



Good History Reads for Kids



Here are some books we think are really good, both fiction and non-fiction. They just might get you excited about history! If you have your own recommendations for history books you think are terrific (fiction or non-fiction) please let us know. We would love to hear from you! In fact, the list is meant to be added to. Please feel free to e-mail us at curasst@mercermuseum.org and tell us why you think a book should be placed on this list!

Historical Fiction

American History, General:

Lyon, George Ella. *Who Came Down That Road?* (Orchard Books, 1996).

While out for a walk, a child's simple question to his mother leads the reader back in time. Ages 4-7.

The Seventeenth Century:

Speare, Elizabeth George. *The Witch of Blackbird Pond.* (Houghton Mifflin, 1958).

A free-spirited teen from the Island of Barbados, Kit Tyler, finds herself in Connecticut Colony in the late 1680s. Having been uprooted from her home in the Caribbean, Kit is not ready to deal with the narrowly religious and suspicious Puritans of Connecticut. An outsider herself, she finds common ground with an old Quaker woman who locals consider to be a witch. This is dangerous territory, and Kit's own life is in danger as she, too, is accused of witchcraft. Ages 10 and up.

Native American History:

Bruchac, Joseph. *A Boy Called Slow.* (Philomel, 1995).

A picture book biography of the boyhood of Lakota Sioux warrior Sitting Bull. Ages 4-10.

The Eighteenth Century:

Dagliessh, Alice. *The Courage of Sarah Noble.* (Athenaeum, 1987).

The story of a young girl's journey into the New England wilderness in 1707. Ages 4-8.

Edmonds, Walter D. *The Matchlock Gun*. (Turtleback Books, 1998 – reprint)
Ten-year-old Edward is the protector of his family in this story, set on the New York frontier during the French and Indian War. His weapon? An ancient Spanish musket, larger than himself. Ages 8-10.

The American Revolution:

Benchley, Nathaniel. *Sam the Minuteman*. (HarperCollins, 1987).

Young Sam joins his father and friends on Lexington Green to face the British, and becomes a witness to the first shots of the American Revolution. Ages 4-8.

Brady, Esther Wood. *Toliver's Secret*. (Yearling Press, 1993)

A shy, timid girl must deliver a message to General George Washington, hidden in a loaf of bread. Along the way she learns to overcome her fears, and readers learn some Revolutionary history as well. Ages 9-12.

Forbes, Esther. *Johnny Tremain*. (Houghton Mifflin, 1943)

Set in Boston, Forbes' novel recounts the stirring events leading up to and including the first shots of the American Revolution - all seen through the eyes of a young apprentice silversmith. A classic! Ages 10-14.

The Early National Period:

Blos, Joan W. *A Gathering of Days: A New England Girl's Journal* (Simon & Schuster, 1979)

Through her diary entries, fourteen-year-old Catherine Hill tells the story of a year in her life, growing up on a New Hampshire Farm in the early 1800s. Offers a look at the everyday life of an early American teen, as well as the timeless experiences of heartbreak and loss. Ages 9-12.

Bohner, Charles. *Bold Journey: West with Lewis and Clark*. (Houghton Mifflin, 1985)

Though based on the actual journey of Lewis and Clark through the American west to the Pacific Ocean, this is a fictionalized account told from the perspective of Hugh McNeal, one of the youngest members of the "Corps of Discovery." Ages 10-14.

Sanders, Scott Russell. *Warm as Wool*. (Aladdin, 1998).

A pioneer family travels from Connecticut to the Ohio frontier in 1803. Betsy Ward, the family's mother, has a stash of coins with which she buys a small flock of sheep. Though some of the sheep die, enough survive to provide wool for the family. From that wool Betsy spins yarn, weaves cloth and makes clothing to keep her children warm. Ages 4-8.

Slavery and Emancipation:

Fox, Paula. *The Slave Dancer*. (Simon & Schuster, 2001)

A thirteen-year-old white boy is kidnapped and impressed into service on slave ship bound for Africa. His job? To play the flute during exercise time for the ship's human cargo. Ages 10-14.

Whelan, Gloria. *Friend on Freedom River*. (Sleeping Bear Press, 2005).

With his father away, a twelve-year-old Michigan boy must decide what to do when a family of slaves seeks his help in crossing the river to freedom in Canada. On a dark, dangerous night in 1850, Louis just might find the courage and conviction to make the trip. Ages 4-8.

