



11 Plus English: Classic Reading Resource for Parents

Welcome! This resource is designed to help parents support their children in preparing for the 11 Plus English exam, using classic literature available freely online. For each book, you'll find links to legally free versions and a focused workbook to develop a targeted reading skill.

1. Just-So Stories by Rudyard Kipling

Read it for free:

- [Project Gutenberg](#) (EPUB, Kindle, Plain text, HTML)
- [Internet Archive](#) (various formats)
- [Standard Ebooks](#) (EPUB, Kindle)

Workbook Focus: Retrieval Skills

Encourage your child to read a story (e.g., "*How the Camel Got His Hump*") and then ask oral questions that require retrieving and repeating key information. Try these types of questions after each story:

- What was the first thing the camel refused to do?
- Who asked the Djinn for help, and why?
- What did the Djinn give the camel?
- Where did the camel live at the start of the story?
- Can you list three animals that appear in the story?

 **Parent tip:** Mix direct questions ("*What did the Djinn do?*") with detail checks ("*What word did the camel keep saying?*"). Encourage your child to point to the answer in the book if they need to.

2. Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll

Read it for free:

- [Project Gutenberg](#) (EPUB, Kindle, Plain text, HTML)
- [Internet Archive](#) (scanned editions, PDF/EPUB)
- [Standard Ebooks](#) (EPUB, Kindle)

Workbook Focus: Vocabulary Skills

After reading a chapter, highlight unusual or challenging words. Try these vocabulary activities:

- **Context clues:** Ask, *"What do you think 'curious' means in this sentence? What helped you guess?"*
- **Synonyms:** *"What is another word for 'sudden' as used in the story?"*
- **Antonyms:** *"What is the opposite of 'timid'? Can you find a sentence where Alice is timid?"*
- **Create a word map:** Pick a word and write 2 synonyms, 2 antonyms, a sentence from the book, and your own sentence using the word.

 **Parent tip:** Praise your child for figuring out meanings from surrounding words, and encourage them to keep a **"new words" notebook**.

3. The Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame

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- [Internet Archive](#) (various formats)

Workbook Focus: Figurative Language

After reading a passage, work on these identification and interpretation tasks:

- **Find a simile:** *"Can you spot a simile in this chapter? What two things are being compared?"*
- **Identify a metaphor:** *"Is there a metaphor the author uses to describe the river? What does it mean?"*
- **Vivid imagery:** *"Underline a sentence where you can picture clearly what is happening- what words make it vivid?"*
- **Onomatopoeia/alliteration:** *"Can you find a word that sounds like what it means, or a sentence where words start with the same sound?"*

 **Parent tip:** Read aloud together and model how to spot figurative language by **thinking aloud yourself**.

4. Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery

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- [Internet Archive](#) (various formats)
- [Standard Ebooks](#) (EPUB, Kindle)

Workbook Focus: Character Inferencing

After reading a chapter, ask inferencing questions:

- *"How do you think Anne felt when she arrived at Green Gables? What clues does the author give?"*
- *"What can we tell about Marilla's personality from the way she speaks to Anne?"*
- *"Find a moment when Anne acts bravely. How do you know she is brave, even if the author doesn't say it directly?"*
- *"Why do you think Anne said X? What does that tell us about her character?"*

 **Parent tip:** Encourage your child to **"read between the lines"** and justify their ideas with evidence from the text.

5. The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett

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- [Project Gutenberg](#) (EPUB, Kindle, Plain text, HTML)
- [Internet Archive](#) (various formats)
- [Standard Ebooks](#) (EPUB, Kindle)

Workbook Focus: Summarising and Recognising Theme

After reading a chapter, try these summarising exercises:

- *"Can you tell me what happened in this chapter in your own words, using just 3 sentences?"*
- *"What do you think is the most important event in this chapter—and why?"*
- *"What is a big idea or lesson from today's reading? How does the author show this?"*
- *"Does the garden mean something more than just a garden? Explain your thoughts."*

 **Parent tip:** Help your child distinguish between **main events** and little details, and support them in identifying moral or thematic messages.

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