

Suggested Titles for Nonfiction Reading 1

The following suggested titles were gathered from current and previous years' American Library Association's lists for college bound students. On the whole, these items are most appropriately recommended for high school students and adults. Since the student will select from the list for himself, if the student or parent finds the material too mature, the student should choose another book.

Ambrose, Stephen. Undaunted Courage : Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West. Simon & Schuster, 1997. A biography of Meriwether Lewis that relies heavily on the journals of both Lewis and Clark, this book is also backed up by the author's personal travels along Lewis and Clark's route to the Pacific.

Aronson, Marc. Witch Hunt: Mysteries of the Salem Witch Trials. New York, Simon & Schuster, 2003. Revisit a time of nightmare, fear, hysteria--beyond *The Crucible*, sift through the myths, half-truths and misinformation to make up your own mind about what really happened in Salem Village and why.

Asinof, Eliot. Eight Men Out: The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series. 1963. It's all here: the players, the scandal, the shame, and the damage the 1919 World Series caused America's national pastime.

Atkin, S. Beth. Voices from the Streets: Young Former Gang Members Tell Their Stories. 1996. Gang members from all races and backgrounds describe why they joined, and why--and how--they left.

Bernstein, Carl and Bob Woodward. All the President's Men. 1994. Following lead after lead, two Washington Post reporters lift the veil of secrecy surrounding the Nixon administration's Watergate cover-up.

Best, Joel. Damned Lies and Statistics: Untangling Numbers From the Media, Politicians, and Activists. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001. Do you know the difference between "good" and "bad" statistics or how statistics and public policy are connected?

Cone, Marla. Silent Snow: The Slow Poisoning of the Arctic. Grove/Atlantic, 2005. Traditionally thought of as the last great unspoiled territory on Earth, the Arctic is actually home to some of the most contaminated people and animals on the planet.

Conover, Ted. Newjack, Guarding Sing Sing. New York: Knopf, 2000. Gripping and sometimes humorous insider's look at Sing Sing prison, through the eyes of a writer who worked for a year as a corrections officer.

Corwin, Miles. And Still We Rise: The Trials and Triumphs of Twelve Gifted Inner-City High School Students. New York: William Morrow, 2000. Twelve seniors from Crenshaw High School's Advanced Placement English class in Los Angeles dream of going to college, but the harsh realities of their lives threaten to derail their plans.

Coulton, Larry. Counting Coup: A True Story of Basketball and Honor on the Little Big Horn. New York: Warner Books, 2000. Working through racism, alcoholism, and domestic violence, the players on Hardin High School's girls' basketball team come out winners in life as well as on the court.

Cox, Lynn. Swimming to Antarctica: Tales of a Long-Distance Swimmer. Knopf, 2004. Writer Lynn Cox chronicles her quest to swim the most challenging waters of the world including the Bering Sea, the Strait of Magellan, the Cape of Good Hope, and the coast of Antarctica. Alex Award

Cuomo, Kerry Kennedy. Speak Truth to Power: Human Rights Defenders Who Are Changing Our World. New York: Crown Publishers, 2000. A collection of biographical sketches and haunting photographs of ordinary people from 35 countries who are leading the fight to ensure basic human rights for everyone.

Davis, Wade. Light at the Edge of the World: A Journey Through the Realm of Vanishing Cultures. Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2001. Through photographs and eloquent text, the author unveils the diversity and unique quality of human culture around the world.

Suggested Titles for Nonfiction Reading 2

Day, David. The Search for King Arthur. 1995. Discover through magnificent illustrations and romantic retellings what is fact and what is legend about this fifth-century hero.

Dershowitz, Alan M. Why Terrorism Works: Understanding the Threat. Responding to the Challenge. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002. Focusing on the idea that terrorism is caused largely by the actions of Western governments, Dershowitz suggests steps to reduce the frequency and severity of these attacks.

Diamond, Jared. Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies. New York: W. W. Norton, 1997. Why do some societies become rich and powerful while others remain poor and powerless? Diamond contends that three elements, guns, germs and steel, determined the course of history.

Doyle, William. An American Insurrection: The Battle of Oxford, Mississippi. 1962. New York: Doubleday, 2001. When James Meredith decided to integrate the University of Mississippi, it caused the worst crisis in American history since the Civil War.