The American Civil War/Civil War Era:

Alphin, Elaine Marie. *Ghost Cadet*. (Henry Holth & Co., 1991).

This story of a Virginia Military Institute cadet killed at the Battle of New Market whose ghost befriends a shy youth of today will appeal to many young readers. Ages 9-12. [Recommended by "Jake"]

Beatty, Patricia. *Wait for Me, Watch for Me, Eula Bee*. (Wm. Morrow & Co., 1978).

A young boy and his sister are captured in a bloody attack by Comanches in Civil War-era Texas. Though he takes to life among his capturers, and learns their ways, he longs to escape back home. He succeeds, but has to leave his sister, Eula Bee, behind. Eventually he finds a way to rescue her as well. Ages 10-14.

Hunt, Irene. *Across Five Aprils*. (Perfection Learning, 1986).

The story of an Illinois family torn apart by the Civil War, and dealing with the War's impact on their lives. The central figure is nine-year-old Jethro Creighton, who comes of age during the war years. Ages 11-15.

Keith, Harold. *Rifles for Watie* (HarperCollins, 1987 – reprint).

Civil War-era tale set in Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) and Kansas, where Cherokee leader and Confederate general Stand Watie leads raids against Union outposts and troops. Ages 10-14.

Paulsen, Gary. *Soldiers' Heart: Being the Story of the Enlistment and Due Service of the Boy Charley Goddard in the First Minnesota Volunteers*. (Delacorte Books, 1998)

A memorable book in which the title character's dreams of glory and adventure in going off to war are turned into a nightmare of fear, agony and terror by his actual experiences on the battlefield. Ages 12-15.

Peck, Richard. *The River Between Us*. (Dial Press, 2003).

Set in a Mississippi River town in Illinois in 1861, this story focuses more on the home front experience of the Civil War than on the battlefield – though the impact of battle is keenly felt. The drama centers on members of the Pruitt family, and two mysterious boarders from New Orleans who bring with them some of the War's central issues. Ages 12 and up.

Philbrick, Rodman. *Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg*. (Blue Sky Press, 2009).

In strong contrast to the Paulsen and Peck books, this Civil War story is a rollicking adventure, filled with comic calamities and tall tales. In searching for his brother, who has been hired as a substitute for a rich man's son in the Union army, the title character gets himself into and out of a series of scrapes. Ages 10-14.

Steele, William O. *The Perilous Road*. (Harcourt Press, 2004).

Set in Civil War Tennessee, a state divided in its loyalties between Confederacy and Union. A young man, Chris Babson, is convinced that all Yankees are evil, only to have his views turned upside down when his own brother enlists on the Union side. Ages 10-14.

Labor and Immigration History:

Auch, Mary Jane. *Ashes of Roses*. (Henry Holt & Co., 2002).

A young Irish girl, Rose, and her sister remain behind after their parents return to Ireland from New York City. There they room with a Jewish family (the father is a union organizer) and Rose finds work at the Triangle Shirt Waist Company. When the building catches fire in one of the greatest industrial disasters ever to strike America, Rose must flee for her life along with her friend, Gussie. Ages 12-15.

McCully, Emily Arnold. *The Bobbin Girl*. (Dial Books, 1996).

Story of the Lowell, Massachusetts "Mill Girls," young women and girls as young as ten who were drawn to the textile mills to earn money for their families and for themselves, and who learned to band together to fight for their rights as workers. Ages 6-9.

Paterson, Katherine. *Bread and Roses, Too*. (Clarion Books, 2006).

A moving story set during the 1912 labor strike at the textile mills in Lawrence, Massachusetts during which the workers had to send their children away to keep them safe. Two fictional children, Rosa and Jake, are caught up in the real events of this struggle for better wages, working conditions and human dignity. Ages 11-14.

Late Nineteenth Century:

Kelly, Jacqueline. *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*. (Henry Holt and Co., 2009)

Callie Tate is an intelligent, inquisitive eleven-year-old with an interest in science and nature. She resists learning needlework, cooking and other domestic skills expected of girls of her era. But she has an ally in her grandfather, who presents her with a copy of Charles Darwin's, *The Origin of Species*. Her struggle to find her own path at a difficult time for young women is the focus of Kelly's novel. Ages 10-14.

