

Selected Nonfiction for Young Readers

An Annotated Bibliography

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Prepared for

THE NONFICTION WRITER'S TOOLBOX

For Exploring History and Other Subjects

A Conference for Teachers of Grades 3-8 and School Librarians

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High quality nonfiction for young readers is more important than ever. With the increased attention on polarizing and alternative news, teaching students to be discerning about sources of information is vital to their civic education. The books below cover a range of subjects, from biographies of civil rights activists to the person who created the puppets for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. All of the authors used their own "toolbox" to shine a light on the struggles and accomplishments of people whose contributions and victories impact our lives today.

Below you will find a list of five books by each of the authors participating in today's conference. Beyond that, we have highlighted themes drawn from two of each author's books and provided recommendations of titles on similar topics by other authors to expand your lessons and suggest new avenues for your students to explore.

Author: Tonya Bolden

Emancipation Proclamation: Lincoln and the Dawn of Liberty

New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2013. 128 pages

A combination of narrative and visual storytelling, *Emancipation Proclamation* is an account of the landmark document told through quotations from central participants, archival photos, engravings, letters, posters, maps, and newspaper articles.

Grades 6-9

Capital Days: Michael Shiner's Journal and the Growth of Our Nation's Capital

New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2015. 96 pages

Michael Shiner was born into slavery in Maryland and spent most of his life in Washington D.C., where he was a laborer at the Washington Navy Yard for over 50 years, learned to read and write, and gained his freedom two decades before the Emancipation Proclamation. Shiner's journal offers a fascinating look at the everyday experience of an African-American working man who was an eyewitness to historic events from the War of 1812 through the Civil War and into the 1870s.

Grades 4-6

How to Build a Museum: Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture

New York: Penguin Young Readers Group, 2016. 64 pages

The plans to build a museum honoring African Americans' contribution to our country can be traced back to 1915, but the Smithsonian's 19th museum opened over one hundred years later in 2016. Bolden's book details the story of its creation, including the nation-wide effort to gather artifacts, pictures and documents for the NMAAHC's collections.

Grades 5-8

Pathfinders: The Journeys of 16 Extraordinary Black Souls

New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2017. 128 pages

This book presents brief biographies of a diverse group of African Americans, from the 1700s to the present day, and their impact on American history. They include magicians, a race car driver, and a female Civil War spy. One of Bolden's profiles is of Katherine Johnson, a mathematician whose calculations were integral to the success of many NASA space missions. Generously illustrated with period photographs, prints, posters and cartoons.

Grades 5-8

Facing Frederick: The Life of Frederick Douglass: A Monumental American Man

New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2018. 208 pages

A middle school biography of the escaped slave who became a well-known abolitionist. But here Bolden tells a richer story about a man whose image is more familiar than his accomplishments. (He was in fact the most photographed American of the 19th century.) Opening with the story of Douglass starting his own newspaper, *The North Star*, Bolden follows his trajectory as a supporter of women's suffrage, a diplomat, bank president, public servant, and world traveler.

Grades 6-8

For Further Exploration

African-American Biographies

Hand in Hand: Ten Black Men Who Changed America by Andrea Pinkney and illustrated by Brian Pinkney

New York: Hyperion Books, 2012. 243 pages

The ten historical figures in this collective biography lived in different eras and each had an impact on American society. Although many of the subjects' names may be familiar to students, Pinkney extends her portraits to include details on each man's childhood before highlighting his achievements.

For Younger Readers:

Bad News for Outlaws: The Remarkable Life of Bass Reeves, Deputy U.S. Marshal by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson and illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 2009. 40 pages

Bass Reeves was born into slavery in Arkansas, but escaped into Indian Territory where he lived until slavery was abolished in 1865. Reeves ultimately became the first African-American deputy U.S. Marshal. He made over 3,000 arrests and was respected for his excellent marksmanship.

Gordon Parks: How the Photographer Captured Black and White America by Carole Boston Weatherford and illustrated by Jamey Christoph

Park Ridge, Illinois: Albert Whitman & Company, 2015. 32 pages

Born in Kansas in 1912, Gordon Parks was the youngest of 15 children. Inspired by a magazine he saw while working as a waiter on a railroad dining car, he bought a camera for \$7.50 and

became a prominent chronicler of the everyday lives of African Americans. In 1948, he became the first African-American photographer to be hired by LIFE magazine.

