NEH Nonfiction Booklist

For fifty years, the National Endowment for the Humanities has supported achievements in the humanities. Our grants have helped to decipher the lost journals of explorers, uncover hidden treasures in Egypt, and document adventures in the Wild West on film. As part of our fiftieth anniversary, we are also celebrating the work we've done for children, such as Youth Grants, Summer Seminars and Institutes to train teachers, and a perennial favorite: our Summertime Favorites reading list.

We recently took another look at the list and realized that very few of the books qualified as informational texts. In order to fulfill the need for high-quality, humanities-oriented children's nonfiction, we scoured nonfiction awards lists and crowdsourced recommendations. After extensive internal review and consultation with a panel of respected education and library science experts, we put together a list of books for five different age groups, including works written in a variety of styles that address the wide range of projects NEH has funded over the last half century.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE Humanities FIFTY YEARS

For Young Readers

Special thanks to our education and library science advisors: Elizabeth Bush (Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois), James Grossman (American Historical Association), Michelle Martin (College of Information and Communications, University of South Carolina), Carmen Martinez (Oakland Public Library, retired), Kate McDowell (Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois), Thom McHugh (Carroll County Public Schools), and Aimee Strittmatter (American Library Association).

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National Endowment for the Humanities

The National Endowment for the Humanities is an independent federal agency created in 1965. It is one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United States.

{NONFICTION Favorites}

{ Ages 5-8 }

A LIFE LIKE MINE: HOW CHILDREN LIVE AROUND THE WORLD
UNICEF

ARTIST IN OVERALLS: THE LIFE OF GRANT WOOD
John Duggleby

BALLET FOR MARTHA: MAKING APPALACHIAN SPRING
Jan Greenberg & Sandra Jordan

BALLOONS OVER BROADWAY: THE TRUE STORY OF THE PUPPETEER OF MACY'S PARADE
Melissa Sweet

THE CAMPING TRIP THAT CHANGED AMERICA
Barb Rosenstock

DAVE THE POTTER: ARTIST, POET, SLAVE
Laban Carrick Hill

ELEANOR
Barbara Cooney

FAMILY PICTURES/CUADROS DE FAMILIA
Carmen Lomas Garza

FIFTY CENTS AND A DREAM: YOUNG BOOKER T. WASHINGTON
Jabari Asim

FOUNDING MOTHERS
Cokie Roberts

FRIDA
Jonah Winter

FROM THE GOOD MOUNTAIN: HOW GUTENBERG CHANGED THE WORLD
James Rumford

GEORGE DID IT
Suzanne Tripp Jurmain

HOOP GENIUS: HOW A DESPERATE TEACHER AND A ROWDY GYM CLASS INVENTED BASKETBALL
John Coy

THE HOUSE THAT GEORGE BUILT
Suzanne Slade

HOW THE SPHINX GOT TO THE MUSEUM
Jessie Hartland

IN THE BAG!: MARGARET KNIGHT WRAPS IT UP
Monica Kulling

JOHN MUIR: AMERICA'S FIRST ENVIRONMENTALIST
Kathryn Lasky

JOSÉ! BORN TO DANCE: THE STORY OF JOSÉ LIMÓN
Susanna Reich

LIGHTSHIP
Brian Floca

THE MAN WHO WALKED BETWEEN THE TOWERS
Mordicai Gerstein

MARTIN'S BIG WORDS: THE LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
Doreen Rappaport

MOSES: WHEN HARRIET TUBMAN LED HER PEOPLE TO FREEDOM
Carole Boston Weatherford

MY HANDS SING THE BLUES: ROMARE BEARDEN'S CHILDHOOD JOURNEY
Jeanne Walker Harvey

PASSAGE TO FREEDOM: THE SUGIHARA STORY
Ken Mochizuki

PIRATES: ROBBERS OF THE HIGH SEAS
Gail Gibbons

ROSA'S BUS: THE RIDE TO CIVIL RIGHTS
Jo S. Kittinger

THE SECRET WORLD OF WALTER ANDERSON
Hester Bass

SEQUOYAH: THE CHEROKEE MAN WHO GAVE HIS PEOPLE WRITING
James Rumford

SIDE BY SIDE: THE STORY OF DOLORES HUERTA AND CESAR CHAVEZ
Monica Brown

SOAR, ELINOR!
Tami Lewis Brown

A SPLASH OF RED: THE LIFE AND ART OF HORACE PIPPIN
Jen Bryant

STARRY MESSENGER: A BOOK DEPICTING THE LIFE OF A FAMOUS SCIENTIST, MATHEMATICIAN, ASTRONOMER, PHILOSOPHER, PHYSICIST: GALILEO GALILEI
Peter Sís