History of Science and Technology:

Gutman, Dan. *Back in Time with Benjamin Franklin: Qwerty Stevens Adventures*. (Simon & Schuster, 2002)

Thirteen-year-old Robert "Qwerty" Stevens finds himself traveling to the 1700s to meet and share quality time with American inventor and innovator Ben Franklin. Lots of historical intersections, not just with the main character, and kids will enjoy the comic adventures. Ages 9-12.

Gutman, Dan. *Back in Time with Thomas Edison: Qwerty Stevens Adventures* (Simon & Schuster, 2002)

In this story, Qwerty ends up in 1879 with Edison trying to come up with a workable light bulb. Edison not only has to come through on that invention, he also has to find a way to help get the young time traveler back to his own era. Ages 9-12.

Latham, Jean Lee. *Carry On, Mr. Bowditch*. (Houghton Mifflin, 1955).

Fictionalized account of mathematician and seafarer Nathaniel Bowditch, who wrote an important early text on marine navigation still in use today. Ages 10-14.

Lester, Julius. *John Henry*. (Puffin, 1999).

A retelling of the folk tale about John Henry, the African-American railroad worker and tunnel maker who challenged a steam engine with only his hammer and his hands. Ages 4-9.

Depression Era:

Phelan, Matt. *The Storm in the Barn*. (Candlewick Press, 2009)

The setting – Dust Bowl-era Kansas – makes this historical fiction, but the imaginative plot takes the reader on a journey into fantasy. Eleven-year-old Jack Clark finds that the rain, which has not fallen on the dusty fields for some time, has actually taken up residence in a local barn – and won't come out. Ages 10-14.

Taylor, Mildred. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. (Heinemann Publishers, 1987).

Powerful novel recounts the trials of an African-American family in Depression-era Mississippi. Not only must the family deal with poverty and illness, but also confront the brutal racism of the era. Ages 10-14.

World Wars I and II:

Mochizuki, Ken. *Baseball Saved Us*. (Lee & Low Books, 1993)

The story is told by “Shorty,” a Japanese boy who has been sent to an internment camp with his parents during World War II. After telling how his family was forced out of their home and removed to the camp, he explains how he and his fellow internees make the experience more bearable by playing ball on a makeshift baseball diamond. Ages 4-9.

Civil Rights Era:

Curtis, Christopher P. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham, 1963*. (Random House, 1995)

An African-American family from Flint, Michigan travels to Birmingham, Alabama in 1963. While in Birmingham, the family experiences the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church, a real event in which four black girls were killed while attending Sunday School. Ages 10-12.

History Other Than American, Middle Ages to Modern Europe:

Lowry, Lois. *Number the Stars*. (Houghton Mifflin, 1989).

Tells the story of how 7,000 Danish Jews were secretly evacuated to Sweden just before they could be marched off to Nazi death camps during World War II. The tale is recounted through the eyes of a ten-year-old Danish girl, whose parents help find safe passage out of the country for her best friend, a Jewish girl named Ellen, and Ellen's family. Ages 9-12.

Schlitz, Laura Amy. *Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! Voices from a Medieval Village*. (Candlewick Press, 2008)

In this imaginative book, readers meet a cast of characters – all children – who are residents of a fictional English village of 1255. In a series of colorful narratives, the children tell of their lives and fortunes. Ages 12 and above.

Historical Non-Fiction

American History, General:

St. George, Judith. *So You Want to Be President?* (Penguin Group, 2000)

Playful, light-hearted look at forty-two of America's presidents, from George Washington through Bill Clinton. Provides fun facts and trivia, along with clever illustrations. Ages 7-12.

The Seventeenth Century:

Benge, Janet and Geoff. *William Penn: Liberty and Justice for All* (Emerald Books, 2002)

After the Lenape Indians, the Swedes and the Dutch, Bucks County history starts with William Penn. If you need or want to learn about the founder of Penn's Woods, this is one of the better books to start with. Part of the authors' "Heroes of History" series. Ages 9-12.

Walker, Sally M. *Written in Bone: Buried Lives of Jamestown and Colonial Maryland*. (Lerner Publishing Group, 2009).

CSI and history meet in this fascinating study of the human and material remains found in early archeological sites in Virginia and Maryland. Text is accompanied by photographs of the archaeological evidence, maps, drawings, reconstructions and re-enactments of daily life the period in which the subjects of the study originally lived. Ages 12-15.

