

A
BOOK
THAT SHAPED ME

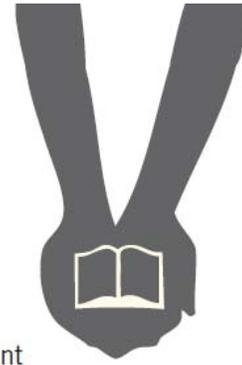


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The Library of Congress and DC Public Library Present

"A Book That Shaped Me"

Summer Writing Contest 2012

The "A Book That Shaped Me" summer writing contest co-presented by the Library of Congress and DC Public Library encourages rising 5th & 6th graders to reflect on a book that has made a personal impact on their lives. The contest is administered as part of the DC Public Library summer reading program and top winners are honored at the Library of Congress National Book Festival in September on the National Mall.

We are proud to announce the library location and grand prize winners of the 2012 "A Book That Shaped Me" Summer Writing Contest! Special thanks to everyone who wrote an essay and entered the contest in this our very first year.

Grand Prize Winners

1st Place

Elsa Pirozzi

The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate by Jacqueline Kelly
West End Neighborhood Library

2nd Place

Alexander Constantino

Going Solo by Roald Dahl
Chevy Chase Neighborhood Library

3rd Place

Myla Agyin

Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story, by Ben Carson
Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library



DC Public Library Location Winners

<u>Name</u>	<u>Library Location</u>	<u>Book Title</u>	<u>Author</u>
William Bell	Francis A. Gregory Library	<i>The Lightning Thief</i>	Rick Riordan
Amber Carpenter	Woodridge Library	<i>The Last Book in the Universe</i>	Rodman Philbrick
Anu Desai	Palisades Library	<i>ER Vets</i>	Donna Jackson
Naomi Gertz	Capitol View Library	<i>The Mandie Collection (vol. 4)</i>	Louis Leppard
Mia Gualtieri	Tenley-Friendship Library	<i>The Harry Potter Series (esp. The Sorcerer's Stone)</i>	J.K Rowling
Eleanor Holt	Southwest Library	<i>Harry Potter</i>	J.K Rowling
Jessica Holloway	Takoma Park Library	<i>Meet Addy</i>	Connie Porter
Charlotte Kho	Southeast Library	<i>The Lion, the Witch, & the Wardrobe</i>	C.S. Lewis
Monieya Maynor	Juanita E. Thornton/Shepherd Park	<i>Out of My Mind</i>	Sharon Draper
Martha Mazura	Lamond-Riggs Library	<i>Hoot</i>	Carl Hiaasen
Ahriana Merryweather	Watha T. Daniel-Shaw Library	<i>Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters</i>	John Steptoe
Zahir Muhammad	Dorothy I. Height/Benning Library	<i>Airman</i>	Eoin Colfer
Olivia Renne	Petworth Library	<i>Wonder</i>	R.J. Palacio
Katherine Sweeney	Parklands-Turner Library	<i>The Daring Book for Girls</i>	Andrea Buchanan & Mirian Peskowitz
Holly Thill	Anacostia Library	<i>The Stolen Sapphire</i>	Sarah Masters Bucky
William Wright	Cleveland Park Library	<i>The Lightning Thief</i>	Rick Riordan



The Influence of Calpurnia Tate

By Elsa Pirozzi

A book that shaped me was *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*, by Jacqueline Kelly. It is a wonderful blend of the wonders of science and the life of a girl in 1899. There are two main themes in this book: the making of opportunity for women, and the fascinating world of science. Calpurnia represents both of these.

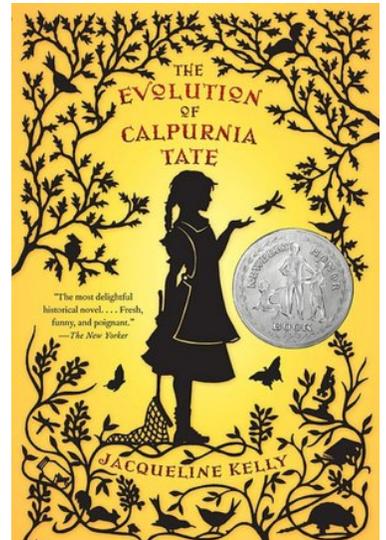
Because Calpurnia lives in 1899, she is supposed to be a lady. She is expected to be good at sewing and housekeeping. Calpurnia prefers to explore and go on adventures. Calpurnia is a lot like me in that way. Although she wants an educated, scientific life, Calpurnia's parents expect her to act like a "reasonable" girl. One Christmas, she is unwrapping a present and uncovers the word "Science". Thinking her parents have finally agreed to her goals, she delightedly finishes unwrapping. But the present turns out to be a book called "The Science of Housewifery." Girls simply did not go to college, study insects, or hunt for new species in 1899.

Although things have changed, women are still second class citizens in many ways. There's been improvement, but mostly recently. I'm inspired by how Calpurnia handles the problem, and keeps working towards her goals. She makes me think I should work to promote the rights of women for myself and everyone.

Over the course of a year, Calpurnia is so changed by what she learns you are inspired to try to be the same. She learns an incredible amount and even discovers, with the help of her grandfather, a whole new species of plant. Her success makes me want to be a scientist myself and made me fascinated with animals and plants.

Because of Calpurnia, I now want to be a scientist. Inspired by her, I started my own journal and recorded my natural observations in it. I explore the outdoors and study plants and animals. Although I have not read *The Origin of Species*, I have plenty of other books about science to inspire me. Most of all, I love animals. Watching and studying animals is one of my favorite things to do.

