



## **Our America 1865 to the Present USII Literature List**

### **CHAPTER 1**

- ***Atlas of American History***, by Gary Nash, is a comprehensive collection of maps beginning at 1607. This reference is expensive, but well worth the price. Its many historical maps will be useful throughout the year.
- ***My America: A Poetry Atlas of the United States***, by Lee Bennett Hopkins, explores the diverse geography and climate of the regions through poems by a variety of authors, such as Langston Hughes and Carl Sandburg. Maps and state fact lists are also included. **Lexile NP**
- ***Our Fifty States***, by Mark Bockenbauer and Stephen Cunha, is a National Geographic production that illustrates each state in our country in photographs by region. It is an excellent resource for visualizing a diverse land.
- ***USA from Space***, by Anne-Catherine Fallen, uses satellite images, along with ground-level photographs, to describe a sampling of locations in the United States. This is an excellent resource to pique student interest and illustrate the landforms. **Lexile 1090L**
- ***The Camping Trip that Changed America***, by Barb Rosenstock, shares the friendship between President Theodore Roosevelt and naturalist John Muir as they camp in the Yosemite. **Lexile 740L**

### **CHAPTER 2**

- ***Cause: Reconstruction America 1863-1877***, by Tonya Bolden, is a nonfiction, in-depth look at Reconstruction.
- ***Forty Acres and Maybe a Mule***, by Harriette Gillem Robinet, is an award-winning historical fiction title that follows a formerly enslaved boy and his brother through the trials of becoming landowners shortly after the war. **Lexile 610L**
- ***I Thought My Soul Would Rise and Fly: The Diary of Patsy, a Freed Girl, Mars Bluff, South Carolina, 1865***, by Joyce Hansen, is part of the *Dear America* series. This historical fiction title, written as a journal, is an easy read for interested students or an insightful read aloud for extra minutes at the end of the class. **Lexile 820L**
- ***Lincoln and Douglass: An American Friendship***, by Nikki Giovanni, is a picture book that introduces the strengths and challenges of the friendship between Lincoln and Douglass. **Lexile 970L**
- ***Reconstruction Junction***, by Bentley Boyd, is a colorful graphic novel discussing the events of the Reconstruction Era that your reluctant readers will thoroughly enjoy.
- ***The African American Story***, by Joy Masoff, takes readers from the great African civilizations of Egypt, Nubia, and Mali, through the dark days of enslavement and discrimination, to the accomplishments of modern-day legends, such as Oprah and President Obama.
- ***The American Story***, by Jennifer Armstrong, is a collection of 100 true tales from American history. It is valuable to use throughout the entire year. **Lexile 1050L**

### CHAPTER 3

- ***Building the Transcontinental Railroad***, by Linda Thompson, is a helpful resource for your challenged readers interested in learning more about the construction of the railroad. **Lexile 1130L**
- ***Iron Rails, Iron Men, and the Race to Link the Nation: The Story of the Transcontinental Railroad***, by Martin Sandler, contains primary source photographs and text that describes the history of building the transcontinental railroad. **Lexile NC1230L**
- ***The Dream of Manifest Destiny: Immigrants and the Westward Expansion***, by Nick Christopher, is written in an engaging way that allows the reader to “take a ride” on a wagon train or a railroad while learning through primary sources. **Lexile 1050L**
- ***The Split History of Westward Expansion in the United States, American Indian Perspective***, by Nell Musolf, tells the story of westward expansion from two different sides—one by the settlers and one by the American Indians. **Lexile 1030L**
- ***The Transcontinental Railroad***, by Michael V. Uschan, is an inviting title full of maps and engaging images.
- ***Which Way to the Wild West?: Everything Your Schoolbooks Didn’t Tell You About America’s Westward Expansion***, by Steve Sheinkin, is told with a storyteller’s voice to captivate reluctant readers. **Lexile 940L**
- ***Bad News for Outlaws: The Remarkable Life of Bass Reeves, Deputy U.S. Marshal***, by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson, is a picture book biography of an American West hero. **Lexile 860L**
- ***Black Cowboy, Wild Horses: A True Story***, by Julius Lester, is a picture book retelling of a wild horse hunt by an African American cowboy. Readers explore the Old West and experience the relationship between the men and the animals. **Lexile 710L**
- ***The Buffalo Soldier***, by Sherry Garland, follows a freed man who joins the U.S. Army to help earn a living and an education. Readers will learn about the nickname “buffalo soldier” given to the freed slaves by the Cheyenne Indians in this fiction picture book.
- ***The Buffalo Soldier and the American West***, by Jason Glaser, is a graphic novel that tells the story of the African American soldiers who fought to protect the Western Frontier **Lexile GN660L**

