

History Odyssey: Modern Times Level One Alternative Booklist

Note: Comprehension questions found in the study guide are provided only for the original books listed in the guide.

Below are alternative books that can be read in place of the following three titles:

1. *Mysteries of Sherlock Holmes* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, adapted by Judith Conaway

Alternatives: Read an abridged version of a Victorian novel. The Victorian era in British literature gave us so many famous quotes and phrases. From “Please, sir, I want some more,” to “Elementary, my dear Watson,” to “Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum!,” chances are good that you will find a Victorian-era literature that appeals to your child’s interests. Here are three options from the *Classic Starts* series, but certainly feel free to choose any abridged version of your choice:

- ★ ***Classic Starts: The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, edited by Chris Sasaki** (Sterling Children’s Books, 2005) ISBN: 978-1402712173. Do you like putting puzzles together and solving mysteries? If so, this might be the book for you. Join Sherlock Holmes and his famous sidekick Watson as they put their detective skills to the test.
- ★ ***Classic Starts: Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson, edited by Chris Tait** (Sterling Children’s Books, 2005) ISBN: 978-1402713187. Not interested in solving mysteries? How about hunting for treasure with a crew of fearsome pirates? You’ll meet Long John Silver and many other colorful characters as you cruise to Treasure Island.
- ★ ***Classic Starts: Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens, edited by Kathleen Olmstead** (Sterling Children’s Books, 2006). He famously asks for a second serving of gruel, but what he really yearns for is a home and a family to love. Join one of literature’s most famous orphans as he navigates the rough streets of Victorian-era London. Please note that this story contains scenes of violence. In this version, the violence is quite toned-down (as compared to the Broadway musical version, for example), but this might not be the best choice for highly sensitive children.

2. *The Last Safe House: A Story of the Underground Railroad* by Barbara Greenwood

Alternatives:

- ★ ***As Long as the Rivers Flow* by Larry Loyie** (Douglas & McIntyre, 2002) ISBN: 0-88899-473-7.
This is a Native-authored book about the boarding school atrocity in Canada. It takes place in the 1940s (around Lesson 13 or 14 of History Odyssey: Modern Times) but this series of events occurred from the late 19th century well into modern times, so you could read this book at almost any time during the course.
Summary: In the late 19th century and well into the 20th century, tens of thousands of Native North American children in the United States and Canada were forcibly removed from their parents and made to attend residential “boarding schools,” where they toiled for long hours, were forbidden from speaking their native languages, and faced harsh punishments. *As Long as the Rivers Flow* tells the story of a Cree boy who enjoys one last summer with his family before being forced to attend a residential school. This book should be an independent read for most upper elementary students, but we also recommend reading together, as it is an excellent starting point for conversations about a shameful course of events in American and Canadian history.

- ★ ***The Story of Harriet Tubman by Christine Platt*** (Rockridge Press, 2020) ISBN: 978-1646111091. A biography of Harriet Tubman from *The Story of . . .* biography series. This book would be appropriate to read during Lesson 7 of History Odyssey: Modern Times. This early reader biography would be an excellent independent read for elementary-level readers, but we also recommend reading together as a family so you can discuss the topic of the Underground Railroad with your child. If you like the format, reading level, and illustration style of this series, you have many more options to continue reading, with biographies of Alexander Hamilton, Martin Luther King, Jr., Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and others.

3. *The Story of Thomas Alva Edison by Margaret Cousins*

Alternatives: Below are a few options for learning about Thomas Edison (on three different reading levels) which may be more readily available at local libraries (and are also available on the Epic! app).

- ★ ***Great Minds of Science: Thomas Edison by Katherine Krieg***. ISBN: 978-1624033780 (Core Library, 2014). This biography is geared toward students reading on a 4th- to 6th-grade level, and includes several photos. If you like this series, there are several other *Great Minds* books you can check out, including biographies of Jane Goodall, Stephen Hawking, and several others.
- ★ ***Britannica Beginner Bios: Thomas Alva Edison, Inventor and Entrepreneur by Greg Roza***. (Britannica Educational Publishing, 2015) ISBN: 978-1622756933. This brief biography would work well for a child reading on a 2nd- to 4th-grade level. It includes many photos of Edison and his inventions, as well as a helpful timeline and list of books for further reading.
- ★ ***National Geographic Kids: Thomas Edison by Barbara Kramer***. (Readers Bios, 2014) ISBN: 978-1426314766. This book has a slightly lower reading level than the other Edison biography (roughly 1st- to 3rd-grade) and also includes many photos to maintain interest. Perhaps consider paring this book with others from the *National Geographic Kids* series, which includes biographies of Alexander Graham Bell and Albert Einstein, among others.