When Marian Sang by Pam Munoz Ryan and illustrated by Brian Selznick

New York: Scholastic, 2002. 40 pages

After being denied the use of Constitution Hall because of her race, singer Marian Anderson performed on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial before 75,000 people on Easter Sunday, 1939. It was one of the defining cultural events of the 20th century and a milestone in civil rights history. She later became the first African-American soloist at the Metropolitan Opera.

Frederick Douglass/Freedom and Social Justice

Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass: The Story Behind an American Friendship by Russell Freedman

New York: Clarion Books, 2012. 128 pages

Both Lincoln and Douglass rose to prominence against enormous odds and they were equally committed to education as a path toward success. Freedman's dual biography traces how the ideals of both men impacted the nation.

Frederick Douglass: The Lion Who Wrote History by Walter Dean Myers and illustrated by Floyd Cooper

New York: Harper Collins, 2017. 40 pages

A solid and moving introduction to the well-known abolitionist and writer. Born into slavery in 1818, Douglass learned to read and used his education to build a new life for himself. "Once you learn to read," he said, "you will be forever free."

We've Got a Job: The 1963 Birmingham Children's March by Cynthia Levinson

Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2012. 176 pages

An account of the nearly 4,000 young people who marched in Birmingham to protest segregation. The youngest marcher was Audrey Hendricks, the subject of a picture book for younger students.

For Younger Readers:

Frederick's Journey: The Life of Frederick Douglass by Doreen Rappaport and illustrated by London Ladd

New York: Disney Publishing: Jump at the Sun, 2015. 48 pages

The life—and voice—of Frederick Douglass in Rappaport's signature "Big Words" style.

The Youngest Marcher: The Story of Audrey Faye Hendricks, a Young Civil Rights Activist by Cynthia Levinson and illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton

New York: Atheneum Books, 2017. 40 pages

After participating in a 1963 march in Birmingham, nine-year-old Audrey Hendricks spent seven days in jail with other student activists. This book provides an accessible way for even the

youngest reader or listener to understand the importance of young people in the Civil Rights Movement.

Author/Illustrator: Melissa Sweet

Some Writer! The Story of E.B. White

New York: HMH Books, 2016. 176 pages

Melissa Sweet was given special access to E.B. White's personal papers by his granddaughter. This unique biography fuses White's family photos, letters and excerpts from his published writing with Sweet's watercolors and collage. The book covers White's lifelong devotion to the written word, including his years at *The New Yorker*, *The Elements of Style*, and of course his three beloved children's novels.

Grades 3-8

Balloons over Broadway: The True Story of the Puppeteer of Macy's Parade

New York: HMH Books, 2011. 40 pages

The giant balloons floating over Fifth Avenue in New York City during the Macy's Parade are a staple of Thanksgiving Day celebrations. In this festive book, Sweet tells the story of Tony Sarg, the creator of the "upside-down puppets."

Grades K-3

The Right Word: Roget and His Thesaurus

Written by Jen Bryant and illustrated by Melissa Sweet

Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2014. 42 pages

A picture book biography of the British man who gave writers just "the right word." Peter Mark Roget began creating word lists as a child and continued to compile them as an adult while working as a physician, researcher, inventor and educator. Fortunately, his personal fascination with words and their connections evolved into a reference tool everyone can use.

Grades 2-5

Girls Think of Everything: Stories of Ingenious Inventions by Women

Written by Catherine Thimmesh and illustrated by Melissa Sweet

New York: HMH Books, 2002. 64 pages

A collective biography of women inventors who improved our lives with a wide variety of innovations including window wipers and chocolate chip cookies! This is a book to inspire young readers who may be dreaming of the next big thing.

Grades 3-6

Brave Girl: Clara and the Shirtwaist Makers' Strike of 1909

Written by Michelle Markel and illustrated by Melissa Sweet

New York: Balzer + Bray, 2013. 32 pages

A picture book biography of Clara Lemlich, who in the early 1900s led a strike for workers' rights. Lemlich, a Ukrainian immigrant who worked in a garment factory, inspired thousands of women to participate in "walkouts" demanding better working conditions.