### CHAPTER 4

- ***Alexander Graham Bell: Inventor of the Telephone***, by the editors of TIME for Kids, with Johan Micklos, Jr., offers a simple read for middle school students about Bell’s life and inventions. **Lexile 780L**
- ***Oil, Steel, Railroads: America’s Big Businesses in the late 1800’s***, by Jesse Jarnow, correlates to the Big Business lessons in Chapter 6, but also makes a helpful introduction when discussing the industries here.
- ***Shutting out the Sky: Life in the Tenements of New York 1880-1924***, by Deborah Hopkinson, is filled with telling photographs and powerful quotations from immigrants about the lives they endured in New York. Perfect for a quick read aloud. It brings readers into the midst of the dark, fiery imaginary town with a steel mill and iron mill. **Lexile 990L**
- ***Steel Town***, by Jonah Winter, is picture book perfect for a quick read aloud. It brings readers into the midst of the dark, fiery imaginary town with a steel and iron mill.

## **CHAPTER 4 CONTINUED**

- ***The Industrial Revolution in United States History***, by Anita McCormick, focuses on how our country transformed itself from agriculture to industry. **Lexile 1130L**
- ***Thomas Edison: Brilliant Inventor***, by the editors of TIME For Kids, with Lisa DeMauro, offers a similarly easy read about Edison. **Lexile 680L**
- ***Landed***, by Milly Lee, is a picture book that follows a twelve-year-old boy from China trying to join his merchant father in San Francisco during the Chinese Exclusion Act. **Lexile 790L**
- ***Reconstructing America: 1865-1890***, by Joy Hakim, will answer most questions that arise in this chapter in a helpful, student-friendly way. **Lexile 890L**
- ***Telephone***, by the editors of TIME For Kids, with John Micklos, Jr., offers a simple read for middle school students about Bell's life and inventions. **Lexile 780L**
- ***The Memory Coat***, by Elvira Woodruff, is a picture book story of a Russian boy and his family who come to America. It tells his travel story and his experience at Ellis Island. **Lexile AD650L**
- ***When Jessie Came Across the Sea***, by Amy Hest, is a picture book of a poor 13-year-old Jewish orphan's journey and challenges traveling from Eastern Europe to New York City. **Lexile 470L**

## **CHAPTER 5**

- ***Booker T. Washington: Great American Educator***, by Eric Braun, is an engaging graphic novel biography. **Lexile GN660L**
- ***Discovering Black America: From the Age of Exploration to the Twenty-First Century***, by Linda Tarrant-Reid, is an account of 400 years of African American history. Notable chapters include topics on Jim Crow and the advancement of African Americans through the years. **Lexile 1370L**
- ***More Than Anything Else***, by Marie Bradby, is a simple picture book about Booker T. Washington's desire to learn to read when he worked at the salt mines. **Lexile 660L**
- ***Portraits of African-American Heroes***, by Tonya Bolden, contains a powerful one-page biography and image about DuBois. **Lexile 660L**
- ***The First Step: How One Girl Put Segregation on Trial***, by Susan E. Goodman, is about the first African American case challenging segregated schools. With a length of only 40 pages, this would be an excellent read aloud. **Lexile 770L**
- ***The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow***, by Richard Wormser, is the companion book to the PBS series by the same title. It is a thorough digital resource helpful in answering any questions that arise about Jim Crow.

