

2025 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

A Few Beautiful Minutes: Experiencing a Solar Eclipse by Kate Allen Fox, illustrated by Khoa Le (Little Brown and Company, an imprint of Hachette Book Group, 2023)

**Daughter of the Light-Footed People: The Story of the Indigenous Marathon Champion Lorena Ramirez* by Belen Medina, illustrated by Natalia Rojas Castro (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing Division, 2024)

I Was: The Stories of Animal Skulls by Katherine Hocker, illustrated by Natasha Donovan (Candlewick Press, 2024)

Log Life by Amy Hevron, (Beach Lane Books, an imprint of Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing Division, 2024)

Marcel's Masterpiece: How a Toilet Shaped the History of Art by Jeff Mack, illustrated by Jeff Mack (Henry Holt and Co., an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Group, LLC, 2022)

**Mushroom Rain* by Laura K Zimmerman, illustrated by Jamie Green (Sleeping Bear Press, 2022)

Nothing: John Cage and 4'33" by Nicholas Day, illustrated by Chris Raschka (Neal Porter Books, an imprint of Holiday House, 2024)

Odd Couples: A Guide to Unlikely Animal Pairs by Maria Birmingham, illustrated by Raz Latif (Owl Kids Books, 2023)

Sleepy: Surprising Ways Animals Snooze by Jennifer Ward, illustrated by Robin Page (Beach Lane Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division, 2024)

Yoshi, Sea Turtle Genius: A True Story About an Amazing Swimmer by Lynne Cox, illustrated by Richard Jones (Anne Schwartz, an imprint of Penguin Random House, 2023)

GRADES 3-5

And Yet You Shine: The Kohinoor Diamond, Colonization, and Resistance by Supriya Kelkar (Candlewick Press, 2024)

Dive!: The Story of Breathing Underwater by Chris Gall, illustrated by Chris Gall (Roaring Brook Press, a division of Holtzbrinck Publishing, 2024)

**Erno Rubik and his Magic Cube* by Kerry Aradhya, illustrated by Kara Kramer (Peachtree Publishing Company, 2024)

Gifts from Georgia's Garden by Lisa Robinson, illustrated by Hadley Hooper (Neal Porter Books, and imprint of Holiday House, 2024)

Jose Feeds the World: How a Famous Chef Feeds Millions of People in Need Around the World by David Unger, illustrated by Marta Alvarez Miguens (Duopress, an imprint of Sourcebooks, 2024)

Lucy!: How Lucille Ball Did it All by Amy Gugliemo, illustrated by Brigette Barrager (Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint of ABRAMS, 2024)

Making Sense of Dog Senses: How Our Furry Friends Experience the World by Stephanie Gibeault, illustrated by Raz Latif (Owl Kids Books, 2024)

**My Lost Freedom: A Japanese American World War II Story* by George Takei, illustrated by Michelle Lee (Crown Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Penguin Random House, 2024)

**Poetry Comics* by Grant Snider (Chronicle Books LLC, 2024)

**Small Shoes, Great Strides: How Three Brave Girls Opened Doors to School Equality* by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson, illustrated by Alex Bostic (Carolrhoda, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, Inc., 2023)

Sweet Justice: Georgia Gilmore and the Montgomery Bus Boycott by Mara Rockliff, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie (Random House Studio, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, 2022)

The Bees of Notre-Dame by Meghan P. Browne, illustrated by E.B. Goodale (Random House Studio, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, 2023)

The Bone Wars: The True Story of an Epic Battle to Find Dinosaur Fossils by Jane Kurtz, illustrated by Alexander Vidal (Beach Lane Books, an imprint of Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing Division, 2023)

The Fabulous Fannie Farmer: Kitchen Scientist and America's Cook by Emma Bland Smith, illustrated by Susan Reagan (Calkins Creek, an imprint of Astra Books for Young Readers, a division of Astra Publishing House, 2024)

**The Girl Who Figured it Out* by Minda Dentler, illustrated by Stephanie DeHennin (Sourcebooks eXplore, an imprint of Sourcebooks Kids, 2024)

**The Iguanodon's Horn: How Artists and Scientists Put a Dinosaur Back Together Again and Again and Again* by Sean Rubin (Clarion Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2024)

**Thomas Jefferson's Battle for Science: Bias, Truth, and a Mighty Moose!* by Beth Anderson, illustrated by Jeremy Holmes (Calkins Creek, an imprint of Astra Books for Young Readers, a division of Astra Publishing House, 2024)

