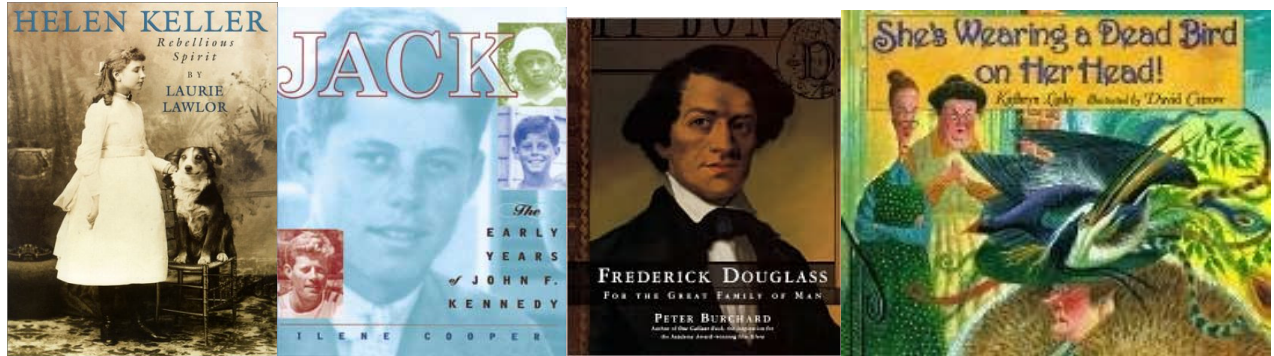


Biographies in Massachusetts History



An Annotated Bibliography for Elementary and Middle Grades

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The books listed in this bibliography have content related to the following eras in United States History according to the National History Standards:

Era 2: Colonization and Settlement (1585 – 1763); **Era 3:** Revolution and the New Nation (1754 – 1820s); **Era 4:** Expansion and Reform (1801 – 1861); **Era 5:** Civil War and Reconstruction (1850 – 1877); **Era 6:** The Development of the Industrial United States (1870 – 1900); **Era 7:** The Emergence of Modern America (1890 – 1930); **Era 8:** The Great Depression and World War II (1929 – 1945); **Era 9:** Postwar United States (1945 to early 1970s); **Era 10:** Contemporary United States (1968 to the present)

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Introduction

This bibliography is a resource for elementary teachers and school librarians, particularly in conjunction with the Massachusetts social studies curriculum for grades 3-5 and the National History Standards. The Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework states that children should “read biographies of prominent Massachusetts people in science, technology, the arts, business, education and political leadership in order to learn how they contributed to Massachusetts history.” Drawing from the names listed in the Framework, but not restricting our choices to those people, we looked for biographies that were of high quality and that were accessible to children with a range of reading abilities.

Of the many people whose biographies are included here, only a few spent their entire lives in Massachusetts. Some were born in Massachusetts and then moved elsewhere; others moved to Massachusetts as adults. Thus, the interpretation of “contributed to Massachusetts history” is necessarily somewhat broad.

What publishers decide to publish presented another challenge. When there were biographies available about a particular historical figure, we tried to include those that presented a reasonably accurate, truthful picture of their subjects, along with a sense of the times in which they lived. We also looked for attractive book design, vivid illustrations, and lively narrative writing. A number of the titles in this bibliography are published in series that are suitable for a range of students. In general, a biography for less experienced readers tends to be a summary of the person’s life written with a controlled vocabulary, resulting in a somewhat dull narrative, but this need not always be the case. Several of the more accessible biographies tell their stories in a lively manner, with anecdotes that may help to engage young readers’ interest.

Contents

The bibliography is arranged alphabetically, first by subject's name and then by author. Four broad historical eras are represented: the Colonial Period, the American Revolution and Federalist Period, the 19th Century, and 20th Century. Resources for teachers and proficient readers, and a sampling of collective biographies follow the individual biographies of the people listed below.

Abigail Adams	John Hancock
John Adams	Nathaniel Hawthorne
John Quincy Adams	Harriet Hemenway and Minna Hall
Samuel Adams	Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.
Louisa Alcott	Anne Hutchinson
Susan B. Anthony	Helen Keller
Crispus Attucks	John F. Kennedy
Clara Barton	Robert F. Kennedy
Alexander Graham Bell	Metacom (King Phillip)
William Bradford	Samuel Morse
John Chapman (Johnny Appleseed)	Frederick Law Olmsted
E.E. Cummings	Edgar Allan Poe
Emily Dickinson	Paul Revere
Frederick Douglass	Norman Rockwell
W.E.B. Du Bois	Deborah Sampson
Ralph Waldo Emerson	Squanto
Benjamin Franklin	Miles Standish
Elizabeth Freeman (Mumbet)	Henry David Thoreau
Theodor Geisel (Dr. Seuss)	John Winthrop
Robert Goddard	Phillis Wheatley

Adams, Abigail (1744-1818)

Somerville, Barbara A. Abigail Adams. Courageous Patriot and First Lady

Minneapolis: Compass Point Books, 2006; 111 pages.

Series: Signature Lives

Grades 5 – 8. The narrative focuses on the events of the Revolutionary period from the perspective of Abigail Adams's life and character. Well illustrated with paintings, original documents, photographs, maps, and sidebars.

St. George, Judith. John & Abigail Adams. An American Love Story

New York: Holiday House, 2001; 136 pages.

Grades 6 – 8 and as a reference for teachers. This handsome book focuses on the lifelong partnership of John and Abigail Adams. The narrative is lively and clearly written. All of the illustrations, portraits, and primary documents are in black-and-white.

Wallner, Alexandra. Abigail Adams

New York: Holiday House, 2001; 32 pages.

Grades 2 - 3. A handsome picture book that would make an excellent read-aloud introduction to Abigail Adams's life. Fully illustrated by the author with line drawings and watercolors.

Adams, John (1735-1826)

Feinberg, Barbara S. John Adams. America's Second President

New York: Children's Press/Scholastic, 2003; 107 pages.

Series: Encyclopedia of Presidents

Grades 4 - 6. A straightforward narrative with useful sidebars containing additional information about the times. Illustrated with photographs, primary documents, maps, and portraits.