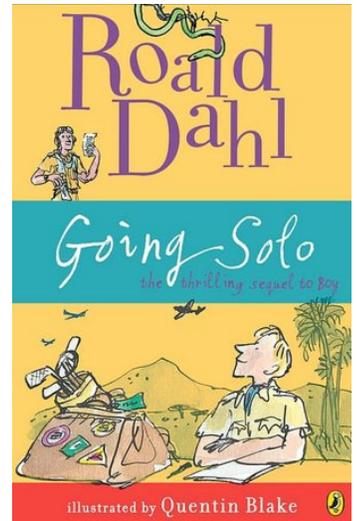
The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate has had a large impact on me and my life. Although it's set in another time, its lessons about equality and the pursuit of scientific understanding are still valuable today. There are many stories about twelve year olds facing and overcoming their problems, but this is one that will stay with me forever.



The Book That Changed My Life: Roald Dahl "Going Solo"

By Alexander Constantino

"The ship that was carrying me from England to Africa...was the SS Mantoba"...so writes my favorite author Roald Dahl in his book "Going Solo". I was first introduced to Roald Dahl when I watched the movie "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory". I then went to the library to research more books of Roald Dahl and I found out about "Going Solo". It is different from all his stories because it is an autobiography in which he writes letters to his mom about his experiences as a pilot in World War II. I thought that he was light-hearted even if he was in a difficult situation. It also made me like History more....



The book also made me think more about the consequences of war. For example, Roald Dahl wrote to his Mom about how his fellow pilots were killed in the last two weeks that they were flying. Roald Dahl also experienced the horrors of war when he himself got shot down. But what was sadder was that there were other innocent people got affected by war not by losing things they owned like their property but also people they loved.

The book changed my outlook towards war. It made me question myself why is there is such a thing as war. Before, I looked at war because of the fun planes and ships and artillery that they use I also thought it was cool especially when I played video games with themes of war. But reading this book made me realize that the cool stuff I saw were destroying lives that could have lived to see their dreams. The book made me more compassionate towards people who go to war and the people they leave behind. I can think of the soldiers in our country who are in war. I have an uncle who was in Afghanistan for some time and he has two young children who are left here. What if he was a casualty? What will happen to my cousins? Or like Roald Dahl, he shot down a person. What if this is not an enemy? Or even if he is an enemy should he get killed? Does he have a family who will miss him? War has a sad ending even for the winner.

I also learned to be more being more tolerant for people who annoy me. I think that is how wars begin—by people annoying each other. If only people were more patient and compassionate and not hot-headed, then there would be no wars. I make it a point to work for world peace and this would start in my own little world.



A Book That Shaped Me

By Myla Agyin

My name is Myla Agyin. I am 11 years old and I will be entering the six grade in the up coming school year 2012-2013.

During this summer, I have read several books, some challenging and some not so challenging. I like to read so, I am never bored.

However, the book that shaped me was the Ben Carson story "Gifted Hands". After reading Dr. Carson's biography, I found that I could relate to some of the things he had experienced as a child. Like living in a single parent household, having only one sibling that is a brother, and being surrounded by family and friends that will give us support in time of need.

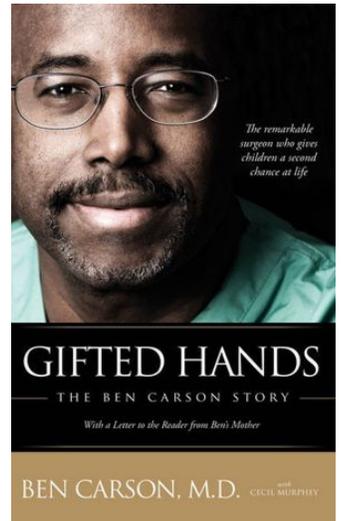
Dr. Carson got his inspiration from his mother. In his book he recalls worship service or bible lessons that discuss doctors doing missionary work helping people in Africa and India. Dr. Carson tells his mother "That's what I want to do." "I want to be a doctor; can I be a doctor mother?"

Well it just so happens that my mother is a Registered Nurse and when I was just five years old, I can remember asking my mother "Mommy can girls be doctors?" And my mother said to me in an excited tone "Yes" women/girls can be what ever they want to be."

My mother would take me to work sometimes, there I would see elderly or the sick and ask why were the people sick? But I was never afraid. My mother would talk to us about health care at home.

As I became older, I like helping people. Reading this book has had a life changing impact. I volunteer sometimes at the Adult Day Care where my mother works on the weekends. Serving meals and collecting dishes after meals. This gives me the opportunity to interact and be observant to others needs.

I know I was meant to work in health care and I am now more determined than ever. One day I would like to meet Dr Ben Carson.



The Book That Shaped Me

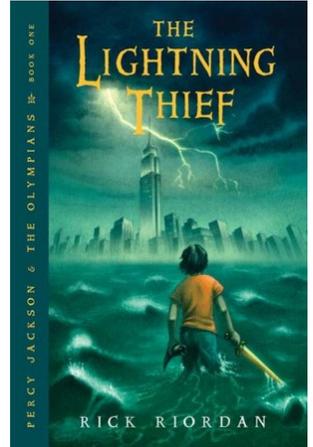
By William Bell

A book that has impacted my life is *The Lightning Thief*. *The Lightning Thief* introduced me to the world of mythology. Before I read this book, I knew very little about Greek gods and goddesses. I wasn't interested in them either. The book's main character, however, Percy Jackson, a young teen god who is framed for stealing Zeus' lightning bolt, got me interested.

While at a special camp to learn more about kids like him — "half-bloods" who are part human, part Greek creature — Percy is accused of taking the god of lightning's most prized possession. He knows that he's innocent so he goes on a quest to catch the real culprit.

