

EPISODE **47**

# How to Read the Classics with Kids (even if you've never read them before)

Guest: Gail Ledbetter

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## Meet Gail Ledbetter

She is the author of *Timeline of Classics: Historical Context for the Good and Great Books*.

She earned a B.S. in Bible and Elementary Education from Columbia International University, and homeschooled her 4 children.

She is a certified instructor and exhibitor for the Institute for Excellence in Literature.

## In This Episode

Sarah talks to Gail about the enduring legacy of reading aloud with her children. Gail shares about her book, and gives us a glimpse of the Literary Notebooks she keeps with her students as they encounter the classics. And of course we get to hear about the Ledbetter Family's favorite read-alouds!

It's never too late, you know? Just get started.  
Really and truly, if you just take the next step.

- Gail Ledbetter

## The Listening Guide

**Use this guide to skip to parts that most interest you, or listen to the entire podcast.**

- 3:30 Welcome Gail Ledbetter
- 5:50 Big library trips
- 9:20 Keeping your wits about you at the library
- 11:30 A Ledbetter Family favorite
- 13:00 Overwhelmed by the Classics
- 17:00 Studying history chronologically
- 19:00 How Timeline of History began
- 20:30 Not just a booklist
- 22:50 Compact Classics
- 25:00 Reader Response Journaling
- 28:30 Finding Gail's work on the internet
- 28:50 Favorite read-alouds
- 33:00 Reading aloud with older teens
- 38:20 One more nugget of advice

## Quotes and Questions

### \* **Sharing books with all generations.**

“Recently one of my parents was in the hospital. And so on Easter Sunday I took my 18 year old daughter with me to go to the hospital to go visit, and I found it very interesting, she grabbed a book off the shelf because she wanted to read to her grandma in the hospital.”

In the press of the day it's sometimes hard to see the effects of read-aloud. But this wonderful story shows the rich legacy of comfort and happiness that has been built into Gail's family through sharing stories. What sorts of stories are a part of your family culture?

### \* **On reader response journaling.**

On a one page spread in our notebook, we would have vocabulary, we would have a quickie retelling or narration about this chapter right there, in key word outline form, and then I would also have my students look for what we call notable quotes and literary devices.

Do you see how simple Gail makes this sound? No special workbooks or supplies—just a composition book, a classic to read, and your full attention. Gail included vocabulary, short narrations, golden lines or favorite quotes and literary devices. Consider feathering in one practice with each new book your students read. In a year, they would have build a habit of close reading and a method of tracking what they're thinking about as they encounter the literature.

This journal really is just a way to make them slow down, teach them to annotate a book and to really, really enjoy the wonderful words that were put forth, you know, because so many times we can fly through a book, and read for speed. You know these books of classic literature they are not meant to be taken so fast.

### \* **The art of commonplacing.**

Commonplacing is a wonderful practice to model for our children. [Sarah and the Schole Sisters](#) talked about their methods of common placing in this video. We also collected common placing resources on [this pin board](#).

### \* **Listening on the farm.**

“We live on a farm so there's always chores. So as often as possible we would have books on tape so that we could keep whatever we were working on, we could listen to the story and keep talking.”

# READ-ALLOUD REVIVAL

## Cheat Sheet Episode 47

Do you use audiobooks? They are a great tool for long (or short!) car trips and afternoon quiet time. Mystie Winckler talks about using Audible on [Episode 14](#). And our favorites from Librivox and beyond are a part of the [RAR Booklist](#).

## Show Notes

### Books from today's episode:

- [Grimm Fairy Tales](#)
- [Fairy tales from Hans Christian Andersen](#)
- Books by [Patrick McManus](#)
- [Where the Red Fern Grows](#)
- [The Adventures of Tom Sawyer](#)
- [The Prince and the Pauper](#)
- [Farmer Boy](#)
- [The Boxcar Children](#)
- Books by [Jane Austen](#)
- [Patty Reed's Doll](#)
- [A Tale of Two Cities](#)

### Other links from today's show:

- A \*NEW\* read-aloud challenge is happening now. Find out more [here!](#)
- Gail's book: [Timeline of Classics](#)
- Jim Weiss on [Episode 4](#) and [Episode 5](#)
- Adam Andrews on [Episode 2](#)
- [To Kill a Mockingbird](#)
- [Teaching the Classics](#) by Adam and Missy Andrews
- [Teaching Writing: Structure and Style](#)
- [Jim Hodges audio books](#)
- The [Timeline of Classics website](#)
- [Tarzan of the Apes audio](#)

# READ-ALoud REVIVAL

Cheat Sheet Episode 47

- [Frankenstein read by Jim Weiss](#)
- [The RAR Booklist](#)

To find more resources to help you build your family culture around books, visit [ReadAloudRevival.com](http://ReadAloudRevival.com).