Dylan, Bob. Chronicles. Volume One. Simon & Schuster, 2004. Bob Dylan has been called the greatest lyricist of the twentieth century and the spokesman for the hippie generation. In this book he tells of his self-directed journey through music and life. Interesting for the history, the music, and process involved in reaching stardom. Quills Award

Ellis, Joseph J. Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation. Vintage, 2002. In retrospect, it seems as if the American Revolution was inevitable. But was it? In Founding Brothers, Joseph J. Ellis reveals that many of those truths we hold to be self-evident were actually fiercely contested in the early days of the republic.

Faludi, Susan. Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women. 1991. This unflinching analysis examines the current status of American women.

Feynman, Richard. Six Easy Pieces: Essentials of Physics Explained by Its Most Brilliant Teacher. Addison-Wesley, 1995. Presents six "easy" chapters from the Nobel Prize-winning physicist's Lectures on Physics (1963), originally prepared for Caltech undergraduate students.

Flannery, Sarah with David Flannery. In Code: A Mathematical Journey. Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2002. A sixteen-year-old girl and her father convey their love of mathematics in the book written after Sarah wins Ireland's Young Scientist of the Year 1999 award for her project on cryptography.

Ford, Michael Thomas. The Voices of AIDS: Twelve Unforgettable People Talk About How AIDS Has Changed Their Lives. 1995. Individuals whose AIDS experiences have been catalysts for making a difference share their poignant and personal stories.

Frank, Mitch. Understanding September 11. Answering Questions about the Attacks on America. New York, Penguin Group, 2002. These events are burned into images we can never forget-but after the pain of September 11 we ask "why" and "what" do we need to learn about the historical, religious and cultural issues that sparked the attacks.

Freedman, Samuel G. Small Victories: The Real World of a Teacher. Her Students. and Their High School. 1990. How does this overcrowded, under funded inner city school send 92% of its graduates to college?

Gladwell, Malcolm. The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference. Little Brown, 2002. Looks at why major changes in society often happen suddenly, and describes the personality types who are natural originators of new ideas and trends.

Gould, Lewis. The Modern American Presidency. University Press of Kansas, 2003. A no-holds-barred analysis of all the modern presidents from William McKinley up to George W. Bush includes the observation that today's presidency is so bogged down in media manipulation, fund-raising, and self-indulgence that it is no more capable of grappling with difficulties than it was a century ago.

Suggested Titles for Nonfiction Reading 3

Hart, Elva Trevino. The Barefoot Heart: Stories of a Migrant Child. Tempe, AZ: Bilingual Press, 1999. This honest and moving memoir follows a migrant child and her family as they travel from their home in New Mexico to the farm fields of Minnesota and Wisconsin in search of work.

Hawking, Stephen. A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes. 1988. Cosmology becomes understandable as the author discusses the origin, evolution, and fate of our universe.

Hedges, Chris. War is a Force That Gives Us Meaning. New York: Public Affairs, 2002. A Pulitzer Prize winning author presents a passionate, thought-provoking look at wars through the ages, and exposes the myths of the culture of combat.

Hersey, John. Hiroshima. 1946. Six Hiroshima survivors reflect on the aftermath of the first atomic bomb.

Hillenbrand, Laura. Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption. Random House, 2010. Louie Zamperini, is a disciplined champion racer who ran in the Berlin Olympics, he's a wit, a prankster, and a reformed juvenile delinquent who put his thieving skills to good use in the POW camps.

Horvitz, Leslie A. Eureka!: Scientific Breakthroughs That Changed the World. New York: Wiley, 2002. Horvitz explores the dramatic events and thought processes of twelve great minds that lead to profound scientific discoveries. The author examines the impact of these discoveries on the way we live, think, and view the world around us.

Humes, Edward. No Matter How Loud I Shout: A Year in the Life of Juvenile Court. 1996. Humes paints a tragic and heartbreaking portrait of the chaos characterizing America's juvenile justice system where, as one inmate writes, "my screams have no voice, no matter how loud I shout."

