2024 Texas Topaz
Nonfiction Reading List

The purpose of the Texas Topaz Reading List is to provide children, teens, and adults with recommended nonfiction titles that stimulate reading for pleasure and personal learning. It is intended for recreational reading and is not designed to support any particular curriculum. Due to the diversity in age range and topics, Texas librarians should consider titles on this list in accordance with their own local collection development policies.

(*) Denotes a unanimous recommendation by the Texas Topaz Committee.

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Titles Recommended for Kids & Teens

GRADES K-2


Butt or Face?: Can You Tell Which End You’re Looking At? by Kari Lavelle (Sourcebooks eXplore, an imprint of Scholastic Kids, 2023)

*Caves by Nell Cross Beckerman, illustrated by Kalen Chock (Orchard Books, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., 2022)

Champion Chompers, Super Stinkers and Other Poems by Extraordinary Animals by Linda Ashman, illustrated by Aparna Varma (Kids Can Press, 2023)

Darwin’s Super Pooping Worm Spectacular by Polly Owen, illustrated by Gwen Millward (Wide Eyed Edition, an imprint of The Quarto Group, 2023)

*Dogs: A History of our Best Friends by Lita Judge (Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Abrams, 2023)
*Glitter Everywhere!: Where It Came From, Where It's Found & Where It's Going* by Chris Barton, illustrated by Chaaya Prabhat (Charlesbridge, 2023)

*Home is Calling: The Journey of the Monarch Butterfly* by Katherine Pryor, illustrated by Ellie Peterson (Worthy Kids, 2023)

*How Do You Spell Unfair? MacNolia Cox and the National Spelling Bee* by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Frank Morrison (Candlewick Press, 2023)

*How to Make a Book (about My Dog)* by Chris Barton, illustrated by Sarah Horne (Millbrook Press, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, 2021)

*How to Promenade with a Python (And Not Get Eaten)* by Rachel Poliquin, illustrated by Kathryn Durst with Jeff Sayre (Tundra Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House Canada Young Readers, 2022)


*My Indigo World: A True Story of the Color Blue* by Rosa Chang (mindedition, an imprint of Astra Books for Young Readers, 2023)

*On the Corner of Chocolate Avenue* by Tziporah Cohen, illustrated by Steven Salerno (Clarion Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2022)

*Polar Bear* by Candace Fleming, illustrated by Eric Rohmann (Holiday House, 2022)


*The Beak Book* by Robin Page (Beach Lane Books, an imprint of Simon and Schuster Children’s Publishing Division, 2022)


*This is Tap: Savion Glover Finds His Funk* by Selene Castrovilla, illustrated by Laura Freeman (Holiday House, 2023)
When the Sky Glows by Nell Cross Beckerman, illustrated by David Litchfield (Beach Lane Books an imprint of Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing Division, 2022)

**GRADES 3-5**

*Contenders: Two Native Baseball Players, One World Series* by Traci Sorell, illustrated by Arigon Starr (Kokila, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2023)

*Extra Life: The Astonishing Story of How We Doubled Our Lifespan* by Steven Johnson (Viking, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2023)

*Flip! How the Frisbee Took Flight* by Margaret Muirhead, illustrated by Adam Gustavson (Charlesbridge, 2021)

*From Shore to Ocean Floor: The Human Journey to the Deep* by Gill Arbuthnott, illustrated by Christopher Nielsen (Big Picture Press, 2023)

*Hardcourt: Stories from 75 Years of the National Basketball Association* by Fred Bowen, illustrated by James E. Ransome (Margaret K. McElderry Books, an imprint of Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing Division, 2022)

*Holding Her Own: The Exceptional Life of Jackie Ormes* by Traci N. Todd, illustrated by Shannon Wright (Orchard Books, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., 2023)

*Just Jerry: How Drawing Shaped My Life* by Jerry Pinkney (Little, Brown and Company, 2023)

*Survival Scout: Lost in the Mountains* by Maxwell Eaton III (Roaring Brook Press, 2023)

