

# Not Your School's Reading List 10: Inspiring Tales for Young Men

At *Intellectual Takeout*, we strive to offer not only commentary on current events but also tangible advice for engaging with our increasingly chaotic world. That's why we're proud to present this ongoing series of literature recommendations.

Perfect for middle and high school-age boys, these books are a mix of fiction and non-fiction with events spanning hundreds of years. Filled with adventure, war, and epic stories, there's something here to engross any older teen boy.

Read the previous list [here](#).

## 1. Unknown. [\*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight\*](#). 1397.

"One of the earliest great stories of English literature after *Beowulf*, the poem narrates in crystalline verse the strange tale of a green knight on a green horse, who rudely interrupts the Round Table festivities one Yuletide. ... The virtuous Gawain accepts and decapitates the intruder with his own axe. Gushing blood, the knight reclaims his head, orders Gawain to seek him out a year hence, and departs."

## 2. Walter Scott. [\*Ivanhoe\*](#). 1819.

"Banished from England for seeking to marry against his father's wishes, Ivanhoe joins Richard the Lion Heart on a crusade in the Holy Land. On his return, his passionate desire is to be reunited with the beautiful but forbidden lady

Rowena, but he soon finds himself playing a more dangerous game as he is drawn into a bitter power struggle between the noble King Richard and his evil and scheming brother John.”

### **3. Warren Wildwood. Thrilling Adventures Among the Early Settlers. 1861.**

“A fun and fascinating foray into the tribulations of some of America’s most beloved folk heroes, as well as ordinary men and women who showed bravery in the face of Indians, wild animals, and criminals. These inspirational and entertaining escapades depict true tales of exceptional men like Daniel Boone and David Crockett, along with storied groups like the Texan Rangers and the Patriot Army of 1776.”

### **4. Jules Verne. Around the World in Eighty Days. 1872.**

“One night in the reform club, Phileas Fogg bets his companions that he can travel across the globe in just eighty days. Breaking the well-established routine of his daily life, he immediately sets off for Dover with his astonished valet Passepartout. Passing through exotic lands and dangerous locations, they seize whatever transportation is at hand—whether train or elephant—overcoming set-backs and always racing against the clock.”

### **5. Stephen Crane. The Red Badge of Courage. 1895.**

“*The Red Badge of Courage* is Stephen Crane’s second book, notable for its realism. ... Henry Fleming has joined the Union army because of his romantic ideas of military life, but soon

finds himself in the middle of a battle against a regiment of Confederate soldiers. Terrified, Henry deserts his comrades. Upon returning to his regiment, he struggles with his shame as he tries to redeem himself and prove his courage.”

## **6. Pyotr Wrangel. Always with Honor. 1928.**

“Russia, 1917. As World War I drags on, political turmoil slowly paralyzes the Empire. The Czar abdicates. ... Leading the anti-communist “White” forces against the new “Red” army to the end was Pyotr Wrangel. Wrangel, a career cavalry officer who fought with distinction in the Russo-Japanese War and World War I, found himself at the center of various intrigues in the early stages of the Russian Revolution.”

## **7. Gustav Krist. Alone Through the Forbidden Land. 1937.**

“In 1924 the lands of Soviet Central Asia remained shrouded in secrecy, closed off from the rest of Russia without special travel permits, entering its borders as a westerner was simply impossible. Gustav Krist endeavored to enter those forbidden lands where he had been held as a prisoner of war years before. Driven by the spirit of adventure he would begin a sixteen month journey.”

## **8. Bernard Fall. Street Without Joy. 1961.**

“Journalist and scholar Bernard Fall vividly captured the sights, sounds, and smells of the brutal– and politically complicated–conflict between the French and the Communist-led Vietnamese nationalists in Indochina. The French fought to the bitter end, but even with the lethal advantages of a modern

military, they could not stave off the Viet Minh insurgency of hit-and-run tactics, ambushes, booby traps, and nighttime raids.”

## **9. Richard Adams. [Watership Down](#). 1972.**

“Set in England’s Downs, a once idyllic rural landscape, this stirring tale of adventure, courage and survival follows a band of very special creatures on their flight from the intrusion of man and the certain destruction of their home. Led by a stouthearted pair of friends, they journey forth from their native Sandleford Warren through the harrowing trials posed by predators and adversaries, to a mysterious promised land.”

## **10. Ryan Landry. [Masculinity Amidst Madness](#). 2020.**

“Modern man fears not the unknown, but the known that he fails to honor, the known against which he fears he cannot measure. The world is on fire. Everything you know—or thought you knew—is being destroyed before your eyes. Culture is perverted, nations are subverted, and reality itself is being warped. ... But how do you carve your own path when you’ve been trained from birth to be an observer, a consumer?”

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