

Contemporary Realistic Fiction for Young Adults

Fiction is full of stories of aliens and wizards, vampires and superheroes. But some people prefer to read books that are a little closer to home - about events that could happen here and now, in real life. Below are some great books about people who aren't real, but could be. They're living life now, going to school, and dealing with the kinds of things we all might have to deal with some day.



Alexie, Sherman. [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.

Anderson, Laurie Halse. [Wintergirls](#). (YA AND)

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

Andrews, Jesse. [Haters](#). (YA AND)

For Wes and his best friend, Corey, jazz camp turns out to be lame. It's pretty much all dudes talking in Jazz Voice. But then they jam with Ash, a charismatic girl with an unusual sound, and the three just click. They need to hit the road. Before Wes and Corey know it, they're in Ash's SUV heading south, and The Haters Summer of Hate Tour has begun. (Also by Jesse Andrews - [Me and Earl and the Dying Girl](#))

Asher, Jay. [Thirteen Reasons Why](#). (YA ASH)

When high school student Clay Jenkins receives a box in the mail containing thirteen cassette tapes recorded by his classmate Hannah, who committed suicide, he spends a bewildering and heartbreaking night crisscrossing their town, listening to Hannah's voice recounting the events leading up to her death.

Chbosky, Stephen. [The Perks of Being a Wallflower](#). (YA CHO)

A coming of age novel about Charlie, a freshman in high school who is a wallflower, shy and introspective, and very intelligent. He deals with the usual teen problems, but also with the suicide of his best friend.

Forman, Gayle. [If I Stay](#). (YA FOR)

While in a coma following an automobile accident that killed her parents and younger brother, seventeen-year-old Mia, a gifted cellist, weighs whether to live with her grief or join her family in death.

Green, John. [Paper Towns](#). (YA GRE)

One month before graduating from his Central Florida high school, Quentin "Q" Jacobsen basks in the predictable boringness of his life until the beautiful and exciting Margo Roth Spiegelman, Q's neighbor and classmate, takes him on a midnight adventure and then mysteriously disappears.

(Also by John Green - [The Fault in Our Stars](#), [Looking for Alaska](#), [Turtles All the Way Down](#))

Hinton, S.E. [The Outsiders](#). (YA HIN)

The struggle of three brothers to stay together after their parent's death and their quest for identity among the conflicting values of their adolescent society.

Lockhart, E. [We Were Liars](#). (YA LOC)

Spending the summers on her family's private island off the coast of Massachusetts with her cousins and a special boy named Gat, teenaged Cadence struggles to remember what happened during her fifteenth summer.

Murdock, Catherine Gilbert. [Dairy Queen](#). (YA MUR)

After spending her summer running the family farm and training the quarterback for her school's rival football team, sixteen-year-old D.J. decides to go out for the sport herself, not anticipating the reactions of those around her. (Sequel – [The Off Season](#), [Front and Center](#))

Nelson, Jandy. [I'll Give You the Sun](#). (YA NEL)

A story of first love, family, loss, and betrayal told from different points in time, and in separate voices, by artists Jude and her twin brother Noah

Niven, Jennifer. [All the Bright Places](#). (YA NIV)

Told in alternating voices, when Theodore Finch and Violet Markey meet on the ledge of the bell tower at school--both teetering on the edge--it's the beginning of an unlikely relationship, a journey to discover the "natural wonders" of the state of Indiana, and two teens' desperate desire to heal and save one another.

Rennison, Louise. [Angus, Thongs and Full-Frontal Snogging](#).

Presents the humorous journal of a year in the life of a fourteen-year-old British girl who tries to reduce the size of her nose, stop her mad cat from terrorizing the neighborhood animals, and win the love of handsome hunk Robbie.

Rowell, Rainbow. [Eleanor and Park](#). (YA ROW)

Set over the course of one school year in 1986, this is the story of two star-crossed misfits--smart enough to know that first love almost never lasts, but brave and desperate enough to try.

Ruby, Laura. [Bone Gap](#). (YA RUB)

Eighteen-year-old Finn, an outsider in his quiet Midwestern town, is the only witness to the abduction of town favorite Roza, but his inability to distinguish between faces makes it difficult for him to help with the investigation, and subjects him to even more ridicule and bullying.

Whaley, John Corey. [Where Things Come Back](#). (YA WHA)

Seventeen-year-old Cullen's summer in Lily, Arkansas, is marked by his cousin's death by overdose, an alleged spotting of a woodpecker thought to be extinct, failed romances, and his younger brother's sudden disappearance.

Yoon, Nicola. [The Sun is Also a Star](#). (YA YOO)

Natasha is a girl who believes in science and facts. Daniel has always been a good son and good student. But when he sees Natasha he forgets all that and believes there is something extraordinary in store for both of them.

Zusak, Marcus. [I Am the Messenger](#). (YA ZUS)

After capturing a bank robber, nineteen-year-old cab driver Ed Kennedy begins receiving mysterious messages that direct him to addresses where people need help, and he begins getting over his lifelong feeling of worthlessness.