

The Ultimate Reading List — Classics That Endure

Illustrated Comics Introduce Children to Classics

Since the end of World War II, illustrated comics of literary classics have captured the imaginations of children and introduced them to Western civilization's most enduring stories. Beginning in 1941 with Alexandre Dumas's *The Three Musketeers* and ending in 1962, 167 titles were published. The first 34 were called Classic Comics, and subsequent issues (including reprints of earlier titles) were known as Classics Illustrated.

Al Kanter, the creator, was a Russian-Jewish immigrant who worked as a sales representative for a publishing company after the Depression. "He had the idea that you could publish illustrated books, each title a different literary classic. You could sell them as comics to kids and as books as adults," said Dan Malin, author of *The Complete Guide to Classics Illustrated*.

Classic Comics made it cheap and

easy for kids to sample Western culture through Shakespeare, the Brontës, and Mark Twain. Many titles printed much of the original text. Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, for example, contains Mark Antony's complete eulogy to Caesar in huge text balloons over three full pages.

"I used Classic Comic books to get through grammar school," said Charles Schwab, chairman of his own financial services company, in a 1995 interview.

While some may have used the comics as educational shortcuts, many took the advice that began to appear at the end of each story: "Now that you have read the Classics Illustrated edition, don't miss the added enjoyment of reading the original, obtainable at your school or public library."

Why have the comics endured? "The stories are new to each generation," said collector and dealer Raymond True.