Yolen, Jane, et al. *The Salem Witch Trials: An Unsolved Mystery from History*. (Simon & Schuster, 2004)

The author presents the history of the Salem Witchcraft trials of 1692 as a fascinating detective case, providing clues and theories, and inviting readers to draw their own conclusions at the end of the book. Ages 9-12.

Plymouth Colony:

Bruchac, Joseph. *Squanto's Journey: The Story of the First Thanksgiving*. (Harcourt Press, 2000)

Kidnapped by a ship captain in New England and taken to Europe, Squanto escapes. He eventually finds his way back to America only to discover that most of his people have died of disease. When the Pilgrims arrive in 1620 Squanto surprises the settlers by greeting them in English, and helps them learn about their new land. Ages 4-8.

Grace, Catherine O'Neill, et al. *Mayflower 1620: A New Look at a Pilgrim Voyage*. (National Geographic, 2003)

A retelling of the story of the voyage of the English Separatists, and those who accompanied them, to the New World. The book is illustrated with photographs taken during the journey of the ship, *Mayflower II*, in 2001. Ages 8-12.

Harness, Cheryl. *Three Young Pilgrims*. (Bradbury Press, 1992)

Tells the story of three real children, Mary, Remember and Bartholomew Allerton, who came aboard the Mayflower to Plymouth Colony. The author involves the children in much of the activity of the first year in the Colony. Ages 5-10.

McGovern, Ann. *If You Sailed on the Mayflower in 1620*. (Scholastic Press, 1991).

In a question and answer format, young children find out a lot of interesting facts about the Pilgrim's voyage to America. Fun illustrations accompany the text. Ages 4-8.

Penner, Lucille Recht. *The Pilgrims at Plymouth*. (Random House, 1996).

Describes the experiences of the Plymouth colonists, from leaving England to the "First Thanksgiving." Provides many interesting tidbits about Pilgrim foods, tools, incidents and daily life. Ages 4-8.

Native American History:

Fritz, Jean. *The Double Life of Pocahontas*. (Perfection Learning, 2002).

An easy to read biography of the life of Pocahontas, daughter of Chief Powhatan, based on the journals of John Smith. Ages 9-12.

The American Revolution:

Brindell, Dennis. *Let It Begin Here! Lexington and Concord: First Battles of the American Revolution*. (Walker Books, 2005).

From the ride of Paul Revere through the retreat of the British back to the Boston after their defeat at Concord, *Let It Begin Here!* gives an account of the action of April 18th and 19th, 1775. Great illustrations. Ages 5-8.

Giblin, James Cross. *The Many Rides of Paul Revere*. (Scholastic Press, 2007).

A good biography of Revere that goes beyond the "ride" for which he is famous. Covers his other roles in the American Revolution, as well as his metalwork, printmaking and manufacturing activities. Ages 9-12.

Harness, Cheryl. *The Revolutionary John Adams*. (National Geographic, 2003)
Good biography of the “forgotten revolutionary,” whose important contributions are sometimes lost to those of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin. Ages 9-12.

Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth and Ted Rand. *Paul Revere’s Ride*. (Puffin, 1996)

A retelling of Longfellow’s “The Landlord’s Tale,” from *Tales of a Wayside Inn*. Every kid should be familiar with the poem about Paul Revere and his famous “ride,” and the pictures make Longfellow’s words come alive. Ages 4-8.

Peacock, Louise. *Crossing the Delaware: A History in Many Voices*. (Aladdin, 2007).

Since it happened right here in Bucks County, we should have at least one book on the list about George Washington’s decision to cross the Delaware River and attack Trenton in December 1776. The text tells the overall story of the crossing, but also includes actual accounts from letters and journals written by those who took part in the attack. A group of letters from a fictional soldier rounds out the book. Ages 9-12.

The Early National Period:

Schanzer, Rosalyn. *How We Crossed the West: The Adventures of Lewis and Clark*. (National Geographic, 1997).

Covers the journey of William Clark and Meriwether Lewis, and the Corps of Discovery, 1804-1806. Text is taken directly from the diaries of Lewis and Clark, and reads like the adventure tale that it was. Ages 8-12.

Spier, Peter. *The Erie Canal*. (Doubleday, 1970).

Enjoy the pictures and learn the words to the great folk song, “The Erie Canal” (“I had an old mule and her name was Sal...”). You’ll also learn something about the history of the canal. Ages 4-8.

