

Philanthropy Suggested Novel List

The following novels have characters that in some way show a giving and caring attitude. Included is a brief description for some of the novels. The word in parenthesis gives an idea of the social issue that is found in the story. The novels that involve an elderly person are good for students to read independently while serving at the nursing home.

1. Albom, Mitch - *Tuesdays with Morrie*
Subject: elderly and dying
This is a true story of Professor Morrie Schwartz who is dying of Lou Gehrig's disease and his former student Mitch Albom who regularly visits him every Tuesday. Mitch calls his visits his last class, and his novel is the term paper. The subject of the book is the meaning of life. Mitch gives his time and treasure to fly out and visit his mentor, and Morrie shares his wisdom and life lessons.
2. Byars, Betsy - *The Pinballs*
Subject: foster children
Three lonely foster children, who have been knocked about like pinballs, collide in a caring foster home and learn to care for each other.
3. Byars, Betsy - *After the Goat Man*
Subject: elderly
A sensitive and overweight boy overcomes his problems when he becomes involved in a search for a friend's grandfather, named the Goat Man.
4. Higa, Tomilo - *The Girl with the White Flag*
Subject: orphans and elderly
5. Homan, Felice - *Slake's Limbo*
Subject: homelessness
Slake is a thirteen-year-old boy who lives in a subway for 121 days. He benefits both physically and emotionally from a number of strangers who demonstrate philanthropy. His experiences impact him positively, and he leaves the subway with hope.
6. Jones, Ron - *The Acorn People*
Subject: handicapped
7. Magorian, Michelle - *Good Night Mr. Tom*
Subject: elderly
8. Paterson, Katherine - *Jip, His Story*
Subject: orphans, mental illness
The setting of this historical fiction novel is a poorhouse farm in rural Vermont during the 1850s. True philanthropy is not found at the charity orphanage/asylum but within Jip. He cares deeply for the paupers and strays at the poorhouse as well as the plants



and animals. Jip experiences the sacrifices that come with thinking of others first and yourself last.

9. Thomasma, Kenneth - *Amee-nah*

Subject: handicapped

Amee-nah is a fictional story based on the life of a boy and a doctor who actually lived. He is a Zuni boy with a clubfoot that keeps him from running and herding sheep with his friends. According to the story, when a doctor from Grand Rapids, MI, who was also born with a clubfoot, hears about Amee-nah, he writes a letter in which he says "Many people made it possible for me to have my foot surgery. Many people made it possible for me to become a doctor. Now I want to make it possible for this young man to have his operation and be able to walk and run like all of his friends. There will be no charge for my services." We learn how philanthropy is passed on to others.

10. Voigt, Cynthia - *Homecoming*

Subject: orphans

in this story, four orphans travel from Rhode Island to Connecticut with few resources other than the will to stay together and find a home.

