Notable Non-Fiction for 3rd and 4th Grade

Haunted Histories: Creepy Castles, Dark Dungeons, and Powerful Palaces / J. H. Everett and Marilyn Scott-Waters (133.122)
Guided by tween "ghostorian" Virgil, readers will discover fascinating facts about calamitous events throughout history as they explore castles, palaces and dungeons and those infamous figures associated with each. The book is chock-full of details that kids will find intriguing - dungeon life for prisoners, methods of torture, and even the most popular methods of poisoning enemies. So join Virgil and the other ghostly inhabitants for an historical adventure on the dark side.

Athena: Grey-Eyed Goddess / George O'Connor (292)
Boom! Pow! Crash! Greek Gods as you've never seen them before! The strong, larger-than-life heroes of the Olympians can summon lightning, control the sea, turn invisible, or transform themselves into any animal they choose. Superheroes? No! Greek gods. The ancient pantheon comes to explosive life in this new series where myth meets comic books. Epic battles, daring quests, and terrible monsters await readers within the pages of these books. Volume 2, Athena: Grey-Eyed Goddess, is the tale of the goddess of wisdom and war, recounting her many adventures.

Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down / Andrea Davis Pinkney (323.1196)
This picture book is a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the momentous Woolworth's lunch counter sit-in, when four college students staged a peaceful protest that became a defining moment in the struggle for racial equality and the growing civil rights movement.

Energy Island: How One Community Harnessed the Wind and Changed Their World / Allan Drummond (333.794)
The rather ordinary citizens of Samso have accomplished something extraordinary--in just ten years they have reduced their carbon emissions by 140% and become almost completely energy independent. A narrative tale and a science book in one, this inspiring true story proves that with a little hard work and a big idea, anyone can make a huge step towards energy conservation.
The Day-Glo Brothers / Chris Barton (535.352)
Brothers Joe and Bob Switzer were quite different. Bob was a hard worker and planner who wanted to grow up to be a doctor. Joe dreamed of making his fortune in show business and loved magic tricks and problem-solving. When an accident left Bob recovering in the dark basement, the brothers began experimenting with ultraviolet light and fluorescent paints. Together they stumbled on a formula for colors that glows with an extra-special intensity—Day-Glo colors.

Tornado! The Story Behind These Twisting, Turning, Spinning, and Spiraling Storms / Judith Bloom Fradin (551.553)
Through riveting narrative and eyewitness stories, young readers learn what it's like to be caught in a monster tornado. Captivating first-person accounts and news reports detail survivors' experiences of the most destructive tornadoes ever to occur in the United States.

Dinosaur Mountain: Digging into the Jurassic Age / Deborah Kogan Ray (567.9)
Earl Douglass was a teenager when he first heard about the Bone Wars—the race between paleontologists to unearth and classify dinosaur fossils—and he remained fascinated with these prehistoric giants for the rest of his life. Using entries directly from Douglass's diary along with her own evocative storytelling and artwork, acclaimed author and illustrator Deborah Kogan Ray paints the life of this adventurous bone hunter in memorable detail.

How the Dinosaur Got to the Museum / Jessie Hartland (567.913)
Acclaimed author/illustrator Jessie Hartland presents the fascinating 145-million-year journey of a dinosaur from its discovery in 1923 in Utah to its arrival in the hallowed halls of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C.

Can We Save the Tiger? / Martin Jenkins (574.529)
The team behind the award-winning Ape returns with an inspiring look at a range of endangered species sure to engage every child who loves animals.
North: The Amazing Story of Arctic Migration / Nick Dowson (591.525)
A passionate nature lover and a renowned artist trace the awe-inspiring spring migration of millions of creatures to the Arctic—the greatest journey on Earth. This lushly illustrated picture book celebrates the cyclical nature of the seasons, showcasing the barren and beautiful landscapes of the Arctic Circle and reminding the reader of the hardships and harmony of life in the wild.