What's Inside a Caterpillar Cocoon?: and Other Questions About Moths & Butterflies by Rachel Ignotofsky (Crown Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, 2023)

**Wings of an Eagle* by Billy Mills and Donna Jannell Bowman, illustrated by S.D. Nelson (Little, Brown and Company, an imprint of Hachette Book Group, Inc., 2024)

World of Rot: Learn All About the Wiggly, Slimy, Super-Cool Decomposers We Couldn't Live Without by Britt Crow-Miller, illustrated by Bruno Valasse (Storey Publishing, an imprint of Workman Publishing, a division of Hachette Book Group, Inc., 2024)

GRADES 6-8

Absurd Words: A Kids' Fun and Hilarious Vocabulary Builder for Future Word Nerds by Tara Lazar, illustrated by Michelle Mayhall (Sourcebooks eXplore, an imprint of Sourcebooks, 2022)

Attacked!: Pearl Harbor and the Day War Came to America by Marc Favreau (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Hachette Book Group, 2023)

Kid-Ventors: 35 Real Kids and Their Amazing Inventions by Kailei Pew, illustrated by Shannon Wright (A Feiwel and Friends Book, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Group, LLC, 2024)

Mountain of Fire: The Eruption and Survivors of Mount St. Helens, by Rebecca E.F. Barone (Henry Holt and Company, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Group, LLC, 2024)

**Puzzled: A Memoir About Growing Up with OCD* by Pan Cooke (Rocky Pond Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2024)

Total Garbage: A Messy Dive Into Trash, Waste, and Our World by Rebecca Donnelly, illustrated by John Hendrix (Henry Holt and Company, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Group, 2023)

**Uprooted: A Memoir About What Happens When Your Family Moves Back* by Ruth Chan (Roaring Brook Press, a division of Holtzbrinck Publishing Holdings Limited, 2024)

Where Are the Aliens?: The Search for Life Beyond Earth by Stacy McAnulty, illustrated by Nicole Miles (Little, Brown Books, an imprint of Hachette Book Group, Inc, 2023)

Who Got Game? Basketball: Amazing but True Stories! by Derrick Barnes, illustrated by Jez Tuya (Workman Publishing Co, Inc., a subsidiary of Hachette Book Group, Inc, 2023)

GRADES 9-12

83 Days in Mariupol: A War Diary by Don Brown (Clarion Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2023)

America Redux: Visual Stories From Our Dynamic History by Ariel Aberg-Riger (Balzer+Bray, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2023)

Disappearing Act: A True Story by Jiordan Castle (Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Group, LLC, 2023)

Homebody by Theo Parish (HarperAlley, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2024)

**Impossible Escape* by Steve Sheinkin (Roaring Brook Press, a division of Holtzbrinck Publishing Holdings Limited Partnership, 2023)

Loch Ness Uncovered: Media Misinformation, and the Greatest Monster Hoax of All Time by Rebecca Siegel (Astra Young Readers, an imprint of Astra Books for Young Readers, 2024)

Marked Man: Frank Serpico's Inside Battle Against Police Corruption by John Florio and Ouisie Sharpiro (Roaring Brook Press, a division of Holtzbrinck Publishing Holdings Limited Partnership, 2024)

Spirit Sleuths: How Magicians and Detectives Exposed the Ghost Hoaxes by Gail Jarrow (Calkins Creek, an imprint of Astra Books for Young Readers, 2024)

Stealing Little Moon: The Legacy of the American Indian Boarding Schools by Dan SaSuWeh Jones (Scholastic Focus, an imprint of Scholastic, Inc., 2024)

**The Enigma Girls: How Ten Teenagers Broke Ciphers, Kept Secrets, and Helped Win World War II* by Candace Fleming (Scholastic Focus, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., 2024)

Titles Recommended for Adults

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

**A Man of Two Faces* by Viet Thanh Nguyen (Grove Atlantic, 2023)

*^*A Walk in the Park: The True Story of a Spectacular Misadventure in the Grand Canyon* by Kevin Fedarko (Scribner, an imprint of Simon & Schuster, LLC, 2024)

All in Stride: A Journey in Running, Courage, and the Search for the American Dream by Johanna Garton (Rowman & Littlefield, an imprint of Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc., 2024)

**American Girls: One Woman's Journey into the Islamic State and Her Sister's Fight to Bring Her Home* by Jessica Roy (Scribner, an imprint of Simon and Schuster, Inc., 2024)

**Birdgirl: Looking to the Skies in Search of a Better Future* by Mya-Rose Craig (Celadon, a division of Macmillan Publishers, 2022)

