Authentic Nonfiction vs. Encyclopedia

You've chosen to learn about your topic because you found it interesting. When you share it with others, make them interested, too. The best way to do this is by writing with voice. Find what makes your subject most interesting to you and bring it to life. Here's what we mean:

National Geographic on Sea Turtles:
Turtles poured out of the surf in wave after wave through the darkness. Heaving, huffing, gasping, turtles plowed the coarse black sand with their noses, laboring onto shore. On this rain-soaked October night, possibly 30,000 olive ridley sea turtles were converging on a half mile of Pacific beach at Ostinonal, Costa Rica, in a biological extravaganza called *la arribada*, the arrival.

Following instincts that scientists have not begun to understand, the turtles had gathered offshore for mating and now hordes of females were swimming to this particular beach to lay eggs. By 2 A.M. the beach looked like a cobblestone street where the cobblestones had come to life. And still more turtles were coming. All night, they advanced and retreated. The collided and piled up in jams. They filled the air with the soft sound of flippers hollowing nests in the sand and a rhythmic thump thump thump as turtles that had finished laying rocked their 80 pound bodies to pack sand over their eggs (Rudloe, Jack, and Anne Rudloe. 1994. "Sea Turtles: In a Race for Survival." *National Geographic* 185 (February): 94-121.)

World Book Encyclopedia (1996)
There are at least seven species of sea turtles. Six of them - the green turtle, the flatback, the hawksbill, the loggerhead, the Atlantic ridley and the Pacific ridley -- have bony scut covered shells. . .

Female sea turtles do not normally leave the water, except to lay their eggs. The females often migrate thousands of miles or kilometers to reach their breeding beaches. They drag themselves onto a sandy beach, bury their eggs, and then return to the sea.

(These examples were chosen by Stephanie Harvey for her book *Nonfiction Matters)*