Percy's exciting adventures and encounters with the other gods inspired me to study more about Greek myths. I checked out lots of books on gods and goddesses from the library. I learned about Hera, Athena, Poseidon and many more. They became new superheroes to me. It was fun to read about them because it was interesting to learn about their "superpowers" and what they represented. One had the power to control water and another could use a lightning bolt as a weapon.

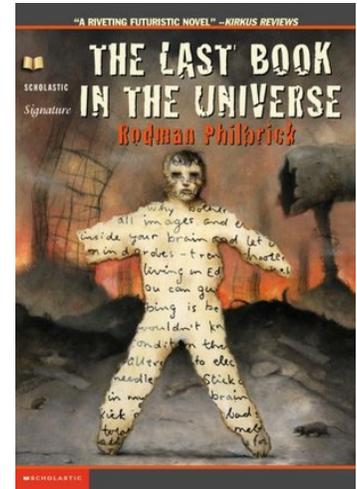
Thanks to *The Lightning Thief*, I now consider myself a semi-expert in Greek mythology. I am well on my way to becoming an expert. I hope to one day meet Rick Riordan, the author of the book. He opened my eyes to something new and awesome. Studying mythology has become one of my new favorite hobbies. I was even selected to be a member of my classroom mythology club.



A Book That Shaped Me

By Amber Carpenter

A book that shaped me is *The Last Book in the Universe* by Rodman Philbrick. This book shaped me because it wasn't just any good read. It was a good read that taught precious values like love and friendship. Before reading this book, I didn't have "real friends". Before my "friends" put me against others and made a lot of trouble for me. Now I know a real friend wouldn't do that and to look for other things besides popularity in a friend. *The Last Book in the Universe* gave me a love for books again. It showed me that just because a book isn't a comic doesn't mean that it is terrible. To me a lengthy book is like a piece of bacon, the thicker the better. *The Last Book in the Universe* also helped my attitude. Whenever I'm in a bad situation, I shrug and think it could be worse. Even though this book has shaped me I figure I have a lot more to learn. I won't ever under value lengthy books again.



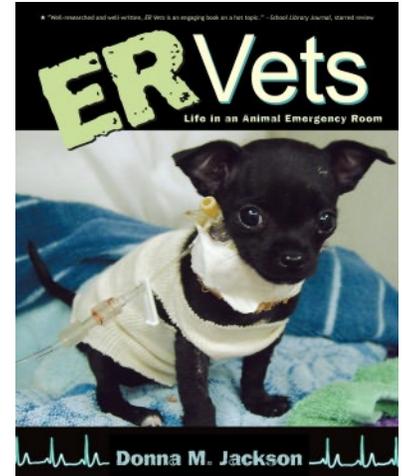
A Book That Shaped Me

By Anu Desai

The book I chose for this contest had a personal impact on my life because it made me much more interested in animal health. The book is called ER Vets. The people in the book were so amazing that I could not help but want to work with them.

By reading the book, I felt sympathetic for the owners that put up with their animals dying and for the animals that did not make it. But I also got great respect for the ER vets from knowing that they work 24/7 to give these animals a chance. Also, I love animals, so it gave me a chance to learn even more about what I love learning about and that's why it inspired me to be an ER vet when I grow up. They save so many lives that seem impossible to save, like a horse who got hypoxia (when not enough oxygen reaches the brain) and went into a coma or teaching a little beagle named Owen to breathe with a new group of muscles after his heart surgery when he had gone into respiratory failure. Because of those particular ER vets, he is surviving.

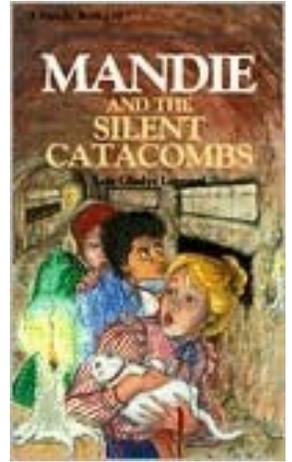
In short, the book made me decide what my job would be when I grew up. I had always wondered what I would be. I wanted to be a wildlife photographer, a marine biologist, a dolphin trainer, a baker or a vet. I decided on being a vet when I read this book because they are nothing short of amazing and I want to be just like them too.



Inspired to Travel

By Naomi Gertz

This summer I discovered a series of books by Lois Leppard about a girl named Mandie. Three of the books (in one volume of 5 stories) are called *Mandie and the Silent Catacombs*, *Mandie and the Windmill's Message*, and *Mandie and the Singing Chalet*. They have shaped me by making me want to visit the countries in which these books take place. Mandie and her friends travel all over Europe to places such as Italy, France, England, Switzerland, Germany, Ireland and Holland. I have lived in the countries of Jordan, Scotland and England, but would now like to experience more of Europe, especially Rome, Holland, and the Alps in Switzerland.



I want to see Rome because of the many ruins there. Here are some descriptions from the book. "As the Fontana de Trevi came within sight, the girls gasped in wonder at the huge body of water and the front of the magnificent building behind it. Water spouted from every statue and stone decoration around it" "The portico was composed of 150 columns and a statue of the apostle Paul stood in the center. Mosaics on the facade glittered with gold and many other colors," This sounds beautiful to me and I hope to one day see it.

Another place that sounds beautiful is the Alps in Switzerland. The author describes them like this, "Huge snow-covered mountains came into view." I have never seen snow-covered mountains, or even high mountains at all, and I think they would be magnificent. I wouldn't like to go to the top, but would enjoy the view from the valley.

I also would probably enjoy visiting Holland because of its big windmills. The author writes, "She pointed to two large windmills standing in a distant field full of blooming purple flowers." Mandie's grandma says that the windmills can be taken apart block by block, shipped somewhere else, and re-built. I think it would be fun to live on a piece of land big enough to fit a windmill.