**Chamber Divers: The Untold Story of the D-Day Scientists Who Changed Special Operations Forever* by Rachel Lance (Dutton, an imprint of Penguin Random House, LLC, 2024)

**Eyeliners: A Cultural History* by Zahra Hankir (Penguin Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2023)

^*Fear is Just a Word: A Missing Daughter, a Violent Cartel, and a Mother's Quest for Vengeance* by Azam Ahmed (Random House, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2024)

**Four Thousand Paws: Caring for the Dogs of the Iditarod: A Veterinarian's Story* by Lee Morgan (Liveright Publishing, an imprint of W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2024)

**Hidden Potential: The Science of Achieving Greater Things* by Adam Grant (Viking, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2023)

^His Majesty's Airship: The Life and Tragic Death of the World's Largest Flying Machine by S. C. Gwynne (Scribner, An imprint of Simon and Schuster LLC., 2024)

^How to be Perfect: The Correct Answer to Every Moral Question by Michael Schur (Simon and Schuster, 2022)

^How to Survive History: How to Outrun a Tyrannosaurus, Escape Pompeii, Get Off the Titanic, and Survive the Rest of History's Deadliest Catastrophes by Cody Cassidy (Penguin Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2023)

**Impossible City: Paris in the 21st Century* by Simon Kuper (Public Affairs, an imprint of Hachette Book Group, 2024)

**^It Starts with One: The Legend and Legacy of Linkin Park* by Jason Lipshutz (Hachette Books, an imprint of Hachette Book Group, 2024)

**Lost in Austin: The Evolution of an American City* by Alex Hannaford (Dey St., an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2024)

**^Making It So: A Memoir* by Patrick Stewart (Gallery Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster, 2023)

^Not Your China Doll: The Wild and Shimmering Life of Anna May Wong by Katie Gee Salisbury (Dutton, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, 2024)

^One in a Millennial: On Friendship, Feelings, Fangirls, and Fitting In by Kate Kennedy (St. Martin's Press, an imprint of St. Martin's Publishing Group, 2024)

**Red Dead's History: A Video Game, and Obsession, and America's Violent Past* by Tore C. Olsson (St. Martin's Press, an imprint of St. Martin's Publishing Group, 2024)

Rogues: True Stories of Grifters, Killers, Rebels, and Crooks by Patrick Radden Keefe (Doubleday, Penguin Random House LLC, 2022)

^Says Who? A Kinder, Funnier Usage Guide for Everyone that Cares About Words by Anne Curzan, Ph.D (Crown, an imprint of Crown Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, 2024)

Strong Female Character by Fern Brady (Harmony Books, an imprint of Random House, 2023)

The Age of Magical Overthinking: Notes on Modern Irrationality by Amanda Montell (First One Signal Publishers/ Atria, an imprint of Simon & Schuster, 2024)

**The Angel Makers: Arsenic, A Midwife, and Modern History's Most Astonishing Murder Ring* by Patti McCracken (William Morrow, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2023)

**The Einstein Effect: How the World's Favorite Genius Got into our Cars, our Bathrooms, and our Minds* by Benjamin Cohen (Sourcebooks, 2023)

**The King of Diamonds* by Rena Pederson (Pegasus Books, and imprint of Simon & Schuster, 2024)

**The Serial Killer's Apprentice: The True Story of How Houston's Deadliest Murderer Turned a Kid Into a Killing Machine* by Katherine Ramsland and Tracy Ullman (Crime Ink, an imprint of Penzler Publishers, 2024)

The Slow Road North: How I Found Peace in an Improbable Country by Rosie Schaap (Mariner Books, an imprint of HarperCollins, 2024)

**The Swans of Harlem: Five Black Ballerinas, Fifty Years of Sisterhood, and Their Reclamation of a Groundbreaking History* by Karen Valby (Pantheon Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House, 2024)

The Unclaimed: Abandonment and Hope in the City of Angels by Pamela Prickett, Stefan Timmermans (Crown, an imprint of Penguin Random House, 2024)

**The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny, and Murder* by David Grann (Doubleday, an imprint of Penguin Random House, 2023)

**Twelve Trees: The Deep Roots of our Future* by Daniel Lewis, Illustrated by Eric Nyquist (Avid Reader Press, an imprint of Simon & Schuster LLC, 2024)

**Walking With Sam: A Father, A Son, and 500 Miles Across Spain* by Andrew McCarthy (Grand Central Publishing, an imprint of Hachette Publishing, 2023)

You Never Know: A memoir by Tom Selleck (Dey Street Books, an imprint of William Morrow, 2024)

