

Milestones in the History of Children's Literature

This chapter first considers some milestones in the development of children's literature; then it looks at changing views of children and the family as reflected in early books for children and in more contemporary stories. Chart 2.1 provides an overview of the historical milestones.

The Oral Tradition

Long before recorded history, family units and tribes shared their group traditions and values through stories told around the campfire. On every continent around the globe, ancient peoples developed folktales and mythologies that

speculated about human beginnings, attempted to explain the origins of the universe and other natural phenomena, emphasized ethical truths, and transmitted history from one generation to the next. When hunters returned from their adventures, they probably told about the perils of the hunt and hostile encounters with other tribes. Heroic deeds were certainly told and retold until they became a part of a group's heritage. This tradition has existed since the first oral communication among human beings and goes back to the very roots of every civilization on earth. These

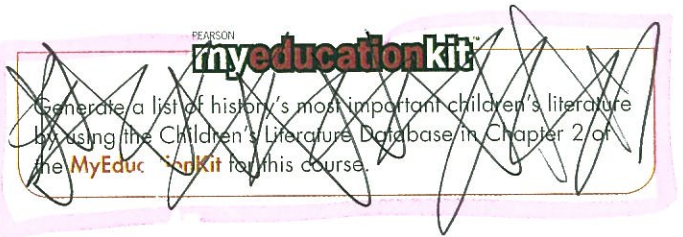


CHART 2.1 Early historical milestones in children's literature

—	The Oral Tradition "Beowulf" "Jack the Giant Killer"	1800s	The Romantic Movement in Europe The Brothers Grimm Hans Christian Andersen
1400s	Early Books Hornbooks Caxton's Printing Press (1476)		The Impact of Illustrators on Children's Books Walter Crane Randolph Caldecott Kate Greenaway
1500s	The Introduction of Chapbooks "Jack the Giant Killer"	1860s	The Victorian Influence Charlotte Yonge's <i>The Daisy Chain</i> and <i>The Clever Woman of the Family</i>
1600s	The Puritan Influence <i>Spiritual Milk for Boston Babes in Either England, Drawn From the Breasts of Both Testaments for Their Souls' Nourishment</i> <i>Pilgrim's Progress</i>	1840–1900	Childhood Seen as an Adventure, Not a Training Ground for Adulthood Fantasy Lewis Carroll's <i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i> Edward Lear's <i>A Book of Nonsense</i> Adventure Robert Louis Stevenson's <i>Treasure Island</i> Howard Pyle's <i>The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood</i> Jules Verne's <i>Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea</i> Real People Margaret Sidney's <i>The Five Little Peppers and How They Grew</i> Louisa May Alcott's <i>Little Women</i> Johanna Spyri's <i>Heidi</i>
1693	A View of Childhood Changes John Locke's <i>Some Thoughts Concerning Education</i>		
1697	First Fairy Tales Written for Children Charles Perrault's <i>Tales of Mother Goose</i>		
1719	Great Adventure Stories Daniel Defoe's <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> Jonathan Swift's <i>Gulliver's Travels</i>		
1744	Children's Literature: A True Beginning John Newbery's <i>A Little Pretty Pocket Book</i> and <i>History of Little Goody Two-Shoes</i> (1745)		
1762	Guidance of Children in Their Search for Knowledge Jean-Jacques Rousseau's <i>Emile</i>		
1789	Poetry About Children William Blake's <i>Songs of Innocence</i>		

CHART 2.2 Milestones in the history of children's illustration

1484	William Caxton, <i>Aesop's Fables</i> , contained woodcuts.	1878	Randolph Caldecott, <i>The Diverting History of John Gilpin</i> , the first of sixteen picture books.
1658	Johann Amos Comenius, <i>Orbis Pictus</i> , considered by many to be the first picture book for children.	1878	Kate Greenaway, <i>Under the Window</i> .
1771	Thomas Bewick, <i>The New Lottery Book of Birds and Beasts</i> .	1883	Howard Pyle, <i>The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood</i> .
1784	Thomas and John Bewick, <i>The Select Fables of Aesop and Others</i> .	1900	Arthur Rackham, illustrations for the Grimms' <i>Fairy Tales</i> .
1789	William Blake, <i>Songs of Innocence</i> .	1901	Beatrix Potter, <i>The Tale of Peter Rabbit</i> .
1823	George Cruikshank, translation of the Grimms' <i>Fairy Tales</i> .	1924	E. H. Shepard, illustrations for A. A. Milne's <i>When We Were Very Young</i> .
1853	George Cruikshank, <i>Fairy Library</i> .	1933	Kurt Wiese, illustrations for Marjorie Flack's <i>The Story of Ping</i> .
1865	John Tenniel, illustrations for Lewis Carroll's <i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i> .	1933	E. H. Shepard, illustrations for Kenneth Grahame's <i>The Wind in the Willows</i> .
1865	Walter Crane, <i>The House That Jack Built</i> , the first of the toy books engraved by Evans.	1937	Dr. Seuss, <i>And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street</i> .