TO FLY: THE STORY OF THE WRIGHT BROTHERS
Wendie Old

WE THE KIDS: THE PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES
David Catrow

WHEN MARIAN SANG: THE TRUE RECITAL OF MARIAN ANDERSON, THE VOICE OF A CENTURY
Pam Munoz Ryan

WHEN THUNDER COMES: POEMS FOR CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS
J. Patrick Lewis

THE WORST OF FRIENDS: THOMAS JEFFERSON, JOHN ADAMS AND THE TRUE STORY OF AN AMERICAN FEUD
Suzanne Tripp Jurmain

{ Ages 7-10 }

ACTION JACKSON
Jan Greenberg & Sandra Jordan

AND THEN WHAT HAPPENED, PAUL REVERE?
Jean Fritz

BAD NEWS FOR OUTLAWS: THE REMARKABLE LIFE OF BASS REEVES, DEPUTY U.S. MARSHALL
Vaunda Micheaux Nelson

ELEANOR, QUIET NO MORE: THE LIFE OF ELEANOR ROOSEVELT
Doreen Rappaport

ELECTRIC BEN: THE AMAZING LIFE AND TIMES OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
Robert Byrd

THE EXTRAORDINARY MARK TWAIN (ACCORDING TO SUSY)
Barbara Kerley

FLIGHT: THE JOURNEY OF CHARLES LINDBERGH
Robert Burleigh

THE GRAND MOSQUE OF PARIS: A STORY OF HOW MUSLIMS RESCUED JEWS DURING THE HOLOCAUST
Karen Gray Ruelle & Deborah Durland Desaix

HARRIET TUBMAN: CONDUCTOR ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD
Ann Petry

HARVESTING HOPE: THE STORY OF CESAR CHAVEZ
Kathleen Krull

THE HOUSE BABA BUILT: AN ARTIST'S CHILDHOOD IN CHINA
Ed Young

KATE SHELLEY AND THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS
Margaret K. Wetterer

NIGHT FLIGHT: AMELIA EARHART CROSSES THE ATLANTIC
Robert Burleigh

THE POPPY LADY: MOLINA BELLE MICHAEL AND HER TRIBUTE TO VETERANS
Barbara Elizabeth Walsh

PYRAMID
David Macaulay

SIT-IN: HOW FOUR FRIENDS STOOD UP BY SITTING DOWN
Andrea Davis Pinckney

SNOWFLAKE BENTLEY
Jacqueline Briggs Martin

TEAMMATES
Peter Golenbock

WALT WHITMAN: WORDS FOR AMERICA
Barbara Kerley

WAR BOY: A COUNTRY CHILDHOOD
Michael Foreman

WHAT TO DO ABOUT ALICE?: HOW ALICE ROOSEVELT BROKE THE RULES, CHARMED THE WORLD, AND DROVE HER FATHER TEDDY CRAZY!
Barbara Kerley

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE AND THE GLOBE
Aliki

WILMA UNLIMITED: HOW WILMA RUDOLPH BECAME THE WORLD'S FASTEST WOMAN
Kathleen Krull

{ Ages 9-13 }

14 COWS FOR AMERICA
Carmen Agra Deedy

AMELIA LOST: THE LIFE AND DISAPPEARANCE OF AMELIA EARHART
Candace Fleming

BLACK ELK'S VISION: A LAKOTA STORY
S. D. Nelson

BLOODY TIMES: THE FUNERAL OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE MANHUNT FOR JEFFERSON DAVIS
James Swanson