1. *The Three Musketeers* (1844) Alexandre Dumas
2. *Ivanhoe* (1820) Sir Walter Scott
3. *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1844) Alexandre Dumas
4. *Last of the Mohicans* (1826) James Fenimore Cooper
5. *Moby Dick* (1851) Herman Melville
6. *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) Charles Dickens
7. *Robin Hood* (1883) Howard Pyle
8. *Arabian Nights* (1704) Antony Galland
9. *Les Miserables* (1862) Victor Hugo
10. *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) Daniel Defoe
11. *Don Quixote* (1605) Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra
12. *Washington Irving: Rip Van Winkle* (1819), *The Headless Horseman* (1819)
13. *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde* (1883) Robert Louis Stevenson
14. *Westward Ho!* (1855) Charles Kingsley
15. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) Harriet Beecher Stowe
16. *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) Jonathan Swift
17. *The Deerslayer* (1841) James Fenimore Cooper
18. *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1831) Victor Hugo
19. *Huckleberry Finn* (1884) Mark Twain
20. *The Corsican Brothers* (1845) Alexandre Dumas
21. *3 Famous Mysteries: The Sign of the Four* (1890) Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Played Hand* (1880) Guy de Maupassant, *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1841) Edgar Allen Poe
22. *The Pathfinder* (1840) James Fenimore Cooper
23. *Oliver Twist* (1838) Charles Dickens
24. *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) Mark Twain
25. *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840) Richard Henry Dana Jr.
26. *Frankenstein* (1818) Mary Shelley
27. *Marco Polo* (1921) Donn Byrne
28. *Michael Strogoff* (1876) Jules Verne
29. *The Prince and the Pauper* (1882) Mark Twain
30. *The Moonstone* (1868) William Wilkie Collins
31. *The Black Arrow* (1888) Robert Louis Stevenson
32. *Lorna Doone* (1869) Richard Doddridge Blackmore
33. *Sherlock Holmes Stories: A Study in Scarlet* (1887) Arthur Conan Doyle,
34. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1902) Arthur Conan Doyle
35. *Mysterious Island* (1874) Jules Verne
36. *Last Days of Pompeii* (1834) Edward Bulwer-Lytton
37. *Typee* (1846) Herman Melville
38. *The Adventures of Cellini* (1562) Benvenuto Cellini
39. *Jane Eyre* (1847) Charlotte Bronte
40. *Edgar Allen Poe Mysteries: Pit and the Pendulum* (1845), *Adventures of Hans Pfall* (1845), *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1838)
41. *Twenty Years After* (1845) Alexandre Dumas
42. *Swiss Family Robinson* (1813) Johann Wyss
43. *Great Expectations* (1861) Charles Dickens
44. *Mysteries of Paris* (1842) Eugene Sue
45. *Tom Brown's School Days* (1856) Thomas Hughes
46. *Kidnapped* (1886) Robert Louis Stevenson
47. *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1870) Jules Verne
48. *David Copperfield* (1850) Charles Dickens
49. *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) Lewis Carroll (C.L. Dodgson)
50. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) Mark Twain
51. *The Spy* (1821) James Fenimore Cooper
52. *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) Nathaniel Hawthorne
53. *A Christmas Carol* (1843) Charles Dickens
54. *The Man in the Iron Mask* (1850) Alexandre Dumas
55. *Silas Marner* (1861) George Eliot (Marian Evans)
56. *Toilers of the Sea* (1866) Victor Hugo
57. *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855) Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
58. *The Prairie* (1827) James Fenimore Cooper
59. *Wuthering Heights* (1847) Emily Bronte
60. *Black Beauty* (1860) Anna Sewell
61. *The Woman in White* (1860) William Wilkie Collins
62. *Western Stories: The Luck of Roaring Camp* (1870) Bret Harte, *The Outcasts of Poker Flats* (1870) Bret Harte
63. *Man Without a Country* (1863) Edward Everett Hale
64. *Treasure Island* (1883) Robert Louis Stevenson
65. *Benjamin Franklin* (1817) Benjamin Franklin
66. *The Cloister and the Hearth* (1861) Charles Reade
67. *The Scottish Chiefs* (1809) Jane Porter
68. *Julius Caesar* (1607) William Shakespeare
69. *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1873) Jules Verne
70. *The Pilot* (1823) James Fenimore Cooper
71. *The Man Who Laughs* (1869) Victor Hugo
72. *The Oregon Trail* (1849) Francis Parkman
73. *The Black Tulip* (1850) Alexandre Dumas
74. *Mr. Midshipman Easy* (1836) Captain Frederick Marryat
75. *The Lady of the Lake* (1810) Sir Walter Scott
76. *The Prisoner of Zenda* (1894) Anthony Hope (Hawkins)
77. *The Iliad* (962 B.C.) Homer
78. *Joan of Arc* (1801) Frederick Schiller
79. *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1897) Edmond Rostand
