

Realistic Fiction Books for Teens

Akron-Summit County Public Library

Acevedo, Elizabeth. **Clap When You Land**, 2020. ACEVEDO Clap TEEN

Award-winning spoken word artist, Elizabeth Acevedo, writes engaging real life stories about her Afro-Latina, Dominican Republic heritage. This novel-in-verse is about two young women who live far apart, one in the US and one in the Dominican Republic. They both find out that their father has died in a plane crash and that they are in fact sisters. Neither of them knew of each other until his death, and so they must deal with the grief of losing their father and also learn to forgive his secrets that kept them apart.

Chmakova, Svetlana. **Awkward**, 2015. BERRYBROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL 1 TEENGN

Peppi Torres is the new girl in school and she doesn't know anyone except for a few of her friends in the art club. That's awkward enough, but on the first day she drops all of her books in the hallway in front of the older, cool kids who point and laugh at her. She bends down to pick them up, and then quiet, shy Jaime rushes over to help her. He is also teased by the older kids, who taunt him for having a "new girlfriend." Embarrassed, Peppi pushes him down and he stares at her, surprised and confused. She later feels terrible and this begins a series of awkward moments with Jaime until they get to know each other. This graphic novel series describes middle school life with wisdom and humor.

Korman, Gordon. **Restart**, 2017. KORMAN Restart JFIC

Chase Ambrose wakes up in a hospital bed after jumping off of the roof of his house and practically landing on his head. The problem is, he doesn't remember anything about the first 13 years of his life. He doesn't remember his family, his friends or even who he is. As he returns to school he finds that several students are steering clear of him, either because they're angry or even afraid of him. When his memory starts to return he realizes that he was the star of the school football team and a ruthless bully. Will he be able to restart his life and become a better person?

Ramee, Lisa Moore. **A Good Kind of Trouble**, 2019. RAMEE Good JFIC

12-year-old Shayla avoids trouble at all costs. She's a good student and does what she's told. She just wants to make it through school, learn to run track, keep her friendships going and maybe get a cute boy to notice her. But everyone in her community is on edge about the trial of a white police officer who shot and killed an unarmed black man. When Shayla wears a Black Lives Matter t-shirt to school she is called into the principal's office and told to remove it. Defiant, Shayla makes the decision to stand up for what she feels is right and get into "A Good Kind of Trouble."

Stoeve, Ray. **Between Perfect and Real**, 2021. STOEVE Between TEEN

Dean Foster came out as lesbian a few years ago. He has a girlfriend and a great part playing a “non-traditional” Romeo in the school production of Romeo and Juliet. He’s known he was a trans guy for a while, but at first he isn’t sure how to come out as his true self. Through a trans support group and a strong network of diverse friends, Dean learns to be open and comfortable with who he is.

Stone, Nic. **Dear Justyce**, 2020. STONE Dear TEEN

In this powerful sequel to “Dear Martin”, the focus is on Justyce McAllister’s childhood friend Quan. Quan is in juvenile jail with a murder charge and Justyce is at Yale University. When they were young, Quan always looked up to Justyce for being smart and winning academic awards at school, but when his father is violently arrested in his home Quan drifts apart from Justyce. Through a series of flashbacks, the reader learns how the two boys’ lives turned out so entirely different.

Thomas, Angie, **On the Come Up**, 2019. THOMAS On TEEN

16-year-old Bri wants to follow in her father’s footsteps. He was an underground rap legend who died before he made it big. Her mother wants her to study and do well on her ACT so she can get into a good college, but Bri can’t concentrate on anything but getting a chance to battle rap in the underground ring. When her mom unexpectedly loses her job, they struggle to pay the rent and shutoffs are imminent, Bri wants to fight for her dream to be a famous rapper more than ever.

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