

NONFICTION TITLES FOR STUDENTS ENTERING GRADES 6-8

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| <p><i>Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream</i> by Tanya Lee Stone 980L</p> | <p>In the early 1960s, 13 women highly qualified to become astronauts were excluded by NASA from the Mercury space program. This appealing Sibert Award winner, notable for the author’s strong point of view, explores the reasons and biases behind the decision. Students can examine the text for language and other evidence that show Stone’s position on the topic and the people involved. For example, what words does she use to describe the women, some of whom she interviewed? How does she present opposing viewpoints that argued that women shouldn’t be included? One of the book’s main themes is that society minimized women’s abilities and restricted their opportunities. Students can consider how photographs and artifacts like advertisements are used to make that case, and if it’s presented fairly.</p> |
| <p><i>An Invisible Thread</i> by Laura Schroff</p> | <p>When Laura Schroff brushed by a young panhandler on a New York City corner one rainy afternoon, something made her stop and turn back. She took the boy to lunch at the McDonald’s across the street that day. And she continued to go back, again and again for the next four years until both their lives had changed dramatically. Nearly thirty years later, that young boy, Maurice, is married and has his own family. Now he works to change the lives of disadvantaged kids, just like the boy he used to be. <i>An Invisible Thread</i> is the true story of the bond between a harried sales executive and an eleven-year-old boy who seemed destined for a life of poverty. It is the heartwarming story of a friendship that has spanned three decades and brought meaning to an over-scheduled professional and hope to a hungry and desperate boy living on the streets.</p> |
| <p><i>Breaker Boys: How a Photograph Helped End Child Labor</i> by Michael Burgan 1020L</p> | <p>Photographs can change history. So contends this and other entries in the valuable “Captured History” series. Breaker Boys’ straightforward text focuses on a 1911 photograph by Lewis Hine of a group of boys who sorted coal at a Pennsylvania mine for 10 hours a day. The four chapters discuss coal mining, children in the mines, Hine and his work, and the slow changes in child labor laws.</p> |
| <p><i>Candy Bomber: The Story of the Berlin Airlift’s “Chocolate Pilot”</i> by Michael Tunnell 1130L</p> | <p>This is the true story of Gail Halvorsen, an American pilot and real-life hero who parachuted small bags of candy over the war-torn city of Berlin, giving hope to children and families during the aftermath of World War II.</p> |
| <p><i>Case Closed? Nine Mysteries Unlocked by Modern Science</i> by Susan Hughes 1000L</p> | <p>Egypt’s first female pharaoh disappears around 1457 BCE -- was she murdered? Find out how DNA closes the case. The ancient Arabian Peninsula city of Ubar vanishes, seemingly without trace. Find out how old maps and modern space shuttles help solve the mystery. Sir John Franklin’s 1845 expedition to find the Northwest Passage is never heard from again. Find out how spectroscopy points to some probable explanations. Case Closed? examines these and six other mysteries from ancient and modern times. Accompanied by photos, maps, diagrams and illustrations, this book reveals how modern science sheds new light on people, vessels and entire civilizations throughout history that simply vanished. In some cases, the mystery has been solved. In other cases, readers can examine the latest evidence and decide for themselves.</p> |