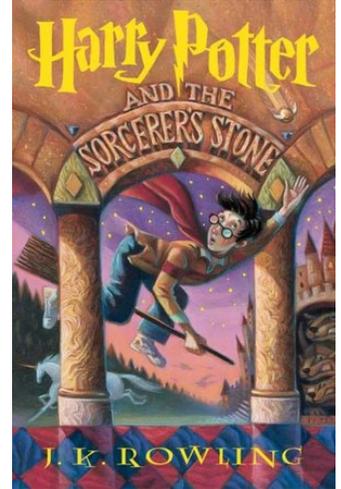
The Mandie Collection (Volume Four) has definitely made me want to visit Europe and learn more about Switzerland, Italy and Holland. Just the wonder of seeing all those places would be amazing.



The Harry Potter Series

By Mia Gualtieri

The Harry Potter series, by J.K. Rowling, has impacted my life in many important and interesting ways. Not things as big as having a giant, like Hagrid, knock on my door, but instead little things did change in my life. From dressing as Ginny Weasley on "Dress as your Favorite Book Character Day", to my believing that magic was real for a few years. Harry Potter impacted the way I thought about things, and how I acted.



At recess, my friends and I used to play Harry Potter games, such as "Harry Potter Tag", where you become a character in the story and pretend like you are tagging each other with spells. We made up the game after most of us had read the books, which we all loved so much. After I read the series, my room was Harry Potter themed. I had posters on the walls, Harry Potter legos on display, Harry Potter action figures, and a pair of Harry's glasses on my doll. My ninth birthday was Harry Potter themed, and everyone came dressed as witches or wizards. My dad even dressed as Dumbledore, fake beard and all! One time, I checked J.K. Rowling's biography out of the school library for at least a month.

I was not one to read the series multiple times, as my friends did. But the one time that I did shaped me. I felt like it became a part of me. For a year or so, Harry Potter was the majority of what I talked about, or thought about. Conversations would end up in a discussion of part of the story. Also, in conversation, I would use terms from Harry Potter as if they were real. Such as on long car rides I wished I could apparate. I would have long conversations with friends about the book, retelling parts, or just talking about our love for the books.

I can relate to Harry, at least in the first book, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, because he has major changes in his life. He was eleven when he started learning at Hogwarts school, moving away from his aunt, uncle, and cousin, and I am eleven now. I'm not moving away from family, but I am changing schools like Harry did. I'm starting middle school. When I first started reading the books, I couldn't relate like I can now, but I was sucked into the magical plot, and the characters. I love J.K. Rowling's characters. They also shaped me. My favorite character was always Ron, the one who was a little bit awkward with his big hands and feet, and red hair, which I always liked about his character. Hermione was the smart one, but could fit in with her clever plans. It was cool that she only hung out with the boys. You can't have a great story without great characters.

I started reading the Harry Potter series when I was in second grade. After reading the first book in the series, every time I thought about my birthday I would think about my eleventh birthday, the year I would find out if I was a witch. Now I am eleven, and I have found I am a muggle, much to my disappointment. Although, when I came home from vacation I did find a letter from "Hogwarts" (I recognized my friend's return address) saying that I had been accepted! The Harry Potter series really shaped me, and people everywhere.



Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

By Eleanor D. Holt

My favorite and most inspiring books are the Harry Potter series.

I started reading the Harry Potter series in second grade. I was bored at home with nothing to do and so I picked it up and almost immediately I was drawn into the book. I had never loved a book so much.

After I finished the third book in the series I was crazy about Harry Potter, and I was convinced I was a wizard! I wanted to go to the U.K. and speak with a British accent. I wanted to go to Hogwarts School and I pushed one of my school teachers to start a Harry Potter Fan Club. I persuaded my mom to take me to Harry Potter World in Florida, and I even convinced my cousin to send me her old Harry Potter robe!

Hermione is my favorite character in the Harry Potter series. She is confident, smart, brave, and reliable. When I want to concentrate in school I ask myself, "If Hermione can do it, why can't I?"

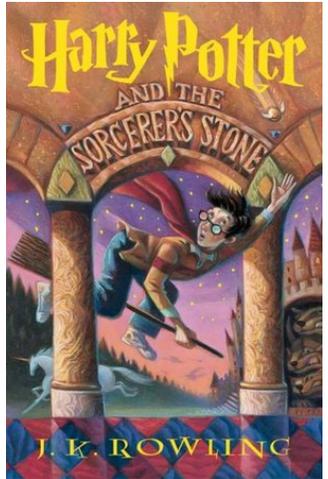
Hermione is very brave because she is in a magical world (Hogwarts) that is scary and big. Her parents are Muggles (non-magical) and they can't understand the magical world. She gets teased and she is not completely accepted into the magic world because of her Muggle background. Yet, despite her lack of wizard blood she is the smartest student at Hogwarts School.

This book influenced my life because, like the characters in Harry Potter, I try to observe and find unusual things going on around me. I believe in magic because of that book. That book has made an impact on my life for many reasons.

I relate to Hermione because I am sometimes confident and tend not care about what other people think of me. Sure, Hermione can be bossy, but she usually knows what she's doing and she can do almost anything she sets her mind to. Hermione is helpful and knows a lot of spells. In the first book, she helps her friend Ron. Ron is tangled up in a magical vine, and Hermione knows the vine doesn't like light, so she uses a magical spell that casts light into the room.

In the first book, Harry Potter and his friends find the Sorcerer's Stone. It is protected by a large dog named Fluffy that Hagrid owns. The reason the Stone must be fiercely protected is that it keeps alive the partner of Albus Dumbledore (The Headmaster of Hogwarts). They then discover that the evil man named Voldemort is hiding under Professor Quirell's turban. Harry Potter defeats Quirell for the Sorcerer's Stone.

