

TRIPS IN TIME: 50 historical reads for teens

BC -1000

Cooney, Caroline B. [*Goddess of Yesterday.*](#)

In a prelude to the Trojan War, Anaxandra is taken from her home at a young age and survives by posing as two different princesses, before ending up as a servant to Helen and Paris as they make their way to Troy.

Galloway, Priscilla. [*The Courtesan's Daughter.*](#)

Ancient Athens is the backdrop for 14 year-old Phano and 30 year-old Theo, who are in love and want to marry. Their plans go awry, however, when an enemy of Phano's family claims that Phano is really a slave who belongs to him.

Geras, Adele. [*Troy.*](#)

Stories from the last weeks of the famous Trojan War are told from different women's perspectives, who tell tales of caring for the wounded, men weary from fighting, and bored gods and goddesses who find ways to stir things up.

Tingle, Rebecca. [*The Edge on the Sword.*](#)

Fifteen-year-old Aethelflaed, daughter of King Alfred of West Saxony, weds a stranger out of family loyalty and embarks on a journey to become one of the most well respected and loved women in early British history.

1000-1500s

Jinks, Catherine. [*Pagan's Crusade.*](#)

In twelfth-century Jerusalem, orphaned sixteen year-old Pagan is assigned to work for Lord Roland, a Templar knight, as Saladin's armies close in on the Holy City.

Meyer, Carolyn. [*Mary, Bloody Mary.*](#)

Mary Tudor, who reigned briefly as Queen of England during the 1500s, tells the story of her troubled childhood as daughter of King Henry VIII.

- Nonfiction companion: [*The Children of Henry VIII*](#) by **Alison Weir.**

Napoli, Donna Jo. [*Daughter of Venice.*](#)

In 1592 Venice, Donata isn't allowed to go to school or explore the piazzas and canals of her city – all because she is a girl – so she dresses up as a boy to seek out adventure.

Torrey, Michele. [*To the Edge of the World.*](#)

Mateo's parents have just been killed by the plague. Orphaned and penniless, he joins the crew of the famous explorer Magellan and embarks on a dangerous and exciting voyage.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Over the Edge of the World: Magellan's Terrifying Circumnavigation of the Globe*](#) by **Laurence Bergreen.**

Yolen, Jane. [*Girl in a Cage.*](#)

In 1306 as English armies invade Scotland, the King of England captures Scottish Princess Marjorie and locks her in a cage put on public display.

1600s

Brooks, Geraldine. [*Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague.*](#)

As the bubonic plague sweeps through England, eighteen year-old Anna and other residents of her small mountain village quarantine themselves in an attempt to escape the deadly virus.

- Nonfiction companion: [*When Plague Strikes: The Black Death, Smallpox, AIDS*](#) by **James Giblin.**

Chevalier, Tracy. [*Girl with a Pearl Earring.*](#)

Sixteen year-old Griet, a servant in the house of Dutch painter Vermeer, is the fictional subject of his famous painting, 'Girl with a Pearl Earring'. The household is turned upside down when everyone questions whether Griet is more than a model to Vermeer.

Hooper, Mary. [*At the Sign of the Sugared Plum.*](#)

Sarah is excited about spending the summer of 1665 working in her sister's London candy shop, until the bubonic plague takes hold of the city and Sarah finds herself fighting to stay alive.

- Nonfiction companion: [*When Plague Strikes: The Black Death, Smallpox, AIDS*](#) by **James Giblin.**

Rees, Celia. [*Witch Child*](#) & [*Sorceress.*](#)

Fourteen year-old Mary, a witch, records in a diary her experiences of living during the time of the Salem witch trials in *Witch Child*. The sequel, *Sorceress*, picks up hundreds of years later when Mary's descendant takes a spiritual journey to find out exactly what happened to Mary back in 1659.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Witch Hunt: Mysteries of the Salem Witch Trials*](#) by **Marc Aronson.**

1700s

Anderson, Laurie Halse. [*Fever 1793.*](#)

Yellow fever is sweeping through 1793 Philadelphia and in the mayhem, 16 year-old Mattie must locate her missing mother and try to outlast the wildly infectious disease.

