NICK BLADE

Fantasy Book Gift Chooser

Start with what the reader loves about fantasy.

Wonder

They talk about the places they discovered. Check what kind of peril they enjoy.

Darkness

They want to be unsettled. Find out what they would rather avoid.

Deep worlds

They talk about history, customs, and who holds power. Check their appetite for a long opening or a series.

Earned power

They enjoy training chapters and working out how magic functions. Check for reissues, preorders, and collected editions.

Before wrapping it

1. Check what they already own, including alternate covers and books inside an omnibus.
2. For a series, verify where to begin and whether the reader wants that commitment.
3. For a child, check age and subject matter with their caregiver.
4. Confirm the exact edition, digital platform, and seller’s delivery estimate.

The full article and author or publisher sources:

https://nickblade.com/discovery/fantasy-gift-guide-by-reader-type/

Sixteen books to consider

Wonder

The Hobbit — J. R. R. Tolkien
A reluctant traveler on an adventure that stands on its own. Monsters and peril.

Howl’s Moving Castle — Diana Wynne Jones
A curse and a wonderfully difficult wizard. Children’s fantasy; buy the novel, not the film picture book.

A Wizard of Earthsea — Ursula K. Le Guin
A young wizard reckons with his power. Earthsea opener; check frightening material.

The Girl Who Drank the Moon — Kelly Barnhill
A kind witch and a child in her care. Middle-grade standalone; child abandonment.

Darkness

Sabriel — Garth Nix
An eerie quest into the land of the dead. YA; the Old Kingdom entry point.

Ninth House — Leigh Bardugo
Murder and occult secrets at Yale. Adult fantasy; check content guidance.

A Deadly Education — Naomi Novik
A magical school where survival is the problem. Adult fantasy; Scholomance opener.

Black Sun — Rebecca Roanhorse
Prophecy and religious power collide. Adult trilogy opener; ritual injury.

Deep worlds

The Way of Kings — Brandon Sanderson
A storm-shaped world with intersecting lives. Long opener; ongoing Stormlight Archive.

The City of Brass — S. A. Chakraborty
A city of djinn with old grievances. Adult; completed Daevabad trilogy.

The Fifth Season — N. K. Jemisin
Catastrophe and the politics of controlling power. Adult; completed Broken Earth trilogy.

The Goblin Emperor — Katherine Addison
Court etiquette and an unexpected emperor. Self-contained story in a shared world.

Earned power

Unsouled — Will Wight
A cultivation climb that starts from the bottom. Cradle opener; completed twelve-book series.

Ascendant — Michael R. Miller
A dragon bond and power learned through it. Songs of Chaos Book One.

Sufficiently Advanced Magic — Andrew Rowe
Tower trials to think through. Ongoing series; new hardcover slated for July 2027.

Mage Errant Volume I — John Bierce
A young mage learns his way around Skyhold. Omnibus contains the first two novels.

Source information checked November 22, 2026. See the full guide for source links.

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