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| <p><i>Chew on This: Everything You Don't Want to Know About Fast Food</i> by Eric Schlosser and Charles Wilson 1110L</p> | <p>Fast food—good or bad? In adapting Schlosser's best seller <i>Fast Food Nation</i>, the authors thoughtfully added material relevant to teens about how fast food is marketed to young people and about teenagers who work in fast food restaurants. They point to problems with working conditions at the restaurants and with inhumane treatment of animals at companies that supply meat. They also argue that fast food harms the environment and consumers' health. Students can consider whether the authors provide credible evidence for their arguments and if they acknowledge competing arguments about benefits of fast food such as convenience and low prices.</p> |
| <p><i>Chinese Cinderella: The True Story of an Unwanted Daughter</i> by Adeline Yen Mah 960L</p> | <p>Chinese Cinderella is the perfect title for Adeline Yen Mah's memoir of her childhood growing up in China during the 1940s as she endures life ruled by a cruel stepmother.</p> |
| <p><i>Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice</i> by Phillip M. Hoose 1000L</p> | <p>In 1955, Claudette Colvin refused to give up her seat to a white passenger in Montgomery, Alabama and played an important, but little known, role in the Civil Rights Movement.</p> |
| <p><i>Every Body's Talking: What We Say Without Words</i> by Donna M. Jackson</p> | <p>Did you know you can talk without opening your mouth? You do it everyday when you nod to say yes or wave your hand to say hello. <i>Every Body's Talking</i> explores various types of body language, both here in the U.S. and abroad. Find out what people are saying, even when they don't know they're saying it.</p> |
| <p><i>Flesh and Blood So Cheap: The Triangle Fire and Its Legacy</i> by Albert Marrin 1000L</p> | <p>Hard-working immigrants looking for a better life, poor working conditions, and greedy factory bosses – this is the story of the unimaginable disaster of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire of 1911.</p> |
| <p><i>Forensics: Uncover the Science and Technology of Crime Scene Investigation</i> by Carly Mooney, Samuel Carbaugh (Illustrator) 1060L</p> | <p><i>Forensics: Uncover the Science and Technology of Crime Scene Investigation</i> introduces students to the fascinating world of forensic science and shows them how to find clues, analyze evidence, and crack the case. Combining hands-on activities with forensic science, kids will have fun learning about the world of forensics, evidence collection, and crime lab analysis. Entertaining illustrations and fascinating sidebars illuminate the topic and bring it to life, reinforcing new vocabulary. <i>Forensics</i> meets common core state standards in language arts for reading informational text and literary nonfiction and is aligned with Next Generation Science Standards. Guided Reading Levels and Lexile measurements indicate grade level and text complexity.</p> <p>Winner 2013 Silver Moonbeam Children's Book Award Winner of a 2013 Society of School Librarians International Honor Book Award</p> |

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| <p><i>Freedom Rides: John Lewis and Jim Zwerg on the Front Lines of the Civil Rights Movement</i> by Ann Bausum</p> | <p>The 1960s saw courageous young people risking great personal danger as they participated in the freedom rides during the Civil Rights Movement.</p> |
| <p><i>Grace, Gold & Glory: My Leap of Faith</i> by Gabrielle Douglas</p> | <p>Gabby Douglas, the Olympic Gold Medalist who stole our hearts during the London summer games tells of her triumph, in the face of adversity. Dreams really do come true; this is the testament within <i>Grace, Gold, and Glory: My Leap of Faith</i>.</p> |
| <p><i>I am Scout: the biography of Harper Lee</i> by Charles J. Shields</p> | <p>She only wrote one book, but it is one of the most read! Read about the life that led up to <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>. From childhood days in Alabama to years struggling as a writer in New York City, discover what brought about the insight that speaks to continuing generations.</p> |
| <p><i>Left for Dead: A Young Man's Search for Justice for the USS Indianapolis</i> by Peter Nelson 1260L</p> | <p>It's an unlikely beginning to what became a momentous, history-changing history fair project. Eleven-year-old Hunter Scott was watching <i>Jaws</i> one day when he first heard about the World War II sinking of the USS Indianapolis. Intrigued, he investigated further, and discovered a shocking, heartbreaking story behind what should have been a tale of heroism and patriotism. Torpedoed by a Japanese submarine, the Indianapolis went down in minutes, taking more than 800 sailors with it. Several hundred survived, but only after spending days in the open sea with sharks diminishing their numbers hourly. This is only the beginning of the tragedy, however. In an effort to make an example of the ship's captain, and in order to deflect blame from itself, the U.S. Navy unfairly court-martialed the captain, painfully changing the lives of all the men involved. Basing much of his text on young Hunter Scott's research, author Pete Nelson does a fine job of presenting this story through the eyes of many of the survivors. Old and new photos allow readers to know many of the men of the ship, and personal accounts reveal the horrors of those days in the ocean--and later in the courtroom. A bittersweet ending will leave the reader pensive and deeply moved.--<i>Emilie Coulter</i></p> |
| <p><i>Lincoln Through the Lens: How Photography Revealed and Shaped an Extraordinary Life</i> by Martin W. Sandler 1210L</p> | <p>This is a photo-biography which shows how innovative and important media was, especially photography during the presidency and life of Lincoln. This is one of several books in Sandler's <i>Through the Lens</i> series.</p> |