- Nonfiction companion: [*An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever*](#) by **Jim Murphy.**

Bruchac, Joseph. [*The Winter People.*](#)

In 1759 during the French and Indian War, 14 year-old Saxso searches for his mother and sister, who have been kidnapped by British soldiers.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Our Stories Remember: American Indian History, Culture and Values through Storytelling*](#) by **Joseph Bruchac.**

Hausman, Gerald. [*Escape from Botany Bay.*](#)

Nineteen year-old Mary is sent from her England home to Botany Bay, Australia in 1786 as a prison sentence for stealing a lady's bonnet. The conditions on the ship and in the penal colony are atrocious, which prompts Mary to lead a group of prisoners in an escape back to England.

Rees, Celia. [*Pirates!*](#)

It's 1722 and 16 year-old Nancy is unwilling to be married off by her family, so she escapes to the high seas with her slave friend Minerva, where the two become pirates and travel the world in search of treasure.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Piracy and Plunder: A Murderous Business*](#) by **Milton Meltzer.**

1800s

Arrington, Frances. [*Prairie Whispers.*](#)

In the rural prairie life of the 1860s, 12 year-old Colleen sets off for help when her mother gives birth to a stillborn baby, telling everyone that the baby is just asleep. On her way to the midwife, Colleen encounters a sick woman in labor who dies just after making Colleen promise to take care of her newborn baby. Colleen switches the two babies and keeps the secret from her family until the baby's father turns up and makes trouble.

Giff, Patricia Reilly. [*Nory Ryan's Song.*](#)

In 1845, twelve year-old Nory must keep her family together as the Great Hunger, Ireland's devastating potato famine, threatens their survival.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Black Potatoes: The Story of the Great Irish Famine, 1845-1850*](#) by **Susan Campbell Bartoletti.**

Holeman, Linda. [*Search of the Moon King's Daughter.*](#)

When Emmaline's father dies of cholera, her mother sells Emmaline's younger brother into a life of servitude as a chimney sweep in order to raise money to feed her drug addiction. Knowing the life of a chimney sweep in the 1830s is extremely dangerous and gruesome, 15 year-old Emmaline sets out to London to rescue her beloved brother.

Kirkpatrick, Katherine. [*Voyage of the Continental.*](#)

As an orphan of the Civil War in 1866, 16 year-old Emeline joins a group of girls heading by ship from Massachusetts to Washington State. Emeline reports in her diary of the journey's excitement, danger, and unwelcome surprise as she arrives in Seattle.

Peck, Richard. [*The River Between Us.*](#)

During the early days of the Civil War, the Pruitt family takes in two mysterious young ladies who have fled north to Illinois from New Orleans. As the war unfolds so does the mystery of the two strangers, which will affect each member of the Pruitt family differently.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Bound for the North Star: True Stories of Fugitive Slaves*](#) by **Dennis B. Fradin.**

Rinaldi, Ann. [*Numbering All the Bones.*](#)

The Civil War ends and slaves are promised freedom, but 13 year-old slave Eulinda feels anything but free when her choices are to stay at her master's plantation or to face the world alone.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Days of Jubilee: The End of Slavery in the United States*](#) by **Patricia C. McKissack.**

1900-1910

Donnelly, Jennifer. [*A Northern Light.*](#)

Set in 1906 against the backdrop of a real-life murder at a summer inn, 16 year-old Mattie finds a voice of her own through reading the letters of the woman who was murdered.

Ingold, Jeanette. [*The Big Burn.*](#)

While fighting one of the worst wildfires in history during the summer of 1910, three teenagers' lives unfold amid the blazing forests of Montana and Idaho.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Year of the Fires: The Story of the Great Fires of 1910*](#) by **Stephen J. Pyne.**

1910s

Auch, Mary Jane. [*Ashes of Roses.*](#)

Sixteen year-old Irish immigrant Rose finds herself working under inhumane conditions at New York's Triangle Shirtwaist Factory, site of the infamous and deadly fire in 1911.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Good Girl Work: Factories, Sweatshops, and How Women Changed Their Role in the American Workforce*](#) by **Catherine Gourley.**

Bagdasarian, Adam. [*Forgotten Fire.*](#)

The Armenian Holocaust forces 12 year-old orphan Vahan on the run, who survives by begging, pretending to be deaf and mute, dressing as a girl, hiding out in basements and outhouses, and doing whatever he can to stay alive. Spans the years 1915-1918.