Harness, Cheryl. The Revolutionary John Adams

Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2003; 39 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. Picture book format with full color illustrations, maps, a timeline, and quotes of historical figures using the spellings of the time. Straightforward and accessible narrative.

St. George, Judith. John & Abigail Adams. An American Love Story

New York: Holiday House, 2001; 136 pages.

Grades 6 – 8 and as a reference for teachers. This handsome book focuses on the lifelong partnership of John and Abigail Adams. The narrative is lively and clearly written. All of the illustrations, portraits, and primary documents are in black-and-white.

Adams, John Quincy (1767-1848)

Souter, Gerry and Janet. John Quincy Adams: Our Sixth President

Chanhassen, MN: The Child's World, 2001; 48 pages.

Pictures, maps, original documents, sidebars of interesting facts, and one-page sketches of the people in John Quincy Adams's life are interspersed with the narrative. Also tells how, as a lawyer and a member of Congress after his presidency, Adams worked to abolish slavery.

Adams, Samuel (1722-1803)

Fradin, Dennis B. Samuel Adams: the Father of American Independence

New York: Clarion Books, 1998; 182 pages.

Grades 5 – 8. Well-written narrative revealing the contributions of Samuel Adams, who passed into relative obscurity partially because he "took great pains to remain in the shadows and arrange for others to receive the glory" and credit for his accomplishments. All the illustrations, which include original documents and maps, are in black-and-white.

Fritz, Jean. Why Don't You Get a Horse, Sam Adams?

New York, NY: Putnam & Grosset Group, 1996; 47 pages.

Grades 2 – 4. A humorous and accessible biography, fully illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman, whose amusing drawings show details of life in Revolutionary-era Boston. A two-page postscript includes additional facts about Adams.

Heinrichs, Ann. Samuel Adams: Father of the Revolution

Chanhassen, MN: Child's World, 2004; 32 pages.

Series: Our People

Grades 2 – 4. With an informal and lively writing style, text is interspersed with illustrations on every page. Includes interesting facts about the era in text boxes, several well-chosen primary documents, an eyewitness account of the Boston Tea Party, and the original Bill of Rights.

Burgan, Michael. Samuel Adams: Patriot and Statesman

Minneapolis: Compass Point Books, 2005; 95 pages.

Series: Signature Lives

Grade 6 -8. For more proficient readers. Wide margins, short paragraphs, and well-constructed sentences make the narrative accessible. Includes paintings, maps, primary documents, and sidebars with additional information.

Alcott, Louisa May (1832–1888)

Aller, Susan Bivin. Beyond Little Women: A Story about Louisa May Alcott

Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 2004; 64 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. Short and lively text presents the highlights of Alcott's life, and both humanizes her and reveals her extraordinary achievement. The format is basic, with bland black-and-white drawings.

Ditchfield, Christine. Louisa May Alcott: Author of Little Women

New York: Franklin Watts, 2005; 111 pages.

Grades 5 – 8. Well-written and accessible with an attractive layout that includes period photos, maps, and sidebars with additional background information about significant historical events and people.

Dunlap, Julie. Louisa May & Mr. Thoreau's Flute Illustrated by Mary Azarian

New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2002; 32 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. A lightly fictionalized picture book account of Alcott's childhood friendship with one of her mentors, Henry David Thoreau. Based on the actual nature classes that Thoreau led for children in Concord, Massachusetts, the text presents the inspiration for Alcott's earliest known poem. Illustrated with large, colorful woodcuts. A good introduction to Alcott and Thoreau.

Johnston, Norma. Louisa May: The World and Works of Louisa May Alcott

New York: Four Winds Press, 1991; 225 pages.

Grades 6 – 12. A thorough, well-researched biography that traces the influence of her family life on Alcott's work, puts her writing in historical context, and highlights her powerful, ahead-of-her-times social and political outlook.

Anthony, Susan Brownell (1820-1906)

Collier, James Lincoln. The Susan B. Anthony You Never Knew

New York: Children's Press, 2004; 80 pages.

Grades 4 – 6. A thorough and well-written biography that combines historic pictures with a few painted illustrations. The text includes quotes from Anthony's own writing.

Hopkinson, Deborah. Susan B. Anthony: Fighter for Women's Rights Illustrated by Amy Bates

New York: Aladdin, 2005; 30 pages.

Series: Ready-to-Read Stories of Famous Americans

Grades 3 – 4. Attractive painted illustrations and large-size text make this an accessible biography for early readers.

McPherson, Stephanie Sammartino. Susan B. Anthony

Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Co., 2006; 48 pages.

Series: History Maker Bios

Grades 3- 5. Accessible text and attractive format, illustrated with drawings, and includes historical photos and documents.

Orr, Tamra. The Life and Times of Susan B. Anthony

Hockessin, DE: Mitchell Lane Publishers, 2007; 48 pages.

Series: Profiles in American History

Grades 5 – 8. A thorough biography with sidebars that provide information about the times and short profiles of other significant people in the women's rights movement. The book is attractively designed, with clear photographs, drawings, and paintings.

Parker, Barbara Keevil. Susan B. Anthony: Daring to Vote

Brookfield, CT: Millbrook Press, 1998; 48 pages.

Series: A Gateway Biography

Grades 4 – 7. Written in a lively style, this biography includes background information about the time period, a timeline, a few photos, and short profiles of other women in the women's rights movement. There is some invented dialogue in the beginning of the book.

Slade, Suzanne. Susan B. Anthony: Fighter for Freedom and Equality Illustrated by Craig Orback

Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2007; 24 pages.

Grades 3 – 4. In picture book format, this book would be useful as a read-aloud introduction to Anthony. The text is dry, but the painted illustrations are colorful and bold.

Attucks, Crispus (1723?-1770)

McLeese, Don. Crispus Attucks

Vero Beach, FL: Rourke, 2005; 32 pages.

Series: Heroes of the American Revolution

Grades 3 – 5. A short, straightforward biography that provides the basic facts and explains why so little is known about Attucks. Some background information about slavery and the Revolutionary period is provided. The captions for the historic illustrations do not explain when and by whom the images were made.

Barton, Clara (1821 – 1912)

Ditchfield, Christin. Clara Barton: Founder of the American Red Cross

New York: Franklin Watts, 2004; 111 pages.

Series: Great Life Stories

Grades 5 – 8. A thorough and well-written biography with many historic photos and sidebars that give background information about the period.