80. *White Fang* (1906) Jack London
81. *The Odyssey* (927 B.C.) Homer
82. *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889) Robert Louis Stevenson
83. *The Jungle Book* (1894) Rudyard Kipling
84. *Edgar Allen Poe: The Gold Bug* (1843), *The Tell-Tale Heart* (1845), *A Cask of Amontillado* (1845)
85. *The Sea Wolf* (1904) Jack London
86. *Under Two Flags* (1868) Ouida (Louisa de la Rame)
87. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1600) William Shakespeare
88. *Men of Iron* (1891) Howard Pyle
89. *Crime and Punishment* (1866) Feodor Dostoevsky
90. *Green Mansions* (1904) William Henry Hudson
91. *The Call of the Wild* (1903) Jack London
92. *Henry W. Longfellow: Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858), *Evangeline* (1847)
93. *Pudd'nhead Wilson* (1894) Mark Twain
94. *David Balfour* (1893) Robert Louis Stevenson
95. *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1928) Erich Maria Remarque
96. *Daniel Boone* (1939) John Bakeless
97. *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) H. Rider Heggard
98. *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) Stephen Crane
99. *Hamlet* (1603) William Shakespeare
100. *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1932) Charles Nordhoff & James Hall
101. *William Tell* (1804) Frederick Schiller
102. *The White Company* (1891) Arthur Conan Doyle
103. *Men Against the Sea* (1933) Charles Nordhoff & James Hall
104. *Bring 'em Back Alive* (1930) Frank Buck & Edward Anthony
105. *From the Earth to the Moon* (1870) Jules Verne
106. *Buffalo Bill* (1920) William F. Cody
107. *King of the Khyber Rifles* (1916) Talbot Mundy
108. *Knights of the Round Table* (1903) Howard Pyle
109. *Pitcairn's Island* (1939) Charles Nordhoff & James Hall
110. *The Speckled Band* (1892) Arthur Conan Doyle
111. *The Talisman* (1825) Sir Walter Scott
112. *Kit Carson* (1873) John S.C. Abbott
113. *The Forty-Five Guardsmen* (1848) Alexandre Dumas
114. *The Red Rover* (1827) James Fenimore Cooper
115. *How I Found Livingstone* (1872) Henry M. Stanley
116. *Robert Louis Stevenson: The Bottle Imp* (1891), *The Beach at Falesa* (1892)
117. *Captains Courageous* (1897) Rudyard Kipling
118. *Rob Roy* (1818) Sir Walter Scott
119. *Soldiers of Fortune* (1897) Richard Harding Davis
120. *The Hurricane* (1936) Charles Nordhoff & James Hall
121. *Wild Bill Hickok* (no author listed)
122. *The Mutineers* (1920) Charles Boardman Hawes
123. *Fang and Claw* (1935) Frank Buck
124. *War of the Worlds* (1898) H.G. Wells
125. *The Oxbow Incident* (1940) Walter Van Tilburg Clark
126. *The Downfall* (1892) Emile Zola
127. *The King of the Mountains* (1857) Edmond About
128. *Macbeth* (1606) William Shakespeare
129. *Davy Crockett* (no author listed)
130. *Caesar's Conquests* (51 B.C.) Julius Caesar
131. *The Covered Wagon* (1922) Emerson Hough
132. *The Dark Frigate* (1923) Charles Boardman Hawes
133. *The Time Machine* (1895) H.G. Wells
134. *Romeo and Juliet* (1597) William Shakespeare
135. *Waterloo* (1868) Emile Erckmann & Alexandre Chatrian
136. *Lord Jim* (1900) Joseph Conrad (Korzeniowski)
137. *The Little Savage* (1848) Captain Frederick Marryat
138. *A Journey to the Center of the Earth* (1864) Jules Verne
139. *In the Reign of Terror* (1890) G.A. Henty
140. *On Jungle Trails* (1936) Frank Bucks
141. *Castle Dangerous* (1831) Sir Walter Scott
142. *Abraham Lincoln* (1952) Benjamin Thomas
143. *Kim* (1901) Rudyard Kipling
144. *The First Men in the Moon* (1901) H.G. Wells
145. *The Crisis* (1901) Winston Churchill
146. *With Fire and Sword* (1890) Henry Sienkiewicz
147. *Ben Hur* (1880) Lew Wallace
148. *Lafitte the Pirate* (1930) Lyle Saxon
149. *Off on a Comet* (1878) Jules Verne
150. *The Virginian* (1902) Owen Wister
151. *Won by the Sword* (1899) G.A. Henty
152. *Wild Animals I Have Known* (1898) Ernest Thompson Seton
153. *The Invisible Man* (1897) H.G. Wells
154. *The Conspiracy of the Pontiac* (1851) Francis Parkman
155. *The Lion of the North* (1890) G.A. Henty
156. *Conquest of Mexico* (1632) Bernal Diez Del Castillo
157. *Lives of the Hunted* (1902) Ernest Thompson Seton
158. *The Conspirators* (1843) Alexandre Dumas
159. *The Octopus* (1901) Frank Norris
160. *The Food of the Gods* (1904) H.G. Wells
161. *Cleopatra* (1889) H. Rider Haggard
162. *Robur the Conqueror* (1886) Jules Verne
163. *Master of the World* (1904) Jules Verne
164. *The Cossack Chief* (1839) Nikotai Gogol
165. *The Queen's Necklace* (1849) Alexandre Dumas
166. *Tigers and Traitors* (1880) Jules Verne
167. *Faust* (1808/1832) Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Source: <http://www.classicscentral.com>