

A Book a Week Plan – Ancient History

Focus: Elementary – Middle School Readers

While the longer list is ideal if you want to choose from the multitude of reading treasures beyond your own shelves, this list is based on the book-a-week method I created in my own homeschool. Each child found a surprise book on the mantle on Monday morning. There was one for my preschooler, pulled from my favorite classics or the Five-in-a-Row booklists; an intriguing, illustrated book or I Can Read edition for my emerging reader; and an enticing historical fiction work for my advanced elementary reader.

Here, I've suggested 1-2 titles per week for your avid intermediate reader. Just 24 weeks are provided, to allow for your own additions and school breaks. Some of these titles would also be suitable for read-aloud time; some would also take up more than a week for many readers, so I do not recommend planning on including all of them! 😊 Pick ones they will enjoy.

These titles would not make up a full curriculum but could greatly enhance one and open the way for the great classics and literary analysis in Rhetoric. Adapted histories are included for those who favor a Charlotte Mason approach. (At the end, I also provide a table with suggestions of resources to “grow” this list into a history course for your elementary students.)

Non-fiction titles are non-italicized and longer/more difficult selections are marked with an asterisk.*

The Stone Age & Egypt: Weeks 1-8

Week 1

Boy of the Painted Cave (Justin Denzel)

Warrior Scarlet (Rosemary Sutcliff)

The Boy with the Bronze Ax (Kathleen Fidler)

(All are comparable stories about children during the stone age.)

Week 2

The Golden Bull (Marjorie Crowley) *a novel of Mesopotamia*

The Riddle of the Rosetta Stone (James Giblin) *for those students who might prefer non-fiction*

Week 3

Gilgamesh the Hero* (Geraldine McCaughrean) – or –

Gilgamesh Trilogy (Ludmila Zemen) *3 picture books, but excellent retelling of the myth*

Week 4

Pyramid (David Macauley) *amazing, illustrated how-the-pyramids-were-built*

You might also consider looking through:

Into the Mummy's Tomb (Nicholas Reeves) *illustrated documentation of excavations*

The Egyptian Book of the Dead (Ernest Budge) *interesting to peruse with guidance!*

Week 5

The Golden Goblet (Eloise Jarvis McGraw) *a mystery in ancient Egypt*

Week 6

Tales of Ancient Egypt* (Roger Lancelyn Green) *compilation of Egyptian mythology*

Week 7

The Cat of Bubastes* (G. A. Henty)

Week 8

Mara, Daughter of the Nile* (Eloise McGraw) – or –

Tirzah (Travis Lucille) *an easier read than Mara*

Greece: Weeks 9-16

Week 9

Black Ships Before Troy (Rosemary Sutcliff) *audio recording available* – or –
Children's Homer *(Colum Power) *more difficult*

Week 10

Tales from the Odyssey (Mary Pope Osborne) - or -
Wanderings of Odysseus (Rosemary Sutcliff)

Week 11

The Odyssey (Russel Punter & Fabiano Fiorin) *graphic novel*

Week 12

A Wonder Book (Nathaniel Hawthorne) – or –
Book of Greek Myths (D'Aulaire) *with illustrations*

Week 13

Theras and His Town (Caroline Snedeker)

Week 14

Alexander the Great (Jane Bingham)

Week 15

*The Golden Fleece** (Colum Power)

Week 16

A Triumph for Flavius (Caroline Snedeker)

Rome: Weeks 17-24

Week 17

The Aeneid for Boys & Girls (Alfred Church) *careful paraphrase in prose -or-*
Aeneas: Virgil's Epic Retold (Emily Frenkel) *easier retelling*

Week 18

The Bronze Bow (Elizabeth George Speare)

Week 19

Ben Hur (Lew Wallace & Mike Gagnon) *graphic novel*

Week 20

Detectives in Togas (Henry Winterfeld)

Mystery of the Roman Ransom (Henry Winterfeld)

Week 21

The Victor (Patricia St. John)

Week 22

The City (David Macauley)

Week 23

*Fabiola** (Nicholas Wiseman) *longer but beautiful story!*

Phantom of the Colosseum (Sophie de Mullenheim) *an easier option*

Week 24

The Silver Branch (Rosemary Sutcliff)

Beowulf (Michael Morpurgo)

Additional History Selections

To expand this list into a full history course for a middle school student, I would suggest adding a backbone text such as Hillyer's or Bauer's (see second column) and supplementing with other readings featuring more historical depth (see third column). If you are choosing to focus more on primary texts, you could also simplify by omitting the second text. All of these would also be fun read-aloud selections for elementary students.

1. Pick "Book of the Week"	2. Add chapters & assignments from "A Child's History of the World" (Hillyer), "Story of Civilization" (Civil), or "Story of the World" (Bauer)	3. Supplement with some of these historical readings. <i>Most could be covered in 2-3 weeks.</i>
Early Civilizations & Egypt Weeks 1-8	Hillyer: Chapters 1-23 Civil: Chapters 1-12 Bauer: Chapters 1-18	Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt (Elizabeth Payne) Herodotus and the Road to History (Jeanne Bendick) – or- The Boys' and Girls' Herodotus (John White)
Greece Weeks 9-16	Hillyer: Chapters: 24-31 Civil: Ch. 13-22 Bauer: Ch. 19-33	Archimedes & Door of Science (Jeanne Bendick) Plutarch's Lives for Boys and Girls (W. Weston)
Rome Weeks 17-24	Hillyer: Chapters 32-41 Civil: Ch. 23-35 Bauer: Ch. 34-42	Stories from the History of Rome (Mrs. Beesly) -or- Caesar's Gallic Wars (Olivia Coolidge) <i>more difficult</i> Augustus Caesar's World (Genevieve Foster) Galen and the Gateway to Medicine (Jeanne Bendick)