Collier, James Lincoln, The Clara Barton You Never Knew

New York: Children's Press, 2003; 80 pages.

Grades 4 – 6. The engaging and accessible text is accompanied by historical photographs and some painted illustrations.

Francis, Dorothy Brenner. Clara Barton: Founder of the American Red Cross

Brookfield, CT: Millbrook Press, 2002; 48 pages.

Series: Gateway Biography

Grades 3 – 6. The engaging and accessible text is illustrated with historical photographs and engravings. Includes a lot of background information in short supplemental chapters.

Bell, Alexander Graham (1847-1922)

Fisher, Leonard Everett. Alexander Graham Bell Illustrated by the author.

New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1999; 32 pages.

Grades 3 – 6. In picture book format with a lot of text and powerful illustrations in black and white. A very moving story of this remarkable man who was as much a humanitarian as he was an inventor. Among other great deeds, he introduced Helen Keller to Anne Sullivan. Very good for reading aloud.

Matthews, Tom. Always Inventing: A Photobiography of Alexander Graham Bell

Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 1999; 64 pages.

Grades 4 – 8. One of a wonderful series of books by this publisher, this is an excellent biography that includes valuable scientific information. In an exciting, large format and illustrated with large photos and diagrams of Bell's inventions. A timeline is included.

Bradford, William (1590-1657)

Doherty, Kieran. William Bradford: Rock of Plymouth

Brookfield, CT: Twenty-First Century Books, 1999; 192 pages.

Grades 6 – 10. For older students and adults. Thorough, well-researched and with many quotes from primary sources. The writing is lively and the few illustrations are well chosen with interesting captions. Includes an excellent bibliography, source notes, and timeline.

Hering, Marianne. William Bradford: Governor of Plymouth Colony

Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1999; 79 pages.

Series: Colonial Leaders

Grades 5 – 8. One in a series about significant people of colonial times. The information is presented in a clear, accessible way. Includes a list of myths about the Pilgrims and the true facts. The illustrations look historic but many are not authentic to the period and most of the captions do not make this clear. The glossary and chronology are helpful.

Whitehurst, Susan. William Bradford and Plymouth: A Colony Grows

New York: PowerKids Press, 2002; 24 pages.

Series: The Library of the Pilgrims

Grades 3 – 5. This book has large-sized print and many illustrations which students will find inviting. It provides basic information about the subject. The illustrations look historic but many are not authentic to the period, and most of the captions do not make this clear

Chapman, John (1774–1845)

Holub, Joan. Who was Johnny Appleseed?

Illustrated by Anna DiVito

New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 2005; 101 pages.

Grades 4 – 6. Lively account of Chapman’s life with humorous illustrations.

Moses, Will. Johnny Appleseed: The Story of a Legend

New York: Philomel Books, 2001; 46 pages.

Grades 3 – 6. A picture book biography of John Chapman, aka Johnny Appleseed, written and illustrated by a well-known folk artist. The paintings, from small to almost full-page, are filled with rich detail. A good read-aloud choice.

Zarzycki, Daryl Davis. Johnny Appleseed

Hockessin, DE: Mitchell Lane Publishers, 2007; 32 pages.

Series: Robbie Reader/What’s So Great About...?

Grades 3 – 5. Written in an accessible style and in large print format with colorful images and photos.

Cummings, E. E. (1894-1962)

Reef, Catherine. E.E. Cummings. A Poet’s Life

New York: Clarion Books, 2006; 149 pages.

Grades 5 and up. For proficient readers and as a reference for teachers. The author relates Cummings’s story in relationship to the writers, artists, and performers who influenced his life and work. The many illustrations and examples of Cummings’s poetry enhance the book’s appeal.

Dickinson, Emily (1830–1886)

Bedard, Michael, Emily

Illustrated by Barbara Cooney

New York: Doubleday Books for Young Readers, 1992; 32 pages.

Grades 2 – 4. In picture book format, this fictionalized account of a child’s encounter with the poet is based on an actual occurrence. This is a good

introduction to Dickinson's reclusive life, sensitivity to nature, and poetic gifts. Lovely, evocative illustrations.

**Berry, S. L. Emily Dickinson
Illustrated by Dugald Stermer**

Mankato, MN: Creative Education, 1994; 45 pages.

Series: Voices in Poetry

Grades 5 – 9. One in a series about well-known poets. This is a large-format book that combines biography, many examples of the writer's work, and large, powerful images. Some of the pictures are historical photos and etchings and some are vivid drawings of flowers inspired by the poetry. This is an exciting introduction to the writer and would also work well for any project that combines poetry and art.

Dommermuth-Costa, Carol. Emily Dickinson: Singular Poet

Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1998; 112 pages.

Grades 5 – 8. An accessible and well-written biography. The text is interspersed with many examples of Dickinson's poetry and excerpts from her letters. With black-and-white illustrations that include period photographs and portraits.

Meltzer, Milton. Emily Dickinson: A Biography

Minneapolis: Twenty-First Century Books, 2006; 128 pages.

Series: American Literary Greats

Grades 5 – 8. An excellent, well-written, and thorough exploration of Dickinson's life and times. Connects her life and personal struggles with her poetry. Includes many illustrations, primary sources, excerpts from her poems, and a chronology.

Douglass, Frederick (1817-1895)

Burchard, Peter. Frederick Douglass: For the Great Family of Man

New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2003; 226 pages.

Grades 6 – 12. An excellent and highly recommended biography for older students. It is well-written, thorough, and makes extensive use of Douglass's own words. With black and white drawings and photos. Includes extensive notes on sources and a lengthy bibliography.

**Douglass, Frederick. Frederick Douglass, In His Own Words
Edited by Milton Meltzer**

San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1995; 220 pages.

Grades 6 – 12. Not a biography, but an excellent selection of Douglass's own writings for those looking for primary sources. Includes extensive explanatory notes that put Douglass's words in context. Also has several woodcut-style illustrations by Stephen Alcorn.

Fleming, Alice Mulcahey. Frederick Douglass: From Slave to Statesman

New York: PowerPlus Books, 2004; 112 pages.

Series: Library of American Lives and Times

Grades 5 - 8. A thorough and well-documented biography that includes information about other abolitionists with whom Douglass worked. The illustrations are attractive with clear and informative captions. A timeline, maps, and photos of primary source documents are included.

