

# REALISTIC FICTION FOR OLDER TEENS



The abbreviations after the title indicate where the books can be found:

**YA** - Young Adult      **TEEN** - Teen Room      **L** - Denotes Lexile Level

**Please note:** Books vary widely in maturity level and content.

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**THE ABSOLUTELY TRUE DIARY OF A PART-TIME INDIAN** by Sherman Alexie ~~~~~YA & TEEN ALEXI  
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. (600L)

**WINTERGIRLS** by Laurie Halse Anderson ~~~~~YA & TEEN ANDER  
Eighteen-year-old Lia comes to terms with her best friend's death from anorexia as she struggles with the same disorder. (730L)

**ME, EARL, AND THE DYING GIRL** by Jesse Andrews ~~~~~YA & TEEN ANDRE  
Greg has managed to become part of every social group at his Pittsburgh high school without having any friends, but his life changes when his mother forces him to befriend Rachel, a girl he once knew in Hebrew school who has leukemia. (820L)

**WHAT LIGHT** by Jay Asher ~~~~~YA ASHER  
Sierra's family runs a Christmas tree farm in Oregon, and every year they pack up and move to California to set up their Christmas tree lot for the season. So Sierra lives two lives: her life in Oregon and her life at Christmas. By reputation, Caleb is not your perfect guy: years ago, he made an enormous mistake and has been paying for it ever since. But Sierra sees beyond Caleb's past and becomes determined to help him find forgiveness and, maybe, redemption, this Christmas. (HL690L)

**LIE** by Caroline Bock ~~~~~TEEN BOCK  
A group of Long Island high school seniors conspire to protect Jimmy after he brutally assaults two Salvadoran immigrants, until they see the moral implications of Jimmy's actions and the consequences of being loyal to a bully. (HL610L)

**HATE LIST** by Jennifer Brown ~~~~~YA & TEEN BROWN  
After her boyfriend goes on a shooting rampage at school, Valerie is implicated because of her involvement in writing the list of names and so now must come to terms with what has happened, her feelings for the boy she once loved, and the part she played that resulted in such tragic events. (HL760L)

**LOVE AND OTHER PERISHABLE ITEMS** by Laura Buzo ~~~~~YA & TEEN BUZO  
A fifteen-year-old Australian girl gets her first job and first crush on her unattainable university-aged co-worker, as both search for meaning in their lives. (HL810L)

**ESSENTIAL MAPS FOR THE LOST** by Deb Caletti ~~~~~YA CALET  
When Mads discovers a dead body while she's swimming in the lake, she begins to obsess over who the woman was and what led her to commit suicide by jumping off a bridge. But when she starts to fall for Billy, the woman's troubled son, Mads isn't sure how much longer she can keep her obsession a secret. (HL650L)

**NICK AND NORAH'S INFINITE PLAYLIST** by Rachel Cohn and David Leviathan ~~~~~YA & TEEN COHN  
High school student Nick O'Leary, member of a rock band, meets college-bound Norah Silverberg and asks her to be his girlfriend for five minutes in order to avoid his ex-sweetheart, in a tie-in title which includes an eight-page insert of photos from the film. (1020L)

**SKINNY** by Donna Cooner ~~~~~YA COONE  
After undergoing gastric-bypass surgery, a self-loathing, obese teenage girl loses weight and makes the brave decision to start participating in high school life, including pursuing her dream of becoming a singer and finding love. (670L)

**THE BRILLIANT LIGHT OF AMBER SUNRISE** by Matthew Crow ~~~~~YA CROW  
Life threatening cancer brings Francis and Amber together. But Francis's recovery is taking a different path from Amber's. He's actually getting better. And although he knew who he was before cancer, before Amber, now he has no idea how to live--or how to let go. (880L)

**THE MISEDUCATION OF CAMERON POST** by Emily M. Danford ~~~~~YA DANFO  
In the early 1990s, when gay teenager Cameron Post rebels against her conservative Montana ranch town and her family decides she needs to change her ways, she is sent to a gay conversion therapy center. (1120L)

**THE MOON AND MORE** by Sarah Dessen ~~~~~YA DESSE  
During her last summer at home before leaving for college, Emaline begins a whirlwind romance with Theo, an assistant documentary filmmaker who is in town to make a movie. (HL710L)

**MY LIFE NEXT DOOR** by Huntley Fitzpatrick ~~~~~YA & TEEN FITZP  
When Samantha, the seventeen-year-old daughter of a wealthy, perfectionist, Republican state senator, falls in love with the boy next door, whose family is large, boisterous, and just making ends meet, she discovers a different way to live, but when her mother is involved in a hit-and-run accident Sam must make some difficult choices. (HL720L)

