

**Selected and annotated by Melissa Albarran and Michelle Biwer
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This two-part bibliography features stories about real and fictional female authors.

The Real Lives of Women Writers
Selected and annotated by Melissa Albarran

This bibliography features biographies, memoirs, and fictional accounts of women that have created products using the written word, such as authors, journalists, songwriters and legislators. Titles here are best suited for grades 2 through 12.

Bell, Cece. *El Deafo*; written and illus. by Cece Bell. Amulet/Abrams, 2014. 233p. Gr. 3-6.
This graphic novel depicts the author's own life, beginning at the age of four when she has lost her hearing and begins using a hearing aid. The novel chronicles Cece's hearing device upgrades and a number of friends that have the best intentions but fail to treat Cece like a "normal" girl. Cece develops her superhero alter ego, "El Deafo," and readers are given a series of quick lessons on deaf culture.

Beram, Nell. *Yoko Ono: Collector of Skies*; by Nell Beram and Carolyn Boriss-Krimsky. Amulet/Abrams, 2013. 178p. Gr. 7-12.
In this biography, the avant-garde artist is depicted as an individual with the desire to create art in everything. Beram and Boriss-Krimsky navigate her public and private life with empathy, revealing an artist that seeks to create beauty all around her.

Cooper, Ilene. *A Woman in the House (and Senate): How Women Came to the United States Congress, Broke Down Barriers, and Changed the Country*; illus. by Elizabeth Baddeley and with photographs. Abrams, 2014. 134p. Gr. 5-9.
Beginning with the women's suffrage movement and ending with the 2012 elections, Cooper chronicles the pioneering women who broke down barriers in American government. Individual accomplishments are recorded alongside the issues championed by female politicians, legislation they wrote and passed, and the societal expectations women faced as they ran for various positions.

Eagland, Jane. *The World Within: A Novel of Emily Brontë*. Levine/Scholastic, 2015. 336p. Gr. 7-10.
With little known about Emily Brontë's personal life, this imagined account of her inner thoughts and family dynamics will feed readers' curiosities about the mysterious *Wuthering Heights* author. As her siblings begin to drift away, Emily becomes fraught with distress and anxiety.

Fradlin, Dennis Brindell. *Zora!: The Life of Zora Neale Hurston*; written by Dennis Brindell Fradin and Judith Bloom Fradin. Clarion, 2012. 180p. Gr. 4-7.
At the height of the Harlem Renaissance, Zora Neale Hurston arrived in New York and quickly

gained recognition for her writings. That recognition did not bring her success, but with her self-confidence, she remained determined to become a famous writer. The authors explore her childhood, writing career, and how the award-winning author came to work as a housekeeper in her fifties.

Hartland, Jessie. *Bon Appétit!: The Delicious Life of Julia Child*; written and illus. by Jessie Hartland. Schwartz & Wade, 2012. 48p. Gr. 6-9.

Julia Child's life is spread out in this quirky graphic novel, following her upbringing in Pasadena, California and her war service in the OSS and ultimately focusing on her relationship with French cuisine and cookery. Hartland focuses on describing the ten painstaking years that Child took to write her influential French cookbook and her surprising rise as a television star.

Kohuth, Jane. *Anne Frank's Chestnut Tree*; illus. by Elizabeth Sayles. Random House, 2013. 48p. Gr. 2-4.

The branches of a tall chestnut tree, visible through the attic window of the now famous Amsterdam annex, gave Anne Frank hope for the future. When she was unable to walk outside or breathe fresh air, this small glimpse of nature inspired Anne's writing. The theme of nature structures an abbreviated overview of Anne Frank's life in this accessible easy-reader.

McCully, Emily Arnold. *Ida M. Tarbell: The Woman Who Challenged Big Business—and Won!* Clarion, 2014. 279p. Gr. 7-12.

Ida Minerva Tarbell originally wanted to be a naturalist, but her talent for writing brought her to *McClure's Magazine* where she became a pioneering journalist; her investigative journalism contributed to government regulation of big businesses. From her upbringing in oil country and her truancy in school to her rise to fame at *McClure's*, Tarbell is depicted as an adventurous and independent individual.

