



Realistic Fiction for Middle School Readers

Alexie, Sherman. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. YA ALE

Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.

Bauer, Joan. *Rules of the Road*. YA BAU

Sixteen-year-old Jenna gets a job driving the elderly owner of a chain of successful shoe stores from Chicago to Texas to confront the son who is trying to force her to retire, and along the way Jenna hones her talents as a saleswoman and finds the strength to face her alcoholic father.

Burg, Ann. *All the Broken Pieces*. YA BUR

Two years after being airlifted out of Vietnam in 1975, Matt Pin is haunted by the terrible secret he left behind and, now, in a loving adoptive home in the United States, a series of profound events forces him to confront his past.

Choldenko, Jennifer. *Al Capone Does My Shirts*. YA CHO

A twelve-year-old boy named Moose moves to Alcatraz Island in 1935 when guards' families were housed there, and has to contend with his extraordinary new environment in addition to life with his autistic sister.

Cormier, Robert. *The Chocolate War*. YA COR

A high school student is first a hero and then a victim in this novel of intimidation and the misuse of power. "Masterfully structured and rich in theme. Well crafted, well timed, suspenseful." --"The New York Times." ALA Best Book for Young Adults.

Dueker, Carl. *Night Hoops*. YA DEU

While trying to prove that he is good enough to on his high school's varsity basketball team, Nick must also deal with his parents' divorce and erratic behavior of a troubled classmate who lives across the street.

Fenner, Carol. *Yolonda's Genius*. J FEN

After moving from Chicago to Grand River, Michigan, fifth grader Yolonda, big and strong for her age, determines to prove that her younger brother is not a slow learner but a true musical genius.

Holt, Kimberly Willis. *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town*. J HOLT

Nothing ever happens in Toby's small Texas town. Nothing until his mother leaves home to be a country singer, and his friend goes off to fight in Vietnam. But he is about to get an even bigger jolt with the arrival of Zachary Beaver, the fattest boy in the world.

Korman, Gordon. *Song of the Mob*. YA KOR

Vince Luca is just like any other high school guy. His best friend, Alex, is trying to score vicariously through him; his brother is a giant pain; and his father keeps bugging him to get motivated. There is just one thing that really sets him apart for other kids his father happens to be the head of a powerful crime organization. Needless to say, while Vince's family's connections can be handy for certain things-like when teachers are afraid to give him a bad grade as they can put a serious crimp in his dating life. How is he supposed to explain to a girl what his father does for a living? But when Vince finally meets one who seems to be worth the trouble, her family turns out to be the biggest problem of all. Because her father is an FBI agent-the one who wants to put his father away for good.

Lowry, Lois. *A Summer to Die*. YA LOW

Thirteen-year-old Meg envies her sister's beauty and popularity. Her feelings don't make it any easier for her to cope with Molly's strange illness and eventual death.

Lupica, Mike. *Travel Team*. FIC LUPICA / CD FIC LUPICA (Sound Recording)

In his first novel for young readers, the author of "Wild Pitch" and "Bump and Run" tells the story of a 12-year-old Danny Walker, the smallest kid on the basketball court who's cut from the very travel team his father led to national prominence as a boy.

McDonald, Janet. *Twists & Turns*. YA MCD

With the help of a couple of successful friends, eighteen- and nineteen-year-old Teesha and Keeba try to capitalize on their talents by opening a hair salon in the run-down Brooklyn housing project where they live.

Meyers, Walter Dean. *Monster*. YA MYERS

Winner of the Printz Award Winner of the Coretta Scott King Award National Book Award Finalist. Steve Harmon's black. He's in jail, maybe forever. He's on trial for murder. And he's sixteen years old. Steve: "Sometimes I feel like I have walked into the middle of a movie. Maybe I can make my own movie. The film will be the story of my life. No, not my life, but of this experience. I'll call it what the lady prosecutor called me . . . MONSTER.

