Picture Book Biography

BROCHURE
About this Brochure

Nonfiction stories can open doors for readers. Through them, we can learn about the lives of some of our greatest heroes and be introduced to new ones. We can learn about new fields of study, and encourage students to open their minds to new subjects and activities they might never have tried before. They can also provide a mirror for readers, showing that they are not alone in their experiences or interests. Picture books are a wonderful way to bring readers of all ages and backgrounds together.

This collection of nonfiction picture books can inspire readers and spark their curiosity. It spans a wide range of topics and themes, from history to art to STEM. By sharing these books with your readers, you will be opening doors for them and inspiring their futures.

Topics and Themes

Next to each title, we have included symbols indicating topics or themes covered. Please see sidebar for a full description of each theme or topic.
This simple nonfiction picture book about the beloved American poet William Carlos Williams is also about how being mindful can result in the creation of a great poem like “The Red Wheelbarrow,” which is only sixteen words long.

A Boy Called Dickens
Written by Deborah Hopkinson
Illustrated by John Hendrix
HC: 9780375867323
Explore the streets of London with a young Charles Dickens. This tale of his boyhood is the perfect way to introduce young readers to this great author.

Eliza: The Story of Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton
Written by Margaret McNamara
Illustrated by Esmé Shapiro
HC: 978-1-5247-6588-0
An stunning picture book biography about Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton, American Founding Father Alexander Hamilton’s extraordinary wife and an important figure in her own right.

Margaret and the Moon
Written by Dean Robbins
Illustrated by Lucy Knisley
HC: 978-0-399-55185-7
A picture book biography of Margaret Hamilton, the first female software engineer, whose code helped launch the Apollo missions!

Joan Procter, Dragon Doctor
Written by Patricia Valdez
Illustrated by Felicita Sala
HC: 9780399555725
A fascinating picture book biography of a pioneering female scientist who loved reptiles!

Madame Saqui
Written by Lisa Robinson
Illustrated by Rebecca Green
HC: 9780525579977
Reach new heights with the tightrope walker who dazzled Paris as she danced across the sky with impeccable balance and unparalleled skill during the French Revolution.

Imagine That!
Written by Judy Sierra
Illustrated by Kevin Hawkes
HC: 978-0-553-51097-3
A lively new picture book biography of the most beloved children’s book author of all time.

Digging for Words
Written by Angela Burke Kunkel
Illustrated by Paola Escobar
HC: 9781984892638
An inspiring picture book based on the life of José Alberto Gutiérrez, a garbage collector in Bogotá, Colombia, who started a library with a single discarded book found on his route.

Bones in the White House
Written by Candice Ransom
Illustrated by Jamey Christoph
HC: 978-0-525-64607-5
A little-known, fascinating story about Thomas Jefferson and his obsessive quest to find America’s first complete mastodon skeleton.

Elvis Is King!
Written by Jonah Winter
Illustrated by Red Nose Studio
HC: 978-0-399-55470-4
Learn about the life and times of the king of rock ‘n’ roll, Elvis Presley.

Margaret and the Moon
Written by Dean Robbins
Illustrated by Lucy Knisley
HC: 978-0-399-55185-7
A picture book biography of Margaret Hamilton, the first female software engineer, whose code helped launch the Apollo missions!
Me and the Sky
Written by Beverley Bass and Cynthia Williams
Illustrated by Joanie Stone
HC: 9780525645498
The groundbreaking female pilot Beverly Bass tells her story in this high-flying and inspiring picture-book autobiography!

Mother Jones and Her Army of Mill Children
Jonah Winter
Illustrated by Nancy Carpenter
HC: 978-1-5247-6377-0
Fight for what is right! Mary "Mother" Jones led 100 children on a march from Philadelphia to New York in a fiery protest against child labor.

My Journey to the Stars
Written by Scott Kelly
Illustrated by André Ceolin
HC: 978-1-5247-1952-4
Learn about the Stonewall Uprising with the very first picture book to tell of its historic and inspiring role in the gay civil rights movement.

No Small Potatoes
Written by Tonya Bolden
Illustrated by Don Tate
HC: 978-0-385-75276-3
Discover the incredible true story of how one of history's most successful potato farmers began life as an enslaved person and worked until he was named the "Potato King of the World"!

The Noisy Paint Box
Written by Barb Rosenstock
Illustrated by Mary GrandPré
HC: 978-0-307-97848-6
Explore the childhood and abstract art of Vasya Kandinsky.