**JUST ONE DAY** by Gayle Forman ~~~~~YA & TEEN FORMA  
Sparks fly when American good girl Allyson encounters laid-back Dutch actor Willem, so she follows him on a whirlwind trip to Paris, upending her life in just one day and prompting a year of self-discovery and the search for true love. (HL750L)

**THE FAULT IN OUR STARS** by John Green ~~~~~YA & TEEN GREEN, PB GREEN  
Despite the medical miracle that has bought her a few more years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal, but when Augustus Waters suddenly appears at the Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel's story is about to be rewritten. (850L)

**LOOKING FOR ALASKA** by John Green ~~~~~YA & TEEN 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. (930L)

**LOUD, AWAKE AND LOST** by Adele Griffin ~~~~~YA GRIFF  
Sparks fly when American good girl Allyson encounters laid-back Dutch actor Willem, so she follows him on a whirlwind trip to Paris, upending her life in just one day and prompting a year of self-discovery and the search for true love. (760L)

**SPEECHLESS** by Hannah Harrington ~~~~~TEEN HARRI  
After her behavior causes her to lose her popular friends and results in one person being hospitalized, Chelsea takes a vow of silence.

**A CERTAIN OCTOBER** by Angela Johnson ~~~~~YA JOHNS  
Scotty compares herself to tofu: no flavor unless you add something. And it's true that Scotty's friends, Misha and Faclone, and her brother, Keone, make life delicious. But when a terrible accident occurs, Scotty feels responsible for the loss of someone she hardly knew, and the world goes wrong. But the prospect of a boy, a dance, and the possibility that everything can fall back into place soon help Scotty realize that she is capable of adding her own flavor to life. (870L)

**MAYBE ONE DAY** by Melissa Kantor ~~~~~YA KANTO  
Zoe thought that being cut from her ballet program was the worst thing that could happen, but when her best friend, Olivia, is diagnosed with a life-threatening disease, Zoe quickly learns that not being able to dance is the least of her problems. (HL770L)

**EVERYBODY SEES THE ANTS** by A.S. King ~~~~~YA KING  
Experiencing vivid dreams about meeting his long-lost POW/MIA grandfather, Lucky Linderman struggles to fit into a home life marked by a distant father, a weary mother and a cruel bully who compromises Lucky's grasp on reality. (HL710L)

**REALITY BOY** by A.S. King ~~~~~YA KING  
An emotionally damaged seventeen-year-old boy in Pennsylvania, who was once an infamous reality television show star, meets a girl from another dysfunctional family, and she helps him out of his angry shell. (HL620L)

**STILL LIFE WITH TORNADO** by A.S. King ~~~~~YA KING  
A talented 16-year-old artist slowly discovers the history of domestic violence behind why her brother left the family years earlier and why she suddenly cannot make art. (Lexile Unavailable)

**PERSONAL EFFECTS** by E.M. Kokie ~~~~~YA KOKIE  
Matt has been sleepwalking through life while seeking answers about his brother T.J.'s death in Iraq, but after discovering that he may not have known his brother as well as he thought he did, Matt is able to stand up to his father, honor T.J.'s memory, and take charge of his own life. (HL670L)

**THE TRAGEDY PAPER** by Elizabeth Laban ~~~~~YA LABAN  
While preparing for the most dreaded assignment at the prestigious Irving School, the Tragedy Paper, Duncan gets wrapped up in the tragic tale of Tim Macbeth, a former student who had a clandestine relationship with the wrong girl, and his own ill-fated romance with Daisy. (HL740L)

**THE DISENCHANTMENTS** by Nina LaCour ~~~~~YA & TEEN LACOU  
Colby's post-high school plans have long been that he and his best friend Beth would tour with her band, then spend a year in Europe, but when she announces that she will start college just after the tour, Colby struggles to understand why she changed her mind and what losing her means for his future. (780L)

**WE WERE LIARS** by E. Lockhart ~~~~~YA LOCKH  
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. (HL600L)

**NOT IF I SEE YOU FIRST** by Eric Lindstrom ~~~~~YA LINDS  
Blind sixteen-year-old Parker Grant navigates friendships and romantic relationships, including a run-in with a boy who previously broke her heart, while coping with her father's recent death. (Lexile Unavailable)

**SECOND CHANCE SUMMER** by Morgan Matson ~~~~~TA & TEEN MATSO  
Taylor Edwards' family might not be the closest-knit but for the most part, they get along just fine. Then Taylor's dad gets devastating news, and her parents decide that the family will spend one last summer together at their lake house in the Pocono Mountains. As the summer progresses and the Edwards become more of a family, they're more aware than ever that they're battling a ticking clock. (1020L)