Nelson, Marilyn. *How I Discovered Poetry*; illus. by Hadley Hooper. Dial, 2015. 103p. Gr. 7-12.

This verse memoir follows poet Marilyn Nelson through her childhood years, from age four to fourteen. Each poem serves as a snapshot of her family life and offers a glimpse into the Civil Rights Movement, McCarthyism, and the beginnings of the feminist movement through the eyes of a young African American girl.

Reef, Catherine. *The Brontë Sisters: The Brief Lives of Charlotte, Emily, and Anne.* Clarion, 2012. 231p. Gr. 6-9.

The literary Brontë siblings spent their childhood exploring the moors of Yorkshire, England and weaving together stories of imaginary kingdoms. This romantic pastime was accompanied by many hardships, the loss of their mother and two sisters, and their brother Branwell's addiction to drugs and alcohol. The Brontë sisters spun their misfortune into novels and poems that still resonate today.

Fictional Female Authors
Selected and annotated by Michelle Biwer

Featuring everything from picture books to YA, this booklist showcases the diversity of fictional female writers, their stories, and how they choose to share them.

Banks, Angelica. *Finding Serendipity*. Holt, 2015. 280p. Gr. 4-6.

When famous author Serendipity Smith mysteriously disappears, it is up to her daughter Tuesday to find her and bring her home. The only hint Serendipity left was a note reading, “The End.” Tuesday realizes that in order to find her mother at “The End,” she must start at “The Beginning,” and thus she begins to write in the world of her mother’s heroine, Vivienne Smith.

Fitzmaurice, Kathryn. *Destiny, Rewritten*. Tegen/HarperCollins, 2013. 335 pages. Gr. 5-7.

Emily Elizabeth Davis was named after poet Emily Dickinson, an unsurprising choice given that Emily Elizabeth’s own mother is a poet and professor at Berkeley. Her mother assumes that her daughter will follow suit, but Emily Elizabeth wants to be a romance novelist despite her mother’s disapproval. Her mother is also unsupportive of Emily Elizabeth’s quest to find her father, so she sets out to find him and prove that fate is more malleable than her mother believes.

Frank, E. R. *Dime*. Atheneum, 2015. 315p. Gr. 10-12.

Dime is working on her suicide note, the story of how she got involved with her pimp and violent lover, Daddy. She is having trouble writing it because she thinks her voice is too “serious and boring” to draw enough attention and ensure that the terror of her situation and that of the other trafficked girls around her gets the publicity it deserves. She continues trying to write the story by using the inhuman narrators of *Sex, Money, and Truth* as danger escalates around her.

Freitas, Donna. *This Gorgeous Game*. Foster/Farrar, 2010. 208p. Gr. 8-12.

When Sister June pulls Olivia out of her AP Calculus class, Olivia is pretty sure it is because of the writing competition she had entered. Not only did Olivia win the writing prize, but she got to meet her literary hero, local priest Mark D. Brendan, and register for his college writing class. But when he invites her to work on her manuscript with him, gives her gifts, and begins to contact her constantly, the situation escalates so suddenly that Olivia is not sure what is happening or whom to trust.

Haskell, Merrie. *Handbook for Dragon Slayers*. Harper/Harper Collins, 2013. 324p. Gr. 5-7.

Tilda is a princess of Alder Brook, and as such it is her duty to tend to various social responsibilities. Tilda attempts to avoid such frivolity by writing, although usually materials are so scarce that she is limited to copying texts and crafting letters to other royals. But after she is kidnapped and subsequently rescued, Tilda and her friends decide to become dragon slayers and adventurers rather than going back to their mundane lives at the palace. Careful to write down everything she observes about dragons, Tilda finally gets to write her own story and discovers a lot about herself and dragonkind in the process.

Hattermer, Kate. *The Vigilante Poets of Selwyn Academy*. Knopf, 2014. Gr. 9-12.

Ethan and his three friends protest the reality show that films at their high school by writing a long-form poem that is published in an illicit school newspaper. Contrary to their mission, the

producers of the reality show revel in the attention and even manage to convince Ethan's friend and poem co-author Luke to join the show. Ethan and his remaining colleagues then resolve to launch an investigation into the school.