## **CHAPTER 6**

- ***American Tycoons Series***, by Lewis K. Parker, from Reading Power, by PowerKids Press, offers high interest, strong content titles with lower reading levels. Included in the series are: Andrew Carnegie and the Steel Industry, Cornelius Vanderbilt and the Railroad Industry, John D. Rockefeller and the Oil Industry, and J. Pierpont Morgan and Wall Street.
- ***Kids at Work: Lewis Hine and the Crusade Against Child Labor***, by Russell Freedman, tells the story of child labor in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century through photographs. **Lexile 1140L**
- ***The Roaring Twenties: Discover the Era of Prohibition, Flappers, and Jazz***, by Marcia Amidon Lusted, covers the 1920s, including industry, American farmers, inventions, the economy, women's suffrage, and the temperance movement. **Lexile 1110L**
- ***The Bobbin Girl***, by Emily Arnold McCully, is a picture book about a 10-year-old girl working in the horrid conditions of a cotton mill. **Lexile 600L**

## **CHAPTER 6 CONTINUED**

- ***Hear My Sorrow: The Diary of Angela Denoto, a Shirtwaist Worker***, by Deborah Hopkinson, is part of the *Dear America* series. The story follows an Italian immigrant girl working in a shirtwaist factory in New York City. **Lexile 740L**
- ***Fire! The Beginnings of the Labor Movement***, by Barbara Diamond Goldin, is part of the *Once Upon America* series and retells the events of the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire through the eyes of 11-year-old Rosie. **Lexile 600L**
- ***The Locket: Surviving the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire***, by Suzanne Lieurance, is a historical fiction book about immigrants living in a tenement and working at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company.
- ***Uprising***, by Margaret Peterson Haddix, is a suspenseful historical fiction novel following three teenage girls living in New York City in the early 1900s. The girls share varied viewpoints but all find themselves present at the Triangle Shirtwaist fire. **Lexile 790L**

## **CHAPTER 7**

- ***Driven: A Photobiography of Henry Ford***, by Don Mitchell, is a photographic history of the inventor of the automobile. **Lexile 1210L**
- ***Eat My Dust! Henry Ford's First Race***, by Monica Kulling, is a simple, quick read-aloud about Ford's first car race. **Lexile 360L**
- ***Henry Ford: Big Wheel in the Auto Industry***, by Mike Venezia, offers an inviting illustrated biography of Henry Ford. **Lexile 950L**
- ***The Flyer Flew! The Invention of the Airplane***, by Lee Sullivan Hill, is a quick-read on the Wright brothers' story.
- ***The Wright Brothers***, by Susan E. Hamen, includes primary source photos, maps, historic documents, timelines, and fun facts featured throughout the text.
- ***The Wright Brothers: How They Invented the Airplane***, by Russell Freedman, won a Newberry Honor award for its many primary source photographs and detailed descriptions of each step of the process. **Lexile 1160L**
- ***Who Was Henry Ford?***, by Michael Burgan, is an appropriate biography for student who want to know more about the inventor who brought affordable cars to the people.
- ***My Brothers' Flying Machine: Wilbur, Orville, and Me***, by Jane Yolen, tells the story of the Wright brothers through the eyes and supporting efforts of their sister, Katharine.

## **CHAPTER 8**

- ***An Emerging World Power: 1900-1929***, by George Stanley, is a fine review of Chapter 7, a strong resource for Chapter 8, and an introduction to Chapter 9. Its clear text supports a multitude of primary source samplings of the time period.
- ***Colonel Theodore Roosevelt***, by David Adler, is a biography of this great American leader. Photographs, political cartoons, and copies of letters enrich this text. **Lexile 960L**
- ***Eyewitness World War I***, by Simon Adams, does not offer many specifics related to the standards of the chapter, but it touches on many parts in a visually appealing manner.
- ***Shooting the Stars: The Christmas Truce of 1914***, by John Hendrix, is a letter from a soldier to his mother about a true story during WWI. He tells about the night that the war stopped in the trenches for Christmas Eve in 1914. **Lexile 830L**
- ***The 1910s***, by Deanne Durrett, offers an easy-to-read text about this decade. Chapter 4 focuses on World War I.

## **CHAPTER 8 CONTINUED**

- ***The 1910s Decade in Photos: A Decade That Shook the World*, by Jim Corrigan, offers another look at the events in the chapter with photographs, drawings, maps, and World War I propaganda.**
- ***The American Story*, by Jennifer Armstrong, is a collection of one hundred tales from American history. Lexile 1050L**
- ***The Progressive Era and World War I*, by Tanya Lee Stone, offers more detail into Big Stick Diplomacy and the causes and events of World War I at an age-appropriate reading level.**
- ***Where Poppies Grow*, by Linda Granfield, is a collection of photos, memorabilia, and anecdotes that bring to life the human story of World War I.**
- ***Fly, Cher Ami, Fly!*, by Robert Burleigh, is an engaging nonfiction selection about a WWI carrier pigeon. Lexile 570L**
- ***When Christmas Comes Again: The World War I Diary of Simone Spencer*, by Beth Seidel Levine, a part of the *Dear America* series about a young girl who operates switchboards and helps the Allies to victory. Lexile 940L**
- ***Gay-Neck: The Story of a Pigeon*, by Dhan Gopal Mukerji, is a Newberry Medal winner about a prized pigeon serving in WWI. Lexile 1040L**

