

5

KINDS OF NONFICTION

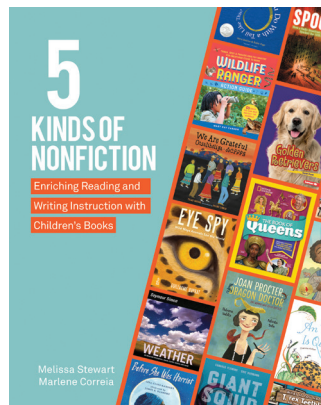
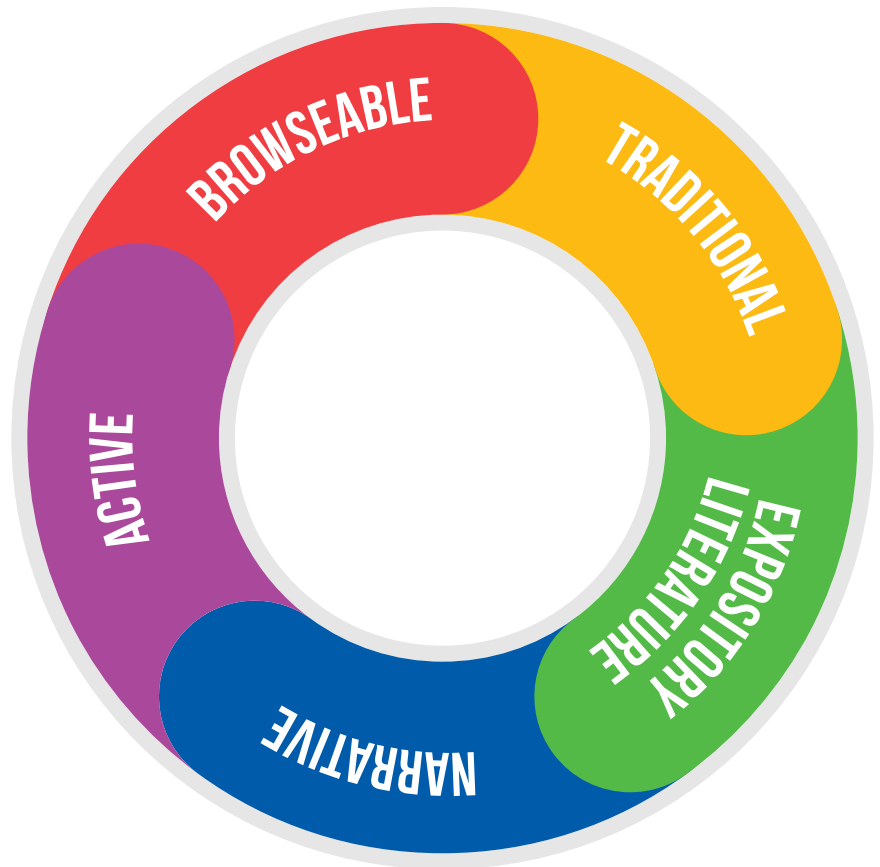
Created by author Melissa Stewart, the **5 Kinds of Nonfiction** classification system helps librarians expand and balance their nonfiction collection to provide a broad array of titles that appeal to different types of readers.

It also helps students select books they like, predict the type of information they will find in a book, and use the books for specific purposes.

To assist librarians in identifying titles from each category, Lerner used the 5 Kinds of Nonfiction system to classify the nonfiction on our website. Browse collections at lernerbooks.com/5KNF. Some books may contain elements from two different categories; these are blended nonfiction titles.

Note that books that deliver factual information but use fictional elements, such as invented dialog or scenes, talking animals or fictional characters—are not included in this classification system. They are referred to as “informational fiction” instead.

To learn more, read the educational resource *5 Kinds of Nonfiction: Enriching Reading and Writing Instruction with Children's Books* coming soon from Stenhouse Publishers or visit the educators section of Melissa's website melissa-stewart.com.



Source: Stewart, Melissa and Marlene Correia. *5 Kinds of Nonfiction: Enriching Reading and Writing Instruction with Children's Books*. Portsmouth, NH: Stenhouse Publishers. Used with permission of Stenhouse Publishers.

ACTIVE

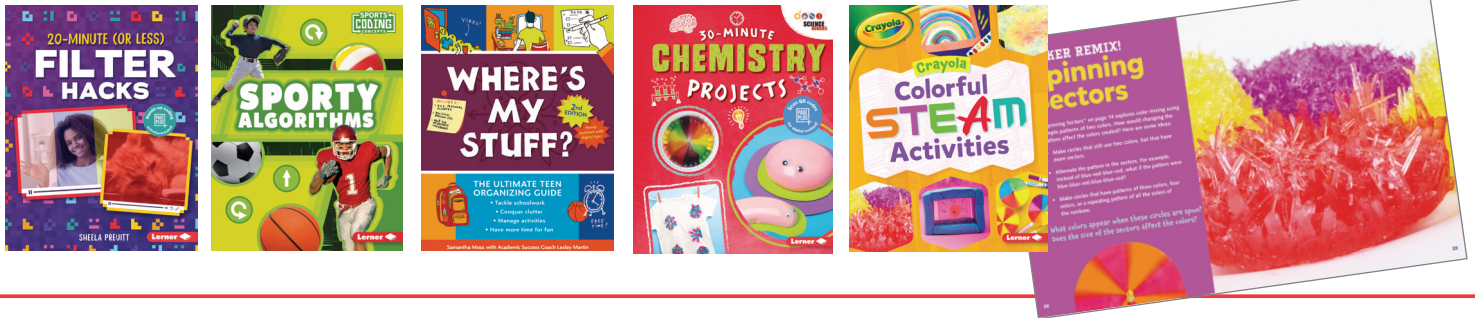
Highly interactive and/or teaches skills for engaging in activity

