



Writers choose a particular nonfiction category based on the information they want to share and how they want to share it. Most nonfiction literature for children can be classified in one of four categories: life stories (biography, memoir, and autobiography), survey books, specialized nonfiction books, and concept books.

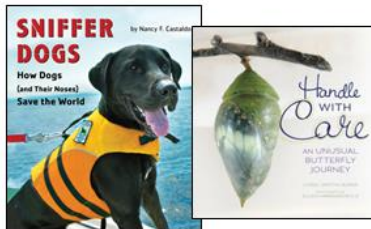
Nonfiction Categories



Life Story



Survey Book



Specialized Nonfiction



Concept Book

Life Story



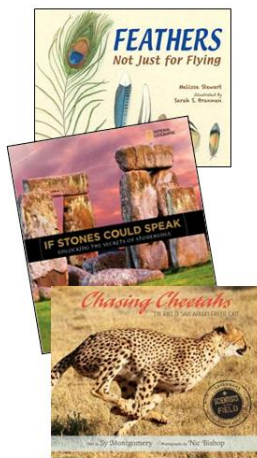
- Cradle-to-grave biography
- Episodic biography
- Autobiography/memoir
- Biography collection

Survey Book



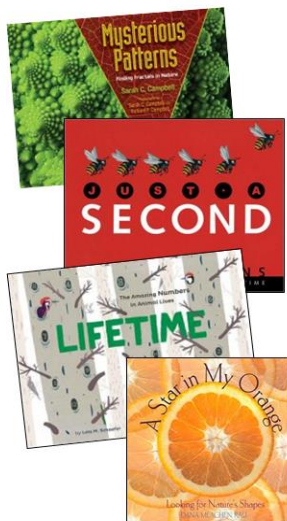
- Overview of a topic
- Emphasizes balance and breadth of coverage rather than depth
- Can read cover to cover or skip around

Specialized Nonfiction



- Specific information about a relatively limited topic
- Emphasizes depth rather than breadth
- Writer often presents information in a way that models his/her passion for the topic

Concept Book



- Explores an abstract idea or process
- Offers unique perspectives or new ways of seeing things
- Works well for picture books about life cycles, seasons, animal behavior patterns, math concepts

Recommended Books by Nonfiction Category

Life Stories

The Boy Who Loved Math by Deborah Heiligman

Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson

Dave the Potter by Laban Carrick Hill

Daredevil: The Daring Life of Betty Skeleton by Meghan McCarthy

El Deafo by Cece Ball

A Home for Mr. Emerson by Barbara Kerley

How the Beatles Changed the World by Martin W. Sandler

Josephine: The Dazzling Life of Josephine Baker by Patricia Hruby Powell and Christian Robinson

The Mad Potter: George Ohr, Eccentric Genius by Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan

Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai by Claire A. Nivola

The Scraps Book: Notes from a Colorful Life by Lois Ehlert

What to Do About Alice? by Barbara Kerley

Survey

Animal Book by Steve Jenkins

Animal Grossapedia by Melissa Stewart

A Black Hole Is Not a Hole by Carolyn Cinami DeCristofano

The Beetle Book by Steve Jenkins

Bugged: How Insects Changed the World by Sarah Albee

Eyewitness Books

Frogs by Nic Bishop

The Great American Dust Bowl by Don Brown

Ice: The Amazing History of the Ice Business by Laurence Pringle

National Geographic Readers

Redwoods by Jason Chin

Woman in the House (and Senate) by Ilene Cooper

Specialized

Bomb by Steve Sheinkin

Chasing Cheetahs: The Race to Save Africa's Fastest Cats by Sy Montgomery

Frog Song by Brenda G. Zuiberson

Energy Island by Allan Drummond

Handle with Care: An Unusual Butterfly Journey by Loree Griffin Burns

My First Day by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

A Place for Butterflies by Melissa Stewart

Plastics Ahoy! by Patricia Newman

Pure Grit by Mary Cronk Farrell

Witches! The Absolutely True Tale of Disaster in Salem by Rosalyn Schanzer

Wolfsnail: A Backyard Predator by Sarah Campbell

Zombie Makers: True Stories of Nature's Undead by Rebecca L. Johnson

Concept

An Egg is Quiet by Dianna Aston Hutts

Bone by Bone: Comparing Animal Skeletons by Sarah Levine

Frog in a Bog by John Himmelman

Just a Second by Steve Jenkins

Lifetime: The Amazing Numbers in Animals' Lives by Lola Schaefer

Move by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

Mysterious Patterns: Finding Fractals in Nature by Sarah C. Campbell

No Monkeys, No Chocolate by Melissa Stewart

Seeing Symmetry by Loreen Leedy

Swirl by Swirl by Joyce Sidman

Trout Are Made of Trees by April Pulley Sayre