Lantier, Patricia. Frederick Douglass

Austin, TX: Raintree Steck-Vaughn, 2003; 32 pages.

Series: Raintree Biographies

Grades 4 – 6. A large format book with good basic information and many sidebars and illustrations that include images of newspapers and other documents.

Passaro, John. Frederick Douglass

Chanhassen, MN: Child's World, 2000; 39 pages.

Series: Journey to Freedom

Grades 3 – 5. An accessible biography in a very attractive format with many large historical photographs and prints. Includes a timeline and glossary.

**Slade, Suzanne. Frederick Douglass: Writer, Speaker, and Opponent of Slavery
Illustrated by Robert McGuire**

Minneapolis, MN: Picture Window Books, 2007; 24 pages.

Grades 2 – 4. Picture book format with large, powerful illustrations. Very good for reading aloud and as an introduction to Douglass.

Trumbauer, Lisa. Let's Meet Frederick Douglass

Philadelphia: Chelsea Clubhouse Books, 2004; 32 pages.

Series: Let's Meet Biographies

Grades 3 – 5. A good, basic biography with an attractive format. Includes a timeline and many photos and sidebars.

Du Bois, W.E.B. (1886-1963)

Bolden, Tonya. W.E.B. Du Bois

Viking Children's Books, 2009; 222 pages.

Series: Up Close

Grades 6 – 8. Du Bois' life spanned 95 years, from Reconstruction to the modern Civil Rights Movement. This biography includes his many contributions as a teacher, speaker, Civil Rights activist, sociologist, writer and co-founder of several organizations, including the NAACP, as well as his personal and professional setbacks.

Hinman, Bonnie. A Stranger in My Own House: the Story of W.E.B. Du Bois

Greensboro, NC: Morgan Reynolds Pub., 2005; 176 pages.

Grades 6 – 8. Thorough and engaging biography with a lot of background information about important people and movements of the time period. Includes color and black and white photos.

McDaniel, Melissa. W.E.B. Du Bois: Scholar and Civil Rights Activist

New York: Franklin Watts, 1999; 96 pages.

Series: Book Report Biography

Grades 4 – 6. Straightforward and accessible biography, illustrated with black-and-white photographs.

Moss, Nathaniel. W.E.B. Du Bois: Civil Rights Leader

New York: Chelsea Juniors, 1996; 79 pages.

Series: Junior World Biographies

Grades 4 – 6. Straightforward and accessible biography illustrated with black-and-white photographs.

Stafford, Mark. W.E.B. Du Bois: Scholar and Activist

Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2005; 118 pages.

Series: Black Americans of Achievement

Grades 6 – 8. Thorough and engaging biography with a lot of background information about important people and movements of the time period. Includes primary source quotes and black-and-white photos.

Troy, Don. W.E.B. Du Bois

Chanhassen, MN: Child's World, 1999; 39 pages.

Series: Journey to Freedom

Grades 3 – 5. Attractive format with many large-scale photographs and accessible text.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo (1803-1882)

Poolos, Jamie. Ralph Waldo Emerson: the Father of the American Renaissance

New York: Rosen Pub. Group, 2006; 112 pages.

Series: Library of American Thinkers

Grades 5 – 8. A thorough, attractive, and highly readable biography of one of the most influential literary figures of the nineteenth century. Includes background information, quotes from his writing, many illustrations, and a timeline.

Franklin, Benjamin (1706-1790)

Adler, David A. B. Franklin, Printer

New York: Holiday House, 2001; 126 pages.

Grades 5 – 8. Excellent book design that captures the era in which Franklin lived and worked. The narrative is particularly engaging, including details that highlight Franklin's personality and accomplishments.

**Dash, Joan. A Dangerous Engine: Benjamin Franklin from Scientist to Diplomat
Illustrated by Dusan Petricic**

New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2006; 246 pages.

Middle school and above. This highly engaging new biography explores Franklin's scientific experiments, with a particular focus on electricity. Using the metaphor of the lightning rod, or "dangerous engine," the second half of the book explores Franklin's role in the American Revolution. The black and white illustrations echo the humor in the narrative and capture the spirit of Franklin's life and character. Quotes from Franklin's writing are incorporated into the narrative throughout. Recommended for all who find Franklin a captivating subject.

Fleming, Candace. Ben Franklin's Almanac: Being a True Account of the Good Gentleman's Life

New York: Athenaeum Books for Young Readers, 2003; 120 pages.

Grades 5 – 8. The book design of this biography encourages the reader to sample aspects of Franklin's life and accomplishments, offering an alternative to reading a chronological narrative. The design is particularly well suited for the complexities of Franklin's life. The writing is often lively, and humorous anecdotes appear throughout.

**Fritz, Jean. What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin?
Illustrated by Margot Tomes**

New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1976; 47 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. The story of Franklin’s life and accomplishments, written and illustrated with humor and with an eye for interesting anecdotes. Although there are no sources listed, Fritz’s books are well-researched and she catches the essence of her subject.

**Giblin, James Cross. The Amazing Life of Benjamin Franklin
Illustrated by Michael Dooling**

New York: Scholastic Press, 2000; 48 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. Picture book format with handsome illustrations. Printed in double columns, initial caps, and uneven word spacing to graphically echo Franklin’s newspaper, The Pennsylvania Gazette. Back matter includes pages on important dates, Franklin’s inventions, sayings from Poor Richard’s Almanac, historic sites, and an author’s note.

Glass, Maya. Benjamin Franklin: Early American Genius

New York: Rosen Pub. Group, 2004. 32 pages.

Series: Primary Sources of Famous People in American History

Grades 2 – 3. Beginning biography printed in large font. Includes primary documents and text boxes with relevant facts about Franklin’s life and accomplishments.

Harness, Cheryl. The Remarkable Benjamin Franklin

Washington, DC: National Geographic Society. 2005; 47 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. The life and times of Ben Franklin, with full-page color illustrations, black-and-white drawings, a Franklin quote on every page, and background information incorporated into the pictures. The narrative and illustrations project a friendly tone.