Slavery and Emancipation:

Hendrix, John. *John Brown: His Fight for Freedom*. (Harry N. Abrams, 2009)

A new telling of the life of abolitionist John Brown and his fight to end slavery with a raid on Harper’s Ferry, Virginia in 1859. Ages 8-12.

Levine, Ellen. *Henry’s Freedom Box*. (Scholastic Press, 2007)

Recounts the freedom journey of Henry “Box” Brown, a Virginia slave, to Philadelphia in 1849. A true story, Henry found a novel way of reaching the north – he packed himself in a box, addressed it to friendly abolitionists, and shipped himself off to Philadelphia. Ages 4-8.

Pinkney, Andrea Davis. *Sojourner Truth’s Step-Stomp Stride*. (Hyperion Books, 2009).

A picture-book biography of the former slave who not only took action to gain her own freedom, but made it her life’s work to agitate for the freedom of others – both African-Americans and women. Ages 5-9.

Sterling, Dorothy. *Freedom Train: The Story of Harriet Tubman*. (Perfection Learning, 1987).

A biography of the former slave and fearless “conductor” on the Underground Railroad. Book also includes a good deal of information on the subject of slavery and the coming of the Civil War. Ages 9-12.

Yates, Elizabeth. *Amos Fortune: Free Man*. (E.P. Dutton, 1950)

Based on the life of an African boy – the son of a king – who is captured, enslaved and transported to America in the early 1700s. Arriving in Massachusetts he is taught a trade and eventually manages to purchase his own freedom. At the same time, he dedicates his life to aiding other slaves, and those less fortunate. Ages 10-14.

The American Civil War/Civil War Era:

Cox, Clinton. *Undying Glory: The Story of the Massachusetts 54th Regiment*. (Scholastic Press, 1993).

Like the movie, *Glory*, this book recounts the story of the first regiment of African-American troops enlisted to fight for the Union during the Civil War. The bravery and heroism of the 54th Massachusetts paved the way for the enlistment of thousands more African-Americans during the remaining two years of the War. Ages 12 and up.

McPherson, James M. *Fields of Fury: The American Civil War*. (Athenaeum, 2002).

A concise history of the War by a famous historian, with well-chosen illustrations, designed expressly for young people. Ages 10-14.

Smith, R. Michael. *The Ringgold Regiment: Based on the True Exploits of the 104th Pennsylvania Volunteers*. (R. Michael Smith, 2008). Relates many of the real experiences of the 104th Pennsylvania Infantry, a regiment comprised mostly of Bucks County men during the Civil War. Their story is told through the eyes of "Matthew," a young enlistee in the unit. Ages 12-14.

Swanson, James L. *Chasing Lincoln's Killer*. (Scholastic Press, 2009)

The story reads like fiction, but it is, of course, history. Book traces the events of the assassination and subsequent hunt for John Wilkes Booth and his co-conspirators through Maryland and Virginia. Ages 10-14.
[Recommended by “Frank”]

Westward Expansion:

Nelson, Vaunda Micheaux. *Bad News for Outlaws: The Remarkable Life of Bass Reeves, Deputy U.S. Marshal*. (Lerner Publishing Group, 2009).

Book tells the little-known story of Reeves, born a slave in 1838, who became one of the most successful and effective lawmen on the western frontier. A real-life western hero, with a strong sense of right and wrong. Ages 8-12.

Labor and Immigration History:

Kraft, Betsy Harvey. *Mother Jones: One Woman's Fight for Labor*. (Clarion Books, 1995).

One of the most fiery labor agitators and organizers of the late 1800s and early 1900s was Mary Harris "Mother" Jones. She labored tirelessly and with enormous courage on behalf of worker's interests until her death in 1930. Ages 9-12.

Stanley, Jerry. *Big Annie of Calumet: A True Story of the Industrial Revolution*. (Knopf, 1996).

Annie Clemenc, or "Clements," was a larger than life character in the copper mining town of Calumet, Michigan, in the early 20th century. In 1913, when miners were out on strike against the Calumet & Hecla Co. she led daily parades of strikers and sympathizers through village streets carrying a large American flag. At 6' 2" she was an easy figure to spot. Ages 10 and up.

Wells, Rosemary. *Streets of Gold*. (Dial Books, 1999).

Picture book biography about the experiences of Masha, or Mary, Antin, a Russian Jew who came to America with her family in 1894. Ages 6-9.

Late Nineteenth Century:

Murphy, Jim. *The Great Fire*. (Scholastic Press, 2006).

