

Realistic Fiction

Teen Fiction Suggested Reading List

All titles located in YA Fiction or YA Paperbacks by the author's last name .



Wintergirls by Laurie Halse Anderson

Eighteen-year-old Lia comes to terms with her best friend's death from anorexia as she struggles with the same disorder. (Grades 9 & up)



Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher

When Clay Jenkins receives a box containing thirteen cassette tapes recorded by his classmate Hannah, who committed suicide, he spends the night crisscrossing their town, listening to Hannah's voice recounting the events leading up to her death. (Grades 8 & up)



Hope Was Here by Joan Bauer

When sixteen-year-old Hope and her aunt move from Brooklyn to Wisconsin to work as waitress and cook in the Welcome Stairways diner, they become involved with the diner owner's political campaign to oust the town's corrupt mayor. (Grades 8 & up)



Hanging on to Max by Margaret Bechard

When his girlfriend decides to give their baby away, seventeen-year-old Sam is determined to keep him and raise him alone. (Grades 8 & up)



My Lost and Found Life by Melody Bowsher

When her mother is accused of embezzling a million dollars and vanishes, spoiled, selfish Ashley must fend for herself by finding a job and a place to live. (Grades 9 & up)



Evolution, Me and Other Freaks of Nature by Robin Brande

Following her conscience leads high school freshman Mena to clash with her parents and former friends from their conservative Christian church, but might result in better things when she stands up for a teacher who refuses to include "Intelligent Design" in lessons on evolution. (Grades 7 & up)



Kissing the Rain by Kevin Brooks

Fifteen-year-old Moo Nelson, shy, overweight, and bullied by his classmates, finds his life spinning out of control after he witnesses a car chase and a fight that results in a murder. (Grades 9 & up)



Sara's Face by Melvin Burgess

Seventeen-year-old Sara wants so much to be famous that when a legendary, plastic-surgery-addicted rock star offers to take her under his wing and pay for her to have surgery too, she jumps at the chance despite her misgivings. (Grades 9 & up)



The Secret Life of Prince Charming by Deb Caletti

When seventeen-year-old Quinn learns that her charismatic but selfish father, with whom she has recently begun to have a tentative relationship, has stolen from the many women in his life, she decides she must avenge this wrong. (Grades 8 & up)



Carter Finally Gets It by Brent Crawford

Awkward freshman Will Carter endures many painful moments during his first year of high school before realizing that nothing good comes easily, focus is everything, and the payoff is usually incredible. (Grades 8 & up)



Played by Dana Davidson

When Ian Striver is dared by "his boys" to sleep with plain Kylie Winship in just three weeks, he is up for the challenge, thinking it will be a breeze, but a series of unexpected events have surprises for both of them. (Grades 8 & up)



Before I Die by Jenny Downham

A terminally ill teenaged girl makes and carries out a list of things to do before she dies. (Grades 9 & up)



If I Stay by Gayle Forman

With no memory of the car accident itself, 17-year-old Mia must come to terms with never really knowing what happened one horrific winter's day that changed her life forever. (Grades 8 & up)



Breathing Underwater by Alex Flinn

Sent to counseling for hitting his girlfriend, Caitlin, and ordered to keep a journal, sixteen-year-old Nick recounts his relationship with Caitlin, examines his controlling behavior and anger, and describes living with his abusive father. (Grades 8 & up)



Looking For Alaska by John Green

Sixteen-year-old Miles' first year at Culver Creek Preparatory School in Alabama includes good friends and great pranks, but is defined by the search for answers about life and death after a fatal car crash. (Grades 9 & up)

**Don't You Dare Read This, Mrs. Dunphrey** by Margaret Peterson Haddix

Tish's new high school English teacher promises her class that if they write "Do not read this" on their personal journal entries, she will not read them, but Tish's life with her little brother, her violent father, and her irresponsible mother leads her to confide in her teacher through her diary. (Grades 7 & up)

**Get Well Soon** by Julie Halpern

When her parents commit her to a mental hospital for being depressed, Anna Bloom meets a roommate with a secret, a doctor who focuses way too much on her weight, and a cute, shy boy who just might like her. (Grades 8 & up)

**Blank Confessions** by Pete Hautman

A new and enigmatic student named Shayne appears at high school one day, befriends the smallest boy in the school, and takes on a notorious drug dealer before turning himself in to the police for killing someone. (Grades 8 & up)