When people say they don't know what to read I automatically say "What about the Harry Potter series". J.K. Rowling started writing the book on a napkin in a coffee shop, and from those notes she created an amazing world. I love the Harry Potter series and recommend it to anyone who likes stories that make you want to stay up late and keep reading. Some people have said "Harry Potter is a long book". And I say yes, it takes a while to finish the books, but that is good because they are so interesting and so much fun. I am glad that J.K. Rowling wrote this book and I hope that she writes more in the future. I LOVE THE HARRY POTTER SERIES!



Meet Addy Helped Shape Me

By Jessica Sallette Holloway

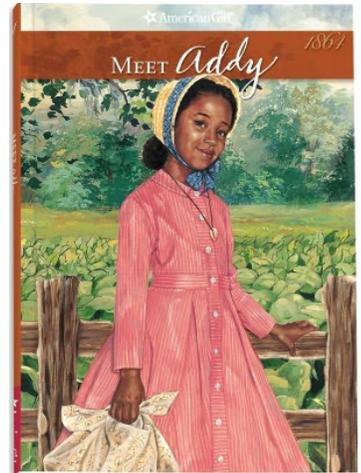
Meet Addy is a story about a girl named Addy who lives in slavery in the south. Addy and her mom decide to escape to Philadelphia after her father and brother are sold to another plantation. This was a brave and dangerous move because Addy had to leave her family, her home, and she knew that if they got caught they would be punished.

When Addy got out of slavery it wasn't better because she and her mother had no money. When Addy and her mom first got to Philadelphia they got their first meal at a church that served meals to people who just got out of slavery. It was hard for Addy and her mother to find somewhere to stay, but then a woman who owns a sewing shop let Addy and her mother live in her attic. Then Addy and her mother worked at the sewing shop. At Christmas time, Addy had the chance to help to cook and serve the new slaves who just got out of slavery at the church.

Addy also learned there was segregation in the north. One day Addy saw a streetcar she wanted to ride, but her friend Sarah told her that only white people could ride the streetcar and there was another for colored people like her. When Addy went to school all the other kids were African American like her. I learned from this book that segregation is when African Americans don't have as many rights as white people have. During segregation, African Americans did not go to the same school and had to drink from a different water fountain.

This book made me realize how good my life is. One day Addy had to work every day. On the plantation, she had to work in the fields worming the tobacco plants. She knew she was property and could be sold like her brother and her dad. I'm glad I can go on vacation, go to summer camp, go to sewing class, or take trips to Six Flags.

I think this book can change how kids act and think. This story can show kids how other people's lives are worse than theirs and how good they have it. Kids always want more and more, but there are some people who have nothing. Although slavery is gone, there are still people that are in need of help. There are people in the world that don't have homes, cars, or food. This book has made me want to volunteer to help the homeless. I learned from the book that just by volunteering at a food Kitchen at my church I can help others.



A Book That Shaped Me

By Charlotte Kho

The book that shaped my life this summer was "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe". I think this book had a really big impact on me because it taught me to be a bit more adventurous. It also taught me about the people you love and the people you don't love. For example, around the beginning and the middle of the book Edmund Pevensie thought that he hated his older brother, Peter, and he wasn't very fond of his sisters, Susan and Lucy, either! This was because Edmund thought everyone (other than himself, that is) was trying to be in charge of him and of everyone else (especially Peter) and I think he was just getting annoyed with his mixed feelings and I sometimes feel like he does. I mean, I have a lot of mixed feelings and I bet a lot of other people feel them too and I think that all of these feelings inside of me are about to explode inside of me because there are so many! I admit, it makes me really frustrated a lot but I think at my age it's just hard, but by just reading this book, and understanding the characters' feelings just soothes my feelings.

I also really loved this book because it really helped me deepen my faith in God because I had just learned that the author, C.S. Lewis was a Christian and Aslan the lion (one of my favorite characters) was supposed to represent God and the White Witch was representing Satan. This book taught me that God is my lion, God is my Aslan, he is my lion and he would do anything to keep me safe.

Like when Aslan "died" on the stone table after they brought Edmund back to camp. God would do that for me, he would do that for you. Aslan loved the Pevensie children just like God loves the world. All of these reasons help support my idea that this book has most definitely shaped my life. I would totally recommend this book for other kids my age and they don't have to be an eleven year old to enjoy this book. I think this book is meant for almost all ages! I just think it is so amazingly written and I enjoyed reading it.



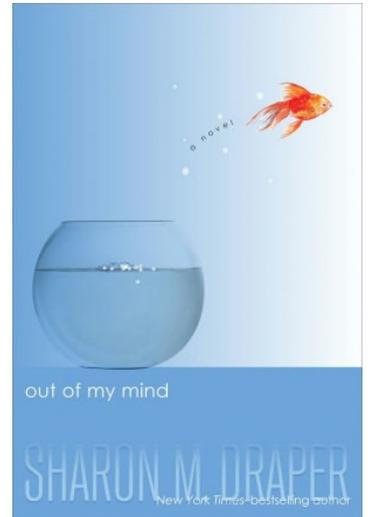
A Book That Shaped Me

By Monieya Maynor

The book that has made an impact on my life is, "Out of My Mind," by Sharon Draper. The book is about Melody, a girl born with Cerebral Palsy. Melody is a very smart girl, but she cannot talk, control her actions, feed herself- basically, she cannot do anything without help. In the story, Melody finds a way to communicate to others. She uses a "talker" - a machine that "speaks" words for her. She controls the machine by pressing buttons. It immediately begins to speak her words.