Wolfsnail: A Backyard Predator / Sarah C. Campbell (594.38)
The wolfsnail hunts its prey: other snails. This photographic story, a Theodor Seuss Geisel Honor Book, of a day in the life of a wolfsnail offers a unique and dramatic introduction to the food chain. Young readers will be fascinated by this little-known predator and the impact it has had on habitats where it does not belong.

Nic Bishop Butterflies and Moths / Nic Bishop (595.78)
Award-winning author and photographer Nic Bishop brings his vast knowledge of biology to this eye-catching exploration of butterflies and moths. With breathtaking full-page images, Nic introduces young readers to the beauty and diversity of these amazing insects. The simple, engaging text presents both basic information and fun, quirky facts about the insects' appearance, habits, and life cycle. (Be sure to also check out other wonderful titles by this author!)

Puffling Patrol / Ted and Betsy Lewin (598.33)
Every April, the Westman Islands off the coast of Iceland become home to hundreds of thousands of puffins, small black-and-white seabirds with colorful bills. They spend the summer on the rocky cliffs of the islands, caring for their newly hatched chicks. By the middle of August, it is time for the young puffins, called pufflings, to make their way to the sea. And that is when the children of The Puffling Patrol are called to action. The fascinating story of this unique annual rescue, combined with Ted Lewin's dramatic paintings and Betsy Lewin's lively field sketches, is sure to make Puffling Patrol a hit with animal lovers of all ages.
**Thunder Birds: Nature’s Flying Predators / Jim Arnosky (598.91)**
Acclaimed naturalist and illustrator Jim Arnosky helps birds and imaginations take glorious flight in this breathtaking nonfiction picture book with six giant gatefolds. Arnosky will draw out kids’ inner explorer as he explains why there are no feathers on a vulture’s head, which bird is the deep-diving champ, what makes owls’ wings perfectly silent in flight, and much more. Readers can use this gorgeously illustrated book to bring the wilderness right into their rooms, or as a guide on their next expedition.

**Winter’s Tail: How One Little Dolphin Learned to Swim Again / Juliana Hatkoff (599.53)**
When Winter was a baby, she was rescued from a crab trap, her tail seriously damaged, and rushed to Clearwater Marine Aquarium. Winter survived, but eventually her tail fell off. This is the inspiring true story of a young dolphin learning to adapt to a prosthetic tail.

**Face to Face with Dolphins / Flip and Linda Nicklin (599.53)**
National Geographic photographer Flip Nicklin and his wife Linda, a naturalist and educator, invite you to study the amazing behavior of the beloved dolphin. This compelling book aims to encourage active concern and support for these smiling sea creatures whose intelligence demands our kinship. (Be sure to also check out our other *Face to Face* books by National Geographic!)

**Owen & Mzee: The True Story of a Remarkable Friendship / Isabella Hatkoff (599.734)**
The inspiring true story of two great friends, a baby hippo named Owen and a 130-yr-old giant tortoise named Mzee (Mm-ZAY). When Owen was stranded after the Dec 2004 tsunami, villagers in Kenya worked tirelessly to rescue him. Then, to everyone’s amazement, the orphan hippo and the elderly tortoise adopted each other. Now they are inseparable, swimming, eating, and playing together.

**The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind / William Kamkwamba (621.453)**
When fourteen-year-old William Kamkwamba’s Malawi village was hit by a drought, everyone’s crops began to fail. Without enough money for food, let alone school, William spent his days in the library . . . and figured out how to bring electricity to his village. Persevering against the odds, William built a functioning windmill out of junkyard scraps, and thus became the local hero who harnessed the wind. Lyrically told and gloriously illustrated, this story will inspire many as it shows how - even in the worst of times - a great idea and a lot of hard work can still rock the world.
Stay: The True Story of Ten Dogs / Michaela Muntean (636.70887)
With beautiful full-color photographs, this is the story of 10 dogs rejected by their owners as hopeless cases and adopted by Luciano Anastasini, a renowned circus performer and dog trainer.