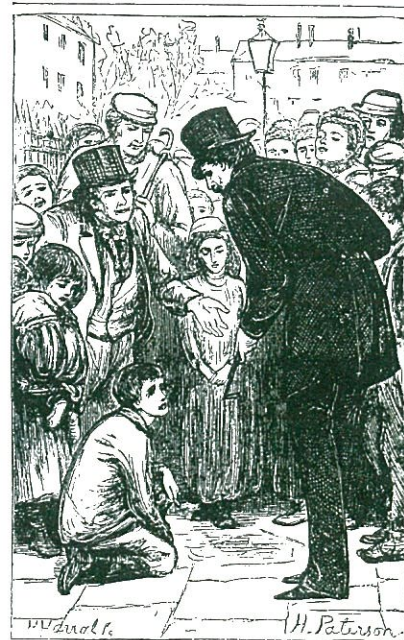
Illustration. Chart 2.2 summarizes some milestones in the illustration of children's books from the 15th century into the early 20th century.

The Victorian Influence

English-speaking people identify the reign of Great Britain's Queen Victoria, from 1837 to 1901 with a distinct social epoch, the Victorian Age, although so-called Victorian social influences certainly preceded and followed the queen's life. The rise of a highly competitive industrial technology, the growth of large cities and the decline of rural traditions, an emphasis on strictly controlled social behavior and Christian piety, and a romantic focus on home and family are factors usually associated with the Victorian Age in Europe, North America, and elsewhere. Alan Rauch (1989) describes this period as one of "scientific didacticism," a time when authors used scientific subjects for moral and religious instruction of children. In addition, the increasingly prosperous middle and upper classes began to view childhood sentimentally, as an even more special stage in the human life cycle, while children of the working poor labored many hours a day in mines and factories.

Juliana Horatia Ewing was one of the most prolific authors of the Victorian period. Many of her popular tales for children first appeared in such English periodicals as *The Monthly Packet* and *Aunt Judy's Magazine for Young People*. Her first book, *Melchior's Dream and Other Stories*, was published by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge in 1862.

MRS. EWING'S STORIES.



"What's your name, boy?" — PAGE 247.

JAN OF THE WINDMILL.

A STORY OF THE PLAINS.

By Mrs. EWING. Price, \$1.00.

ROBERTS BROTHERS, Publishers,
BOSTON

This illustration is from a popular Victorian author. From Mrs. Ewing's *Stories*, by Mrs. Juliana Horatia Ewing. Published by Roberts Brothers, Boston.