The book is truly inspirational. It shows that you don't have to be disable-free to be smart. I know this because in the book, Melody won the regional state-wide math competition. She also made it to the national competition!! This book had a big impact on my life because it tells me and other kids like me, that we can be friends with disabled children. Melody's story proves that being disabled does not mean that you are not normal. This also made a big impact on my life because my cousin was born with Cerebral Palsy. My best friend Lily was also born with Cerebral Palsy.

In the story Melody makes friends with a girl named Rachel. Rachel doesn't mind the fact that Melody has Cerebral Palsy, because she and I both know that having Cerebral Palsy doesn't make Melody different. I think that this book could impact many people. This story proves that kids who are disabled are smart and can make a difference in life. The lesson this story taught is that everyone (whether disabled or not) is different because everyone has a different personality or something unique about them that makes them special. Because of this special quality, we should not make fun of one another, but accept each other's own special gifts.



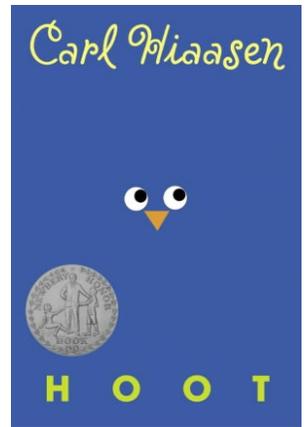
A Book That Shaped Me

By Martha Mazura

The book that shaped me is *Hoot*, by Carl Hiaasen. It taught me that standing and speaking up for what you believe isn't wrong and can sometimes help.

I learned from this book about a boy named Napoleon Bridger who was also known as Mullet Fingers that, standing/speaking up for yourself isn't always wrong. In this book, I learned about a company was planning to build a dinner called Mother Paula's. Mullet Fingers knew that the company was doing something terribly wrong because they were building over a burrowing owls nest. Initially he spoke up by using actions; first he put baby alligators in the construction site port-a-potties. While Curly (the man in charge of the construction site workers) asked for a cop to guard the site, Mullet spray painted the cop's car. On the day they were about to start building the dinner, Mullet Fingers went and buried his body in the burrowing owls nest and had his head sticking out of the ground. During the opening ceremony he started telling people about the owls. However, there was a couple of friends who protested and as a result, Mullet Fingers succeeded so the company could not build there.

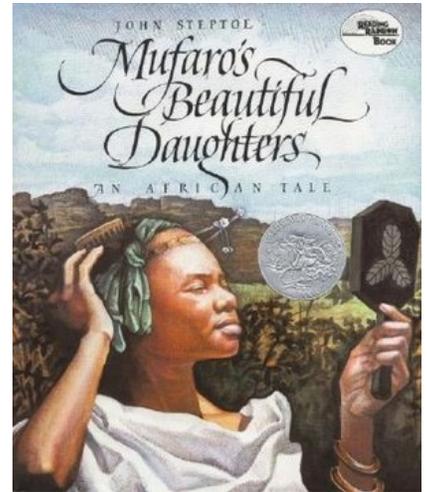
By speaking/standing up for yourself I don't mean go on a wild rampage like Mullet Fingers, I mean tell people about it. Making change happen isn't always easy, believe in yourself and you can succeed. These are just some reasons that this book has shaped.



A Book That Shaped Me

By Ahriana Merryweather

The book that shaped me is *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* an African tale collected by John Steptoe. The story was about two sisters who both wanted to marry the king. There was Nyasha who was the nice sister and Manyara who was the mean sister. I was influenced by this book because it was the first book I read with African characters and names, and it taught me a great moral lesson. Seeing characters who looked like me in a book made me feel proud. The characters names even taught me words from the Shona language. There was Manyara which means ashamed, Mufaro which means happy and Nyoka which means snake. My favorite character was Nyasha which means mercy. I liked her so much I tried to convince my mom to change my name! This book and these characters made me a little bit smarter and nicer. I also wanted to learn more about African traditions and culture, especially African tales.



Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters was my first African tale. I like African tales because they almost all have talking animals and that's a fun way to learn morals. In the story the two sisters take a journey where the king is supposed to pick the sister he wants to marry. During the journey they both meet a boy and an old woman, Manyara chose to be mean and Nyasha chose to be nice to them. Manyara was also mean to her sister and everyone else while Mufaro was not looking. However, Nyasha was nice to everyone even the snake Nyoka. The King turned out to be the boy, the old woman, and the snake in disguise and of course he chose to marry Nyasha. The moral of *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* is to be nice to everyone even when no one is looking. Nyasha shaped me because now I am nicer, even to a garden snake.



The Airman

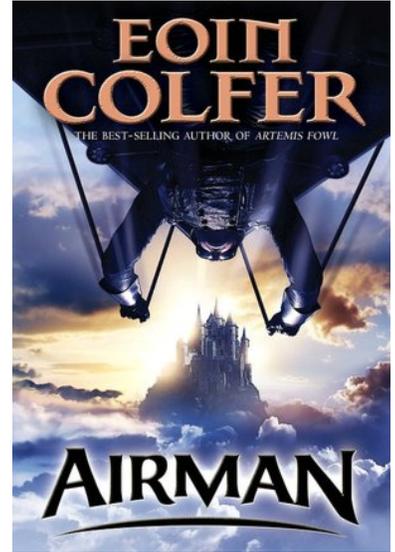
By Zahir Muhammad

The book that shaped me is called *The Airman*, written by Eoin Colfer. *The Airman* changed my life, because it inspired me to never give up. The reason why I liked this book is that there were many trials that the main character had to overcome, and he did. This book impacted me because, it showed that I can do anything I put my mind to.