BODIES FROM THE ICE: MELTING GLACIERS AND THE RECOVERY OF THE PAST
James Deem

BROOKLYN BRIDGE
Lynn Curlee

BUFFALO HUNT
Russell Freedman

CANDY BOMBER: THE STORY OF THE BERLIN AIRLIFT'S "CHOCOLATE PILOT"
Michael O. Tunnell

CARVER: A LIFE IN POEMS
Marilyn Nelson

CASTLE
David Macaulay

CHILDREN OF THE WILD WEST
Russell Freedman

THE CHILDREN WE REMEMBER
Chana Byers Abells

CHUCK CLOSE: UP CLOSE
Jan Greenberg & Sandra Jordan

CLAUDETTE COLVIN: TWICE TOWARD JUSTICE
Phillip Hoose

DRAWING FROM MEMORY
Allen Say

THE DUEL: THE PARALLEL LIVES OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON & AARON BURR
Judith St. George

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT: A LIFE OF DISCOVERY
Russell Freedman

THE FAIRY RING: OR, ELSIE AND FRANCES FOOL THE WORLD
Mary Losure

FOSSIL FEUD: THE RIVALRY OF THE FIRST AMERICAN DINOSAUR HUNTERS
Thom Holmes

FREEDOM RIDERS: JOHN LEWIS AND JIM ZWERG ON THE FRONT LINES OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT
Ann Bausum

FREEDOM WALKERS: THE STORY OF THE MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT
Russell Freedman

THE GREAT MOLASSES FLOOD: BOSTON, 1919
Deborah Kops

HEART AND SOUL: THE STORY OF AMERICA AND AFRICAN AMERICANS
Kadir Nelson

HITLER YOUTH: GROWING UP IN HITLER'S SHADOW
Susan Campbell Bartoletti

HORRIBLE HISTORIES SERIES
Peter Hepplewhite, Terry Deary

IN DEFENSE OF LIBERTY: THE STORY OF AMERICA'S BILL OF RIGHTS
Russell Freedman

IT JES' HAPPENED: WHEN BILL TRAYLOR STARTED TO DRAW
Don Tate

THE JOURNEY THAT SAVED CURIOUS GEORGE: THE TRUE WARTIME ESCAPE OF MARGRET AND H. A. REY
Louise Borden

KENNEDY THROUGH THE LENS: HOW PHOTOGRAPHY AND TELEVISION REVEALED AND SHAPED AN EXTRAORDINARY LEADER
Martin W. Sandler

KIDS AT WORK: LEWIS HINE AND THE CRUSADE AGAINST CHILD LABOR
Russell Freedman

LAFAYETTE AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
Russell Freedman

LEONARDO DA VINCI
Diane Stanley

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF CRAZY HORSE
Russell Freedman

LINCOLN: A PHOTOBIOGRAPHY
Russell Freedman

LINCOLN SHOT: A PRESIDENT'S LIFE REMEMBERED
Barry Denenberg

LOOKING FOR LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE
Ellen Jackson

LOST STAR: THE STORY OF AMELIA EARHART
Patricia Lauber

THE MANY RIDES OF PAUL REVERE
James Cross Giblin

MARCHING FOR FREEDOM: WALK TOGETHER, CHILDREN, AND DON'T YOU GROW WEARY
Elizabeth Partridge

MORE ABOUT BOY: ROALD DAHL'S TALES FROM CHILDHOOD
Roald Dahl

NOAH WEBSTER: WEAVER OF WORDS
Pegi Deitz Shea

PHOTO BY BRADY: A PICTURE OF THE CIVIL WAR
Jennifer Armstrong

RED BIRD SINGS: THE STORY OF ZITKALA-ŠA—NATIVE AMERICAN AUTHOR, MUSICIAN, AND ACTIVIST
Gina Capaldi & Q. L. Pearce

SMALL WORLDS: MAPS AND MAPMAKING
Karen Romano Young

SPIES OF MISSISSIPPI: THE TRUE STORY OF THE SPY NETWORK THAT TRIED TO DESTROY THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT
Rick Bowers