Jonas, Gerald. Dancing: The Pleasure, Power, and Art of Movement. 1992. This international survey explores dance as social, cultural, and religious expression.

Jones, K. Maurice. Say It Loud! The Story of Rap Music. 1994. From a village in West Africa to a street in Brooklyn, to MTV, rappers make the Scene.

Junger, Sebastian. The Perfect Storm: A True Story of Men Against the Sea. 1997. Haunting premonitions didn't save seven fishermen from the ferocious and deadly power of the sea.

Kaysen, Susanna. Girl, Interrupted. 1994. Kaysen provides unique insight into mental illness.

King, Stephen. On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft. Scribner, 2000. A candid memoir by one of today's most prolific and successful writers also includes practical writing tips. Bram Stoker Award for Nonfiction

Kotlowitz, Alex. There Are No Children Here: The Story of Two Boys Growing Up in the Other America. 1994. Two young boys struggle to survive in one of Chicago's worst housing projects.

Krakauer, John. Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mount Everest Disaster. 1997. His dream expedition to Everest became a nightmare when human error and a sudden storm combined to claim the lives of some of the world's best mountain climbers.

Kurson, Robert. Shadow Divers: The True Adventure of Two Americans Who Risked Everything to Solve One of the Last Mysteries of World War II. Random House, 2004. Two week-end scuba divers flirt with danger and intrigue in their six-year quest to learn more about a sunken World War II German U-boat they discovered sixty miles off the New Jersey coast. Alex Award

Latifa [pseud.]. My Forbidden Face: Growing Up Under the Taliban: A Young Woman's Story. New York: Hyperion Press, 2002. Sixteen-year-old Latifa dreamed of becoming a professional journalist until the Taliban's repression of women changed her life.

Suggested Titles for Nonfiction Reading 4

Least Heat-Moon, William. Columbus in the Americas. Hoboken NJ, John Wiley & Sons, 2003. Was he a visionary and daring explorer, or a ruthless conquistador with dreams of riches and glory? Discover the truth behind the myth of a man whose impact still resonates through the continents he stumbled across.

Le Couteur, Penny and Jay Burreson. Napoleon's Buttons: How 17 Molecules Changed History. Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, 2003. Chemically, tin falls apart in very cold temperatures. That Napoleon's army used tin for many ordinary items, such as buttons, may have hastened his defeat by the Russian Army. The authors recount sixteen more fascinating stories of how chemistry changed history.

Levitt, Steven and Stephen J. Dubner. Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Engineering. William Morrow, 2005. Levitt ties economics to the emotional forces affecting human behavior, in interesting explanations of things from cheating sumo wrestlers to the relative dangers of guns versus swimming pools.

Martinez, Ruben. Crossing Over: A Mexican Family on the Migrant Trail. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2001. Martinez explores the powerful forces that drive men, women and even children to risk their lives crossing the border illegally from Mexico to the United States to find work.

Mathabane, Mark. Kaffir Boy: The True Story of a Black Youth's Coming of Age in Apartheid South Africa. Macmillan, 1986. Despite overwhelming odds, a young South African boy triumphs over the degrading racism and dire poverty of his childhood.

Mortenson, Greg and Relin, David Oliver Relin: Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace...One School at a Time. Penguin Books, 2007 Some failures lead to phenomenal successes, and this American nurse's unsuccessful attempt to climb K2, the world's second tallest mountain, is one of them. Dangerously ill when he finished his climb in 1993, Mortenson was sheltered for seven weeks by the small Pakistani village of Korphe; in return, he promised to build the impoverished town's first school, a project that grew into the Central Asia Institute, which has since constructed more than 50 schools across rural Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Nolen, Stephanie. Promised the Moon: The Untold Story of the First Women in the Space Race. New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 2002. The history of women in aviation and as astronauts is revealed in this compelling story.

Norman, Elizabeth. We Band of Angels: The Untold Story of American Nurses Trapped on Bataan by the Japanese. Random House, 1999. Nurses are held captive in the jungles of the Philippines in this harrowing World War II tale.

Pipher, Mary. Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls. 1994. Pipher looks at societal "girl poisoning" and the emotional and psychological havoc it wreaks on the lives of young women.