**Sucker Punch** by David Hernandez

Shy, seventeen-year-old Marcus and his sixteen-year-old brother, Enrique, accompanied by two friends, drive from their home in southern California to Monterey to confront the abusive father who walked out a year earlier, and who now wants to return home. (Grades 9 & up)

**Cheated** by Patrick Jones

Fifteen-year-old Mick recalls a series of betrayals and other life-changing events in his broken home, during the break-up with his girlfriend, and at school, that led to his arrest for murder. (Grades 9 & up)

**Pop** by Gordon Korman

Lonely after a midsummer move to a new town, sixteen-year-old high-school quarterback Marcus Jordan becomes friends with a retired professional linebacker who is great at training him, but whose childish behavior keeps Marcus in hot water. (Grades 8 & up)

**Cheater** by Michael Laser

When brilliant high school student Karl Petrovsky gets talked into participating in an elaborate cheating operation at his school, he ends up involved in a bigger problem than he ever anticipated. (Grades 7 & up)

**The Earth, My Butt and Other Rounds Things** by Carolyn Mackler

Feeling like she does not fit in with the other members of her family, who are all thin, brilliant, and good-looking, fifteen-year-old Virginia Shreves tries to deal with her self-image, her first physical relationship, and her disillusionment with some of the people closest to her. (Grades 8 & up)

**Saving Francesca** by Melina Marchetta

Sixteen-year-old Francesca could use her outspoken mother's help with the problems of being one of a handful of girls at a parochial school that has just turned co-ed, but her mother has suddenly become severely depressed. (Grades 8 & up)

**Cut** by Patricia McCormick

While confined to a mental hospital, thirteen-year-old Callie slowly comes to understand some of the reasons behind her self-mutilation, and gradually starts to get better. (Grades 8 & up)

**Monster** by Walter Dean Myers

While on trial as an accomplice to a murder, sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon records his experiences in prison and in the courtroom in the form of a film script as he tries to come to terms with the course his life has taken. (Grades 7 & up)

**Sunrise Over Fallujah** by Walter Dean Myers

Robin Perry, from Harlem, is sent to Iraq in 2003 as a member of the Civilian Affairs Battalion, and his time there profoundly changes him. (Grades 7 & up)

**L8R, G8R** by Lauren Myracle

Throughout their senior year in high school, Zoe, Maddie, and Angela continue to share "instant messages" with one another about their day-to-day experiences as they consider college, sex, the importance of prom, and the inevitable end of their inseparable trio. (Grades 10 & up)

**A Step From Heaven** by An Na

Young Ju Park is unhappy with her journey to America as her family suffers hard times upon their arrival, yet when her father suddenly becomes violent, Young Ju is thankful when he leaves so that her family can start over. (Grades 8 & up)

**The Sky is Everywhere** by Jandy Nelson

In the months after her sister dies, seventeen-year-old Lennie falls into a love triangle and discovers the strength to follow her dream of becoming a musician. (Grades 9 & up)

**Breathe My Name** by R.A. Nelson

Soon after Frances begins falling for the new boy at school, her quiet life is disrupted by a summons from her birth mother, who has just been released after serving eleven years in prison for smothering Frances's younger sisters. (Grades 10 & up)

**King Dork** by Frank Portman

After stumbling upon one of his father's old books, hints and clues are revealed to a secret past that may lead to answers regarding his father's life and mysterious death. (Grades 10 & up)

**Punkzilla** by Adam Rapp

A runaway boy nicknamed Punkzilla who sustains himself on the streets of Portland through petty crimes decides to try to kick his meth habit, turn his life around, and go on a journey to Tennessee to visit his dying older brother. (Grades 9 & up)

**It's Kind of a Funny Story** by Ned Vizzini

A humorous account of a New York City teenager's battle with depression and his time spent in a psychiatric hospital. (Grades 9 & up)

**Story of a Girl** by Sara Zarr

After being caught in a compromising situation with her brother's best friend in the back of a car, Deanna's life is forever changed as vicious rumors begin to spread all over town and ruin her reputation. (Grades 9 & up)

**Memoirs of a Teenage Amnesiac** by Gabriella Zevin

A toss of the coin ends up changing Naomi's life after a slip on the stairs results in amnesia, a disconnect with the life she once led, and a new relationship with a young man with a questionable past. (Grades 8 & up)

**The Secret Rite of Butterflies** by Lizabeth Zindel

Maggie worries about making friends at her new high school until she is invited to join an elite secret society devoted to eavesdropping and recording the "truth" about students and faculty. (Grades 9 & up)

