

Rilla of Ingleside

Lucy Maud Montgomery

Reviewed by: Bianca Sayuri, 17

Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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Set during the First World War in Canada, the eighth and final book in the Anne of Green Gables series is a coming of age story about Anne's youngest daughter, named Rilla. Her brothers and friends go off to fight in the war, and all by herself she saves and raises a baby whose mother had just died. As a result, this book has a more serious tone compared to all the others in the series. While at the start of the book Rilla is a self-obsessed and ignorant fifteen-year-old girl, she grows up to be a brave, determined, and mature young woman as the years go by.

As sad, and tragic as this story was, there were also many beautiful parts to it. One heartbreaking moment made me cry like I never had with a book before, but still it had something extremely admirable about it. The idea of a teenage girl who disliked babies and then completely took care of one for years was also very intriguing for me. It made me become even more interested and invested in this story. I loved seeing how she started to become such a responsible young girl that she even helped lead a Junior Red Cross organization in her town so that she and her friends could do their part in the war. It was particularly compelling as well to read about that time through the eyes of a girl my age who had family and friends fighting in the war.

I think the target audience for this series is mostly girls and young women, but I would recommend this book to any person over the age of 14. It does refer to certain aspects of war that might be a little too strong for some readers. In addition, since the series was written so many years ago, there are quite a few times where the reader can feel like this is an old-fashioned story, and in certain ways it is. It sometimes makes it hard to relate to the characters, but I personally found it to be fascinating to read and learn more about this time period. This book may be more challenging for some since Montgomery's writing style can be especially poetic and descriptive, and she uses many words that are not very common nowadays. There are also many references to religion, God and Christian beliefs throughout the series. I would suggest you read all the seven books prior to this one so that you are able to have an attachment to all the characters. Additionally, giving this series to a young girl seems appropriate in my opinion.

Recommended Titles:

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

Little Women by Louisa May Alcott

The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett

Emily of New Moon by Lucy Maud Montgomery