CHART 2.3 Notable authors of children's literature

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|------|--|------|---|
| 1477 | William Caxton, <i>Caxton's Book of Curtesye</i> | 1892 | Carlo Collodi, <i>The Adventures of Pinocchio</i> |
| 1484 | William Caxton, <i>The Fables of Aesop</i> | | Arthur Conan Doyle, <i>The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes</i> |
| 1485 | William Caxton, <i>Le Morte d'Arthur</i> | | |
| 1678 | John Bunyan, <i>Pilgrim's Progress</i> | 1894 | Rudyard Kipling, <i>The Jungle Book</i> |
| 1698 | Charles Perrault or Pierre Perrault d'Armancour, <i>Tales of Mother Goose</i> | 1901 | Beatrix Potter, <i>The Tale of Peter Rabbit</i> |
| 1719 | Daniel Defoe, <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> | 1903 | L. Leslie Brooke, <i>Johnny Crow's Garden</i> |
| 1726 | Jonathan Swift, <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> | | Kate Douglas Wiggin, <i>Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm</i> |
| 1744 | John Newbery, <i>A Little Pretty Pocket Book</i> | | J. M. Barrie, <i>Peter Pan: Or The Boy Who Would Not Grow Up</i> |
| 1789 | William Blake, <i>Songs of Innocence</i> | 1904 | Howard Garis, <i>The Bobbsey Twins: Or Merry Days Indoors and Out</i> (Over seventy books in the series) |
| 1812 | First volume of the Grimms' fairy tales, <i>Kinder-und Hausmärchen</i> | | |
| | Johann Wyss, <i>Swiss Family Robinson</i> | 1908 | Kenneth Grahame, <i>The Wind in the Willows</i> |
| 1820 | Sir Walter Scott, <i>Ivanhoe: A Romance</i> | 1911 | Frances Hodgson Burnett, <i>The Secret Garden</i> |
| 1823 | Clement C. Moore, <i>A Visit From St. Nicholas</i> | 1913 | Eleanor H. Porter, <i>Pollyanna</i> |
| 1826 | James Fenimore Cooper, <i>The Last of the Mohicans</i> | 1918 | O. Henry, <i>The Ransom of Red Chief</i> |
| 1843 | Charles Dickens, <i>A Christmas Carol</i> | 1921 | Hendrik Willem Van Loon, <i>The Story of Mankind</i> (One of the first informational books attempting to make learning exciting; first Newbery Medal, 1922) |
| 1846 | Edward Lear, <i>A Book of Nonsense</i> | | |
| | Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales in English translations | 1922 | Margery Williams Bianco, <i>The Velveteen Rabbit</i> |
| 1851 | John Ruskin, <i>King of the Golden River</i> | 1924 | A. A. Milne, <i>When We Were Very Young</i> |
| 1856 | Charlotte Yonge, <i>The Daisy Chain</i> | 1926 | A. A. Milne, <i>Winnie-the-Pooh</i> |
| 1862 | Christina Georgina Rossetti, <i>Goblin Market</i> | 1928 | Wanda Gág, <i>Millions of Cats</i> |
| 1863 | Charles Kingsley, <i>The Water Babies</i> | | Carl Sandburg, <i>Abe Lincoln Grows Up</i> |
| 1865 | Lewis Carroll, <i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i> | 1929 | Rachel Field, <i>Hitty, Her First Hundred Years</i> |
| | Mary Elizabeth Mapes Dodge, <i>Hans Brinker, or the Silver Skates, a Story of Life in Holland</i> | 1932 | Laura Ingalls Wilder, <i>Little House in the Big Woods</i> |
| 1868 | Louisa May Alcott, <i>Little Women</i> | | Laura E. Richards, <i>Tirra Lirra: Rhymes Old and New</i> |
| 1870 | Thomas Bailey Aldrich, <i>The Story of a Bad Boy</i> | 1933 | Jean de Brunhoff, <i>The Story of Babar</i> |
| 1871 | George MacDonald, <i>At the Back of the North Wind</i> | 1937 | Dr. Seuss, <i>And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street</i> |
| 1872 | Jules Verne, <i>Around the World in Eighty Days</i> | | J. R. R. Tolkien, <i>The Hobbit</i> |
| 1873 | <i>St. Nicholas: Scribner's Illustrated Magazine for Girls and Boys</i> , edited by Mary Mapes Dodge | 1939 | James Daugherty, <i>Daniel Boone</i> |
| 1876 | Mark Twain, <i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i> | 1940 | Armstrong Sperry, <i>Call It Courage</i> |
| 1877 | Anna Sewell, <i>Black Beauty</i> | | Doris Gates, <i>Blue Willow</i> |
| 1881 | Margaret Sidney, <i>The Five Little Peppers and How They Grew</i> | 1941 | Lois Lenski, <i>Indian Captive, The Story of Mary Jemison</i> |
| | Joel Chandler Harris, <i>Uncle Remus; His Songs and Sayings: The Folklore of the Old Plantation</i> | | Robert McCloskey, <i>Make Way for Ducklings</i> |
| 1883 | Howard Pyle, <i>Merry Adventures of Robin Hood of Great Renown, in Nottinghamshire</i> | 1942 | Virginia Lee Burton, <i>The Little House</i> |
| | Robert Louis Stevenson, <i>Treasure Island</i> | 1944 | Robert Lawson, <i>Rabbit Hill</i> |
| 1884 | Johanna Spyri, <i>Heidi: Her Years of Wandering and Learning</i> | 1946 | Esther Forbes, <i>Johnny Tremain</i> |
| 1885 | Robert Louis Stevenson, <i>A Child's Garden of Verses</i> | 1947 | Marcia Brown, <i>Stone Soup</i> |
| | | 1950 | Beverly Cleary, <i>Henry Huggins</i> |
| 1886 | Frances Hodgson Burnett, <i>Little Lord Fauntleroy</i> | 1951 | Olivia Coolidge, <i>Legends of the North</i> |
| 1889 | Andrew Lang, <i>The Blue Fairy Book</i> | 1952 | Lynd Ward, <i>The Biggest Bear</i> |
| | | | E. B. White, <i>Charlotte's Web</i> |
| | | | David McCord, <i>Far and Few</i> |