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| <p><i>Math Trek: Adventures in the Math Zone</i> by Ivars Peterson 1060L</p> | <p>Chapters such as "Tilt-A-Whirl Madness" and "The Fractal Pond Race" take readers on an amusing and enlightening amusement park adventure through advanced concepts such as mathematical chaos, fractals and topology. The language, problems and examples are all accessible and age appropriate, and the glossary, recommended reading and web site link enhance this lively learning experience. A 2000 Parents' Choice® Recommended winner.</p> |
| <p><i>Outcasts United: The Story of a Refugee Soccer Team That Changed a Town</i> by Warren St. John 980L</p> | <p>Just a few miles from Atlanta, the city of Clarkston became a settlement for families of refugees from war-torn countries. Soccer coach Luma Mufleh formed the Fugees, a soccer team consisting of boys from various countries and backgrounds. This inspiring book explores the array of challenges the team faced on and off the field and how determination prevailed.</p> |
| <p><i>Phenomena: Secrets of the Senses</i> by Donna M. Jackson 1190L</p> | <p>Find facts, myths, and such hotly debated topics as psychic powers and animals' intuition. Get answers to questions like, "what do visually impaired people see?" and "can a sound have a color?"</p> |
| <p><i>Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science</i> by John Fleischman 1030L</p> | <p>Phineas Gage was truly a man with a hole in his head. Phineas, a railroad construction foreman, was blasting rock near Cavendish, Vermont, in 1848 when a thirteen-pound iron rod was shot through his brain. Miraculously, he survived to live another eleven years and become a textbook case in brain science. At the time, Phineas Gage seemed to completely recover from his accident. He could walk, talk, work, and travel, but he was changed. Gage "was no longer Gage," said his Vermont doctor, meaning that the old Phineas was dependable and well liked, and the new Phineas was crude and unpredictable. His case astonished doctors in his day and still fascinates doctors today. What happened and what didn't happen inside the brain of Phineas Gage will tell you a lot about how your brain works and how you act human.</p> |
| <p><i>Sugar Changed the World: A Story of Magic, Spice, Slavery, Freedom, and Science</i> by Marc Aronson & Marina Tamar Budhos 1130L</p> | <p>When this award-winning husband-and-wife team discovered that they each had sugar in their family history, they were inspired to trace the globe-spanning story of the sweet substance and to seek out the voices of those who led bitter sugar lives. The trail ran like a bright band from religious ceremonies in India to Europe's Middle Ages, then on to Columbus, who brought the first cane cuttings to the Americas. Sugar was the substance that drove the bloody slave trade and caused the loss of countless lives but it also planted the seeds of revolution that led to freedom in the American colonies, Haiti, and France. With songs, oral histories, maps, and over 80 archival illustrations, here is the story of how one product allows us to see the grand currents of world history in new ways. Time line, source notes, bibliography, index. A 2012 YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction Finalist</p> |