Sky Boys: How They Built the Empire State Building / Deborah Hopkinson (720.483)
It's 1930 and times are tough for Pop and his son. But look! On the corner of 34th Street and 5th Avenue, a building straight and simple as a pencil is being built in record time. Hundreds of men are leveling, shoveling, hauling. They're hoisting 60,000 tons of steel, stacking 10 million bricks, eating lunch in the clouds. And when they cut ribbon and the crowds rush in, the boy and his father will be among the first to zoom up to the top of the tallest building in the world and see all of Manhattan spread at their feet.

Dave, the Potter: Artist, Poet, Slave / Laban Carrick Hill (738.092)
To us it is just dirt, the ground we walk on... But to Dave it was clay, the plain and basic stuff upon which he formed a life as a slave nearly 200 years ago. Dave was an extraordinary artist, poet, and potter living in South Carolina in the 1800s. He combined his superb artistry with deeply observant poetry, carved onto his pots, transcending the limitations he faced as a slave.

Balloons over Broadway / Melissa Sweet (791.53)
Everyone's a New Yorker on Thanksgiving Day, when young and old rise early to see what giant new balloons will fill the skies for Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. In brilliant collage illustrations, the award-winning artist Melissa Sweet tells the story of the puppeteer Tony Sarg, capturing his genius, his dedication, his zest for play, and his long-lasting gift to America--the inspired helium balloons that would become the trademark of Macy's Parade.

Ballet for Martha: Making Appalachian Spring / Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan (792.8)
Martha Graham: trailblazing choreographer. Aaron Copland: distinguished American composer. Isamu Noguchi: artist, sculptor, craftsman. Award-winning authors Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan tell the story behind the scenes of the collaboration that created Appalachian Spring, from its inception through the score's composition to Martha's intense rehearsal process.
To Dance: A Memoir / Siena Cherson Siegel (792.8)
Dancers are young when they first dream of dance. Siena was six -- and her dreams kept skipping and leaping, circling and spinning, from airy runs along a beach near her home in Puerto Rico, to dance class in Boston, to her debut performance on stage with the New York City Ballet. To Dance tells and shows the fullness of her dreams and her rhapsodic life they led to. Part family history, part backstage drama, here is an original, firsthand book about a young dancer’s beginnings -- and beyond.

Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer / Li Cunxin (792.802)
In a poor village in northern China, a small boy named Li Cunxin was given the chance of a lifetime. Selected by Chairman Mao's officials from among millions of children to become a dancer, Li's new life began as he left his family behind. At the Beijing Dance Academy, days were long and difficult. Li's hard work was rewarded when he was chosen yet again, this time to travel to America. From there his career took flight, and he danced in cities around the world--never forgetting his family, who urged him to follow his dreams.

We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball / Kadir Nelson (796.35764)
The story of Negro League baseball is the story of gifted athletes and determined owners; of racial discrimination and international sportsmanship; of fortunes won and lost; of triumphs and defeats on and off the field. What makes this book so outstanding are the dozens of full-page and double-page oil paintings—breathtaking in their perspectives, rich in emotion, and created with understanding and affection for these lost heroes of our national game.

Emma’s Poem: The Voice of the Statue of Liberty / Linda Glaser (811.4)
Give me your tired, your poor Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free... Who wrote these words? And why? In 1883, Emma Lazarus, deeply moved by an influx of immigrants from Eastern Europe, wrote a sonnet that was to give voice to the Statue of Liberty. Originally a gift from France to celebrate our shared national struggles for liberty, the Statue, thanks to Emma's poem, slowly came to shape our hearts, defining us as a nation that welcomes and gives refuge to those who come to our shores.
Wild Women of the Wild West / Jonah Winter (920.72)
From Annie Oakley to Polly Pry, biographical sketches, color portraits, and sepia line drawings reveal the accomplishments of 15 amazing women whose adventurous spirit helped build our nation.

