

AMERICAN HISTORICAL FICTION
Curriculum Materials Center

This is a selected bibliography of historical fiction from pre-revolutionary America to the early twentieth century. These titles are appropriate for grades K-8.

Different Worlds Meet: Exploration and Colonization: 1500 - 1774

Bulla, C. R. (1983). *Charlie's house*. New York: Crowell. (Grades 3-6).

A poor, friendless English boy, shipped to America as an indentured servant in the early eighteenth century, runs away from a cruel master and dreams of building his own house.

Call Number: J Bul

Bulla, C. R. (1978). *Conquista!* New York: Crowell. (Grades 5-8).

At the time of Coronado's exploration for a gabled city of gold, a young Indian boy encounters his first horse.

Call Number: J Bul

Clapp, P. (1968). *Constance; A story of early Plymouth*. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co. (Grades 5-9).

A young girl's journal tells of her daily life, hardships, romances and marriage during the first years of the Pilgrim settlement at Plymouth.

Call Number: J Cla

Dorris, M. (1996). *Sees behind trees*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children. (Grades 4-8).

Set in pre-colonial America a Native American boy with a special gift to "see" beyond his poor eyesight journeys with an old warrior to a land of mystery and beauty.

Call Number: J Dor

Hermes, P. (2000). *Our strange new land*. New York: Scholastic. (Grades 4-6).

Nine-year-old Elizabeth keeps a journal of her experiences in the New World as she encounters Indians, suffers hunger and the death of friends, and helps her father build their first home.

Call Number: J Her

Lasky, K. (1996). *A journey to the new world: The diary of Remember Patience Whipple*. New York: Scholastic. (Grades 5-9).

Twelve-year-old Mem presents a diary account of the trip she and her family made on the

Mayflower in 1620 and their first year in the New World.

Call Number: J Las

Mirsky, J. (1969). *The gentle conquistadors; The ten year odyssey across the American Southwest of three Spanish captains and Esteban, a black slave*. New York: Pantheon Books. (Grades 5-8).

A fictional account of the ten-year journey of Esteban, the first black man in America, as he wandered with Cabeza de Vaca and two other Spaniards exploring the Southwest.

Call Number: J Mir

Monjo, F. N. (1972). *The secret of the Sachem's tree*. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan. (Grades 2-6).

The Wadsworth children must abandon their plans for Halloween mischief to help prevent the King's representative from taking away Connecticut Colony's charter.

Call Number: J Mon

O'Dell, S. (1966). *The King's Fifth*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (Grades 7-10).

While awaiting trial in a California prison in 1541 Estaban, the cartographer for Captain Mendoza's expedition in the west, retells the story of how he hoarded a fifth of the king's gold.

Call Number: J Ode

Osborne, M. P. (1998). *Standing in the light: The captive diary of Catherine Carey Logan, Delaware Valley, Pennsylvania, 1763*. New York: Scholastic. (Grades 4-7).

A Quaker girl's diary reflects her experiences growing up and her capture by Lenape Indians in 1763.

Call Number: J Osb

Rockwood, J. (1976). *To spoil the sun*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. (Grades 6-8).

Forewarned by omens, a sixteenth-century Cherokee Indian Village in the southern Appalachians is struck by an "invisible fire," a smallpox epidemic brought by European explorers.

Call Number: J Roc

Creating a Nation: The American Revolution: 1775 – 1783

Brady, E. W. (1976). *Toliver's secret*. New York: Crown. (Grades 4-7).

During the Revolutionary War, a ten-year-old girl crosses enemy lines to deliver a loaf of

bread containing a message for the patriots.

Call Number: J Bra

Collier, J. L. & Collier, C. (1974). *My brother Sam is dead*. New York: Four Winds Press. (Grades 6-9).

Recounts the tragedy that strikes the Meeker family during the Revolution when one son joins the rebel forces while the rest of the family tries to stay neutral in a Tory town.

Call Number: J Col

Gregory, K. (1996). *The winter of red snow: The Revolutionary War diary of Abigail Jane Stewart*. New York: Scholastic Inc. (Grades 5-9).

Eleven-year-old Abigail presents a diary account of life in Valley Forge from December 1777 to July 1778 as General Washington prepares his troops to fight the British.

Call Number: J Gre

Monjo, F. N. (1973). *Poor Richard in France*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. (Grades 2-6).

Benjamin Franklin's seven-year-old grandson recounts the events of his grandfather's visit to France seeking aid for the revolutionaries in America.

Call Number: J Mon

O'Dell, S. (1980). *Sarah Bishop*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (Grades 5-9).

Left alone after the deaths of her father and brother who take opposite sides in the War for Independence, and fleeing from the British who seek to arrest her, Sarah Bishop struggles to shape a new life for herself in the wilderness.