- Nonfiction companion: [*The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America's Awakening to International Human Rights*](#) by **Peter Balakian.**

Namioka, Lensey. [*Ties that Bind, Ties that Break.*](#)

The course of Ailin's life changes when she refuses to have her feet bound, defying the traditions of upper class, early 20th century Chinese society.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Every Step a Lotus: Shoes for Bound Feet*](#) by **Dorothy Ko.**

1920s

Hesse, Karen. [*Witness.*](#)

Various people give personal accounts of life in a small Vermont town during the early 1920s when the Klu Klux Klan tries to infiltrate their town. Among the narrators are an African American girl, a Jewish girl, Klansmen, and townspeople both for and against the KKK.

- Nonfiction companion: [*The Ku Klux Klan: A Hooded Brotherhood*](#) by **Ann Heinrichs.**

Namioka, Lensey. [*An Ocean Apart, A World Away.*](#)

Picking up where *Ties that Bind, Ties that Break* left off, this story focuses on Ailin's friend Yanyan, who pursues her dreams of becoming a doctor by enrolling in an American university. Yanyan finds that adjusting to American life of the 1920s can be just as difficult as the restrictive life she left behind in China.

Ritter, John H. [*Choosing Up Sides.*](#)

The early days of baseball, Babe Ruth and the major leagues is the backdrop for Luke's story, in which the thirteen year-old must find a way to reconcile his changing beliefs and the loyalty he feels for his father.

1930s

Hesse, Karen. [*Out of the Dust.*](#)

In a series of poems, 15 year-old Billie Joe relates the hardships of living on her family's wheat farm in Oklahoma during the dust bowl years of the Depression.

- Nonfiction companion: [*The Hungry Years: A Narrative History of the Great Depression in America*](#) by **T.H. Watkins.**

Peck, Richard. [*A Year Down Yonder.*](#)

Fifteen year old Mary Alice is sent to live with her feisty grandmother in Illinois, painting a vivid landscape of rural America during the 1930s Depression.

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. [*Esperanza Rising.*](#)

Esperanza and her mother are forced to leave their life of wealth in Mexico for the 1930s labor camps of the San Joaquin Valley, where they must adapt to the harsh circumstances facing Mexican farm workers.

- Nonfiction companions: [*The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child*](#) by **Francisco Jimenez** and [*Breaking Through*](#) by **Francisco Jimenez.**

1940s

Disher, Garry. [*The Divine Wind: A Love Story.*](#)

At the end of World War II, Hart reflects back on his relationship with a Japanese-Australian girl and how his loyalties, to his family and his country, were tested.

Kerr, M.E. [*Slap Your Sides.*](#)

Jubal's Quaker family is shaken up when his older brother protests World War II, causing neighbors in his small town to question the family's patriotism.

Spinelli, Jerry. [*Milkweed.*](#)

A young boy with no real name but called many like “StopThief”, “Jew”, and “Gypsy”, lives alone on the streets of Warsaw and admires the Nazis for their warm clothes and full stomachs. When he makes friends with a group of Jewish children, he comes to understand the horrors of the Holocaust.

- Nonfiction companions: [*Maus: A Survivor's Tale, Volumes I & II*](#) by **Art Spiegelman** [graphic novel format] and [*No Pretty Pictures: A Child of War*](#) by **Anita Lobel.**

Wulffson, Don L. [*Soldier X.*](#)

Drafted into the German Army and immediately sent to the front lines of World War II, sixteen year-old Erik sees the horrors of war firsthand. When he encounters a fallen Russian soldier, Erik dons the soldier's uniform and assumes a new identity in an attempt to be taken to the safety of a Russian hospital and away from battle.