Mills, Claudia. *Makeovers by Marcia*. YA MIL

At the beginning of eighth grade, all Marcia can think about is what nail polish to use, how to lose weight, and whether Alex will ask her to the dance, but after giving makeovers in a nursing home for a school project, she begins to appreciate the value of inner beauty.

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *The "Alice" Series*. YA NAY

From School Library Journal: Alice's mother died when she was four. Now a sixth grader, she finds her all-male household no help with the process of growing up female. Through a series of incidents both hilarious and poignant, Alice searches for a female to help her cope with her adolescent anxieties. At first repulsed by her physically unattractive teacher, Mrs. Plotkin, Alice gradually realizes that although surrounded by a variety of role models, it is kind, sensitive Mrs. Plotkin who she wants to be like. The lively style exhibits a deft touch at capturing the essence of an endearing heroine growing up without a mother. Alice's forthcoming fans will agonize with her and await her further adventures.

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *Shiloh*. J NAY

When he finds a lost beagle in the hills behind his West Virginia home, Marty tries to hide it from his family and the dog's real owner, a mean-spirited man known to shoot deer out of season and to mistreat his dogs.

Paulsen, Gary. *Lawn Boy*. J PAU

Things get out of hand for a twelve-year-old boy when a neighbor convinces him to expand his summer lawn mowing business.

Paulsen, Gary. *Lawn Boy Returns*. J PAU

Having expanded his summer lawn mowing job into an ever-growing business conglomerate, a twelve-year-old boy gets involved in high finance thanks to his hippie stockbroker, takes on sponsorship of a boxer, and becomes a media sensation.

Peck, Richard. *On the Wings of Heroes*. J PEC

A boy in Illinois remembers the homefront years of World War II, especially his two heroes--his brother in the Air Force and his father, who fought in the previous war.

Philbrick, W.R. *Freak the Mighty*. YA PHI

At the beginning of eighth grade, learning disabled Max and his new friend Freak, whose birth defect has affected his body but not his brilliant mind, find that when they combine forces they make a powerful team.

Potter, Ellen. *Slob*. YA POT

Picked on, overweight genius Owen tries to invent a television that can see the past to find out what happened the day his parents were killed.

Sonnenblick, Jordan. *After Ever After*. YA SON

Although Jeff and Tad, encouraged by a new friend, Lindsey, make a deal to help one another overcome aftereffects of their cancer treatments in preparation for eighth-grade graduation, Jeff still craves advice from his older brother Stephen, who is studying drums in Africa. (sequel to *Drums, Girls and Dangerous Pie*)

Sonnenblick, Jordan. *Drums, Girls and Dangerous Pie*. YA SON

When his younger brother is diagnosed with leukemia, thirteen-year-old Steven tries to deal with his complicated emotions, his school life, and his desire to support his family.

Spinelli, Jerry. *Stargirl*. YA SPI

In this story about the perils of popularity, the courage of nonconformity, and the thrill of first love, an eccentric student named Stargirl changes Mica High School forever.

Spinelli, Jerry. *Love, Stargirl*. YA SPI

Still moping months after being dumped by her Arizona boyfriend Leo, fifteen-year-old Stargirl, a home-schooled free spirit, writes "the world's longest letter" to Leo, describing her new life in Pennsylvania.

Spinelli, Jerry. *Wringer*. J SPI

As Palmer comes of age, he must either accept the violence of being a wringer at his town's annual Pigeon Day or find the courage to oppose it.

Voight, Cynthia. *Dacey's Song*. J VOI

The four Tillerman children finally have a home at their grandmother's rundown farm on the Maryland shore. It's what Dacey has dreamed of for her three younger siblings, but after watching over the others for so long, it's hard to let go. Who is Dacey, if she's no longer the caretaker for her family? Dacey finds herself in new friends, in a growing relationship with her grandmother, and in the satisfaction of refinishing the old boat she found in the barn. Then, as Dacey experiences the trials and pleasures of making a new life, the past comes back with devastating force, and Dacey learns just how necessary -- and painful -- letting go can be.