by-loung-ung-2000/) by Loung Ung (Cambodia) Graphic in places. Pre-read!!

**The Good Earth** by Pearl Buck – set in China & scheduled in Year 9 of AO Year; one of my girls read it in Year 11/12 but it’s very raw & I suggest a preview first.

[The Makioka Sisters](https://journeydestination.org/2019/08/12/the-makioka-sisters-by-junichiro-tanizaki-1943-1948/) by Junichiro Tanizaki – a Japanese literary classic set between 1936 & 1941 that has an unusual and very interesting perspective on the times. Mature content; would suit an upper high school student studying Modern History, AmblesideOnline Year 12 or Asian studies.

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[An Educational Manifesto – Ambleside Online Year 4](https://journeydestination.org/2015/01/22/an-educational-manifesto-ambleside-online-year-4/?relatedposts_hit=1&relatedposts_origin=3180&relatedposts_position=1)January 22, 2015In "AmblesideOnline"

[Ambleside Online Year 5 – with Australian Substitutes: Updated](https://journeydestination.org/2015/10/14/ambleside-online-year-5-with-australian-substitutes-updated/?relatedposts_hit=1&relatedposts_origin=3180&relatedposts_position=2)October 14, 2015In "AmblesideOnline"

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[Pilgrim’s Inn by Elizabeth Goudge (1948) →](https://journeydestination.org/2020/07/12/pilgrims-inn-by-elizabeth-goudge-1948/)

## 8 thoughts on “Towards an Australian Charlotte Mason Curriculum”

* [***Anonymous***](https://www.blogger.com/profile/04920520572932874408)
* [NOVEMBER 24, 2016 AT 9:54 AM](https://journeydestination.org/2020/07/06/towards-an-australian-charlotte-mason-curriculum/#comment-5199)
* Thank-you for posting this Carol. Its very helpful to have your lists to refer to.
* Like
* [**REPLY**](https://journeydestination.org/2020/07/06/towards-an-australian-charlotte-mason-curriculum/?replytocom=5199#respond)
* [***Anonymous***](https://www.blogger.com/profile/06820925595506920754)
* [NOVEMBER 26, 2016 AT 6:53 AM](https://journeydestination.org/2020/07/06/towards-an-australian-charlotte-mason-curriculum/#comment-5200)
* My pleasure, Zoe. Good to know it's helpful.
* Like
* [**REPLY**](https://journeydestination.org/2020/07/06/towards-an-australian-charlotte-mason-curriculum/?replytocom=5200#respond)
* [***Anonymous***](https://www.blogger.com/profile/00258199051181472323)
* [MAY 24, 2017 AT 7:23 PM](https://journeydestination.org/2020/07/06/towards-an-australian-charlotte-mason-curriculum/#comment-5201)
* What a great list of books. My wife and I are going to homeschool our daughters (5 and 3). We plan on using the Charlotte Mason way. Love the living book idea and the emphasis on free play time. I love Australia and hope to visit one day. These books would be a great way to introduce our girls to Australia. Thank you for the post!
* Like
* [**REPLY**](https://journeydestination.org/2020/07/06/towards-an-australian-charlotte-mason-curriculum/?replytocom=5201#respond)
* [***Anonymous***](https://www.blogger.com/profile/06820925595506920754)
* [MAY 26, 2017 AT 4:49 AM](https://journeydestination.org/2020/07/06/towards-an-australian-charlotte-mason-curriculum/#comment-5202)
* I appreciate how Charlotte Mason makes time for art and beauty – things that are often sacrificed or sometimes seen as unnecessary. All the best to you & your family as you start this new adventure.
* Like
* [**REPLY**](https://journeydestination.org/2020/07/06/towards-an-australian-charlotte-mason-curriculum/?replytocom=5202#respond)
* [***Anonymous***](https://www.blogger.com/profile/07806103758769049923)
* [DECEMBER 29, 2017 AT 5:02 AM](https://journeydestination.org/2020/07/06/towards-an-australian-charlotte-mason-curriculum/#comment-5203)
* Nice and very helpful information i have got from your post. Even your whole blog is full of interesting information which is the great sign of a great blogger.[Online Doctor in Australia](https://article.wn.com/view/2017/12/20/Doctoroo_Launches_Australias_most_Affordable_Online_Teleheal/)
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