Helping your children choose books they will love

I reading

Lovereading4kids.co.uk is a book website created for parents and children to make choosing books easy and fun

Opening extract from

Pippi Goes Aboard

Written by

Astrid Lindgren

Published by

Oxford University Press

All Text is Copyright © of the Author and/or Illustrator

Please print off and read at your leisure.

Lovereading4kids.co.uk



1
Pippi still lives at Villekulla Cottage

If a stranger, coming to the little Swedish town, should one day happen to find himself in a particular place on the outskirts, he would see Villekulla Cottage. Not that the cottage is much to look at: it is rather a tumble-down old cottage with an overgrown garden round it, but the stranger might perhaps pause to wonder who lived there, and why there was a horse in the porch. If it was really late and almost dark, and if he caught sight of a little girl striding round the

garden looking as if she had no intention of going to bed, he might think:

'I wonder why that little girl's mother doesn't see that she goes to bed? Other children are fast asleep by this time.'

If the little girl came up to the gate—and she would be certain to do so, because she enjoyed talking to people—then he would have the chance of taking a good look at her, and would probably think:

'She's one of the freckliest and most red-headed children I've ever seen.'

Afterwards perhaps he would think:

'Freckles and red hair are really rather nice—at least when a person has such a happy appearance as this child.'

It would perhaps interest him to know the name of this little red-head who was strolling about by herself in the dusk, and if he was close to the gate, he might ask:

'What's your name?'

A merry voice would reply:

'Pippilotta Provisiona Gaberdina Dandeliona Ephraims-daughter Longstocking, daughter of Captain Ephraim Longstocking, formerly the terror of the seas, now Cannibal King: but everybody calls me Pippi!'

When she said that her father was a Cannibal

King, she firmly believed it, because he had once been blown into the water and disappeared when Pippi and he had been out sailing on the sea. Since Pippi's father was somewhat stout, she was absolutely sure he had not been drowned. It seemed reasonable to suppose that he had been washed ashore on an island and become king over all the cannibals there, and this is exactly what Pippi thought had happened. If the traveller went on chatting to Pippi, he would find out that, except for a horse and a monkey called Mr Nelson, she lived quite alone at Villekulla Cottage. If he had a kind heart, he probably could not help thinking:

'How does the poor child live?'

He really need not have worried about that.

'I'm rich as a troll,' Pippi used to say. And she was. She had a whole suitcaseful of golden coins which her father had given her, and she managed splendidly without either mother or father. Since there was no one to tell her when to go to bed, Pippi told herself. Sometimes she did not tell herself until about ten o'clock, because Pippi had never believed that it was necessary for children to go to bed at seven. That was the time when you had the most fun. So the stranger should not be surprised at seeing Pippi striding round the garden, although the sun had set and the air was

getting chilly, and Tommy and Annika had been tucked up in bed for ages. Tommy and Annika were Pippi's playmates, who lived in the house next to Villekulla Cottage. They had both a father and a mother, and both the father and the mother believed that it was best for children to go to bed at seven.

If the stranger lingered after Pippi had said goodnight and had left the gate, and if he saw Pippi go up to the porch and lift the horse high in her strong arms and carry him out into the garden, he would surely rub his eyes and wonder if he was dreaming.

'What a remarkable child this is,' he would say to himself. 'I do believe she can lift the horse! This is the most remarkable child *I've* ever seen!'

In that he would be right. Pippi was the most remarkable child—at least in that town. There may be more remarkable children in other places, but in that little town there was no one like Pippi Longstocking, and nowhere in the world, neither in that town nor anywhere else, was there anyone so strong as she was.