Pipher, Mary. The Middle of Everywhere: The World's Refugees Come to Our Town. New York: Harcourt, 2002. An exploration of the difficulties and struggles of refugees settled by the United States government in Lincoln, Nebraska as they try to adjust and build a life in America.

Postman, Neil. Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business. (1985) 1988. The author believes the act and art of public discourse are being degraded by television, which turns important issues into mass media entertainment.

Roach, Mary. Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers. New York: Norton, 2003. Discover the amazing life-after-death adventures of human bodies in this examination of how medical and research scientists use cadavers to make our lives better.

Roberts, Cokie. Founding Mothers: The Women Who Raised Our Nation. Morrow, 2004. This social history of the Colonial Period, profiling the women who influenced the Founding Fathers, was written by the ABC news commentator and National Public Radio news analyst.

Suggested Titles for Nonfiction Reading 5

Rogasky, Barbara. Smoke and Ashes: The Story of the Holocaust. New York, Holiday House, 2002. (revised, expanded edition) Some of history's darkest days are examined in this new look at the horror and humanity of the Holocaust and its aftermath.

Salzman, Mark. True Notebooks. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003. When Salzman agreed to teach a writing class at Central Juvenile Hall in Los Angeles, he had no idea how moved he would be by the lives and the eloquence of his students, all high-risk violent offenders.

Schwartz, Maxime. How the Cows Turned Mad. University of California Press, 2003. A gripping biological detective story traces the history of mad cow and other infectious brain diseases of livestock and people.

Simon, Rachel. Riding the Bus with My Sister: A True Life Journey. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002. Rachel Simon's sister, who has mental retardation, spends her days riding buses in the Pennsylvania city where she lives. When Rachel begins to accompany her sister on the bus, she learns a lot about her sister and her disability, and about her own limitations.

Sobel, Dava. Planets. Viking, 2005. Explores the origins and oddities of the planets through the lens of popular culture, from astrology, mythology, and science fiction to art, music, poetry, biography, and history.

Steinberg, Jacques. The Gatekeepers: Inside the Admissions Process of a Premier College. New York: Viking, 2002. Getting in -who and what drives the college admissions cycle? Find out in a behind the scenes look at Wesleyan University through the eyes of an admissions officer seeking members for the class of 2004.

Sullivan, Robert. Rats: Observations on the History and Habitat of the City's Most Unwanted Inhabitants. Bloomsbury, 2004. An entertaining and detailed account of the rat's seemingly inexhaustible connections to the history of New York City and mankind. Alex Award

Sykes, Bryan. The Seven Daughters of Eve: The Science that Reveals Our Genetic Ancestry. New York: Norton, 2001. Fascinating mitochondrial DNA evidence supports the idea that almost all modern Europeans are descended from just seven women.

Tucker, Jonathan B. Scourge: The Once and Future Threat of Smallpox. Grove Press, 2001. The history of the smallpox virus is traced from the first recorded outbreak around 3700 B.C. through its development as a modern biological warfare agent.

Turner, Sugar and Tracy Bachrach Ehlers. Sugar's Life in the Hood: The Story of a Former Welfare Mother. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003. An anthropologist who befriends a welfare mother learns about her world and the strategies she uses to get off welfare and into college.

Weintraub, Stanley. Silent Night: The Story of the World War I Christmas Truce. Free Press, 2001. From an acclaimed historian and National Book Award finalist comes the poignant story of the 1914 Christmas truce of World War I-the spontaneous and tantalizingly brief moment when mortal enemies came together as friends to celebrate the holiday.

Wheelan, Charles. Naked Economics: Undressing the Dismal Science. New York: W. W. Norton, 2002. Without using charts, graphs or jargon, Wheelan makes economics understandable, even interesting, as he demystifies basic concepts and applies them to everyday life.

Winchester, Simon. Krakatoa: The Day the World Exploded: August 27, 1883. New York, HarperCollins, 2003. When the earth's most dangerous volcano exploded off the coast of Java, hundred foot waves flung ships inland, a rain of hot ash made temperatures plummet, the shock wave traveled around the world seven times, and 40,000 people died. The aftermath of this disaster saw the rise of radical Islam, civil unrest and a legacy of anti-Western militancy that continues today.