This story takes place in 17th century Europe and the main character is Connor Broekhart. He is very smart and because he was born in a hot air balloon, he had a fascination with flying. As a young boy he went to live with the King of the land. While living in the palace, Connor made friends with Princess Isabella. She was the King's daughter. Also living in the palace was Hugo Bonavalin, the King's servant. For many years his family had served the kings of Paris. Now, as the last of his family line, he wanted to overthrow the King and take the throne for himself.

Bonavalin was also in charge of the prison and he did not treat the prisoners with justice. He plotted to kill the king and cause confusion between the family and friends who surrounded him. One day, when Connor was in the palace, the King was murdered. Connor tried to stop it but could not. Instead of being applauded for helping the King, people thought that he killed the king. So he was convicted and sent to jail. After a few years of being locked away, he began to dream up plans to escape by making a flying machine. His plans were successful. He escaped and returned to marry Princess Isabella, and to try to kill the person who killed the King.

This book had a personal impact on my life because Connor had heart and determination. When he was in jail and it looked like he would never be set free, he continued to believe that he could escape. Ultimately, he revealed Bonavalin's plot to take over the throne. I was inspired by the main character because he was very brave and daring. I liked this book because after Connor was convicted, and sent to jail, he escaped by making a flying plane. He liked science and inventing things just like I do. This book, *The Airman*, has shaped me because of the main character's courage, imagination, creativity, and his love for science. This allowed him to create the greatest invention ever and combined with his courage and determination he fulfilled his dreams.



"WONDER" - A Book That Shaped Me

By Olivia Renne

You should not judge a book by its cover. This is what I learned from reading the book, "Wonder." This book is a very interesting and remarkable one about a 10-year-old boy named August who has a majorly deformed face. When he enters 5th grade, people treat him like he has special needs just because his face is a lot different from theirs.

August is seriously bullied by his classmates and sometimes people he doesn't even know. But really, he is a great guy! He is very smart, kind, thoughtful, and funny. He is just an ordinary boy that feels ordinary inside, but not so ordinary on the outside. This is one way that the author teaches us to never judge a book by its cover. The kids in his class also think that he has some sort of "disease" or a "plague" and that he is contagious. They didn't see the inside of him which showed that he had NO disease and that he was actually very kind and just needed a friend. Instead these bullies saw the surface of him that showed he was different. But then he finds two friends that help him get through this hard patch of life. Through his friends' eyes, August is beautiful, not disgusting.

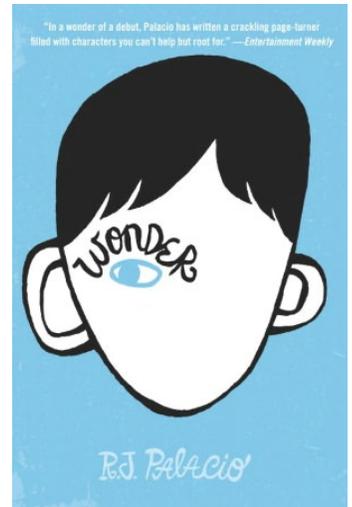
This book definitely shaped me when I read it because it is important to me that everyone should be treated equally no matter what color you are or how you look or what disorder you have or whatever. So the author taught me a big lesson: that if you know someone or see someone that may look different or act differently, don't gawk, stare, or look disgusted. Because, if that were you, you'd feel nothing but worthless.

At the beginning of this book, no one wanted to touch August or even go near him. At the end of this book, everyone in the school was lifting him up and hugging him. How inspiring is that?

About Olivia Renne



Olivia is an aspiring author. Her goal is to publish a book by the time she is 18 years old. She currently has a blog called www.redroze.blog.com where she does her own book reviews, poems and more. Olivia has a twin brother named Paul, three older sisters, a dog, a cat and two moms. She also plays the violin and loves to swim and be out doors.



A Book That Shaped Me

By Katherine Sweeney

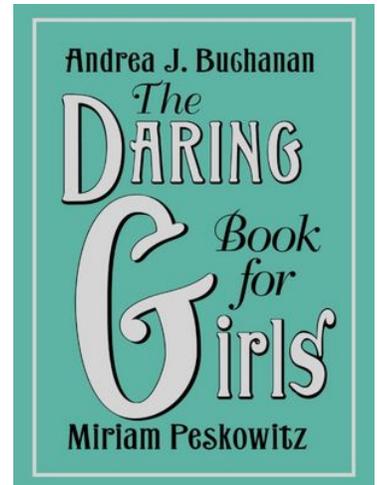
The Daring Book for Girls is a wonderful book by Andrea Buchanan and Miriam Peskowitz. This book taught me new activities and some creative projects, how to set up a business in a fun way, and fascinating women's history. I love the new things the book taught me!

This thrilling book taught me lots of new and important skills. *The Daring Book for Girls* taught me how to make beautiful daisy chains, construct wooden clubhouses, and build forts out of blankets. These activities are great for having play-dates with my friends. This book also taught me some math tricks that make difficult math more fun! One of my favorite parts of the book was where it taught me how to whistle with two fingers.

The Daring Book for Girls also gives instructions on how to set up a lemonade business. This book showed how much lemonade should cost and has a recipe on how to make delicious brownies to sell with your lemonade. *The Daring Book for Girls* says that a lemonade stand is a great way to meet your neighbors and make new friends. I agree that a lemonade stand is a great way to make new friends.

Finally, this book also taught me about Egypt's last queen, Cleopatra, that I did not know! One interesting fact is that she became queen when she was only eighteen years old. *The Daring Book for Girls* also mentions women inventors like Mary Anderson who invented windshield wipers in 1905. I really liked the part about the first women who competed in both the ancient and modern Olympics. Margaret Abbot, a golfer, was the first woman to win an Olympic gold medal in the 1900 games. I think this part of the book is very interesting because I like women's Olympics.