Jennings, Patrick. *Bat and Rat*; illus. by Matthew Cordell. Abrams, 2012. 34 p. 5-7 yrs.
Rat is working on a song about her favorite things but is having trouble getting it just right. Her friend Bat takes her out to ice cream (one of Rat's favorite things) for inspiration. Chaos ensues as precious ice cream splats on the ground, but the experience leaves Rat with enough inspiration to finish writing the lyrics to their song. Bat and Rat perform their now completed song to an enraptured audience that very night.

Juby, Susan. *The Truth Commission*; illus. by Trevor Cooper. Viking, 2014. 309p. Gr. 9-12
Normandy Pale is working on a long-term art project for school, a work of creative non-fiction/investigative journalism targeting her fellow art school students, and her famous graphic novelist sister, Keira. Her project is called "The Truth Commission," and she writes about the "truths" and gossip she uncovers in journal entries complete with extensive, humorous footnotes and characteristic scribbles in the margins. Eventually, her investigations may reveal more about herself and her family than she may have intended.

Look, Lenore. *Polka Dot Penguin Pottery*; illus. by Yumi Heo. Schwartz & Wade, 2011. 36p. 6-9 yrs.
Aspen can usually be found writing in her treehouse, but lately she has had a bad case of writer's block. Her family thinks the best thing for her is a break, so they take her to Polka Dot Penguin Pottery. Aspen is so excited to paint, but she feels like she is blocked somehow, so she watches while her friends paint around her. Aspen eventually realizes that sometime the best masterpieces are made when you are willing to make a mess and keep trying.

Nelson, Jandy. *The Sky Is Everywhere*. Dial, 2010. 275p. Gr. 8-12.
After the devastating death of her older sister Bailey, Lennie Walker is left with little family and few ways to express her grief. She takes to writing short poems, trying to work out both her grief and the newfound complications with her love life in short bursts of emotion that she scatters in public places.

Quintero, Isabel. *Gabi: A Girl in Pieces*. Cinco Puntos, 2014. 284p. Gr. 9-12.
Gabi Hernandez chronicles her senior year of high school in this epistolary novel composed of journal entries, zines, letters, and poetry. And she has plenty of noteworthy things to write about: her best friend just told her she was pregnant, her father is a drug addict, and her mom keeps hassling her about everything, including her weight. Readers will find Gabi's voice relatable, as well the struggles and emotions of a teenage girl trying to work out her identity.

Roskos, Evan. *Dr. Bird's Advice for Sad Poets*. Houghton, 2013. 310p. Gr. 7-10.
James knows that therapy is the best treatment for his anxiety and depression. He dreams up an imaginary pigeon therapist called Dr. Bird because his parents think that his symptoms are that of a typical teenager and refuse to get him treatment. James also finds solace in the poetry of Walt Whitman, which he references in his daily life and channels throughout his own poetic endeavors.

Rowell, Rainbow. *Fangirl*. St. Martin's Press, 2013. 433p. Gr. 8-12

Cath is not only a huge fan of the (fictional) *Simon Snow* books, she is one of the most popular *Simon Snow* fanfiction authors on the internet. It is now the start of Cath's freshman year at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, but she is afraid to leave her bipolar father at home alone, and her struggles with social anxiety leave her far more comfortable with her online life than her real one. Despite Cath's attempts to separate herself from the "real" world, someone manages to make his way through the shield that Cath has put up around herself.

Wein, Elizabeth. *Rose Under Fire*. Hyperion, 2013. 360p. Gr. 9-12

Rose Justice is an eighteen-year-old American pilot who ferries planes for the British Air Transport Auxiliary during World War II. After she volunteers for a solo flight to France, her plane is intercepted by the Nazis. Now a concentration camp victim, Rose writes and recites powerful poetry for her fellow victims as a way of maintaining humanity and hope.

Westerfeld, Scott. *Afterworlds*. Simon Pulse, 2014. 599p. Gr. 9-12.

Darcy Patel is a teenage novelist who recently moved to New York City to pursue a career in publishing. Her first novel, *Afterworlds*, is a fantasy in which her protagonist, Lizzie, unwittingly becomes a guide for the dead in the afterlife. Westerfeld alternates between Darcy's story and chapters of Darcy's soon to be published novel in this uniquely crafted narrative.