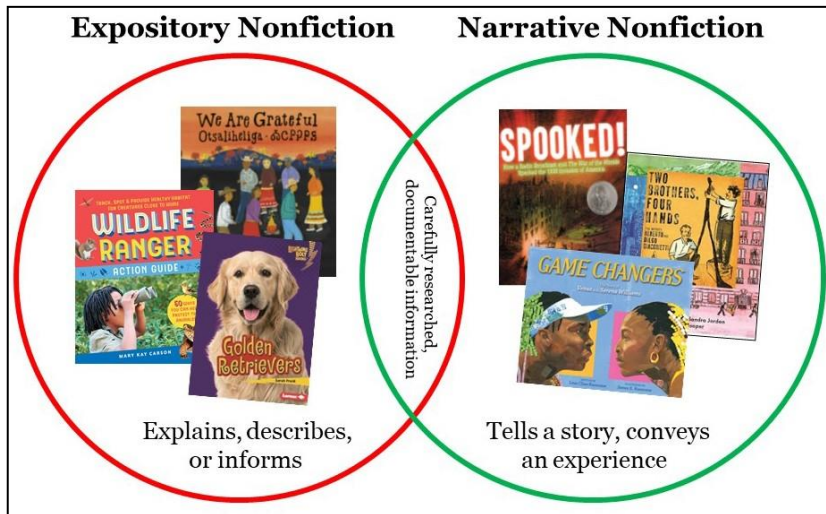


A Look at Nonfiction Writing Styles



There are two nonfiction writing styles—expository and narrative.

Like fiction, narrative nonfiction puts story first. It includes real characters and settings; narrative scenes; and, ideally, a narrative arc with rising tension, a climax, and denouement. The scenes, which give readers an intimate look at the events and people

being described, are linked by transitional text that provides necessary background while speeding through parts of the true story that don't require close inspection. The art of crafting narrative nonfiction lies in pacing, which means selecting just the right scenes to flesh out.

Not all children are naturally drawn to stories and storytelling. Some are more interested in data, facts, ideas, and patterns than in making an emotional connection with the central figure in a book. As they read, their goal is to gather information so that they can learn about the world and how it works. These children enjoy reading expository nonfiction—books that describe, explain, or inform in a clear, accessible fashion.

So, the next time you're adding nonfiction to your collection, be sure to include a healthy mix of narrative and expository titles. Here are some I highly recommend:

Examples of Narrative Nonfiction

Balouch, Kristen. *One Million Trees: A True Story*. New York: Holiday House, 2022

Denise, Anika Aldamuy. *Planting Stories: The Life of Librarian and Storyteller Pura Belpré*. New York: HarperCollins, 2019.

Fleming, Candace. *Honeybee: They Busy Life of Apis mellifera*. New York: Neal Porter Books, 2020.

Jarrow, Gail. *Spooked! How a Radio Broadcast and The War of the Worlds Sparked the 1938 Invasion of America*. Honesdale, PA: Calkins Creek, 2018.

Larson, Kirsten. *The Fire of Stars: The Life and Brilliance of the woman Who Discovered What Stars Are Made Of*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2023.

Levinson, Cynthia. *The People's Painter: How Ben Shahn Fought for Justice with Art*. New York: Abrams, 2021.

Markle, Sandra. *Secrets of the Lost City: A Scientific Adventure in the Honduran Rain Forest*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner, 2022.

Montgomery, Heather L. *Something Rotten: A Fresh Look at Roadkill*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2019.

Parrott-Ryan, Maria. *Mysterious Glowing Mammals: An Unexpected Discovery Sparks a Scientific Investigation*. Minneapolis: Millbrook, 2023.

Sheinkin, Steve. *Impossible Escape: A True Story of Survival and Heroism in Nazi Europe*. New York: Macmillan, 2023.

Slater, Dashka. *Accountable: The True Story of a Racist Social Media Account and the Teenagers Whose Lives It Changed*. New York: Farar, Straus, and Giroux, 2023.

Soontornvat, Christina. *All Thirteen: The Incredible Cave Rescue of the Thai Boys' Soccer Team*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick, 2020.

Valdez, Patricia. *Joan Proctor, Dragon Doctor: The Woman Who Loved Reptiles*. New York: Knopf, 2018.

Wallmark, Laurie. *Hedy Lamarr's Double Life: Hollywood Legend and Brilliant Inventor*. New York: Sterling, 2019.

Weatherford, Carole Boston. *How Do You Spell Unfair? MacNolia Cox and the National Spelling Bee*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick, 2023.

Examples of Expository Nonfiction

Atkins, Marcie Flinchum. *Wait, Rest, Pause: Dormancy in Nature*. Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook, 2019.

Brew-Hammond, Nana Ekua. *Blue: A History of the Color as Deep as the Sea and as Wide as the Sky*. New York: Knopf, 2023.

Cherry-Paul, Sonja, Jason Reynolds, and Ibram X. Kendi. *Stamped (for Kids): Racism, Antiracism, and You*. New York: Little, Brown, 2021.

Chin, Jason. *The Universe in You: A Microscopic Journey*. New York: Holiday House, 2022.

Duffield, Katy S. *Crossings: Extraordinary Structures for Extraordinary Animals*. San Diego: Beach Lane, 2020

Fishman, Seth. *A Hundred Billion Trillion Stars*. New York: Greenwillow, 2017.

Johnson, Dinah. *H Is for Harlem*. Christy Ottaviano Books/Little, Brown, 2022.

Kinser, Heather Ferranti. *Nature Is a Sculptor: Weathering and Erosion*. Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook, 2023.

Lanan, Jessica. *Jumper: A Day in the Life of a Backyard Jumping Spider*. New York: Roaring Brook, 2023.

Lavelle, Kari. *Butt or Face? A Hilarious Animal Guessing Game Book for Kids*. New York: Sourcebooks, 2023.

Leigh, Lindsey. *The Deep: Wild Life at the Ocean's Darkest Depths*. New York: Penguin workshop, 2023.

Markle, Sandra. *What If You Had T. rex Teeth? And Other Dinosaur Parts*. New York: Scholastic, 2019.

Messner, Kate. *The Next President: The Unexpected Beginnings and Unwritten Future of America's Presidents*. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle, 2021.

Montgomery, Heather L. *What's in Your Pocket?: Collecting Nature's Treasures*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2021.

Montgomery, Sy. *The Book of Turtles*. New York: Carion, 2023.

Rocco, John. *How We Got to the Moon: The People, Technology, and Daring Feats of Science Behind Humanity's Greatest Adventure*. New York: Crown, 2020.

Roy, Katherine. *Making More: How Life Begins*. New York: Norton, 2023.

Salyer, Hannah. *Ancestry: The Mystery and Majesty of Ancient Cave Art*. New York, Clarion, 2023.

Sanchez, Anita. *Rotten: Vultures, Beetles, Slime and Nature's Other Decomposers*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2019.

Sepetys, Ruta. *You, the Story: A Writer's Guide to Craft Through Memory*. New York: Viking, 2023.

Sorell, Traci. *We Are Grateful: Otsaliheliga*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2018.

Copyright © 2024, Melissa Stewart. May be copied for educational use but may not be reprinted or resold for commercial purposes. www.melissa-stewart.com