For Further Exploration

Lives of Authors and Illustrators

The Journey That Saved Curious George by Louise Borden and illustrated by Allan Drummond

New York: HMH Books for Young Readers, 2005. 73 pages

The adventurous story of Margaret and H.A. Rey who, in 1940, fled their home in Paris when the Nazis invaded France. They escaped on bicycles with a manuscript, "The Adventures of Fifi," tucked in a bag along with Hans's pipe and some bread and cheese. Fifi, of course, was a "very curious little monkey" whose name would ultimately be changed to George!

Bad Boy: A Memoir by Walter Dean Myers

Amistad, 2001. 224 pages

The late Walter Dean Myers was a prolific author of books for children and young adults. *Bad Boy* is his story of growing up in Harlem during the 1940s and 1950s. Moving between anecdotes of his challenging childhood and young adulthood, Myers relates how he began constructing a life as a reader and a writer.

Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson

New York: Nancy Paulsen Books/Penguin, 2014. 336 pages

Woodson's memoir in verse focuses on the experiences and places that shaped her journey as a writer. *Brown Girl Dreaming* is a rewarding and memorable book.

For Younger Readers:

A Boy, A Mouse, and a Spider by Barbara Herkert and illustrated by Lauren Castillo

New York: Christy Ottaviano/Henry Holt, 2017. 40 pages

A picture book biography that captures the scenes and moments that made E.B. White the writer he became. The perfect book to enhance a child's first reading of *Charlotte's Web*.

Big Machines: The Story of Virginia Lee Burton by Sherri Dusky Rinker and illustrated by John Rocco

New York: HMH Books for Young Readers, 2017. 48 pages

An artistic tribute to the creator of the famous cable car, steam shovel, and snowplow. Rocco pays tribute to Burton's iconic characters in his colorful illustrations.

Child Labor/Workers' Rights

Kids on Strike! By Susan Campbell Bartoletti

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999. 208 pages

A detailed account of the strikes and other actions that led to the passage of child labor laws that made workplaces safer and limited the number of hours children could work.

Kids at Work: Lewis Hine and the Crusade Against Child Labor by Russell Freedman

New York: Clarion Books, 1994. 104 pages

Personal stories of American children who worked in horrid conditions during the 19th and early 20th century. The book details how young people became activists for a better work environment and features historical photographs by Lewis Hine.

For Younger Readers:

Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez by Kathleen Krull and illustrated by Yuyi Morales

San Diego: Harcourt, 2003. 48 pages

A picture book biography of the leader of the 1965 strike against grape growers and a founder of the National Farmworkers Association. Pair with *Brave Clara* to spark a discussion of American movements to protest poor working conditions.

Dolores Huerta: A Hero to Migrant Workers by Sarah Warren and illustrated by Robert Casilla

Singapore: Marshall Cavendish, 2012. 32 pages

Huerta was a co-founder of the National Farmworkers Association and played a leading role in the struggle to improve the lives of migrant workers.

Author: Steve Sheinkin

The Notorious Benedict Arnold: A True Story of Adventure, Heroism & Treachery

New York: Flash Point/Roaring Brook Press, 2010. 352 pages

When we describe someone as a "Benedict Arnold," the implication is that they are a traitor. But the truth, in Arnold's case, is both more complicated and more interesting. Sheinkin's fast-paced and lively biography tells the story of a daring but complex man who rose to prominence in the American army and ultimately plotted to turn over the fort at West Point to the British. Like all of Sheinkin's books, *The Notorious Benedict Arnold* reads like an adventure novel, full of larger than life characters and eyewitness accounts.

Grades 6-9

Bomb: The Race to Build--and Steal--the World's Most Dangerous Weapon

New York: Flash Point/Roaring Brook Press, 2012. 272 pages

In this complicated story made compelling and accessible, Sheinkin takes readers back to the beginning of the nuclear age. His account of the intense war-time competition to develop an

atomic bomb—or obtain the technology by subterfuge—reads like a fast-paced novel that includes a German chemist, spies, and the KGB.

Grades 5 and up

Most Dangerous: Daniel Ellsberg and the Secret History of the Vietnam War

New York: Roaring Brook Press, 2015. 384 pages

Daniel Ellsberg originally supported the Vietnam War, even describing himself as a “cold warrior.” But he became increasingly uncomfortable with lies about U.S. involvement in Vietnam and began leaking government documents that revealed facts about the conflict that had been hidden from the American public. Sheinkin’s book adds nuance and context as debates continue about WikiLeaks and Edward Snowden.