Freeman, Elizabeth (1744-1829) also known as Mum Bet. Freeman was a former slave who successfully sued for her freedom under the new Massachusetts constitution, which provided that “all men are created equal.” Her action is considered instrumental in Massachusetts being the first state to abolish slavery. Mum Bet was a nurse and midwife and a valued member of the community during her long life in Great Barrington, Massachusetts.

NOTE: Two biographies suitable for Grades 6 – 8 are in circulation in the Minuteman Library Network. Neither is of sufficient quality to be included on this bibliography.

Geisel, Theodor Seuss (1904–1991)

Boekhoff, P. M. and Stuart Kallen. Dr. Seuss

San Diego, CA: KidHaven Press, 2002; 48 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. An introductory biography that discusses the childhood, education, influences, marriage, and writing career of Dr. Seuss. It also captures his playful spirit and strong political and social conscience. Illustrated with many photos.

Cohen, Charles D. The Seuss, the Whole Seuss, and Nothing but the Seuss: a Visual Biography of Theodor Seuss Geisel

New York: Random House, 2004; 390 pages.

Grades 6 and up. A definitive biography packed with photos and examples of Seuss’ work from his childhood, college years, early days in advertising and

right up through all his work for children. Everything you ever wanted to know about Dr. Seuss in a beautifully designed format.

Krull, Kathleen. The Boy on Fairfield Street: How Ted Geisel Grew Up to Become Dr. Seuss

Illustrations by Steve Johnson, Lou Fancher, and Dr. Seuss
New York: Random House, 2004; 43 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. A charming and lively account that focuses on Geisel's childhood and youth in Springfield, MA, and takes us up to the moment he arrives in New York at the age of twenty-two. The delightful text and illustrations highlight the childhood influences on the later work. A several-page summary of the rest of his life and career is included.

Goddard, Robert (1882-1945)

McLeese, Don. Robert Goddard

Vero Beach, FL: Rourke Publishing, 2006. 24 pages.
Series: Discover the Life of an Inventor

Grades 2 – 3. Story of the man whose work in developing the liquid fuel rocket led to space flight. Presents highlights of his life, accompanied by photographs.

Patchett, Kaye. Robert Goddard: Rocket Pioneer

Detroit: Blackbirch Press, an imprint of Thompson Gale, 2005; 64 pages.
Series: Giants of Science

Grades 5 and up. For the young rocket science enthusiast. This biography for proficient readers includes information about how rockets work, drawings, and many sidebars with quotes by Goddard and others.

Roberts, Russell. Robert Goddard. Rocket Man

Hockessin, DE: Mitchell Lane Publishers, 2004; 32 pages.
Series: A Robbie Reader

Grades 3-4. This chatty biography, illustrated with many photographs, is geared to mid-level elementary readers.

Hancock, John (1737-1793)

**Adler, David A. and Michael S. A Picture Book of John Hancock
Illustrated by Ronald Himler**

New York: Holiday House, 2007; 32 pages.

A pleasantly illustrated introduction to the life and times of John Hancock. Useful as a read aloud, or for younger readers.

**Fritz, Jean. Will You Sign Here, John Hancock?
Illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman**

New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1976; 48 pages.

John Hancock as an individual, patriot, first signer of the Declaration of Independence, and nine-time governor of Massachusetts, comes alive in this slightly fictionalized account. Very accessible, and often amusing.

Ransom, Candice. John Hancock

Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 2005; 48 pages.
Series: History Maker Bios

Slightly fictionalized, reasonably well written account. Illustrated with drawings, etchings, paintings, and graphic art.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel (1804-1864)

Meltzer, Milton. Nathaniel Hawthorne: a Biography

Minneapolis: Twenty-First Century Books, 2007; 160 pages.

Series: American Literary Greats

Grades 5 – 8. Excellent, well-written, and thorough exploration of Hawthorne's life and times. Connects his complex life and personal struggles with his writings. Includes many illustrations, primary sources, and a chronology.

Hemenway, Harriet (1858-1960) and Minna Hall (1859-1951)

Lasky, Kathryn. She's Wearing a Dead Bird on Her Head!

Illustrated by David Catrow

New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 1995; 32 pages.

Grades 3 – 6. Not an actual biography, but a fictionalized account of the two women who were political activists and who worked to protect wild birds. The text is humorous and lively, as are the wonderfully exaggerated and colorful illustrations. Highly recommended for reading aloud.

Holmes, Jr., Oliver Wendell (1841–1935)

Littlefield, Sophie W. Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.: the Supreme Court and American Legal Thought

New York: PowerPlus Books, 2005; 112 pages.

Series: Library of American Lives and Times

Grades 5 – 8. Well-written and thorough with many historic photos and images. Includes explanations of important court cases and judicial decisions.

Hutchinson, Anne (1591-1643)

Atkins, Jeannine. Anne Hutchinson's Way

Illustrated by Michael Dooling

New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2007; 32 pages.

Grades 3 – 6. A fictionalized biography that would be excellent for introducing Hutchinson and the time period. In 1634, young Susanna Hutchinson and her family join the Massachusetts Bay Colony, where they hope to practice their religion freely. When Susanna's mother begins to hold her own Scripture meetings, the family is threatened with banishment. The story is brought to life in oil paintings rich with historical detail.

Clark, Beth. Anne Hutchinson: Religious Leader

Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2000; 77 pages.

Series: Colonial Leaders

Grades 5 – 8. One in a series about significant people of colonial times. The information is presented in a clear, accessible and interesting way. At times, the text seems to confuse the Plymouth and the Massachusetts Bay colonies. The illustrations look historic but many are not authentic to the period, and the captions do not make this clear. The glossary and chronology are helpful.

Anne Hutchinson: Puritan Rebel

Cobblestone Magazine, November 2003.

Grades 3 – 8. An excellent resource that provides information about Hutchinson, the religious issues of the day, daily life, and the role of women. Also includes a short play based on her trial, maps, timelines and activities.

Mangal, Melina. Anne Hutchinson: Religious Reformer

Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, 2004; 48 pages.

Series: Let Freedom Ring

Grades 3 – 6. This book has an attractive layout and many sidebars that give information about colonial times. Illustrations are vivid (though some are not authentic to the period.) The text is clear and accessible. Useful map, timeline, and glossary.

Stille, Darlene R. Anne Hutchinson: Puritan Protester

Minneapolis: Compass Point Books, 2006; 112 pages.