## **CHAPTER 9**

- ***Children of the Great Depression*, by Russell Freedman, is not intended for student use, but is an excellent resource for images that can be shared with students for an in-depth look at the living conditions of many Americans throughout the 1930s. Lexile 1170L**
- ***The Great Depression*, by Cory Gunderson, is part of the *American Moments* series. This book offers short insights into all aspects of the decade, including the Great Depression, art and music, cultural change, isolationism, the New Deal, and the beginnings of World War I in Europe. Lexile 910L**
- ***Flying Solo: How Ruth Elder Soared Into America's Heart*, by Julie Cummins, is a picture book about how Elder proved that female pilots were as capable as male pilots. It explores her adventurous flights, as well as the negative opinions some had of women pilots during the 1920s and 1930s.**
- ***Skit-Scat Raggedy Cat: Ella Fitzgerald*, by Roxane Orgill, is a picture book about the hardships Fitzgerald faced growing up and how she became a singer. Lexile 820L**
- ***Jazz Age Josephine*, by Jonah Winter, is a picture book about the eccentric life of jazz performer Josephine Baker. It describes how she overcame growing up poor and surrounded by racial barriers. Lexile NC600L**
- ***My Heart Will Not Sit Down*, by Mara Rockliff, was inspired by true events and shares the story of an African child in Cameroon who hears of Americans suffering during the Great Depression. The child is inspired and raises money to send to the U.S.**
- ***Stars in the Shadows : The Negro League All-Star Game of 1934*, by Charles R. Smith Jr., reads as a radio broadcast from the legendary Negro League All Star Game of 1934. Readers are introduced to top players, including Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson. Lexile NC1330L**
- ***That Book Woman*, by Heather Henson, is a picture book based on the true story of the Pack Horse Librarians in the Appalachian Mountains. This library project was part of FDR's WPA to bring books to remote regions. Lexile AD920L**

## CHAPTER 10

- ***Dear Mr. President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Letters from a Mill Town Girl*, by Elizabeth Winthrop, is a collection of fictional letters between FDR and a girl living in New England during the Depression.**
- ***Attack on Pearl Harbor, The True Story of the Day America Entered World War II*, by Shelley Tanaka, is an engaging informational book filled with photographs and paintings of this fateful day. Lexile 820L**
- ***Benno and the Night of Broken Glass*, by Meg Wiviott, is a picture book about a cat in Berlin who offers an impartial perspective as the Nazis take over. Excellent read-aloud for introducing the Nazis.**
- ***Causes of World War II*, by Jim Corrigan, discusses the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I and the subsequent rise of power of the Nazi regime.**
- ***Genevieve's War*, by Patricia Reilly Giff, is a Newbery award-winning book that takes place in France, when the WWII German occupation begins. Lexile 550L**
- ***Gingersnap*, by Patricia Reilly Giff, takes place in New York in 1944 when World War II is raging. Lexile 540L**
- ***I Survived the Bombing of Pearl Harbor*, by Lauren Tarshis, is the fictional tale of an eleven-year-old boy who witnesses and survives the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Lexile 620L**
- ***Making Bombs for Hitler*, by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch, tells the story of a girl taken to a Nazi concentration camp where she and other Ukrainian children were forced to work and nearly starved to death. Lexile 760L**
- ***No Pretty Pictures: A Child of War*, by Anita Lobel, is an autobiographical account of her childhood years in a concentration camp in Nazi-occupied Poland, until her arrival in America as a teenager. Lexile 750L**
- ***Number the Stars*, by Lois Lowry, is a Newbery winning title about a 10-year-old Danish girl working to help her Jewish friend escape from their Nazi-occupied homeland to the safety of Sweden. Lexile 670L**
- ***Pearl Harbor is Burning! A Story of World War II*, by Kathleen V. Kudlinski, is a concise novel about two young boys who witness the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Lexile 490L**
- ***The Butterfly*, by Patricia Polacco, tells the story of a young girl in war-torn France who discovers another girl hiding in her basement from the Nazis. Lexile 430L**
- ***The Devil's Arithmetic*, by Jane Yolen, is the story of a present-day 12-year-old girl who is transported back in time to Poland just before the German invasion. It details the Holocaust from the Jewish ghettos to a concentration camp. Lexile 730L**
- ***The Attack on Pearl Harbor*, by Jane Sutcliffe, is a graphic novel that tells the events of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Lexile GN540L**
- ***The Flag with Fifty-Six Stars: A Gift from the Survivors of Mauthausen*, by Susan Goldman Rubin and Bill Farnsworth, is the moving true story of the handmade American flag made by concentration camp victims and the moment it was presented to the American troops who rescued them. Lexile 940L**
- ***The Lucky Baseball: My Story in a Japanese-American Internment Camp*, by Suzanne Lieurance, follows 12-year-old Harry Yakamoto and his forced relocation to Manzanar shortly after Pearl Harbor. Lexile 690L**
- ***Hiroshima*, A Novella, by Laurence Yep, retells the real account of Hiroshima survivors. Lexile 660L**

