

DELVE DEEPER READING LIST

Bill Nye: Science Guy

A film by David Alvarado and Jason Sussberg



This list of fiction and nonfiction books, compiled by Susan Conlon and Kelsey Ockert of Princeton Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *Bill Nye: Science Guy*.

Bill Nye is a man on a mission: to stop the spread of anti-scientific thinking across the world. The former star of the popular kids show “Bill Nye the Science Guy” is now advocating for the importance of science, research and discovery in public life. With intimate and exclusive access—as well as plenty of wonder and whimsy—this behind-the-scenes portrait of Nye follows him as he takes off his Science Guy lab coat and takes on those who deny climate change, evolution and a science-based world view.

ADULT NONFICTION

Alda, Alan. *If I Understood You, Would I Have This Look on My Face? My Adventures in the Art and Science of Relating and Communicating*. New York: Random House, 2017

Award-winning actor Alan Alda tells the fascinating story of his quest to learn how to communicate better, and to teach others to do the same. With his trademark humor and candor, he explores how to develop empathy as the key factor.

Cooper, Caren B. *Citizen Science: How Ordinary People Are Changing the Face of Discovery*. New York: Overlook Press, 2016

Citizen scientists are challenging old notions about who can conduct research, where knowledge can be acquired, and even how solutions to some of our biggest societal problems might emerge. In telling their story, Cooper will inspire readers to rethink their own assumptions about the role that individuals can play in gaining scientific understanding and putting that understanding to use as stewards of our world.

Ghosh, Amitav. *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Ghosh examines our inability—at the level of literature, history, and politics—to grasp the scale and violence of climate change. The extreme nature of today’s climate events, Ghosh asserts, make them peculiarly resistant to contemporary modes of thinking and imagining.

Onion, Rebecca. *Innocent Experiments: Childhood and the Culture of Popular Science in the United States*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016.

From the 1950s to the digital age, Americans have pushed their children to live science-minded lives, cementing scientific discovery and youthful curiosity as inseparable ideals. In this multifaceted work, historian Rebecca Onion

examines the rise of informal children’s science education in the twentieth century, from the proliferation of home chemistry sets after World War I to the century-long boom in child-centered science museums.

Mann, Michael E. *The Madhouse Effect: How Climate Change Denial Is Threatening Our Planet, Destroying Our Politics, and Driving Us Crazy*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016.

The Madhouse Effect portrays the intellectual pretzels into which denialists must twist logic to explain away the clear evidence that human activity has changed Earth’s climate. Toles’s cartoons collapse counter-scientific strategies into their biased components, helping readers see how to best strike at these fallacies. Mann’s expert skills at science communication aim to restore sanity to a debate that continues to rage against widely acknowledged scientific consensus.

Mundy, Liza. *Code Girls: The Untold Story of the American Women Code Breakers Who Helped Win World War II*. New York: Hachette Books, 2017.

Recruited by the U.S. Army and Navy from small towns and elite colleges, more than ten thousand women served as codebreakers during World War II. While their brothers and boyfriends took up arms, these women moved to Washington and learned the meticulous work of code-breaking. Their efforts shortened the war, saved countless lives, and gave them access to careers previously denied to them. (Bill Nye’s mother is one of the women featured in this book.)

Nye, Bill. *Unstoppable: Harnessing Science to Change the World*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2015.

In *Unstoppable*, Bill Nye crystallizes and expands the message for which he is best known and beloved. That message is that with a combination of optimism and scientific curiosity, all obstacles become opportunities, and the possibilities of our world become limitless. With a scientist’s thirst for knowledge and an engineer’s vision of what can be, Bill Nye sees today’s environmental issues not as insurmountable, depressing problems but as chances for our society to rise to the challenge and create a cleaner, healthier, smarter world.

ADULT FICTION

Crouch, Blake. *Dark Matter*. New York: Crown Publishers, 2016.

With a beautiful wife, a great son, and a job teaching college physics, Jason Dessen is content with his life. Sure, he has a twinge of envy when he meets an old friend who has just won a prestigious science prize, but on the whole, he wouldn’t trade his situation. Which makes it

all the more horrible when someone takes that existence from him, and worse when it turns out to be an alternate version of himself.

Doctorow, Cory. *Walkaway*. New York: Tor, 2017.

