

**From the Stacks**  
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As I have been reflecting on friendships in literature, my daughter mentioned completing a paper for her World Literature class about friendship. She compared the works *Art* by Yasmina Reza and *The Tempest* by Shakespeare stating, “friendships are tested by change, truth, and the passage of time.” Elizabeth Bennet demonstrates true friendship in her relationship with Charlotte Lucas, showing how women can support one another even in Regency era England. Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn are nothing but trouble together, yet Tom does have Huck’s best interests at heart amidst all the chaos. Some literary friendships are shining examples of how to be supportive and awesome besties while others are basically manuals on what not to do.

The friendship between Calvin and Hobbes might be imaginary, but it encapsulates the ideal childhood friendship: someone who is always there, a constant companion and pal, someone you can spend long, lazy summer days with or grumble over school and bad weather. Bill Waterson created these two appealing characters, a six-year-old boy with an imaginary friend, who everyone else sees as a stuffed animal. With this pair, having a close friend who stretches you intellectually, physically, or even emotionally, is good. So is having a good friend who helps you see the consequences of your decisions.

In *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, before “bromance” was ever a word, there was Sancho Panza and Don Quixote. The friendship between Don Quixote and Sancho begins as one of “utility”, that between a knight who needs a squire and a poor peasant who needs a job. Over the years, their friendship has morphed into a familiar trope of hero and sidekick. The two male friends go on an epic journey together, which is basically a road trip. Their funny and simple friendship is a reminder and an ideal of how we should support our friends, both emotionally and physically.

*Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott is literary proof that sometimes the best friends are the ones you are born with. Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy certainly have their struggles, most of which are related to Jo getting really upset that her sisters could ever think of getting married rather than spend their lives acting in the plays she wrote for them. Still, their bond is unbreakable, and they love and support each other unconditionally, as best friends should.

With their fascination of Boo Radley, Jem, Scout, and the summer visitor, Dill, build a strong friendship in Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The trio explore the world around them, often using their imaginations to create games and scenarios. The trial of Tom Robinson and the events significantly affect their friendship and their

understanding of the world. They experience the darker side of human nature and the limitations of their innocence. Yet, their friendship remains a source of strength and comfort throughout the novel.

Literary friendships may not change and grow as real human friendships do. Real friendship means respecting boundaries, supporting each other's growth, and not tying your identity too tightly to someone else's. Friendship contains kindness and forgiveness. Friendship is a choice that is worth choosing over and over.