Call Number: J Ode

A Growing Nation: From the East Coast to the West Coast: 1784 - 1900

Blos, J. W. (1979). *A gathering of days: A New England girl's journal, 1830-3: A novel*. New York: Scribner. (Grades 4-8).

The journal of a 14-year-old girl, records daily events in her small New Hampshire town, her father's remarriage, and the death of her best friend.

Call Number: J Blo

Fleischman, P. (1983). *Path of the pale horse*. New York: Harper & Row. (Grades 6-8).

Lep, an apprentice to a doctor, helps his master take care of yellow fever victims during the Philadelphia epidemic of 1793.

Call Number: J Fle

Garland, S. (2001). *Valley of the Moon: The diary of Maria Rosalia de Milagros*. New York: Scholastic. (Grades 5-8).

The 1845-1846 diary of thirteen-year-old Maria, servant to the wealthy Spanish family which took her in when her mother died. Includes a historical note about the settlement and early history of California.

Call Number: J Gar

Gregory, K. (1997). *Across the wide and lonesome prairie: The Oregon Trail diary of Hattie Campbell*. New York: Scholastic. (Grades 5-9).

In her diary, thirteen-year-old Hattie chronicles her family's arduous 1847 journey from Missouri to Oregon on the Oregon Trail.

Call Number: J Gre

Gregory, K. (2001). *Across seeds of hope: The gold rush diary of Susanna Fairchild*. New York: Scholastic. (Grades 4-7).

Fourteen-year-old Susanna's diary of her life in 1849, when her father succumbs to gold fever while establishing his medical practice in Oregon after losing his wife and money during their steamship journey from New York.

Call Number: J Gre

Henry, M. (1972). *San Domingo; The medicine hat stallion*. Chicago: Rand McNally. (Grades 5-9).

In pre-Civil War Wyoming, a teen-ager's life is complicated when his strangely hostile father trades the boy's beloved horse to the Pony Express.

Call Number: J Hen

MacLachlan, P. (1985). *Sarah plain and tall*. New York: Harper & Row. (Grades 3-6).

When their father invites a mail-order bride to come live with them in their prairie home, Caleb and Anna are captivated by their new mother and hope that she will stay.

Call Number: J Mac

Martin, J. B. (1996). *Grandmother Bryant's pocket*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (Grades K-4).

Suffering from nightmares after her dog is killed in a fire, a young girl in eighteenth-century Maine goes to live with her grandparents.

Call Number: P J Mar

McNeer, M. Y. (1971). *Stranger in the pines*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (Grades 6-8).

In the early 1800's a runaway apprentice takes refuge in the New Jersey Pine Barrens and

learns to come to terms with his troubled past.

Call Number: J McN

Philbrick, W. R. (2003). *The journal of Douglas Allen Deeds: The Donner Party expedition*. New York: Scholastic. (Grades 5-9).

Douglas Deeds, a fifteen-year-old orphan, keeps a journal of his travels by wagon train as a member of the ill-fated Donner Party, which became stranded in the Sierra Nevada mountains in the winter of 1846-47.

Call Number: J Phi

Speare, E. G. (1983). *The sign of the beaver*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (Grades 4-7).

Left alone to guard the family's wilderness home in eighteenth-century Maine, a boy is hard-pressed to survive until local Indians teach him their skills.

Call Number: J Spe

Tripp, V. (2000). *Again, Josephina!* Middleton, WI: Pleasant Publications. (Grades 3-8).

Nine-year-old Josefina, who lives on the New Mexico frontier, wants to give up learning to play the piano until she sees how much joy her music gives to her baby nephew.

Call Number: J Tri

Yep, L. (2000). *The journal of Wong Ming-Chang: A Chinese miner*. New York: Scholastic. (Grades 5-8).

A young Chinese boy, nicknamed Runt, records his experiences as he travels from southern China to California in 1852 to join his uncle during the Gold Rush.

Call Number: J Yep

A Changing Nation: Immigration and Reform: 1814 - 1864

Avi. (1996). *Beyond the western sea*. New York: Orchard Books. (Grades 3-8).

Driven from their impoverished Irish village, fifteen-year-old Maura and her younger brother meet their landlord's runaway son in Liverpool while all three wait for a ship to America. Their fates continue to intertwine on board ship and in the New World.

Call Number: J Avi Vols. 1-2

Coerr, E. (1988). *Chang's paper pony*. New York: Harper & Row. (Grades K-3).

In San Francisco during the 1850's gold rush, Chang, the son of Chinese immigrants, wants a pony but cannot afford one until his friend, Big Pete, finds a solution.

Call Number: P J Coe

Hearne, B. G. (1997). *Seven brave women*. New York: Greenwillow Books. (Grades K-3).

A young girl recounts the brave exploits of her female ancestors, including her great-great grandmother who came to America in a wooden sailboat.

Call Number: PJ Hea

McCully, E. A. (1996). *The bobbin girl*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.

