

A Schoolhouse Book List

Picture books

A country schoolhouse. By Lynne Barasch. 2004. New York: Frances Foster Books (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)

Midwest/northeast?

A student's grandfather tells of his experiences in a three-room school. Good description of the grouping of grades in the different classrooms, as well as the activities that occurred.

Coyote School News. By Joan Sandin. 2003. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Southwest US

A year in the life of a one-room school in the southwest (land that originally belonged to Mexico. Gives a good glimpse of Hispanic culture, complete with a listing of Spanish words and how to pronounce them at the end of the book.

Dear Mr. Rosenwald. By Carole Boston Weatherford. 2006. New York: Scholastic Press.

Rural South

Based on the actual founding of the Rosenwald schools, the reader gets a glimpse of the need for these schools and the reality when they were built. The Author's Note provides additional historical information.

My Great-Aunt Arizona. By Gloria Houston. 1992. HarperCollins Publishers.

Blue Ridge Mountains (NC)

A little girl dreamed of faraway places while she was growing up and attending a one-room school. Though she never visited those places, she taught generations of children about words and numbers and all they places they could visit one day.

One-Room School. By Raymond Bial. 1999. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

Country schools in U.S.

The author captures the essence of the one-room schools, whether made of logs, sod, wood, or stone, and adds narrative to bring to life these rural schools that shaped America.

One Room School. By Laurence Pringle. 1998/ Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mill Press.

New York

Share one last year at School 14, with adventures such as being driven home in the rumble seat of the teacher's car, working in a classroom with students from first through eighth grades, having to go outside to use the school's bathroom, playing "Anny Anny Over" throwing a ball over the school's room, and more.

The one-room school at Squabble Hollow, by Rosemarie Hauscherr. 1988. New York: Four Winds Press.

Vermont

The story of a "modern-day" one-room school, though it is slightly dated even today, with the mention of arrival of dot-matrix printer, etc. Photographs as well as story line bring the one-room school alive for the current students.

School. By Emily Arnold McCully. 1987. New York: Harper & Row.

Anywhere

A wordless book about a mouse community and their country school.

Chapter books

Betsy-Tacy books. By Maud Hart Lovelace and Lois Lenski. Harper Collins.

Minnesota & elsewhere

The Betsy-Tacy series is a collection of books written by Maud Hart Lovelace between 1940 and 1955. The books are written at progressively more difficult reading levels as the characters age. They follow the adventures of Betsy Ray and her friends and family from the time that Betsy turns five until she is in her early twenties. They take place in the very late 19th and early 20th centuries.

As the series progresses, the cast of characters grows larger and the plots progress to reflect the changing concerns of the characters. In the first three books, the action is mainly confined to the “Hill Street” neighborhood that is home to the three main characters, Betsy, Tacy, and Tib. In book four, the girls’ world becomes a bit larger and they have several adventures in new parts of town. (Summary from Wikipedia)

Caddie Woodlawn. By Carol Ryrie Brink. 1935. New York: Macmillian

Wisconsin

The author tells the story of her grandmother, the real Caddie Woodlawn, and the adventures with Indians in rural Wisconsin in the 1860s. Originally printed in 1935, this classic continues to be in print. *1936 Newbery Medal winner

Chig and the second spread. By Gwenyth Swain. 2003. New York: Delacorte Press.

Southern Indiana

This chapter book captures elements of the Great Depression and one-room schools in southern Indiana. The various adventures of the main characters provide interesting context for the story.

I Thought My Soul would Rise and Fly: The Diary of Patsy, a Freed Girl, Mars Bluff, South Carolina, 1865. By Joyce Hansen. 1997. New York: Scholastic.

South Carolina

In this addition to the Dear America series, Coretta Scott King Honor-winning author Joyce Hansen presents the inspiring story of Patsy, a freed girl who becomes a great teacher.

My Face to the Wind: The diary of Sarah Jane Price, a Prairie Teacher. By Jim Murphy. 2001. New York: Scholastic.

Broken Bow, Nebraska

Her father was the teacher for the one-room school, and after his death, she had nowhere to go. Rather than risk being sent to the orphanage, Sarah determines that she will be the teacher, and proceeds to convince the town people of her ability. Her safe management of the children in the snowstorm was all that was needed to assure the position was hers.