- Nonfiction companions: [*Parallel Journeys*](#) by **Eleanor H. Ayer** and [*We Are Witnesses: The Diaries of Five Teenagers Who Died in the Holocaust*](#) edited by **Jacob Boas.**

Zindel, Paul. [*The Gadget.*](#)

Spending the summer of 1945 with his physicist dad in Los Alamos, New Mexico proves both thrilling and frightening for 13 year-old Stephen, when he discovers 'the gadget' his father is working on is really an atomic bomb.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Fallout: J. Robert Oppenheimer, Leo Szilard and the Political Science of the Atomic Bomb*](#) by **Jim Ottaviani** [graphic novel format]

1950s

Crowe, Chris. [*Mississippi Trial, 1955.*](#)

Hiram's love of the South is tested when he witnesses racial injustice in his Mississippi town, home of the real-life murder trial of an African American teenager who was killed after allegedly disrespecting a white woman.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Getting Away with Murder: The True Story of the Emmett Till Case*](#) by **Chris Crowe.**

Guterson, David. [*Snow Falling On Cedars.*](#)

A 1954 murder trial where the accused is a Japanese-American sets the stage for a look back into the Japanese Internment camps of World War II.

- Nonfiction companions: [*Fighting for Honor: Japanese Americans and World War II*](#) by **Michael L. Cooper** and [*Remembering Manzanar: Life in a Japanese Internment Camp*](#) by **Michael L. Cooper.**

Holt, Kimberly Willis. [*My Louisiana Sky.*](#)

Set in the South in the late 1950s, Tiger Ann struggles with taunting classmates, a stern grandmother and mentally slow parents. When she uncovers a dark family secret, Tiger Ann makes a decision that will change her life forever.

White, Ruth. [*Memories of Summer.*](#)

In 1955, thirteen-year-old Lyric finds her whole life changing when her family moves from the hills of Virginia to a town in Michigan and her older sister Summer begins descending into mental illness.

1960s

Alvarez, Julia. [*Before We Were Free.*](#)

The terror of General Trujillo's regime occupies Anita's teen years as she struggles with growing up in the Dominican Republic during the 1960s.

Kidd, Sue Monk. [*The Secret Life of Bees.*](#)

Fourteen year-old Lily lives with her abusive father and their housekeeper, Rosaleen, in rural South Carolina, 1964. When Rosaleen is arrested for defending herself against three of the town's harshest racists, Lily breaks her out of jail and the two hide out on a bee farm with three sisters who help Lily understand the true meaning of family.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Warriors Don't Cry: A Searing Memoir of the Battle to Integrate Little Rock's Central High*](#) by **Melba Beals.**

Les Becquets, Diane. [*The Stones of Mourning Creek.*](#)

It's 1966 in Spring Gap, Alabama where the Civil Rights movement has angered many people. Trouble erupts when Francie, who is white, and Ruthie, who is black, become close friends.

- Nonfiction companion: [*To the Mountaintop: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Sacred Mission to Save America: 1955-1968*](#) by **Stewart Burns.**

Santana, Patricia. [*Motorcycle Ride on the Sea of Tranquility.*](#)

Set in San Diego in the late 1960s, fourteen year-old Yolanda tries to help her favorite brother Chuy, a Vietnam veteran, who has returned from the war and is suffering emotional problems.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Voices from Vietnam*](#) by **Barry Denenberg.**

Soto, Gary. [*Jesse.*](#)

Jesse and his brother Abel hope that by enrolling in Fresno City College, they can escape a life of working in the fields or being drafted for the Vietnam War.

1970s

Easton, Kelly. [*Life History of a Star.*](#)

Fourteen year-old Kristin uses the pages of her diary to relate the turmoil of being a teenager in the 1970s, dealing with issues like her changing body, her Vietnam veteran brother, and everything in between.

Hobbs, Valerie. [*Sonny's War.*](#)

California teen Corin must sort out her feelings on the Vietnam War when the two men she admires most take opposing sides on the issue.

- Nonfiction companion: [*Voices from Vietnam*](#) by **Barry Denenberg.**