## CHAPTER 11

- ***Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories and The Sneetches and Other Stories, by Dr. Seuss, are classical Seuss tales filled with political messages. Lexile 600L***
- ***Amazing Decades in Photos***, by Jim Corrigan, is a series that takes each decade in American history and looks at the key events of the time through easy to understand text and supportive photographs. For this chapter, the following books in the series cover the main points: ***The 1950s Decade in Photos, The 1960s Decade in Photos, The 1970s Decade in Photos.***
- ***Cold War America: 1946 to 1990***, by Ross Gregory, is part of the “Almanacs of American Life” series. The book presents a plethora of information about the time period, including economic and social changes, along with a large amount of data presented in tables and graphs. \* *Due to some content within the book, it is recommended for teacher-use only.*
- ***Talking Walls***, by Margy Burns Knight, is a picture book that looks at some of the world’s most famous walls, including the Berlin Wall and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. **Lexile 1150L**
- ***The Butter Battle Book***, by Dr. Seuss, is a classic tale about the Yooks and the Zooks, who both love buttered bread. However, animosity grows between the two groups because they want to enjoy the bread differently. This story is used in a chapter lesson as an analogy of the superpowers during the Cold War. **Lexile AD710L**
- ***A Night Divided***, by Jennifer Nielsen, is a suspenseful historical fiction novel about a family that is divided by the Berlin Wall and their daring escape plan to be reunited. **Lexile 810L**
- ***Every Human Has Rights: A Photographic Declaration for Kids***, by Mary Robinson, delves into the 30 human rights guaranteed by the United Nations at its inception, in an age-appropriate format. **Lexile 880L**

## CHAPTER 12

- ***Child of the Civil Rights Movement***, by Paula Young Shelton and Raul Colon, is a picture book of Shelton’s memories and experiences as the daughter of the civil rights leader and former U.N. ambassador, Andrew Young. This short, descriptive book captures the feelings and events of many young African American children during this time of change. **Lexile AD960L**
- ***If You Lived at the Time of Martin Luther King***, by Ellen Levine, begins with segregation and ends with the death of this Civil Rights leader and what still needs to be done to ensure equality in America. **Lexile 810L**
- ***Seeds of Freedom***, by Hester Bass, shares the true story of an Alabama town where black and white citizens worked together to end segregation. **Lexile AD830L**
- ***The 2000s Decade in Photos***, by Jim Corrigan, contains sections that focus on 9/11, conflicts in the Middle East, and America’s dependence on energy from foreign countries.

The above list was compiled in 2017 to enhance your classroom library or be used with lessons found in ***Our America 1865 to the Present***. Organized by chapter, this reference list offers biographies, fiction, and nonfiction selections on varied reading levels. When applicable, Lexile text measures accompany books to help match students with appropriate reading materials. Share the list with your library media specialist, principal, PTA, or anyone else who might help you acquire these resources to get students excited about reading in the classroom. This is a copyrighted work product of Five Ponds Press. Please do not post or share this list outside the school without prior permission.