The School at Crooked Creek. By Laurie Lawlor. 2004. New York: Holiday House.

Indiana

Beansie and his sister Louisa have an adventure on the first day of school at their one-room school. The family cow helps out in the snowstorm and everyone looks forward to the next day of school. A glossary is included to assist with unfamiliar terms.

Seal Island School. By Susan Bartlett. 1999. New York: Puffin Books.

Maine

Every year a new teacher comes to Seal Island School on the coast of Maine. (rather than the former teacher staying for more than one year). Pru and other students really like Miss Sparling and are determined to assure that she stays another year on the island. Through several surprising partnerships, the students are successful in their efforts, not only for Miss Sparling staying, but also for enough students to keep the school open.

The Secret School. By Avi. 2001. San Diego, CA: Harcourt.

Colorado

When their teacher has to leave for a family emergency, the students plot to keep the school open. They all work together to continue school so that the two oldest students can take the exams they need to continue to high school. With just a few challenges along the way, the students are successful in their quest to keep the school open, and pass the required exams.

Stop the Train. By Geraldine McCaughrean. 2001. New York: Oxford University Press.

Oklahoma

“It’s 1892 and for them and their fellow settlers, a bright future seems set to arrive along the Red Rock Railroad track.” When settlers refuse to sell their claims to the railroad company, the railroad decides to not stop at their town. This is the story of how the people of Florence got the train to stop at their town.

Understood Betsy. By Dorothy Canfield Fisher. 1917. (Wilder Publications, 2009)

Vermont

Elizabeth Ann, a nine-year-old girl, is timid and small for her age, she is also an orphan. At first she lives with her father's aunt, Harriet, who expects her to lead a very sheltered life. When she is sent to live with her mother's family, on a farm in Vermont, she is then expected to do many of the chores that Harriet had thought too demanding of a little girl. Elizabeth Ann, nicknamed Betsy, discovers her own abilities and gains a new perception of the world around her. (Summary from Amazon.com)

The Wheel on the School. By Meindert DeJong. 1954. New York: Harper Trophy.

Dutch fishing village

Story of how students in a one-room school in the Dutch fishing village of Shora brought the storks back to Shora after a long absence. Everyone becomes involved, and an initially unlikely member of the community proves to be a critical player in the effort.

*1955 Newbery Medal winner

The Year of Miss Agnes. By Kirkpatrick Hill. 2000. New York: Margaret K. McElderry Books.

Alaska

When their teacher leaves, the students are not quite sure about the next teacher that comes to their school. Though there are several questions about the new teacher, it isn't long before the students are endeared to Miss Agnes and enjoy everything they are learning. After considering returning to England at the end of the year, Miss Agnes decides to stay for the next year, much to the students' delight.

Biography/autobiography

I become a teacher: A memoir of one-room school life in Eastern Kentucky. By Cratis D. Williams. 1995. Ashland, Kentucky: The Jesse Stuart Foundation.

Eastern Kentucky

“This book is a memoir of one-room school life in 1929, detailing the first teaching experience of Cratis D. Williams, once America's foremost scholar on the Appalachian experience. This beautiful story of Williams' first teaching assignment---a one-room school on Caines Creek in Lawrence County, Kentucky---will be of interest to teachers, historians, genealogists, and general scholars.” (from book jacket)

Memories of a Georgia teacher: Fifty years in the classroom. By Martha Mizell Puckett, edited by Hoyle B. Puckett, Sr. 2002. Athens: University of Georgia Press.

Georgia

Barely fifteen years old, Martha Mizell began her teaching career in 1913 in a one-room, one-teacher school near the Okefenokee Swamp in southeast Georgia. This book chronicles that time period and location, from the observance of holidays to the rituals of school openings and closings, to the challenges and variety of transportation available for a young teacher.

Little Heathens: Hard times and high spirits on an Iowa farm during the Great Depression. By Mildred Armstrong Kalish. 2007. New York: Bantam Dell.

Iowa

This memoir captures a way of life unfamiliar to folks today. The chapters cover a wide range of elements from the Depression era and include specific chapters about the country school and a city school.