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| <p><i>Temple Grandin: How the Girl Who Loved Cows Embraced Autism and Changed the World</i> by Sy Montgomery and Temple Grandin</p> | <p>This biography explores the life and mind of Temple Grandin, a brilliant autistic woman who revolutionized the livestock industry.</p> |
| <p><i>The Boy on the Wooden Box: How the Impossible Became Possible...On Schindler's List</i> by Leon Leyson 1000L</p> | <p>This is a remarkable memoir of a family's survival of the Holocaust, thanks to Oskar Schindler's repeated interventions. It is told in the voice of Leon Leyson, the youngest member of Schindler's list, who offers his account of day-to-day existence in the factory, helping readers understand the Holocaust through the life of a young person who lived it.</p> |
| <p><i>The Hive Detectives: Chronicle of a Honey Bee Catastrophe</i> by Loree Griffin Burns NC1120L</p> | <p>In 2006, nearly 40 per cent of the honeybee population in the United States simply vanished. Bee scientists and beekeepers across the country have been working to understand "colony collapse disorder." Photographs and scientific journals help tell the story.</p> |
| <p><i>The Omnivore's Dilemma: The Secrets Behind What You Eat</i> (The Young Readers Edition) by Michael Pollan 930L</p> | <p>As an adult title, Michael Pollan's <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> became a nationwide bestseller and notched a place on the <i>New York Times</i> list of the five best nonfiction books of 2006. This young readers' edition widens the potential audience of this classic about the personal and global implications of our food choices. In addition to being reshaped for readers ages 9-12, <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma for Kids</i> contains new and updated material.</p> |
| <p><i>The Secret of the Yellow Death: A True Story of Medical Sleuthing</i> by Suzanne Jurmain 1010L</p> | <p>Fever, chills, headaches, vomiting blood, and liver failure – all symptoms of the deadly disease: yellow fever. In this story, follow Walter Reed and his team of doctors as they travel to Cuba in 1900 to run lab reports, use soldiers as test subjects, and experience inevitable challenges and triumphs as they try to unlock the secret of what once was an unsolved medical mystery.</p> |
| <p><i>The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain</i> by Peter Sis</p> | <p>"I was born at the beginning of it all, on the Red side—the Communist side—of the Iron Curtain." Through annotated illustrations, journals, maps, and dreamscapes, Peter Sís shows what life was like for a child who loved to draw, proudly wore the red scarf of a Young Pioneer, stood guard at the giant statue of Stalin, and believed whatever he was told to believe. But adolescence brought questions. Cracks began to appear in the Iron Curtain, and news from the West slowly filtered into the country. Sís learned about beat poetry, rock 'n' roll, blue jeans, and Coca-Cola. He let his hair grow long, secretly read banned books, and joined a rock band. Then came the Prague Spring of 1968, and for a teenager who wanted to see the world and</p> |

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| | <p>meet the Beatles, this was a magical time. It was short-lived, however, brought to a sudden and brutal end by the Soviet-led invasion. But this brief flowering had provided a glimpse of new possibilities—creativity could be discouraged but not easily killed...</p> |
| <p><i>They Broke the Law—You Be The Judge: True Cases of Teen Crime</i> by Thomas A. Jacobs</p> | <p>Teens often hear about other teens who get into trouble with the law. But they’re seldom asked what they think should happen next and why. A unique introduction to the juvenile justice system, <i>They Broke the Law—You Be the Judge: True Cases of Teen Crime</i> invites teens to preside over a variety of real-life cases. They meet Adam, who makes a threat in school; Erica, who assaults another student and uses marijuana; and more young people who commit crimes and are caught. Like a judge, readers learn each teen’s background, the relevant facts, and the sentencing options available. After deciding on a sentence, they find out what really happened—and where each offender is today. Along the way, readers learn Judge Jacobs’ concerns about each case, reflect on probing questions, and discover that they can’t jump to conclusions. Thought-provoking and eye-opening, this book is for all teens who want to know more about the juvenile justice system and the laws that pertain to them and their peers. Letters from and interviews with twenty-one children and teenagers who broke the law reveal what it is like to be arrested, attend legal proceedings, and be held accountable for one’s actions.</p> |
| <p><i>Through My Eyes: Ruby Bridges</i> by Ruby Bridges 860L</p> | <p>Ruby Bridges tells the moving story of her year in first grade at the all-white William Frantz Public School in New Orleans in 1960.</p> |
| <p><i>World Without Fish</i> by Mark Kurlansky 1230L</p> | <p>This book reveals an environmental problem that is not easily seen- the problem in the world’s oceans. Find out how climate, biology, economics, and fishing are endangering the world’s waters and what kids can do about it.</p> |
| <p><i>5,000 Miles to Freedom</i> by Judith Fradin and Dennis Fradin</p> | <p>What would it take for slaves to escape from slavery in the Deep South, 1,000 miles from freedom and then on to England during the period of the Fugitive Slave Act? For most slaves the thought of escape was unimaginable. But fear did not stop Ellen and William Craft from chasing freedom. An inspiring and riveting story of two amazing people stopping at nothing to fight for freedom and racial equality, this thrilling true tale chronicles Ellen and William Craft's lives from their flight from slavery in Georgia to their rise to world-wide fame as heroes of the Abolitionist movement. Illustrated with period artwork, newspaper clippings, and archival photographs, <i>5,000 Miles to Freedom</i> captures the unforgiving realities of slave life, the political hatred between North and South, and, above all, the extraordinary achievements of this remarkable couple.</p> |

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