Series: Signature Lives

Grades 5 – 8. Thorough, readable, and attractive biography with background information, maps, many illustrations, and timelines.

Keller, Helen (1880-1968)

Ford, Carin T. Helen Keller: Meet a Woman of Courage

Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, Inc. 2002; 32 pages.

Series: Meeting Famous People

Grades 2 – 4. Accessible to younger readers. Attractive book design using photographs of Keller and the people in her life. Includes a time line, glossary, and the Braille alphabet.

Lawlor, Laurie. Helen Keller: Rebellious Spirit

New York: Holiday House, 2001; 168 pages.

Grades 6 – 8. Recommended as an excellent resource for teachers. This handsome biography tells a lively story making Keller come alive for the reader. Illustrated with black-and-white photographs and primary documents.

Sullivan, George. Helen Keller

New York: Scholastic Reference, 2000; 128 pages.

Series: In Their Own Words

Grades 3 – 5. Accessible and straightforward account of Keller's life, told using excerpts from her own writings, and illustrated with photographs and a few primary documents.

Kennedy, John F. (1917-1963)

Cooper, Ilene. Jack. The Early Years of John F. Kennedy

New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2003; 168 pages.

Grades 6 – 8, and young adult. A thorough look at Kennedy's boyhood and school years. Reasonably lively writing, black-and-white photographs, and primary documents – including hand-written letters and report cards – provide a close-up on young JFK and his family.

Heiligman, Deborah. High Hopes. A Photobiography of John F. Kennedy

Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2003; 64 pages.

Grades 4 – 6. This handsomely designed biography, generously illustrated with photographs and primary documents, reveals the impressive accomplishments of Kennedy’s abbreviated presidency.

Sommer, Shelley. John F. Kennedy: His Life and Legacy

New York: HarperCollins, 2005; 152 pages.

Grades 5- 8. Written by a former staff member of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, this biography provides interesting anecdotes, photographs from the Kennedy Library, and an introduction by Caroline Kennedy. Includes a timeline, selected quotes, and endnotes.

Venezia, Mike. John F. Kennedy. Thirty-Fifth President

New York: Scholastic, 2007; 32 pages.

Series: Getting to Know the U.S. Presidents

Grades 2-4. Photographs, large font, and lively cartoons that highlight significant points make this an accessible biography for less experienced readers, and a good choice for a read-aloud introduction to JFK’s life and accomplishments.

Kennedy, Robert F. (1925 -1968)

At the current time, the biographies about Robert Kennedy are for more experienced readers. Marc Aronson’s recent biography is for middle school and above.

Metacom/King Philip (1638?-1676)

King Philip’s War

Cobblestone Magazine, October 2000.

Grades 3 – 8. Has short biography of King Philip, also known as Metacom, and excellent information about the causes, battles, and results of the war. Includes very helpful maps and timeline.

Roman, Joseph. King Philip

New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1991; 109 pages.

Series: North American Indians of Achievement

Grades 6 – 9. Excellent attempt to give a Wampanoag as well as a colonist’s perspective. Includes much information about Wampanoag social, cultural, political and spiritual life and how this differed from that of the colonists, leading to profound misunderstandings between the two groups.

Morse, Samuel (1791–1872)

**Seidman, David. Samuel Morse and the Telegraph
Illustrated by Rod Whigham and Charles Barnett**

Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, 2007; 32 pages.

Series: Graphic Library/Inventions and Discovery

Grades 3 – 5. A fictionalized biography in graphic format, this lively book tells the story of how Samuel Morse developed a working telegraph in 1844 and changed the way people communicated.

Zannos, Susan. Samuel Morse and the Story of the Telegraph

Hockessin, DE: Mitchell Lane Publishers, 2005; 48 pages.

Series: Uncharted, Unexplored and Unexplained

Grades 5 – 8. In an attractive format and with many full-color illustrations, this biography explores Morse’s life and times, his inventions, and many of the well-known people with whom he came in contact.

Olmsted, Frederick Law (1822-1903)

Wishinsky, Frieda. The Man Who Made Parks: the Story of Parkbuilder Frederick Law Olmsted

Illustrated by Song Nan Zhang

Toronto: Tundra Books, 1999.

Grades 3 – 5. In picture book format with large and very attractive illustrations and a fair amount of text, this biography explains Olmsted’s extraordinary contributions to landscape design and shows many of the beautiful public spaces he created.

Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849)

Frisch, Aaron. Edgar Allan Poe

Illustrated by Gary Kelley

Mankato, MN: Creative Education, 2006; 45 pages.

Series: Voices in Poetry

Grades 5 – 9. One in a series about well-known poets. This is a large-format book that combines biography, many examples of the writer’s work, and powerful, large images. Some of the pictures are historical photos and etchings and some are vivid paintings and drawings inspired by the poetry. This is an exciting introduction to the writer and would also work well for any project that combines poetry and art.

Meltzer, Milton. Edgar Allan Poe: a Biography

Brookfield, CT: Twenty-First Century Books, 2003; 144 pages.

Grades 6 – 9. An excellent biography in a very attractive format. This book captures Poe’s tumultuous life, the social and political climate of his time, and provides summaries and analysis of his important work. The text of several poems and an extensive timeline are included.

Revere, Paul (1734-1818)

Fritz, Jean. And Then What Happened, Paul Revere?

Illustrated by Margot Tomes

New York: Putnam, 1973; 48 pages.

Grades 3-5. Always lively, Fritz’s well-researched, lightly fictionalized biographies, matched by humorous illustrations, provide accessible accounts of the lives and accomplishments of important historical figures.

Giblin, James Cross. The Many Rides of Paul Revere

New York: Scholastic Press, 2007; 85 pages.

Grades 5-8. Stunning book design, many illustrations, photographs, maps, original documents, a timeline, and the author’s lively narrative combine to make this an outstanding choice for experienced elementary and middle grade readers.

Randolph, Ryan. Paul Revere and the Minutemen of the American Revolution

New York: Rosen Publishing Group, 2002; 112 pages.

Series: The Library of American Lives and Times

Grades 5-8. If Giblin's stand-alone biography is not available, this makes a good choice for proficient readers.

Sutcliff, Jane. Paul Revere

Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 2002; 48 pages.