SURVIVING HITLER: A BOY IN THE NAZI DEATH CAMPS
Andrea Warren

SWEETHEARTS OF RHYTHM: THE STORY OF THE GREATEST ALL-GIRL SWING BAND IN THE WORLD
Marilyn Nelson

TEREZIN: VOICES FROM THE HOLOCAUST
Ruth Thomson

THROUGH MY EYES
Ruby Bridges

TITANIC: VOICES FROM THE DISASTER
Deborah Hopkinson

VINCENT VAN GOGH
Jan Greenberg & Sandra Jordan

THE VOICE THAT CHALLENGED A NATION: MARIAN ANDERSON AND THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS
Russell Freedman

THE WALL: GROWING UP BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN
Peter Sís

THE WAR TO END ALL WARS: WORLD WAR I
Russell Freedman

WE ARE THE SHIP: THE STORY OF NEGRO LEAGUE BASEBALL
Kadir Nelson

WE WERE THERE, TOO!: YOUNG PEOPLE IN U.S. HISTORY
Phillip Hoose

WIDENESS AND WONDER: THE LIFE AND ART OF GEORGIA O'KEEFFE
Susan Goldman Rubin

THE WRIGHT BROTHERS: HOW THEY INVENTED THE AIRPLANE
Russell Freedman

THE YEAR OF GOODBYES: A TRUE STORY OF FRIENDSHIP, FAMILY, AND FAREWELLS
Debbie Levy

{ Ages 11-15 }

AN AMERICAN PLAGUE: THE TRUE AND TERRIFYING STORY OF THE YELLOW FEVER EPIDEMIC OF 1793
Jim Murphy

AUSCHWITZ: VOICES FROM THE DEATH CAMP
James M. Deem

BIRMINGHAM SUNDAY
Larry Dane Brimner

BLACK & WHITE: THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN REVEREND FRED L. SHUTTLESWORTH AND EUGENE "BULL" CONNOR
Larry Dane Brimner

BLACK POTATOES: THE STORY OF THE GREAT IRISH FAMINE, 1845–1850
Susan Campbell Bartoletti

BOMB: THE RACE TO BUILD—AND STEAL—THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS WEAPON
Steve Sheinkin

BURMA CHRONICLES
Guy Delisle

CHARLES AND EMMA: THE DARWINS' LEAP OF FAITH
Deborah Heiligman

CHASING LINCOLN'S KILLER
James L. Swanson

CHILDREN OF THE DUST BOWL: THE TRUE STORY OF THE SCHOOL AT WEEDPATCH CAMP
Jerry Stanley

THE CIRCUIT: STORIES FROM THE LIFE OF A MIGRANT CHILD
Francisco Jiménez

CLARA SCHUMANN: PIANO VIRTUOSO
Susanna Reich

E. E. CUMMINGS: A POET'S LIFE
Catherine Reef

EXTRAORDINARY EXPLORERS AND ADVENTURERS
Judy Alter

FACING THE LION: GROWING UP MAASAI ON THE AFRICAN SAVANNA
Joseph Lemasolai Lekuton

THE FAMILY OF MAN
Edward Steichen

THE FORBIDDEN SCHOOLHOUSE: THE TRUE AND DRAMATIC STORY OF PRUDENCE CRANDALL AND HER STUDENTS
Suzanne Jurmain

GEORGE WASHINGTON, SPYMASTER
Thomas B. Allen

HARRIET TUBMAN, SECRET AGENT
Thomas B. Allen

IF STONES COULD SPEAK: UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF STONEHENGE
Mark Aronson

JANE AUSTEN: A LIFE REVEALED
Catherine Reef

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ADOLF HITLER
James Cross Giblin

THE LONGITUDE PRIZE
Joan Dash

MARCH: BOOK ONE
John Lewis, Andrew Aydin & Nate Powell

MAUS I & II: A SURVIVOR'S TALE
Art Spiegelman

MISTER LINCOLN'S HIGH-TECH WAR
Thomas B. Allen & Roger MacBride Allen

THE NOTORIOUS BENEDICT ARNOLD: A TRUE STORY OF ADVENTURE, HEROISM, AND TREACHERY
Steve Sheinkin

PAINTING THE WILD FRONTIER: THE ART AND ADVENTURES OF GEORGE CATLIN
Susanna Reich

THE PORT CHICAGO 50: DISASTER, MUTINY, AND THE FIGHT FOR CIVIL RIGHTS
Steve Sheinkin

THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN SHOT: THE ASSASSINATION OF JOHN F. KENNEDY
James L. Swanson