*The Adventures of Dr. Sloth: Rebecca Cliffe and Her Quest to Protect Sloths* by Suzi Eszterhas, (Millbrook Press, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, Inc., 2022)

*The Astronaut's Guide to Leaving the Planet: Everything You Need to Know, from Training to Re-entry* by Terry Virts, illustrated by Andrés Lozano (Workman Publishing Company, 2023)

*The Little Spacecraft That Could: New Horizons' Amazing Journey to Pluto and Arrokoth* by Joyce Lapin, illustrated by Simona Ceccarelli (Union Square Kids, 2021)
There's No Ham in Hamburgers: Facts and Folklore About Our Favorite Foods by Kim Zachman, illustrated by Peter Donnelly (Running Press Kids, an imprint of Perseus Books, LLC, 2023)

*Whale Fall: Exploring an Ocean-Floor Ecosystem* by Melissa Stewart (Random House Studio, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, 2023)

**GRADES 6-8**

*A First Time For Everything* by Dan Santat (First Second, an imprint of Roaring Brook Press, 2023)

*Agent Most Wanted: The Never-Before-Told Story of the Most Dangerous Spy of World War II* by Sonia Purnell (Viking, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2022)

*A Long Time Coming: A Lyrical Biography of Race in America from Ona Judge to Barack Obama* by Ray Anthony Shepard, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie (Calkins Creek, an imprint of Astra Books for Young Readers, 2023)

Buzzkill: A Wild Wander Through the Weird and Threatened World of Bugs by Brenna Maloney, illustrated by Dave Mottram (Henry Holt and Company, 2022)


*Mexikid: A Graphic Memoir* by Pedro Martin (Dial Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Penguin Random House, 2023)

Race Against Death: The Greatest POW Rescue of World War II by Deborah Hopkinson (Scholastic Focus, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., 2023)

*Sunshine: How One Camp Taught Me About Life, Death, and Hope* by Jarrett J. Krosoczka (Graphix, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., 2023)


*The Monkey Trial: John Scopes and the Battle Over Teaching Evolution* by Anita Sanchez (Clarion Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2023)

**GRADES 9-12**

*Accountable: The True Story of a Racist Social Media Account and the Teenagers Whose Lives It Changed* by Dashka Slater (Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Group, LLC, 2023)

*A Face for Picasso: Coming of Age with Crouzon Syndrome* by Ariel Henley (Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Group, LLC, 2021)

*American Murderer: The Parasite that Haunted the South* by Gail Jarrow (Calkins Creek, an imprint of Astra Books for Young Readers, 2022)

*Braiding Sweetgrass for Young Adults: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* Robin Wall Kimmerer, adapted by Monique Gray Smith, illustrated by Nicole Neidhardt (Zest Books, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, Inc., 2022)

*Family Style: Memories of an American from Vietnam* by Thien Pham (First Second, an imprint of Roaring Brook Press, 2023)

*From a Whisper to a Rallying Cry: The Killing of Vincent Chin and the Trial That Galvanized the Asian American Movement* by Paula Yoo (Norton Young Readers, an imprint of W.W. Norton & Company, 2021)

*Money Out Loud: All the Financial Stuff No One Taught Us* by Berna Anat, illustrated by Monique Sterling (Quill Tree Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2023)

*Spearhead: An American Tank Gunner, His Enemy, and a Collision of Lives in World War II (adapted for young adults)* by Adam Makos (Delacorte Press, an imprint of Random House Children’s Books, 2022)
*Where to Start: A Survival Guide to Anxiety, Depression, and Other Mental Health Challenges* by Mental Health America, illustrated by Gemma Correll (Rocky Pond Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2023)

*Work with What You Got: A Memoir* by Zion Clark and James S. Hirsch (Candlewick Press, 2023)

### ADULT FOR YOUNG ADULT

*Now Let Me Fly: A Portrait of Eugene Bullard* by Ronald Wimberly, illustrated by Brahm Revel (First Second, 2023)


### Titles Recommended for Adults

(^) Denotes an enthusiastic recommendation for the audiobook format by the Texas Topaz Adult Sub-Committee.