Series: History Maker Bios

Grades 3-4. A biography for less experienced readers that is written in more engaging prose than many series biographies. The sidebars provide fascinating and revealing details about Revere's life and times. Several of Revere's own drawings, engravings, and silver pieces are among the many illustrations.

Rockwell, Norman (1894-1978)

Gherman, Beverly. Norman Rockwell. Storyteller with a Brush

New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2000; 58 pages.

Grades 5 – 8. Many of Rockwell's most famous paintings and drawings grace the pages of this candid, empathetic biography. The narrative includes many anecdotes and is written in short paragraphs that make the reading more accessible.

Venezia, Mike. Norman Rockwell

New York: Children's Press, 2000; 32 pages.

Series: Getting to Know the World's Great Artists

Grades 3 – 4. This biography examines the life and work of Norman Rockwell, who painted familiar, everyday scenes from the 20th century. Illustrated with photographs, Rockwell's paintings, examples of European art that influenced his composition and subject matter, and Venezia's lively cartoons.

Sampson, Deborah (1760-1827)

Burke, Rick. Deborah Sampson

Chicago: Heinemann Library, 2003; 32 pages.

Series: American Lives

Grades 3 – 5. A basic biography in an attractive format. Includes sidebars, map, and timeline.

Squanto (1585?-1622)

Bruchac, Joseph. Squanto's Journey: The Story of the First Thanksgiving Illustrated by Greg Shed

San Diego, CA: Silver Whistle, 2000; 32 pages.

Grades 3 – 6. An excellent fictionalized biography in picture book form and told in the first person. The author's note explains that he wanted to tell the story from Squanto's perspective, and gives details about his research. Very good for reading aloud; includes large, colorful illustrations.

Dubowski, Cathy East. The Story of Squanto: First Friend to the Pilgrims

Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Pub., 1997; 105 pages.

Series: Famous Lives

Grades 4 – 8. Begins with an excellent author's note that acknowledges that most of what we know about Squanto and other American Indians in the Northeast comes from the writing of the colonists. The author provides information about Squanto's people, the Patuxet, and explains what the first

Thanksgiving feast was really about. Excellent timeline; a few uninteresting black and white drawings.

Hirschfelder, Arlene B. Squanto, 1585?-1622

Mankato, MN: Blue Earth Books, 2004; 32 pages.

Series: American Indian Biographies

Grades 3 – 6. Attractive large-format book with many illustrations and good background information about the Wampanoag. The captions put the pictures into historical perspective. The author clearly states that there are large gaps in what we know about Squanto and often uses the phrase "historians believe" – which is a welcome way of dealing with the lack of certainty.

Kessel, Joyce K. Squanto and the First Thanksgiving

Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 2004; 48 pages.

Series: On My Own Holidays

Grades 2 – 3. A biography in a beginning reader format, but some of the vocabulary is challenging. The story has been simplified but may be helpful as an introduction to Squanto and the Pilgrims.

Standish, Miles (1584?-1656)

Harness, Cheryl. The Adventurous Life of Myles Standish and the Amazing-But-True Survival Story of the Plymouth Colony

Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 2006; 140 pages.

Grades 4 – 8. Lively and thorough with many black-and-white illustrations by the author. Includes background information, maps, and timelines, and would be useful for general learning about the colony.

Miller, Susan Martins. Miles Standish: Plymouth Colony Leader

Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1999; 77 pages.

Series: Colonial Leaders

Grades 5 – 8. One in a series about significant people of colonial times. The information is presented in a clear, accessible and interesting way. Includes some of Standish's brutal dealings with the American Indians. The illustrations look historic but many are not authentic to the period, and most of the captions do not make this clear. The glossary and chronology are helpful.

Witteman, Barbara. Miles Standish: Colonial Leader

Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, 2004; 48 pages.

Series: Let Freedom Ring

Grades 3 – 6. This book has an attractive layout and many sidebars that give information about colonial times. Illustrations are vivid (though some are not authentic to the period.) The text is clear and accessible and includes some of Standish's brutal treatment of American Indians. Useful map, timeline, and glossary.

Thoreau, Henry David (1817-1862)

Anderson, Peter. Henry David Thoreau: American Naturalist

New York: Franklin Watts, 1995; 63 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. A lively and accessible introduction to Thoreau. Includes many quotes from his writings and many photographs and historic images.

Johnson, D. B. Henry Builds a Cabin

Illustrated by the author

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002; 32 pages.

Henry Climbs a Mountain

Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2003; 32 pages.

Henry Hikes to Fitchburg

Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2000; 32 pages.

Henry Works

Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2004; 32 pages.

Grades 2 – 5. This charming, thoughtful and humorous series of picture books presents Henry, a bear modeled after Thoreau. Each book is about an actual event in Thoreau's life. The stories refer to his deep feeling for nature, his belief in simple living, his interest in peaceful social change and his principles of civil disobedience. The illustrations are lively and colorful - a perfect match with the messages of the text. The books include biographical information about Thoreau. An excellent introduction to Thoreau and his many provocative ideas.

Locker, Thomas. Walking with Henry: Based on the Life and Works of Henry David Thoreau

Illustrated by the author

Golden, CO: Fulcrum Pub., 2002; 28 pages.

Grades 3 – 6. In picture book format with exquisite, glowing, painted illustrations. An excellent read-aloud that introduces the philosopher, writer, and environmentalist Henry David Thoreau through selections from his own writings and an imaginary journey into the wilderness.

McCarthy, Pat. Henry David Thoreau: Writer, Thinker, Naturalist

Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow, 2003; 128 pages.

Grades 5 – 8. Straightforward and thorough with many quotes from Thoreau's work. Includes a chapter on the continuing influence of his writing up to the present day.

Meltzer, Milton. Henry David Thoreau: a Biography

Minneapolis: Twenty-First Century Books, 2007; 160 pages.

Series: American Literary Greats

Grades 5 – 8. Excellent, well-written, and thorough exploration of Thoreau's life and times. Examines his beliefs and discusses why his writing and worldview still influence people today. Includes many illustrations, primary sources, and a chronology.