(Grades 3-5).

A ten-year-old bobbin girl working in a textile mill in Lowell, Massachusetts, in the 1830's, must make a difficult decision. Will she participate in the first workers' strike in Lowell?

Call Number: J Mcc

McGill, A. (1999). *Molly Bannaky*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (Grades 4-6).

Benjamin Banneker's grandmother who journeyed from England to Maryland in the late seventeenth century. She worked as an indentured servant then began a farm of her own, and married a freed slave.

Call Number: J Mcg

Paterson, K. (1993). *Lyddie*. Thorndike, ME: Thorndike Press. (Grades 6-9).

Impoverished Vermont farm girl Lyddie Worthen is determined to gain her independence by becoming a factory worker in Lowell, Massachusetts, in the 1840's.

Call Number: J Pat

Turner, A. W. (1987). *Nettie's trip south*. New York: Macmillan. (Grades 1-5).

A ten-year-old northern girl encounters the ugly realities of slavery when she visits Richmond, Virginia, and sees a slave auction.

Call Number: J Tur

Wyeth, S. D. (2001). *Freedom's wings*. New York: Scholastic. (Grades 3-6).

A nine-year-old slave keeps a diary of his journey to freedom along the Underground Railroad in 1857.

Call Number: J Wye

Yep, L. (1993). *Dragon's gate*. New York: HarperCollins. (Grades 5-9).

When he accidentally kills a Manchu, a fifteen-year-old Chinese boy is sent to America to join his father, an uncle, and other Chinese working to build a tunnel for the transcontinental railroad through the Sierra Nevada mountains in 1867. Sequel to "Mountain light."

Call Number: J Yep

A Divided Nation: U.S. Civil War: 1861 – 1865

Crane, S. (1990). *The red badge of courage*. New York: Tom Doherty Associates.
(Grades 6-10).

Set during the Civil War a young soldier, named Henry Fleming, does not engage in the debate with newly enlisted members of a Union Regiment. Instead he reflects on what will become of him when he gets into battle.

Call Number: J Cra

Hansen, J. (1986). *Which way freedom?* New York: Walker. (Grades 4-7).

Obi escapes from slavery during the Civil War, joins a black Union regiment, and soon becomes involved in the bloody fighting at Fort Pillow, Tennessee.

Call Number: J Han

Lyon, G. E. (1991). *Cecil's story*. New York: Orchard Books. (Grades K-3).

A boy thinks about the possible scenarios that exist for him at home if his father goes off to fight in the Civil War.

Call Number PJ Lyo

Monjo, F. N. (1971). *The Vicksburg veteran*. New York: Simon and Schuster. (Grades 2-6).

Twelve-year-old Fred Grant relates what he saw when he accompanied his father, General Grant, on the campaign to capture Vicksburg.

Call Number: J Mon

Osborne, M. P. (2000). *My brother's keeper*. New York: Scholastic. (Grades 4-7).

In 1863, as the Civil War approaches her quiet town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, nine-year-old Virginia records in a journal the horrible things she witnesses before during, and after the Battle of Gettysburg.

Call Number: J Osb

Reshaping the Nation: Western Frontier and Industrialization: 1866 – 1916

Bartoletti, S. C. (2003). *The journal of Finn Reardon: A newsie*. New York: Scholastic.
(Grades 4-7).

Finn Reardon, a thirteen-year-old Irish-American newspaper carrier who hopes to be a journalist someday, keeps a journal of his experiences living in New York City in 1899.

Call Number: J Bar

Bartone, E. (1993). *Peppe the lamplighter*. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books.
(Grades K-2).

Peppe's father is upset when he learns that Peppe has taken a job lighting the gas street lamps in his New York City neighborhood.

Call Number: P J Bar

Brenner, B. (1978). *Wagon wheels*. New York: Harper & Row. (Grades K-3).

Shortly after the Civil War a black family travels to Kansas to take advantage of the free land offered through the Homestead Act.

Call Number: J Bre

Murphy, J. (2001). *My face to the wind: The diary of Sarah Jane Price, a prairie teacher*. New York: Scholastic. (Grades 3-6).

Following her father's death from a disease that swept through her Nebraska town in 1881, teenaged Sarah Jane must find work to support herself and records her experiences as a young school teacher in her diary.

Call Number: J Mur

Wesley, V. W. (1997). *Freedom's gifts: A Juneteenth story*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. (Grades 3-6).

When a girl from New York visits her cousin in Texas, she learns the origin of Juneteenth, a holiday marking the day Texan slaves realized they were free.

Call Number: J Wel

Wilder, L. I. (1953). *Little house in the big woods*. New York: Harper. (Grades 3-7).

A year in the life of two young girls growing up on the Wisconsin frontier, as they help their mother with the daily chores, enjoy their father's stories and singing, and share special occasions when they get together with relatives or neighbors.

Call Number: J Wil