CHART 2.3 Continued

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| 1953 | Mary Norton, <i>The Borrowers</i> | 1976 | Mildred Taylor, <i>Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry</i> |
| 1954 | Rosemary Sutcliff, <i>The Eagle of the Ninth</i> | 1977 | Jamake Highwater, <i>Anpao: An Indian Odyssey</i> |
| 1955 | L. M. Boston, <i>The Children of Green Knowe</i> | | Patricia Clapp, <i>I'm Deborah Sampson; A Soldier in the War of the Revolution</i> |
| 1957 | Else Holmelund Minarik, <i>Little Bear</i> | | Katherine Paterson, <i>Bridge to Terabithia</i> |
| 1958 | Jean Fritz, <i>The Cabin Faced West</i> | | Margaret Musgrove, <i>Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions</i> |
| | Elizabeth George Speare, <i>The Witch of Blackbird Pond</i> | 1978 | Tomie dePaola, <i>The Clown of God</i> |
| 1959 | Leo Lionni, <i>Little Blue and Little Yellow</i> | 1979 | José Aruego and Ariane Dewey, <i>We Hide, You Seek</i> |
| | Jean Craighead George, <i>My Side of the Mountain</i> | 1981 | Nancy Willard, <i>A Visit to William Blake's Inn</i> |
| 1960 | Michael Bond, <i>A Bear Called Paddington</i> | 1982 | Nina Bawden, <i>Kept in the Dark</i> |
| | Scott O'Dell, <i>Island of the Blue Dolphins</i> | | Laurence Pringle, <i>Water: The Next Great Resource Battle</i> |
| 1961 | C. S. Lewis, <i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i> | | Cynthia Rylant, <i>When I Was Young in the Mountains</i> |
| 1962 | Ronald Syme, <i>African Traveler, The Story of Mary Kingsley</i> | 1984 | Paula Fox, <i>One-Eyed Cat</i> |
| | Madeleine L'Engle, <i>A Wrinkle in Time</i> | 1985 | Rhoda Blumberg, <i>Commodore Perry in the Land of the Shogun</i> |
| | Ezra Jack Keats, <i>The Snowy Day</i> | 1986 | Jean Fritz, <i>Make Way for Sam, Houston</i> |
| 1964 | Louise Fitzhugh, <i>Harriet the Spy</i> | 1987 | Russell Freedman, <i>Lincoln: A Photobiography</i> |
| | Irene Hunt, <i>Across Five Aprils</i> | 1988 | Paul Fleischman, <i>Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices</i> |
| | Lloyd Alexander, <i>The Book of Three</i> | 1989 | Janet Taylor Lisle, <i>Afternoon of the Elves</i> |
| 1967 | John Christopher, <i>The White Mountains</i> | 1990 | Dr. Seuss, <i>Oh, the Places You'll Go!</i> |
| | E. L. Konigsburg, <i>Jennifer, Hecate, MacBeth, William McKinley and Me, Elizabeth</i> | 1991 | Avi, <i>Nothing but the Truth: A Documentary Novel</i> |
| | Virginia Hamilton, <i>Zeely</i> | 1993 | Lois Lowry, <i>The Giver</i> |
| 1969 | John Steptoe, <i>Stevie</i> | 1997 | E. L. Konigsburg receives her second Newbery Medal for <i>The View From Saturday</i> |
| | William H. Armstrong, <i>Souder</i> | 1999 | Louis Sachar's <i>Holes</i> receives both the Newbery Medal and the National Book Award |
| | Theodore Taylor, <i>The Cay</i> | 2001 | Richard Peck, <i>A Year Down Yonder</i> |
| | Vera and Bill Cleaver, <i>Where the Lilies Bloom</i> | 2003 | Kate DiCamillo, <i>The Tale of Despereaux</i> |
| | William Steig, <i>Sylvester and the Magic Pebble</i> | 2004 | Jim Murphy, <i>An American Plague</i> |
| 1970 | Betsy Byars, <i>Summer of the Swans</i> | 2005 | J. K. Rowling, <i>Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince</i> |
| | Judy Blume, <i>Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret</i> | 2006 | M. T. Anderson, <i>The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing</i> |
| 1971 | Arnold Lobel, <i>Frog and Toad Are Friends</i> | 2007 | Laura Amy Schlitz, <i>Good Masters! Sweet Ladies!</i> |
| | Muriel Feelings, <i>Moja Means One: Swahili Counting Book</i> | 2008 | Neil Gaiman, <i>The Graveyard Book</i> |
| | Robert Kraus, <i>Leo, the Late Bloomer</i> | | |
| 1972 | Judith Viorst, <i>Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day</i> | | |
| 1973 | Doris Smith, <i>A Taste of Blackberries</i> | | |
| 1974 | Janet Hickman, <i>The Valley of the Shadow</i> | | |
| 1975 | Laurence Yep, <i>Dragonwings</i> | | |

