

World Historical Fiction for Teens

AFRICA:

Things Fall Apart (20th century)

FIC ACHEBE

What happens to your world when fear and anger dominate it?

Half of a Yellow Sun (20th century)

FIC ADICHIE

How do you stay together when your country is ripped apart?

The Power of One (20th century)

YA COURTENAY

Peekey was born in apartheid South Africa, where everything about him was wrong... everything but his boxing.

Over a Thousand Hills I Walk... (20th century)

YA JANSEN

During the genocide in Rwanda, a Tutsi family must flee threatening Hutu soldiers.

Pharaoh's Daughter (Ancient)

YA LESTER

The story of Moses and the Pharaoh retold with great detail and new twists.

THE AMERICAS:

Like Water for Chocolate (20th century)

FIC ESQUIVEL

Must true love be forsaken for tradition?

Feathered Serpent (16th century)

FIC FALCONER

Is she a traitor to her people, or a true heroine?

ASIA:

Forgotten Fire (20th century)

YA BAGDASARIAN

Set during the Armenian genocide in Turkey, a young Armenian boy must survive each new day knowing that it could be his last.

Balzac & the Little Chinese Seamstress (20th century)

FIC DAI

Forbidden literature leads to love and enlightenment.

Memoirs of a Geisha (20th century)

FIC GOLDEN

The confessions of one of Japan's most celebrated geisha.

Samurai Shortstop (19th century)

YA GRATZ

Baseball. Samurai sword-fighting. Toyo knows them both and he plays to win.

Revenge of the Forty-Seven Samurai (18th century)

YA HAUGAARD

Of two hundred samurai only forty-seven will avenge their master. Jiro, a samurai's servant, may turn out to be the hero.

The Stone Goddess (20th century)

YA HO

Nakri spent her childhood in a Khmer Rouge labor camp. In America, she now must come to terms with her past.

The Demon in the Teahouse (18th century)

YA HOOBLER

Seikei has been given a case... find out who started a series of fires. Posing as a teahouse attendant, he is about to find out more than he intended.

The Kite Rider (13th century)

YA MCCAUGHREAN

A boy becomes a kite rider to save his mother and find the spirit of his father.

Empress Orchid (19th century)

FIC MIN

During the last days of imperial China, one woman seizes power... then struggles to keep the country together.

The Ties That Bind, Ties That Break (20th century)

YA NAMIOKA

Foot-binding was a tradition Chinese women couldn't escape...but Ailin is determined to do so.

Bound (17th century)

YA NAPOLI

Xing Xing's fate & future happiness rest solely on a beautiful carp...and her own determination.

A Single Shard (12th century)

YA PARK

An orphan in 12th century Korea, Tree-ear wants to become a master potter—he finds a teacher, but the most important lessons he must learn alone.

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan (19th century)

FIC SEE

*Two friends from childhood survive the decades with the help of a secret language, **nu shu** (women's writing).*

I Rode a Horse of Milk White Jade (15th century)

YA WILSON

A grandmother tells her granddaughter of her childhood in 14th century Mongolia and of her horse that brought luck to her and her family.

CARIBBEAN:

Before We Were Free (20th century)

YA ALVAREZ

During the dictatorship of Trujillo, one girl must escape the Dominican Republic with her family.

In the Time of the Butterflies (20th century)

FIC ALVAREZ

Three sisters are assassinated after visiting their husbands in jail during the tumultuous Trujillo years in the Dominican Republic.

EUROPE:

Crispin and the Cross of Lead [series] (14th century)

YA AVI

Young Crispin, accused of a crime he did not commit, sets off with his mother's cross of lead across the English countryside.

The Book of the Lion (12th century)

YA CADNUM

Part mystery, part history... a brutal but beautiful tale of the crusades under King Richard.

Corelli's Mandolin (World War II)

FIC DEBERNIERES

Cephallonia was a quiet Greek island. Then came WWII and suddenly three people's lives were changed forever.

Powder Monkey (19th century)

YA DOWSWELL

Sam's a slave on a war ship. Will he survive, or get blown into "pink mist" like the last powder monkey?

Blood Red Horse (12th century)

YA GRANT

Will & Gavin join the Crusades. Blood will be shed. Lives lost. 2 things will be constant: fair Ellie, & a horse named Hosanna.

The Minister's Daughter (17th century)

YA HEARN

They say Nell is a witch. They also say that she put a spell on the two daughters of a Puritan minister.

Incantation (15th century)

YA HOFFMAN

Estrella is a Spanish Jew practicing her religion in secret against a backdrop of threat from the inquisition.

Remarkable Life & Times of Eliza Rose (17th century)

YA HOOPER

"From orange seller to mermaid to a lady about town, Eliza will take on many remarkable guises" before finding "a place where she truly belongs."

Pagan Chronicles (13th century)

YA JINKS

This story of adventure and humor pits young Pagan Kidrouk against the various pitfalls of Jerusalem during the crusades.

Blood Confession (16th century)

YA LIBBY

You might have heard of the infamous Vlad the Impaler... chances are you don't know the real-life Erzebal Bathery, the countess with a thing for bathing in human blood.

Young Royals [series] (16th century)

YA MEYER

The fascinating tales of four of the most famous royal women of England.

The English Patient (World War II)

FIC ONDAATJE

Who is the nameless English patient? Three people in an Italian village at the end of WWII would like to know as well.

Betsy & the Emperor (19th century)

YA RABIN

"In 1815, the former emperor Napoleon Bonaparte is the captive of the British, confined to the home of Betsy Balcombe and her family on the island of Helena."

Sword Song (11th century)

YA SUTCLIFF

What other option does a wrongfully accused Viking swordsman have than to be a mercenary? Maybe to become a hero?

The Edge on the Sword (9th century)

YA TINGLE

Noblewomen were expected to be modest and genteel. Too bad for the king... he should've inquired about his daughter's new suitor.

Johnny Got His Gun (World War I)

YA TRUMBO

A young American is maimed in WWI—without arms, legs, or a face. The one thing he still has... his mind.

The Book Thief (World War II)

YA ZUSAK

"It's just a small story really, about, among other things: a girl, an accordionist, some fanatical Germans, a Jewish fist-fighter, and quite a lot of stealing."

MIDDLE EAST:

A Stone in My Hand (20th century)

YA CLINTON

"Nothing stops me, not the concrete and razor wire, not the guns, not the soldiers. I stare at them with my hard black Abdo eyes, and they do not shoot me. I am hidden."

Alphabet of Dreams (1st century)

YA FLETCHER

They were brother and sister. They were also of royal blood. Now they are beggars...one has a special gift. Together they head for Jerusalem towards a better future.

Anahita's Woven Riddle (20th century)

YA SAYRES

In 20th century Persia, one brave young woman defies tradition and gets permission to choose her husband herself.

The Beduins' Gazelle (14th century)

YA TEMPLE

"A pair of star-crossed lovers challenge a wicked uncle in the 14th century Middle East." Said by many to be an accurate account of Middle Eastern culture and history.