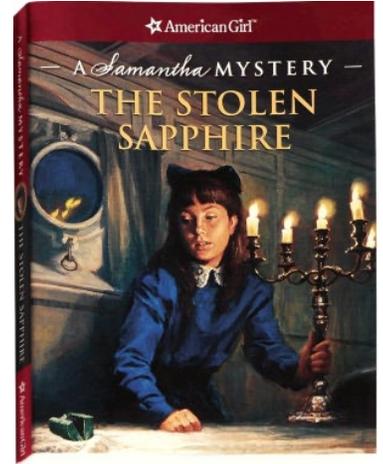
The Daring Book for Girls taught me a lot of interesting facts in a fun way! This book taught me about creative projects, women inventors, and history. This is a great book for girls who like to learn new things.



Jewels and Judging

By Holly Thill

This summer I read *The Stolen Sapphire*, written by Sarah Masters Buckey. In the story, a precious sapphire disappeared with no trace of the thief. Everyone suspected a certain French tutor of stealing the jewel, although there was not enough evidence to prove this. The tutor barely had one person to defend her, and because of the quick accusations of others, she was almost punished. When the thief was eventually caught, it showed the accusers that making hasty judgments is not fair, makes people feel upset, and does not help the situation in the least.



This book made me realize that rushing to judgment if not all the facts are known can ruin a future or current relationship as well as someone's reputation. If the thief had not been caught, the teacher would have probably been punished. Most of the people believed that the tutor was the thief, despite her attempt to defend herself. This most likely not only made her upset, but frustrated as well. People's falsely accusing the teacher was not fair on her part at all. This book showed me that making quick accusations blinds people to clear thinking and makes the accused feel offended and isolated. If there had not been a few people with good sense, the tutor would have been unfairly punished, the thief would have escaped unharmed, and the sapphire would be no closer to being found than when it had just disappeared. I think there are lots of people in this world who malign others by making hasty decisions, which is not fair to anyone.

I do not want to hurt or upset others' feelings because of quickly accusing people. As I have found out many a time, it can ruin relationships and frustrate as well as deeply hurt others. I want to give people the benefit of the doubt, since that does not accuse or upset anyone and it allows me to think more clearly about the situation. I am going to try not to hurt anyone by accusing, even if what they do or appear to be seems worthy of judging, until I have all the facts. If not all the facts and answers are known, there is no reason to criticize, since often times there is more than meets the eye. I have made that mistake many times and I want to change.

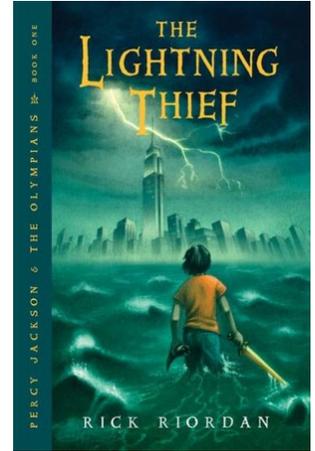
The End



A Book That Shaped Me — The Lightning Thief

By William Wright

Many books have inspired me but the book that I have truly been shaped by is *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan. When I was 8 I didn't read much except for comic books and magazines. One day I went with my mom to a book store in Montpelier, Vermont. My mom asked the lady at the desk if she knew any good books for kids my age and she showed my mom a book that looked big to me then but not so big now! It had a picture of a boy in an orange t-shirt carrying something across a body of water, okay? That didn't look very interesting to me but I read the back and I realized it wasn't so boring after all! The book was really good!



I felt as if I were watching a movie I could almost feel myself holding riptide and jumping off the St. Louis Arch! I almost got scared for myself when Percy was confronted by Hades, Lord of the Underworld, or when his math teacher turned into an evil fury. I read so much I almost got sick from staying up all night. When I was finished with the book I asked my mom if I could get *The Sea of Monsters* (the second installment) and I finished it before I even came home from school that day!

I am still reading Rick Riordan's books now and I am really excited to read *The Mark of Athena*! This has also gotten me into reading other books, too. I really enjoy *The Alchemyst* by Michael Scott and *Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain. I became the person in my school to go to for book recommendations. Even the school librarian came to me to ask for my advice. I think reading is one of my favorite things to do and if I hadn't read *The Lightning Thief* I don't know what I'd be doing these days!





“A BOOK THAT SHAPED ME”
SUMMER WRITING CONTEST
AWARDS CEREMONY

Welcome
Roberta I. Shaffer
Associate Librarian for Library Services

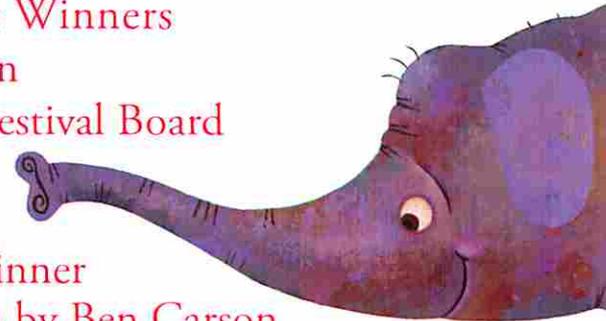


Acknowledgement of All Contest Participants

Presentation of Library Winners
Fred Bowen, KidsPost Sportswriter

Presentation of Grand Prize Winners
David M. Rubenstein
Co-Chairman, National Book Festival Board

Myla Agyin
3rd Place Grand Prize Winner
Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story, by Ben Carson



Alexander Constantino
2nd Place Grand Prize Winner
Going Solo by Roald Dahl

Elsa Pirozzi
1st Place Grand Prize Winner
The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate by Jacqueline Kelly

Closing Statement
Roberta I. Shaffer