The author covers the real story of the Chicago Fire (no, Mrs. O'Leary's cow didn't do it). Includes various first-person accounts and historical illustrations. Can be read as a narrative or used as a reference. Ages 9-12.

History of Science and Technology:

Heiligman, Deborah. *Charles and Emma: The Darwins' Leap of Faith*. (Henry Holt and Co., 2008)

At its core, this is a love story about two people who balance and respect each other. But there is also much to be learned here about Charles Darwin himself, his book – *The Origin of Species* – and the concept of human evolution. Ages 12 and up.

Krull, Kathleen. *The Boy Who Invented TV: The Story of Philo Farnsworth*. (Random House, 2009).

Philo first envisioned the future of human communication in a potato field at the age of fourteen. He realized that vision just eight years later, beating a major corporation to the punch in inventing television. This picture book biography traces Philo's story, and his fascination with technology. Ages 5-8.

Macaulay, David. *Mill*. (Graphia, 1989).

Mill focuses on the workings of a water-powered cotton mill in Rhode Island in the 1800s. But it also weaves together a story about the mill

owners, and shows how events and ideas of the time affected the development of the technology. Ages 10 and up.

Manning, Mick. *What Mr. Darwin Saw*. (Frances Lincoln Books, 2009)

Book tells the story of the five-year journey of the *HMS Beagle*, the ship on which 22-year-old Charles Darwin served as naturalist in the 1830s. The voyage resulted in a change of careers for Darwin, inspired his life-long fascination with the natural world, and launched him toward his theory of evolution and the writing of *The Origin of Species*. Ages 6-9.

Wood, A.J., et al. *Charles Darwin and the Beagle Adventure*. (Candlewick Press, 2009).

In the form of a scrapbook with inserted documents, this volume traces Darwin's voyage aboard the *Beagle*, his observations of the species he encountered, and the development of his theory of evolution. A good introduction to Darwin and his study of the natural world. Ages 8-12.

World Wars I and II:

Colman, Penny. *Rosie the Riveter: Women Working on the Home Front During World War II*. (Crown Publishers, 1995).

With so many men serving in the armed forces, it became necessary for women to take on industrial and other jobs that before had been closed to them. So began the image of "Rosie the Riveter." Book is illustrated with some sixty black and white photos. Ages 10-14.

Civil Rights Era:

Hoose, Phillip. *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*. (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2009)

Before Rosa Parks, there was 15-year-old Claudette Colvin, who also refused to give up her seat to a white woman in the segregated South of the 1950s. Her act of civil disobedience went largely unrecognized at the time, but she later joined a landmark Civil Rights case that helped strike down segregation laws in Alabama and elsewhere. Ages 12 and up.

Ryan, Pam Munoz. *When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson*. (Scholastic Press, 2002)

The biography of African-American opera performer Marian Anderson in words and pictures. Story deals with her determination to overcome the racism of her times. Ages 6-10.

The Twentieth Century:

Floca, Brian. *Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11*. (Simon & Schuster, 2009)

An award-winning, beautifully illustrated picture book telling the story of the first moon mission and landing in the summer of 1969. Ages 4-8.

Heiligman, Deborah. *The Story of the Titanic*. (Random House, 1998)

A simple account of the ill-fated voyage. Also includes the modern archaeology of the wreck and recovery of artifacts. Ages 4-8.

History Other Than American, Pre-history to Modern Europe:

Macaulay, David. *Castle*. (Graphia, 1982).

Book traces the planning and construction of a fictional castle in Wales. More than simply a “how it was done” reference, there is also good storytelling here. Ages 10 and up.

Macaulay, David. *Ship*. (Houghton Mifflin, 1993).

The ship in Macaulay’s title refers to a fictional early 16th-century Spanish caravel. The ship was sunk off the Bahamas and discovered, in his story, during a modern-day diving expedition. Book tells two related tales. One is that of the archaeological investigation into the shipwreck – looking backward in time. The other is the account of the original design and construction of the ship, told through the eyes of the owner and master. Ages 10 and up.

Thimmesh, Catherine. *Lucy Long Ago: Uncovering the Mystery of Where We Came From*. (Houghton Mifflin, 2009)

Describes the discovery and meaning of a new species of “hominid” – a human ancestor that lived in Africa more than three million years ago. Terrific illustrations, many recreating features of the original species based on the skeletal remains – including a full-body reconstruction. Ages 12 and up.