Paper Son
Written by Julie Leung
Illustrated by Chris Sasaki
HC: 978-1-5247-1874
Take a journey with animator Tyrus Wong, the Chinese American immigrant responsible for bringing Disney's Bambi to life.

Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag
Written by Rob Sanders
Illustrated by Steven Salerno
HC: 978-0-399-55531-2
The very first picture book about the incredibly inspiring history of the Pride Flag!

She Made a Monster
Written by Lynn Fulton
Illustrated by Felicita Sala
HC: 978-0-525-57960-1
Join Mary Shelley on the night she created the most frightening monster the world has ever seen.

Starstruck
Kathleen Krull and Paul Brewer
Illustrated by Frank Morrison
HC: 978-0-399-55024-9
Learn more about science superstar Neil deGrasse Tyson, the groundbreaking astrophysicist.

Stay Curious!
Written by Kathleen Krull and Paul Brewer
Illustrated by Boris Kulikov
HC: 978-0-399-55152-8
Stay curious with Stephen Hawking, whose visionary mind revolutionized our concept of reality and whose struggle with ALS inspired millions.

Stonewall
Written by Rob Sanders
Illustrated by Jamey Christoph
HC: 978-1-5247-1952-4
Learn about the Stonewall Uprising with the very first picture book to tell of its historic and inspiring role in the gay civil rights movement.

Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt
Written by Deborah Hopkinson
Illustrated by James Ransome
HC: 978-0-679-82311-7
An inspiring tale of creativity and determination on the Underground Railroad.

D = Diversity  W = Writers & Musicians  P = Politics & Presidential Facts  L = LGBTQIA+
A = Artists  S = Women's History  S = STEM  A = Activism  I = Immigration
The Amazing Collection of Joey Cornell
Candace Fleming
Illustrated by Gérard Dubois
HC: 978-0-399-55238-0
A stunning picture book based on the childhood of artist and sculptor Joseph Cornell.

The Bug Girl
Written by Sophia Spencer and Margaret McNamara
Illustrated by Kerascoët
HC: 9780525645931
Real-life seven-year-old Sophia Spencer was bullied for loving bugs until hundreds of scientists rallied around her. Now Sophie tells her inspiring story.

The Girl Who Named Pluto
Written by Alice B. McGinty
Illustrated by Elizabeth Haidle
HC: 9781524768317
An empowering, inspiring—and accessible!—nonfiction picture book about the eleven-year-old girl who actually named the newly discovered Pluto in 1930.

The Oldest Student
Written by Rita Lorraine Hubbard
Illustrated by Oge Mora
HC: 9781524768287
Imagine learning to read at the age of 116! Discover the true story of Mary Walker, the nation’s oldest student who did just that.

The Polio Pioneer
Written by Linda Elovitz Marshall
Illustrated by Lisa Anchin
HC: 9780525646518
Discover the fascinating life of world-renowned scientist Jonas Salk, whose pioneering discoveries changed the world forever.

Through the Window
Written by Barb Rosenstock
Illustrated by Mary GrandPré
HC: 9781524775175
A gorgeous, expressive picture book biography of Marc Chagall.

Thurgood
Written by Jonah Winter
Illustrated by Bryan Collier
HC: 9781524765330
Thurgood Marshall—the first black justice on the Supreme Court and a giant of the civil rights movement—jumps to life in this inspiring picture book biography.

Vincent Can’t Sleep
Barb Rosenstock
Illustrated by Mary GrandPré
HC: 9781101937105
One of the most famous artists of all time, Vincent Van Gogh often had trouble sleeping, but did thought sleepless nights inspire his creativity and unique vision?

Were I Not a Girl
Written By Lisa Robinson
Illustrated by Lauren Simkin Berke
HC: 9781984849052
This unique picture book biography tells the story of Dr. James Barry, born female, who lived as a man from age eighteen to his death.

You’ve Never Heard of Willie Mays?!
Written by Jonah Winter
Illustrated by Terry Widener
HC: 9780375868443
Learn about Willie Mays, the legendary baseball player who broke boundaries and inspired millions.

If You Want a Friend in Washington
Written and Illustrated by Erin McGill
HC: 9780593122693
A clever, funny, and informative look at the pets that have passed through the White House gates.

---

= Diversity  W = Writers & Musicians  P = Politics & Presidential Facts  L = LGBTQIA+
A = Artists  H = Women’s History  S = STEM  A = Activism  I = Immigration