*A Fever in the Heartland: The Ku Klux Klan's Plot to Take Over America, and the Woman Who Stopped Them* by Timothy Egan (Viking, An imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2023)

*All the Living and the Dead: From Embalmers to Executioners, an Exploration of the People Who Have Made Death Their Life’s Work* by Hayley Campbell (St. Martin’s Press, an imprint of St. Martin’s Publishing Group, 2022)

*Art of the Chicken: A Master Chef’s Recipes and Stories of the Humble Bird* by Jacques Pépin (Harvest, an imprint of William Morrow, 2022)

*Banana Ball: The Unbelievably True Story of the Savannah Bananas* by Jesse Cole (Dutton, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2023)

*Beaverland: How One Weird Rodent Made America* by Leila Philip (Twelve, an imprint of Grand Central Publishing, 2022)

*Brave Hearted: The Women of the American West* by Katie Hickman (Spiegel and Grau, 2022)

*Cobalt Red: How the Blood of the Congo Powers Our Lives* by Siddharth Kara (St. Martin’s Press, an imprint of St. Martin’s Publishing Group, 2023)

*Fatty Fatty Boom Boom: A Memoir of Food, Fat, and Family* by Rabia Chaudry (Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, an imprint of Workman Publishing Co., Inc., 2022)

*Friends, Lovers, and the Big Terrible Thing: A Memoir* by Matthew Perry (___, 2022)

*Go Back to Where You Came From: And Other Helpful Recommendations on How to Become an American* by Wajahat Ali (W.W. Norton & Company, 2022)


*How to Speak Whale: A Voyage into the Future of Animal Communication* by Tom Mustill (Grand Central Publishing, a division of Hachette Book Group, 2022)


*Hysterical: A Memoir* by Elissa Bassist (Hachette Books, 2022)

*Ice: From Mixed Drinks to Skating Rinks, a Cool History of a Hot Commodity* by Amy Brady (G.P. Putnam’s Sons, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2023)

*Life in Five Senses: How Exploring the Senses Got Me Out of My Head and into the World* by Gretchen Rubin (Crown, an imprint of Random House, 2023)

Now Let Me Fly: A Portrait of Eugene Bullard (Adult for YA nomination) by Ronald Wimberly and and Brahm Revel (First Second, 2023)

*Over My Dead Body: Unearthing the Hidden History of America's Cemeteries by Greg Melville (Abrams Press, an imprint of Abrams, 2022)

Ronan and the Endless Sea of Stars: A Graphic Memoir by Rick Louis (Abrams ComicArts, an imprint of Abrams, 2022)

*Rough Sleepers: Dr. Jim O’Connell’s Urgent Mission to Bring Healing to Homeless People by Tracy Kidder (Random House, an imprint and division of Penguin Random House LLC, 2023)

*Scenes from My Life: A Memoir by Michael K. Williams (Crown, an imprint of Random House, 2022)

Stay True: A Memoir by Hua Hsu (Doubleday, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2022)

Tell Me Everything: The Story of a Private Investigation by Erika Krouse (Flatiron Books, 2022)

*The Barbizon: The Hotel That Set Women Free by Paulina Bren (Simon & Schuster, 2021)


*^The Light We Carry: Overcoming in Uncertain Times by Michelle Obama (Crown, an imprint of Random House, 2022)

^Uncle of the Year: & Other Debatable Triumphs by Andrew Rannells (Crown, an imprint of Random House, 2023)


*Waco Rising: David Koresh, the FBI, and the Birth of America's Modern Militias by Kevin Cook (Henry Holt and Company, 2023)

*We Should Not Be Friends: The Story of a Friendship by Will Schwalbe (Alfred A. Knopf, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, 2023)

You Could Make This Place Beautiful: A Memoir by Maggie Smith (One Signal Publishers/Atria, an imprint of Simon & Schuster, 2023)