Now that anyone can design and print the basic necessities of life—food, clothing, shelter—from a computer, there seems to be little reason to toil within the system. It's still a dangerous world out there, the empty lands wrecked by climate change, dead cities hollowed out by industrial flight, shadows hiding predators animal and human alike. Still, when the initial pioneer walkaways flourish, more people join them. Then the walkaways discover the one thing the ultra-rich have never been able to buy: how to beat death.

Hayes, Nick. *Rime of the Modern Mariner*. New York: Viking, 2012.

Written in 1797, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" was the original eco-fable; drawn in 2010, *The Rime of the Modern Mariner* is a graphic novel, now set in the cess-pool of the North Atlantic Garbage Patch—thus adding a timely and resonant message about the destruction of our seas.

Robinson, Kim Stanley. *Aurora*. New York: Orbit, 2015

Generations after leaving Earth, a starship draws near to the planet that may serve as a new home world for those on board. But the journey has brought unexpected changes and their best laid plans may not be enough to survive.

Robinson, Kim Stanley. *New York, 2140*. New York: Orbit, 2017.

The waters rose, submerging New York City. But the residents adapted and it remained the bustling, vibrant metropolis it had always been. Though changed forever. Every street became a canal. Every skyscraper an island. Through the eyes of the varied inhabitants of one building Kim Stanley Robinson shows us how one of our great cities will change with the rising tides. And how we too will change.

NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Cunningham, Darryl. *How to Fake A Moon Landing: Exposing the Myths of Science Denial*. New York: Abrams ComicArts, 2013.

Is hydro-fracking safe? Is climate change real? Did the moon landing actually happen? How about evolution: fact or fiction? Award-winning author-illustrator Darryl Cunningham looks at these and other hot-button science topics and presents a fact-based, visual assessment of current thinking and research on eight different issues everybody's arguing about.

Drummond, Allan. *Green City: How One Community Survived A Tornado and Rebuilt for A Sustainable Future*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2016.

Drummond recounts the story of Greensburg, Kansas, a town rebuilt completely green after a deadly tornado.

Burns, Loree Griffin. *Citizen Scientists: Be A Part of Scientific Discovery From your Own Backyard*. New York: Henry Holt, 2012.

The book shows young readers how a citizen scientist learns about butterflies, birds, frogs, and ladybugs.

Green, Dan. *Climate Change: A Hot Topic!* New York: Kingfisher, 2014.

Cartoon-style characters explain climate change, covering such topics as the polar ice caps, the greenhouse effect, global warming, and fossil fuels.

FICTION FOR YOUNGER READER

Beaty, Andrea. *Ada Twist, Scientist*. New York: Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2016.

Ada Twist is a very curious girl who shows perseverance by asking questions and performing experiments to find things out and understand the world.

Helget, Nicole Lea. *The End of the Wild*. New York; Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2017.

Eleven-year-old Fern helps to take care of her impoverished family by foraging for food in the forest, but when a fracking company rolls into town, she realizes that her peaceful woods and her family's livelihood could be threatened.

King, A. S. *Me and Marvin Gardens*. New York, New York: Arthur A. Levine Books, 2017.

Obe Devlin spends a lot of his time cleaning up the creek that runs through what little is left of his family's once extensive farmland, and worrying about what the developers are doing nearby, and the pollution it is causing--but one day he finds a strange creature by his creek that eats plastic, and soon the animal he calls Marvin Gardens becomes his personal secret, which he believes needs to be protected from pretty much everybody.

Scaletta, Kurtis. *Rooting for Rafael Rosales*. Chicago, IL: Albert Whitman & Company, 2017.

In the Dominican Republic, a boy who dreams of playing professional professional baseball in the United States crosses paths with a young environmentalist from Minneapolis who is passionate about saving bees.

Mone, Gregory and Bill Nye. *Jack and the Geniuses: At the Bottom of the World*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2017.

In the series opener, *Jack and the Geniuses: At the Bottom of the World*, readers meet Jack and his foster siblings, Ava and Matt, who are orphans. But they're not your typical kind of orphans—they're geniuses. Well, Ava and Matt are, which sometimes makes life difficult for twelve-year-old Jack. Ava speaks multiple languages and builds robots for fun, and Matt is into astronomy and a whiz at math. As for Jack, it's hard to stand out when he's surrounded by geniuses all the time.