RECONSTRUCTION AND THE AFTERMATH OF THE CIVIL WAR
Lisa Colozza Cocca

THE SECRET OF THE YELLOW DEATH
Suzanne Jurmain

SECRETS OF A CIVIL WAR SUBMARINE: SOLVING THE MYSTERIES OF THE *H. L. HUNLEY*
Sally M. Walker

SHIPWRECK AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD: THE EXTRAORDINARY TRUE STORY OF SHACKLETON AND THE *ENDURANCE*
Jennifer Armstrong

SIR WALTER RALEGH AND THE QUEST FOR EL DORADO
Marc Aronson

SIX DAYS IN OCTOBER: THE STOCK MARKET CRASH OF 1929
Karen Blumenthal

THEY CALLED THEMSELVES THE KKK: THE BIRTH OF AN AMERICAN TERRORIST GROUP
Susan Campbell Bartoletti

TRUCE: THE DAY SOLDIERS STOPPED FIGHTING
Jim Murphy

WARRIORS DON'T CRY: THE SEARING MEMOIR OF THE BATTLE TO INTEGRATE LITTLE ROCK'S CENTRAL HIGH
Melba Pattillo Beals

WRITTEN IN BONE: BURIED LIVES OF JAMESTOWN AND COLONIAL MARYLAND
Sally M. Walker

{ Ages 14-17 }

1968
Michael T. Kaufman

ANNE FRANK: THE DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL
Anne Frank

ASSAULT IN NORWAY: SABOTAGING THE NAZI NUCLEAR PROGRAM
Thomas Gallagher

BAD BOY: A MEMOIR
Walter Dean Myers

THE DAY THE WORLD EXPLODED: THE EARTHSHAKING CATASTROPHE AT KRAKATOA
Simon Winchester

ELIZABETH AND HAZEL: TWO WOMEN OF LITTLE ROCK
David Margolick

FLESH AND BLOOD SO CHEAP: THE TRIANGLE DISASTER AND ITS LEGACY
Albert Marrin

GOD GREW TIRED OF US
John Bul Dau with Michael S. Sweeney

GUEST OF HONOR: BOOKER T. WASHINGTON, THEODORE ROOSEVELT, AND THE WHITE HOUSE DINNER THAT SHOCKED A NATION
Deborah Davis

HOLE IN MY LIFE
Jack Gantos

THE IMMORTAL LIFE OF HENRIETTA LACKS
Rebecca Skloot

IN COLD BLOOD
Truman Capote

INTO THIN AIR
Jon Krakauer

KAFFIR BOY: THE TRUE STORY OF A BLACK YOUTH'S COMING OF AGE IN APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA
Mark Mathabane

LIFE IN A JAR
Jack Mayer

LIPSTICK JIHAD: A MEMOIR OF GROWING UP IRANIAN IN AMERICA AND AMERICAN IN IRAN
Azadeh Moaveni

MALCOLM X: A GRAPHIC BIOGRAPHY
Andrew Helfer & Randy DuBurke

NELSON MANDELA: THE AUTHORIZED COMIC BOOK
Umlando Wezithombe/The Nelson Mandela Foundation

THE OTHER WES MOORE: ONE NAME, TWO FATES
Wes Moore

PERSEPOLIS: THE STORY OF A CHILDHOOD
Marjane Satrapi

THE PHOTOGRAPHER: INTO WAR-TORN AFGHANISTAN WITH DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS
Guibert, Lefèvre, Lemercier

SHE WOULD NOT BE MOVED: HOW WE TELL THE STORY OF ROSA PARKS AND THE MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT
Herbert Kohl

STITCHES: A MEMOIR
David Small

SUGAR CHANGED THE WORLD
Marc Aronson & Marina Budhos

WITH COURAGE AND CLOTH: WINNING THE FIGHT FOR A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO VOTE
Ann Bausum

THE WORDS WE LIVE BY: YOUR ANNOTATED GUIDE TO THE CONSTITUTION
Linda R. Monk

The end

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