Grades 7 and up

Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team

New York: Roaring Book Press, 2017. 288 pages

Jim Thorpe is considered by many to be one of the greatest athletes of the 20th century. He played football for the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, a boarding school where young Native Americans were sent to “assimilate” into American culture. Among other things, students were given new names and new haircuts. Thorpe, together with the team’s coach Pop Warner, helped to turn Carlisle into a powerhouse that revolutionized the game of football.

Grades 6 and up

The Port Chicago 50: Disaster, Mutiny, and the Fight for Civil Rights

New York: Roaring Brook Press, 2014. 208 pages

During World War II, at the Port Chicago naval base in California, a group of African American sailors were responsible for loading explosives onto cargo ships. In July 1944, munitions detonated and 320 people died, many of whom were black. When hundreds more were assigned to continue that task a month after the explosion, 50 of them refused—sparking the Port Chicago Mutiny. Sheinkin’s book tells the full story of this important yet little-known chapter of civil rights history.

Grades 6 and up

For Further Exploration

Sports and Society

The Greatest: Muhammad Ali by Walter Dean Myers

Scholastic, 2001. 192 pages

A biography of the 1960 Olympic Gold Medalist who became the heavyweight boxing champion of the world and one of the most successful—and controversial—athletes of the 20th century. Myers gives an overview of the boxer’s life, both in and out of the ring, including his transformation from Cassius Clay to Muhammad Ali.

Promises to Keep: How Jackie Robinson Changed America by Sharon Robinson

New York: Scholastic, 2004. 64 pages

A close-up look at Robinson's influence on American culture written by his daughter. The book includes intimate family photographs and letters.

We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball by Kadir Nelson

New York, Disney Publishing, Jump at the Sun, 2008. 96 pages

Both a stunning book of paintings and a look back at the heyday of Negro League baseball, Nelson pays tribute to the players, owners, and managers of the Negro Leagues. The narrative is organized as a series of stories about well-known stars like Satchel Paige and less familiar players who were part of the League's rich history.

Becoming Kareem: Growing Up On and Off the Court by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Raymond Obstfeld

Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 2017. 256 pages

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was one of the greatest basketball players of all time, but he has also been a passionate activist for racial justice. A good book to pair with Walter Dean Myers' biography of Muhammad Ali.

For Younger Readers:

The United States v. Jackie Robinson by Sudipta Bardhan-Quallen and illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

Balzer + Bray, Harper Collins, 2018. 40 pages

Before Jackie Robinson became the first African-American player in Major League Baseball, he was a soldier during WWII. In the army, Robinson was subjected to segregation in every area of his life, from the barracks to the baseball team. Even after the 1944 ruling to end segregation on military posts and buses, Robinson was court martialed after sitting in the middle of an army bus.

The Kid From Diamond Street: The Extraordinary Story of Baseball Legend Edith Houghton by Audrey Vernick and illustrated by Steven Salerno

New York: Clarion Books, 2016. 40 pages

In 1922, when Edith Houghton was only ten years old, she was the star of the Philadelphia Bobbies, an all-female baseball team. "I guess I was born with a baseball in my hand," she said. Twenty years later, the Philadelphia Phillies hired Edith Houghton to be one of the first women to work as a full-time scout.

Wilma Unlimited: How Wilma Rudolph Became the World's Fastest Woman by Kathleen Krull and illustrated by David Diaz

San Diego: Harcourt, 1996. 44 pages

Rudolph faced seemingly insurmountable odds in her quest for athletic success, including a bout with polio during which she lost strength in her left leg. With the support and dedication of her mother, she became a track star and ultimately won three gold medals in the 1960 Olympic games.

The Vietnam War

Vietnam: A History of the War by Russell Freedman

New York: Holiday House, 2016. 160 pages

An overview of the Vietnam War by one of America's most reliable and respected writers of historical nonfiction.

Boots on the Ground by Elizabeth Partridge

New York: Viking, 2018. 224 pages

Through her focus on eight people whose lives were deeply impacted by the Vietnam War, Partridge connects individual stories with the larger conflict, helping readers to understand how the war touched every aspect of life.

10,000 Days of Thunder by Philip Caputo

New York: Atheneum, 2005. 128 pages

Caputo, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, has written some of the most respected chronicles of the Vietnam War. In this volume for young readers, he writes a more accessible account of the "most unpopular war in American history and the only war America ever lost."