books selected for social development should encourage students to read about and discuss controversial points of view in historical materials and discuss books in which rules help society make important decisions. Implications for personality development also suggest evaluative criteria as adolescents read and discuss books that deal with how characters overcome different types of conflict and show how characters

cope with problems. Selecting and discussing literature that helps adolescents understand how to control their emotions is important. As is true for the characters in many books, this is a skill that improves over time. This is a valuable lesson to be learned.

The questions in the Evaluation Criteria feature are helpful when selecting literature for adolescents.

CHART 2.4 Milestones in the history of censorship

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| <p>411 B.C. Works of Protagoras were burned in Athens.</p> <p>387 B.C. Plato suggested expurgating Homer's <i>The Odyssey</i> for immature readers.</p> <p>213 B.C. Chinese Emperor Shih Huang-ti tried to burn all the books in his realm because he disapproved of the traditional Chinese culture.</p> <p>168 B.C. Jewish library in Jerusalem was destroyed during the Maccabean uprising.</p> <p>1st century Augustus exiled poets and banned their works. Emperor Caligula ordered books by Homer and Virgil burned.</p> <p>A.D. 303 Diocletian condemned and burned all Christian books.</p> <p>1497 Works of Ovid and Dante were burned in Florence.</p> <p>1559 The Sacred Congregation of the Roman Inquisition published the first <i>Index of Forbidden Books</i>—books considered dangerous to the faith and morals of Roman Catholics (abandoned in 1996).</p> <p>1624 The Bible, translated by Martin Luther in 1534, was burned in Germany.</p> <p>1660 Charles II of England decreed that the Council for Foreign Plantations instruct natives, servants, and slaves of the British colonies in the precepts of Christianity by teaching them to read. But British slave owners feared literate blacks might find dangerous revolutionary ideas in books.</p> <p>1713 Daniel Defoe was prosecuted and imprisoned by the Whigs for writing treasonable anti-Jacobite pamphlets. In 1720, his <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> was placed on the <i>Index of Forbidden Books</i>.</p> <p>1726 <i>Gulliver's Travels</i>, by Jonathan Swift, was denounced as wicked and obscene because of its satire on courts, political parties, and statesmen.</p> <p>1760 South Carolina passed strict laws forbidding all blacks from being taught to read.</p> <p>1762 Jean-Jacques Rousseau's <i>Emile</i> was condemned and burned by the Parliament of Paris.</p> <p>1872 Anthony Comstock founded in New York the Society for the Suppression of Vice. This was the first effective censorship board in the United States.</p> <p>1884 Mark Twain's <i>Huckleberry Finn</i> was banned in Massachusetts. The sales of the book increased.</p> <p>1925 John Scopes was found guilty of teaching evolution based on <i>The Origin of Species</i>.</p> | <p>1933 In Berlin, propaganda minister Paul Goebbels spoke during the burning of more than 20,000 books while a crowd of more than 100,000 cheered.</p> <p>Rudolf Frank was arrested in Germany for writing <i>No Hero for the Kaiser</i>, a juvenile literature book with an antiwar theme.</p> <p>1942 In Athens, performances of classic Greek plays were banned by Nazi occupation authorities.</p> <p>1955 In Connecticut, African Americans protested against a dramatized version of Harriet Beecher Stowe's <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin, or Life Among the Lowly</i>.</p> <p>1957 New York City dropped works of Mark Twain from lists of approved books for junior and senior high schools because of racial language.</p> <p>1980 Parents took Hawkins County Tennessee Public Schools to court because an elementary school series was believed to violate their fundamentalist religious beliefs.</p> <p>1984 <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> was removed from the high school reading list in Waukegan, Illinois.</p> <p>1989 A survey of schools showed that Mark Twain's <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> was one of the most read books in high schools.</p> <p>2005 The 10 most challenged authors identified by the American Library Association (ALA) include Judy Blume, Robert Cormier, Chris Crutcher, Robie Harris, Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, Toni Morrison, J. D. Salinger, Lois Lowry, and Merily Reynolds. The ALA's 10 most challenged books are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harris's <i>It's Perfectly Normal</i> (homosexuality, nudity, sex education, religious viewpoint, and abortion). Blume's <i>Forever</i> (sexual content and offensive language). Salinger's <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> (sexual content and offensive language). Cormier's <i>The Chocolate War</i> (sexual content and offensive language). Crutcher's <i>Whale Talk</i> (racism and offensive language). Reynolds's <i>Detour for Emmy</i> (sexual content). Sones's <i>What My Mother Doesn't Know</i> (sexual content). Pilkey's <i>Captain Underpants</i> (antifamily content and violence). Conly's <i>Crazy Lady</i> (offensive language). Harris's <i>It's So Amazing! A Book About Eggs, Sperm, Birth, Babies, and Families</i> (sex education and sexual content). |
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CHART 2.5 History of the library