You Wouldn't Want to be an Egyptian Mummy!: Disgusting Things You’d Rather Not Know / David Stewart (932)
Interested in all things Ancient Egypt? Take a look at this entry in the fascinating You Wouldn’t Want series. Full of gross and interested facts, you won’t be able to put it down! Be sure to also check out the other great titles in this series.

The Split History of World War II / Simon Rose (940.53)
When World War I ended in 1918, it was called, “the war to end all wars.” But it wasn't. Unsettled issues and resentments festered for the next 20 years, culminating in the outbreak of war in Europe and Asia in the 1930s. This book discusses the Second World War from the Allied perspective and then, after you flip the book over, you can re-read the narrative from an Axis perspective. A fascinating way to learn about history!

Queen of the Falls / Chris Van Allsburg (971.339)
She could remember standing in a park near the falls, hypnotized by the sight and sound, and holding her father’s hand as they took a walk that would lead them closer. It’s everyone wonders when they see Niagara . . . How close will their courage let them get to it? At the turn of the nineteenth century, a retired sixty-two-year-old charm school instructor named Annie Edson Taylor, seeking fame and fortune, decided to do something that no one in the world had ever done before: she would go over Niagara Falls in a wooden barrel. Come meet the Queen of the Falls and witness with your own eyes her daring ride!
Independent Dames: What You Never Knew about the Women and Girls of the American Revolution / Laurie Halse Anderson (973.3)

Listen up! You've all heard about the great men who led and fought during the American Revolution; but did you know that the guys only make up part of the story? With page after page of superbly researched information and thoughtfully detailed illustrations, Anderson and Faulkner prove the case in this entertaining, informative, and long overdue homage to those independent dames!

The Boston Tea Party / Russell Freedman (973.3115)

More than any other event, the Boston Tea Party of 1773 has come to stand for the determination of American colonists to control their own destinies. (Be sure to check out other amazing titles by Russell Freedman!)

Those Rebels, John and Tom / Barbara Kerley (973.44)

John Adams and Thomas Jefferson were very different. John Adams was short and stout. Thomas Jefferson was tall and lean. John was argumentative and blunt. Tom was soft-spoken and polite. John sometimes got along with almost no one. Tom got along with just about everyone. But these two very different gentlemen did have two things in common: They both cared deeply about the American colonies, and neither cared much for the British tyrant, King George. With their signature wit, impeccable research, and inventive presentation style, Kerley and Fotheringham masterfully blend biography and history to create a brilliant portrait of two American heroes who bravely set aside their differences to join forces in the fight for our country's freedom.

Abraham Lincoln Comes Home / Robert Burleigh (973.7092)

When Abraham Lincoln was assassinated in 1865, the country grieved for the courageous president who had guided them through the Civil War. Over the course of thirteen somber days, people paid homage as Lincoln's funeral train made its way from Washington, D.C., to Springfield, Illinois. In moving prose and stunning paintings, a young boy experiences the deep feelings evoked by the death of a major historical figure, during a time of great change in the country.
The Camping Trip that Changed America: Theodore Roosevelt, John Muir, and Our National Parks / Barb Rosenstock (979.4)
Caldecott medalist Mordicai Gerstein captures the majestic redwoods of Yosemite in this little-known but important story from our nation's history. In 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt joined naturalist John Muir on a trip to Yosemite. Camping by themselves in the uncharted woods, the two men saw sights and held discussions that would ultimately lead to the establishment of our National Parks.

Jacques Cousteau was the world's ambassador of the oceans. His popular TV series brought whales, otters, and dolphins right into people's living rooms. From the first moment he got a glimpse of what lived under the ocean's waves, Cousteau was hooked. He and his team of scientists invented diving equipment and waterproof cameras. They made films and televisions shows and wrote books so they could share what they learned. The oceans were a vast unexplored world, and Cousteau became our guide. And when he saw that pollution was taking its toll on the seas, Cousteau became our guide in how to protect the oceans as well.