For Younger Readers:

Maya Lin: Artist-Architect of Light and Lines by Jeanne Walker Harvey and illustrated by Dow Phumiruk

New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2017. 32 pages

Chinese-American architect Maya Lin was a college student when she won a competition to design a memorial to the soldiers who died in Vietnam.

Author: Tanya Lee Stone

Who Says Women Can't Be Computer Programmers?: The Story of Ada Lovelace

New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2018. 40 pages

Many young readers may be surprised to learn that the first computer programmer was a woman! Ada Lovelace, daughter of a poet, was a natural student of math and science. One of her closest friends, Charles Babbage, proposed an "Analytical Engine," which Lovelace imagined would one day be able to do more than mathematical calculations but also create pictures and even music. Her detailed notes on Babbage's device helped lay the groundwork for the development of modern computers a century later.

Grades 3-5

The House That Jane Built: A Story About Jane Addams

New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2015. 32 pages

Jane Addams, the first American woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize, was the founder of Hull House, America's first settlement house. Addams was an early 20th century "community organizer," a woman dedicated to improving people's lives, especially immigrants in

her native Chicago.
Grades 2-5

Girl Rising: Changing the World One Girl at a Time

New York: Wendy Lamb Books, Penguin Random House, 2017. 208 pages

Portraits of young women around the world who are advocating for the right to an education.

Stone highlights not only the risks they face, but also their determination to succeed. For middle school readers who are inspired by Malala's story, *Girl Rising* is the perfect next book.

Grades 8 and up

Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream

Somerville, Massachusetts: Candlewick Press, 2009. 144 pages

At the same time the Mercury 7 astronauts were training to pilot manned space flights, a group of women were also training for the same task through a privately funded program. One of them, Jerrie Cobb, had more hours in the air than John Glenn but was barred from becoming an astronaut because she was a woman. Stone tells the gripping story of systematic gender prejudice and the women who ultimately found their way into NASA's ranks of pilots and mission specialists.

Grades 4-8

Courage Has No Color – The True Story of the Triple Nickles: America's First Black Paratroopers

Somerville, Massachusetts: Candlewick Press, 2013. 160 pages

The story of the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion. Serving during WWII, the African-American soldiers did not see combat, but reflecting the racism of the era, served as smoke jumpers extinguishing Japanese-ignited forest fires in the Pacific Northwest.

Grades 4-8

For Further Exploration

Astronauts/Space Science

Sally Ride: A Photobiography of America's Pioneering Woman in Space by Tam O'Shaughnessy

New York: Roaring Brook Press, 2015. 160 pages

Sally Ride was the first American woman in space when she flew in the *Challenger* in 1983. Her story is the perfect book for budding space scientists and dreamers.

Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed Apollo 11 on the Moon by Catherine Thimmesh

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. 80 pages

The astronauts were the public face of the Apollo program, but it took a huge number of dedicated people with different jobs to make "lift-off" possible.

For Younger Readers:

Mae Among the Stars by Roda Ahmed and illustrated by Stasia Burrington

New York: Harper Collins, 2018. 40 pages

A star-filled picture book biography of the first African-American woman to travel in space.

Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race by Margot Lee Shetterly and illustrated by Laura Freeman

New York: Harper Collins, 2018. 40 pages

Before computers were able to perform complex mathematical computations, people who were whizzes at math had to do the work. In 1958, it was a group of four African American women who contributed to NASA's early space exploration program.

Strong and Resourceful Women

Lives of Extraordinary Women: Rulers, Rebels (and What the Neighbors Thought) by

Kathleen Krull and illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt

San Diego: Harcourt, 2000. 96 pages

Part of a series of collective biographies of extraordinary people's lives and idiosyncrasies. Each chapter opens with a caricature and a short summary of the subject's accomplishments along with fun facts. For example, the chapter about Cleopatra reports that she wore "so many pearl necklaces that it was hard for her to breathe."

Women in Science: 50 Fearless Pioneers Who Changed the World by Rachel Ignotofsky

Emeryville, California: Ten Speed Press, 2016. 128 pages

Profiles of women from the fields of science, engineering, computer science, and math. The beautiful illustrations enhance this irresistible book for young explorers.

For Younger Readers:

Malala: Activist for Girls' Education by Raphaëlle Frier and illustrated by Aurelia Fronty

Watertown, Massachusetts: Charlesbridge, 2017. 48 pages

A vividly illustrated picture book biography of Malala Yousafzai that depicts her fight for girls' right to an education in her native Pakistan and around the world.

