

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.

Titles Recommended for Kids & Teens

GRADES K-2

**Battle of the Butts: The Science Behind Animal Behinds* by Jocelyn Rish, illustrated by David Creighton-Pester (Running Press Kids, an imprint of Perseus Books, LLC, 2021)

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)

**Ice Cream Man: How Augustus Jackson Made a Sweet Treat Better*, by Glenda Armand and Kim Freeman illustrated by Keith Mallet (Crown Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, 2023)

My Indigo World: A True Story of the Color Blue by Rosa Chang (minedition, 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 Animal Toolkit: How Animals Use Tools by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page, illustrated by Steve Jenkins (Clarion Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2022)

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

The Fastest Girl on Earth! Meet Kitty O'Neil, Daredevil Driver! by Dean Robbins, illustrated by Elizabeth Baddeley (Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, 2021)

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)

Hope Wins: A Collection of Inspiring Stories for Young Readers, edited by Rose Brock (Philomel Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2023)

Inaugural Ballers: The True Story of the First US Women's Olympic Basketball Team by Andrew Maraniss (Viking, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 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)

Songs of America: Patriotism, Protest, and the Music that Made a Nation (Young Readers Edition) by Jon Meacham and Tim McGraw (Delacorte Press, an imprint of Random House Children's Books 2023)

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

**The Mona Lisa Vanishes: A Legendary Painter, a Shocking Heist, and the Birth of a Global Celebrity* by Nicholas Day, illustrated by Brett Helquist (Random House Studio, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, 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)

You: The Story : A Writer's Guide to Craft Through Memory by Ruta Sepetys (Viking, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 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)

**Atlas of the Heart: Mapping Meaningful Connection and the Language of Human Experience* by Brené Brown (Random House, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2021)

**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)

**Hijab Butch Blues: A Memoir* by Lamya H. (The Dial Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2023)

**^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)

How to Take Over the World: Practical Schemes and Scientific Solutions for the Aspiring Supervillain by Ryan North (Riverhead Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 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)

^My First Popsicle: An Anthology of Food and Feelings by Zosia Mamet (Penguin Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2022)

Now Let Me Fly: A Portrait of Eugene Bullard (Adult for YA nomination) by Ronald Wimberly 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 Colony: Faith and Blood in a Promised Land by Sally Denton (Liveright Publishing Corporation, a division of W.W. Norton & Company, 2022)

**The Forever Witness: How Genetic Genealogy Solved a Cold Case Double Murder* by Edward Humes (Dutton, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2022)

The Great Escape: A True Story of Forced Labor and Immigrant Dreams in America by Saket Soni (Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, an imprint of Workman Publishing Co., Inc., 2023)

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

**The Monster's Bones: The Discovery of T. Rex and How It Shook Our World* by David K. Randall (W.W. Norton & Company, 2022)

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

Unraveling: What I Learned About Life While Shearing Sheep, Dyeing Wool, and Making the World's Ugliest Sweater by Peggy Orenstein (Harper, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 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)