O'Neal, Deborah. The Trouble with Henry: A Tale of Walden Pond

Illustrated by S.D. Schindler

Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2005; 32 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. A picture book that relates a lighthearted, fictionalized episode about Thoreau at Walden Pond and the tensions between industrialism and his personal philosophy of respect for the natural world. The illustrations are lively, humorous and convey the look and atmosphere of the times. It is important to note that this episode did not actually happen.

Thoreau, Henry David. Henry David's House; edited by Steven Schnur

Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2002; 32 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. A picture book whose text consists of short excerpts from Thoreau's Walden about the value of living life in harmony with nature.

Illustrated with beautiful impressionistic paintings of Thoreau at Walden Pond by Peter Fiore.

Wheatley, Phillis (1753?-1784)

Clinton, Catherine. Phillis's Big Test

Illustrated by Sean Qualls.

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2008; 32 pages.

Grades 1 – 5. In picture book format, this biography explores the life of Phillis Wheatley, a slave in Boston who was a published poet. The book focuses on the events in 1772 when the leading men of the community gathered to question the 17-year-old Phillis to determine if the poems were indeed her own.

Gregson, Susan R. Phillis Wheatley

Mankato, MN: Bridgestone Books, 2002; 48 pages.

Series: Let Freedom Ring

Grades 3 – 6. One in a series of biographies in American history. This book has an attractive layout and many sidebars that give information about Revolutionary times. Illustrations are vivid; the text is clear and accessible and includes questions for the reader to think about.

Lasky, Kathryn. A Voice of Her Own: The Story of Phillis Wheatley, Slave Poet Illustrated by Paul Lee

Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2003; 38 pages.

Grades 3 – 6. A large format picture book that would be an excellent introduction to Phillis Wheatley's life and poetry. The writing is dramatic and entertaining; the author used careful research to speculate about emotions and experiences. The illustrations are beautiful, powerful, and evocative of the period.

McLendon, Jacquelyn Y. Phillis Wheatley: A Revolutionary Poet

New York: PowerPlus Books, 2003; 112 pages.

Series: Library of American Lives and Times

Grades 5 – 9. An excellent, thorough, and balanced biography. The author clearly distinguishes between what is actually known about Wheatley and the stories that surround her life. Helpful background information is included about the period. The historical pictures have captions that explain when and by whom they were created.

John Winthrop (1588-1649)

Connelly, Elizabeth Russell. John Winthrop: Politician and Statesman

Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2001; 80 pages.

Series: Colonial Leaders

Grades 5 – 8. One in a series about significant people of colonial times. The information is presented in a clear, accessible, and interesting way. The sidebars offer additional information about the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Pell, Ed. John Winthrop: Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony

Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, 2004; 48 pages.

Series: Let Freedom Ring

Grades 3 – 5. Straightforward, basic information given in a colorful and attractive format that would be accessible to younger students.

Collective Biographies

These books have separate chapters or sections devoted to specific people of the period.

The Revolutionary and Federalist Period

Fradin, Dennis B. The Signers: the Fifty-Six Stories Behind the Declaration of Independence

Illustrations by Michael McCurdy

New York: Walker, 2002. 164 pages; Illustrated.

Grades 4 – 8. A large and well-formatted book that includes a two-page spread about each of the signers, as well as information about the individual colonies and the story behind the writing of the Declaration of Independence. The writing is lively and engaging, and the woodcut illustrations are very appealing. The maps, quotes from primary sources, introduction, and afterword are all valuable. A delightful and useful book.

Harper, Judith. African Americans and the Revolutionary War

The Child's World, 2001. 40 pages. Illustrated.

Series: Journey to Freedom. The African American Library

Grades 4 – 6. This, like other titles in this series, is a handsomely designed book, with illustrations on each double spread. Maps, original documents, paintings, quotes, photographs, and the well-written text invite the reader into this important story. Includes brief profiles of Elizabeth Freeman, Phillis Wheatley, Peter Salem, Agrippa Hull, James Armistead, and James Forten.

Kneib, Martha. Women Soldiers, Spies, and Patriots of the American Revolution

New York: Rosen Pub. Group, 2004; 112 pages.

Series: American Women at War.

Grades 4 – 8. Provides excellent information about these women using many quotes from primary sources. Includes a timeline and helpful source notes.

Redmond, Shirley-Raye. Patriots in Petticoats: Heroines of the American Revolution

New York: Random House, 2004; 128 pages.

Series: Landmark Books

Grades 3 – 6. Provides brief information about 24 women, including an introduction to the period and sidebars about interesting aspects of women's lives. The writing is straightforward and accessible.

Across Historical Periods

Crompton, Samuel. 100 Americans Who Shaped American History

San Mateo, CA: Bluewood Books, 1999; 112 pages.

Series: 100 Series

This compilation features one-page articles about notable Americans whose work influenced U.S. history. Political leaders, artist, scientists, inventors, writers, performers, and people in business are included, along with a portrait of each subject.

Keenan, Sheila. Encyclopedia of Women in the United States

New York: Scholastic, 1996; 206 pages.

Grades 5 and up. The biographies in this volume span four centuries and include women in many fields. Each is less than a page in length. Clearly formatted, with illustrations and sidebars accompanying the entries. A number of the women profiled were from Massachusetts.

Additional History Resources

Bober, Natalie. Countdown to Independence: a Revolution of Ideas in England and Her American Colonies: 1760-1776

New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2001; 342 pages.

Grades 6 – Adult. This book answers the question: “How did the social, political, and intellectual developments of the colonial period precipitate a shocking revolution by the American colonists against Great Britain?” The author provides perspectives of people on both sides of the conflict and provides a lot of biographical information through primary sources such as letters, diaries, and speeches. An excellent and thorough resource for students and teachers.

Cox, Clinton. Come All You Brave Soldiers: Blacks in the Revolutionary War

New York: Scholastic Press, 1999; 182 pages.

Grades 5 – 8. Beginning with Crispus Attucks, this book profiles the many black men who took part in the fight for independence. Includes useful and compelling information about other key figures, various battles, the situation of slaves, free blacks, and indentured servants, and the living conditions during the war.

**Stanley, Diane. Joining the Boston Tea Party
Illustrated by Holly Berry**

New York: HarperCollins, 2001; 42 pages.

Series: The Time-Traveling Twins

Grades 2 – 5. This humorous book does a great job of making the time period exciting and accessible. Excellent historical information and detail; the illustrations are lively and inviting.