The World Is Not a Rectangle: A Portrait of Architect Zaha Hadid by Jeanette Winter

San Diego: Beach Lane Books, 2017. 56 pages

Zaha Hadid is not a familiar name to most children, but her story deserves a wider audience. Hadid grew up in Baghdad with a dream to design cities. She became an influential architect whose buildings reflect her love of nature.

Pairing Fiction With Nonfiction

Over the past few years, there has been an explosion of middle grade novels for kids who want to learn more about social justice and explore topics that help shape our worldview. Integrating novels and nonfiction books expands students' thinking and strengthens their capacity for empathy. The books listed below complement the nonfiction books on this list and extend opportunities for learning:

Space Science

Finding Wonders: Three Girls Who Changed Science by Jeannine Atkins

Historical fiction in verse, based on the lives of three young girls who grew up to make important contributions to science—including Maria Mitchell, who became one of America's leading astronomers in the 19th century.

Sports and Society

A Long Pitch Home by Natalie Dias Lorenzi

Ten-year-old Bilal moves from Pakistan to Virginia where he is forced to make many cultural adjustments, including trading in his love of cricket for baseball. A good choice for using sports to introduce discussions about assimilation.

The Hero Two Doors Down by Sharon Robinson

In 1948, Jackie Robinson and his family moved into a Jewish neighborhood in Brooklyn where eight-year-old Stephen Satlow lived with family. This story, based on Sharon Robinson's memories, recalls the friendship between the first African American to play Major League baseball and a young fan.

Child Labor/Workers' Rights

Bread and Roses, Too by Katherine Paterson

Historical fiction based on the 1912 Bread and Roses strike in the mills of Lawrence, Massachusetts. A compelling novel that will spark interest in the working conditions immigrants faced in the early 20th century.

Counting on Grace by Elizabeth Winthrop

More demanding, but equally compelling as Paterson's novel, *Counting on Grace* was inspired by a 1910 Lewis Hines photograph of a child working at a Vermont cotton mill. A heartbreaking and rewarding novel.

Lives of Authors

Kitty and Mr. Kipling: Neighbors in Vermont by Lenore Blegvad

Rudyard Kipling wrote the beloved stories that make up *The Jungle Book* while he lived in a small town in Vermont in the 1890s. Blegvad's novel introduces a fictional young girl named Kitty who befriends Mr. Kipling and learns about his complicated family.

Tru & Nelle by G. Neri

Even children who are not familiar with the names Truman Capote and Harper Lee, will enjoy this story based on the writers' real childhood friendship, which is also a lovely portrayal of southern life in the 1930s. Neri's novel shows two budding writers collecting stories and memories for their future work.

Freedom/Social Justice

The Watsons Go To Birmingham - 1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis

Ten-year-old Ken, along with his older brother Byron and younger sister Joetta, travel with their parents from Michigan to Alabama—with the hope that time spent with the children's strict grandmother will bring some discipline to Byron's life. They are in Birmingham when a bomb explodes at the 16th Street Baptist Church.

Betty Before X by Ilyasah Shabazz with Rene Watson

A portrayal of the childhood of the girl who grew up to be Dr. Betty Shabazz, the civil rights advocate and wife of Malcolm X. The novel's emphasis on how the seeds of Dr. Shabazz's commitment to racial justice were planted and nurtured is especially inspiring.

Ghost Boys by Jewell Parker Rhodes

A new novel by the author of *Ninth Ward* and *Towers Falling*. In her story, a young black boy is shot and killed by a white police officer who mistakes a toy gun for the real thing, allowing Rhodes to address the timely subjects of racial injustice and implicit bias.

One Crazy Summer by Rita Williams-Garcia

The first book in the modern classic trilogy about three sisters growing up against the backdrop of the tumultuous late 1960s. In the opening installment, eleven-year-old Delphine and her two younger sisters move from New York to Oakland where their mother sends the girls to a camp run by the Black Panthers.

Vietnam War

Inside Out and Back Again by Thanhha Lai

Based on the author's own childhood, this is a coming-of-age story told in verse. The novel centers on a girl who grows up in Vietnam, but after the fall of Saigon she and her family are forced to leave their home and start a new life as immigrants in Alabama.