3rd century B.C.	Library of Alexandria
1st century B.C.	Power of the Canon of Recommended Authors and Literature: Aristophanes of Byzantium selected and listed works important for a library.
1st century A.D.	Rome's first public library during the reign of Augustus. Chinese libraries categorized books according to the gods, heavenly bodies, earth, humans, animals, plants, and minerals.
Middle Ages	Arab libraries categorized books according to thematic divisions and alphabetical order.
1099	European Crusaders destroyed Muslim and Jewish libraries in Jerusalem.
11th century	Buddhist monks used caves as sanctuaries for manuscripts and paintings.
1500s	Mexican Inquisition: Libraries of pre-Columbian peoples were destroyed by Europeans to deprive people of their cultural identities and to convert them to Christianity.
1526	Ottoman soldiers destroyed the Corvina Library founded by King Matthias Corvinus in 1471.
1556	John Dee suggested creating a national library in England for the collection of ancient materials.
1609	Libraries in Europe became public libraries.
1612	<i>Index of Forbidden Books</i> compiled in Madrid, Spain.
1690s	Proposal for building a Royal Library in England.
1728	First "Cyclopedia" in English language; later became "Encyclopedia."
1729	British Library was opened to the general public and not only to scholars.
1840s	In Pittsburgh, young Andrew Carnegie discovered a free public library that allowed him to obtain an education.
1873	Dewey Decimal Classification System was developed by Melvil Dewey while he was at Amherst College, Massachusetts.
1890	Andrew Carnegie identified a free public library as the best gift to give a community, and went on to donate money for over 2,500 libraries.
Early 20th century	Cossitt Library in Memphis, Tennessee, was opened to African Americans.
1930s–1940s	Public burning of Jewish books by Nazis, who destroyed Talmudic Library of the Lublin Yeshiva. Concentration camp libraries where older children orally recited works they had memorized.
1945	Remains of Hitler's library were discovered in a salt mine.
1971	Project Gutenberg began its project of placing 10,000 texts on the Web.
1990	Colombian Ministry of Culture established itinerant libraries that delivered books to distant rural areas by men on donkeys.
1996	Library of Congress replaced collection of 19th- and 20th-century newspapers with microfilms and destroyed originals. (Issue: shorter life expectancy of electronic reproductions versus longer life for paper.)
Post–Sept. 11, 2001	Under the Patriot Act, federal agents can obtain records of library books borrowed by the public in order to identify terrorists.
2000s	The Queens Borough Public Library in New York City is one of the busiest libraries in the United States; many users are immigrants.

Children and the Family in Children's Literature

As has already been discussed, attitudes toward children's place in the family have changed considerably over time. Before the Middle Ages, children were not greatly valued, and infanticide was a regular practice. During the Middle Ages, poor children shared the poverty and hard work of their parents, and children from the upper class and nobility spent most of their childhood separated from their families,

receiving instruction and training in the roles that they would assume as adults. Not until relatively recently has childhood become the time for the close family interaction that we are familiar with today.

Books written for children or adopted by children during the last few centuries have usually reflected views of childhood and the family typical of their time. Researchers are increasingly viewing children's literature as an important source of information about these changing attitudes.

Unsurprisingly, a prominent theme in children's literature has been the relationships of children within the family. Changing views about children and the family over