How-to guides, field guides, cookbooks, craft books

Clear, straightforward language

Expository writing style

Best used for: Engaging in an activity or learning a new skill; perfect for makerspaces



BROWSEABLE

Eye-catching design, lavishly illustrated

Short blocks of straightforward text

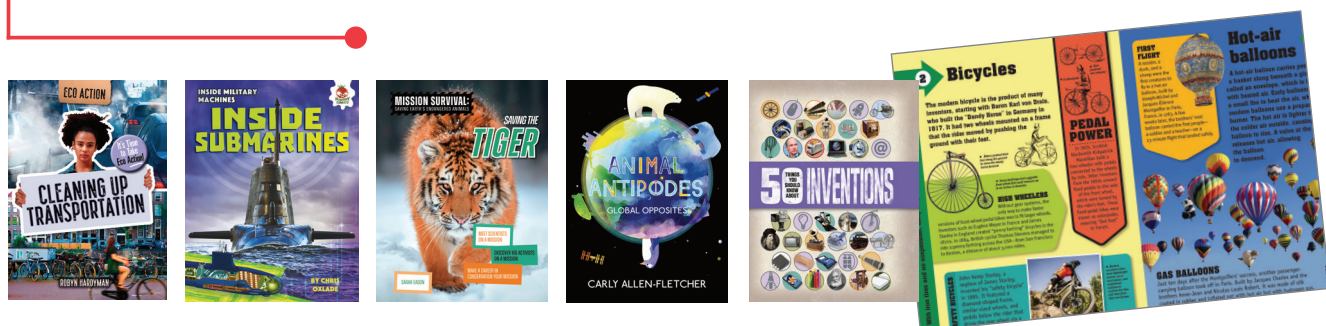
Can be read cover to cover or by skipping around

Great for shared reading

Expository writing style

Description text structure

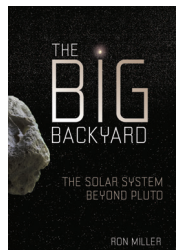
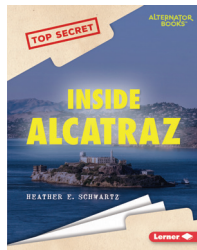
Best used for: Engaging readers quickly by offering interesting or unusual facts; text features make it easy to find specific information; the emphasis is on the book's design and visuals; use later in the research process to add interesting detail



TRADITIONAL

Survey (all about) books
Overview of a topic
Often part of a large series
Clear, straightforward language
Expository writing style
Description text structure

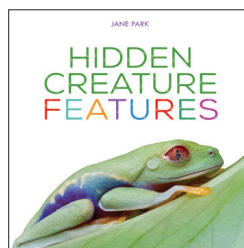
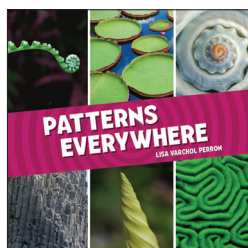
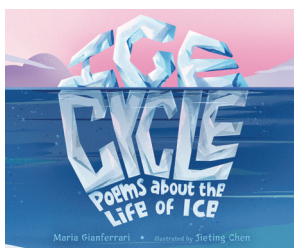
Best used for: An overview or introduction to a topic, use early in the research process to build understanding



EXPOSITORY LITERATURE

Focused topics presented creatively
Strong voice and rich, engaging language
Innovative format
Carefully chosen text structure
Expository writing style
Books about specialized ideas, such as STEM concepts

Best used for: Providing more depth or interesting perspective, ideal mentor texts for writing workshops, nonfiction read alouds



NARRATIVE

Narrative writing style

Tells a story or conveys an experience

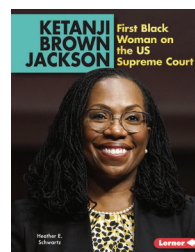
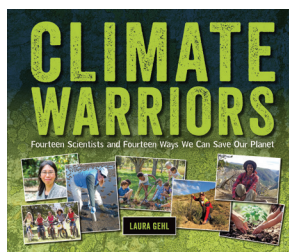
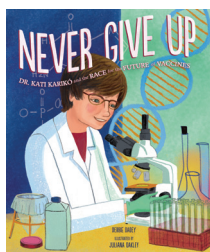
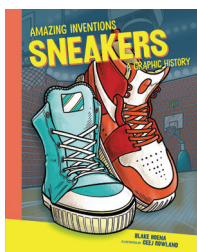
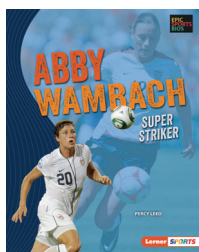
Real characters, scenes, dialog, narrative arc

Strong voice and rich, engaging language

Chronological sequence structure

Books about people (biographies), events, or processes

Best used for: Understanding a past time or place, a person, or a process; nonfiction read alouds



Visit our

5 KINDS OF NONFICTION

hub for book lists, a free poster download,
Melissa's professional development resources, and more!



Lerner

For more information, visit lernerbooks.com/5KNF