Nurse, Soldier, Spy: The Story of Sarah Edmonds, a Civil War Hero / Marissa Moss (Juv. Bio. Edm)
This fast-paced, high-energy picture book tells the true story of Sarah Emma Edmonds, who at age nineteen disguised herself as a man in order to fight in the Civil War. She took the name Frank Thompson and joined a Michigan army regiment to battle the Confederacy. Sarah excelled as a soldier and nurse on the battlefield. Because of her heroism, she was asked to become a spy. Her story comes to life through the signature illustrations and design of John Hendrix and the exciting storytelling of Marissa Moss.

Plowing a potato field in 1920, a 14-year-old farm boy from Idaho saw in the parallel rows of overturned earth a way to "make pictures fly through the air." This boy was not a magician; he was a scientific genius and just eight years later he made his brainstorm in the potato field a reality by transmitting the world's first television image. This fascinating picture-book biography of Philo Farnsworth covers his early interest in machines and electricity, leading up to how he put it all together in one of the greatest inventions of the 20th century.
This illustrated biography of Harry Houdini combines original artwork and archival artifacts--including photographs, playbills and posters, letters, and even some of Houdini's own stage props--to bring the story of the world's greatest escape artist to life. Filled with little-known facts, this is the perfect book for readers interested in magic and the history of Houdini.

Bass Reeves seemed bigger than life. As a deputy U.S. Marshal--and former slave who escaped to freedom in the Indian Territories--Bass was cunning and fearless. This title reveals the story of a remarkable African-American hero of the Old West.

What to Do About Alice? How Alice Roosevelt Broke the Rules, Charmed the World, and Drove Her Father Teddy Crazy! / Barbara Kerley (Juv. Bio. Roo)
A witty and stylish biography of a maverick American heroine -- the outspoken, irresistible daughter of Teddy Roosevelt. Theodore Roosevelt had a small problem. Her name was Alice. Alice Lee Roosevelt was hungry to go places, meet people, do things! Father called it running riot. Alice called it eating up the world. Whether she was entertaining important White House visitors with her pet snake or traveling the globe, Alice bucked convention and turned every new experience into an adventure! Brimming with affection and wit, this spirited biography gives readers a peek at family life inside the White House.

Drawing from Memory / Allen Say (Juv. Bio. Say)
Caldecott Medalist Allen Say presents a stunning graphic novel chronicling his journey as an artist during WWII, when he apprenticed under Noro Shinpei, Japan's premier cartoonist. Part memoir, part graphic novel, part narrative history, Drawing from Memory presents a complex look at the real-life relationship between a mentor and his student. With watercolor paintings, original cartoons, vintage photographs, and maps, Allen Say has created a book that will inspire the artist in all of us.
The Extraordinary Mark Twain (According to Susy) / Barbara Kerley (Juv. Bio. Twain)
Susy Clemens thought the world was wrong about her papa. They saw Mark Twain as "a humorist joking at everything." But he was so much more, and Susy was determined to set the record straight. In a journal she kept under her pillow, Susy documented her world-famous father—from his habits (good and bad!) to his writing routine to their family's colorful home life. Her frank, funny, tender biography (which came to be one of Twain's most prized possessions) gives rare insight and an unforgettable perspective on an American icon. Inserts with excerpts from Susy's actual journal give added appeal.

The House Baba Built: An Artist's Childhood in China / Ed Young (Juv. Bio. You)
In Ed Young's childhood home in Shanghai, all was not as it seemed. The house his father built transformed as needed into a place to play hide-and-seek, to eat bamboo shoots, and to be safe, for outside the home's walls, China was at war. Soon the house held not only Ed and his four siblings but also friends, relatives, and even strangers who became family. The war grew closer, and Ed watched as planes flew overhead and friends joined the Chinese air force. But through it all, Ed's childhood remained full of joy and imagination. This powerful, poignant, and exquisitely illustrated memoir is the story of one of our most beloved children's illustrators and the house his baba built.