5 BOOKS... EVERY CHILD SHOULD READ BEFORE THEY'RE 12

THE WORST WITCH AND THE WISHING STAR
JILL MURPHY

The Worst Witch and The Wishing Star by Jill Murphy is out now (Puffin Hardback, £9.99)

THE SHEEP-PIG
DICK KING-SMITH

This is the book that became Babe on film. Charming and thought-provoking, Babe the pig is so cute and politely funny, and it has a brilliant ending.

THE SWORD IN THE STONE
TH WHITE

An amazing story of King Arthur’s boyhood, in which he is taught by Merlin how to cope with life by turning into various different animals.

THE MAGICIAN’S NEPHEW
CS LEWIS, ILLUSTRATED BY PAULINE BAYNES

This is a sort of prequel to The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe and it’s my favourite of all the Narnia books.

PEACE AT LAST
JON MILLER & LUCY PARKER

A life-saving bar of soap proves big business isn’t necessarily bad

"IF YOU WANT TO FIX THE WORLD, HARNESS THE POWER OF BIG BUSINESS, RATHER THAN FIGHT IT"

Everybody’s Business: The Unlikely Story of How Big Business Can Fix the World is out now (Biteback, £20)

If you want to fix the world, maybe you’re better off harnessing the power of business, rather than fighting it.

We discovered many such examples – and not just in the developing world. Companies like Rolls-Royce, Siemens and GE spend billions each year on innovation – and we saw how much of this goes towards tackling one of the world’s major challenges: energy efficiency. We also saw how Tesco, the world’s second biggest retailer, has committed itself to fighting food waste through initiatives such as food banks. We found many stories like this and met the people making them happen.

Of course, we’re not saying any of these companies are perfect – and neither are they. What we learnt writing this book is that businesses have the scale, resources, innovation and expertise to really make a difference. If you want to fix the world, maybe you’re better off harnessing the power of business, rather than fighting it.

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The novel focuses on Jocelyn’s infatuation, as he ages, with young incarnations of the well-beloved from three different generations of the same family. A lyrical exploration of the doomed concept of romantic love.

THE WELL-BELOVED
THOMAS HARDY (1897)

Free for Kindle

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THOMAS HARDY (1897)

A young sculptor, Jocelyn, becomes obsessed by the notion of the ideal woman – whom he calls the well-beloved – and spends his life in search of her. He is as quick to identify her in a particular woman as he is to feel her inhabit the body of yet another: he declares his love but almost immediately discards the former object of his desire.

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