**THE UNEXPECTED EVERYTHING** by Morgan Matson ~~~~~YA MATSO  
Seventeen year old Andie always has a plan, but when her father suffers a political scandal, her summer med school program is taken away from her, and a new guy comes into the picture, she finds a lot of unexpected things can happen when you're busy making other plans. (950L)

**SOMEBODY, PLEASE TELL ME WHO I AM** by Harry Mazer ~~~~~YA MAZER  
Wounded in Iraq while his Army unit is on convoy and treated for many months for traumatic brain injury, the first person Ben remembers from his earlier life is his autistic brother. (640L)

**YAQUI DELGADO WANTS TO KICK YOUR ASS** by Meg Medina ~~~~~YA MEDIN

One morning before school, some girl tells Piddy Sanchez that Yaqui Delgado hates her and wants to kick her ass. Piddy doesn't even know who Yaqui is, or what she's done to piss her off. Word is that Yaqui thinks Piddy is stuck-up, shakes her stuff when she walks, and isn't Latin enough with her white skin, good grades, and no accent. And Yaqui isn't kidding around, so Piddy better watch her back. (HL670L)

**A TRICK OF THE LIGHT** by Lois Metzger ~~~~~YA METZG

Fifteen-year-old Mike desperately attempts to take control as his parents separate and his life falls apart. (HL550L)

**DAIRY QUEEN** by Catherine Gilbert Murdock ~~~~~YA & TEEN MURDO

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. (990L)

**LOCKDOWN** by Walter Dean Myers ~~~~~YA MYERS

Teenage Reese, who is serving time at a juvenile detention facility, gets a lesson in making it through hard times from an unlikely friend with a harrowing past. (730L)

**I'LL GIVE YOU THE SUN** by Jandy Nelson ~~~~~YA NELSO

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. (HL740L)

**WE ARE ALL MADE OF MOLECULES** by Susin Nielsen-Fernlund ~~~~~YA & TEEN NIELS

Seventeen year old Andie always has a plan, but when her father suffers a political scandal, her summer med school program is taken away from her, and a new guy comes into the picture, she finds a lot of unexpected things can happen when you're busy making other plans. (HL710L)

**ALL THE BRIGHT PLACES** by Jennifer Niven ~~~~~YA NIVEN

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. (830L)

**KETCHUP CLOUDS** by Annabel Pitcher ~~~~~YA PITCH

Zoe, a teenager in Bath, England, writes letters to a death-row inmate in Texas, hoping to find comfort in sharing her guilty secret over the death of a friend with someone who can never tell her family. (890L)

**FORGIVE ME, LEONARD PEACOCK** by Matthew Quick ~~~~~YA QUICK

A day in the life of a suicidal teen boy saying good-bye to the four people who matter most to him. (980L)

**GABI, A GIRL IN PIECES** by Isabel Quintero ~~~~~YA QUINT

Sixteen-year-old Gabi Hernandez chronicles her senior year in high school as she copes with her friend Cindy's pregnancy, friend Sebastian's coming out, her father's meth habit, her own cravings for food and cute boys, and especially, the poetry that helps forge her identity. (HL820L)

**ELEANOR & PARK** by Rainbow Rowell ~~~~~YA ROWEL

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 (HL580L)

**FANGIRL** by Rainbow Rowell ~~~~~YA ROWEL

Cath is a Simon Snow fan. The whole world is a Simon Snow fan, but for Cath, being a fan is her life. Cath's sister has grown away from fandom, but Cath can't let go. Is she ready to start living her own life? Write her own stories? Open her heart to someone? Or will she just go on living inside somebody else's fiction? (HL570L)

**THIS SONG WILL SAVE YOUR LIFE** by Leila Sales ~~~~~YA SALES

Nearly a year after a failed suicide attempt, sixteen-year-old Elise discovers that she has the passion, and the talent, to be a disc jockey. (HL720L)

**THE BEGINNING OF EVERYTHING** by Robyn Schneider ~~~~~YA SCHNE  
Star athlete and prom king Ezra Faulkner's life is irreparably transformed by a tragic accident and the arrival of eccentric new girl Cassidy Thorpe. (930L)

**SOMEBODY UP THERE HATES YOU** by Hollis Seamon ~~~~~YA SEAMO  
Dying of cancer in a hospice, seventeen-year-old prankster Richard has big plans for his final days. (HL710L)

**MORE HAPPY THAN NOT** by Adam Silvera ~~~~~TEEN SILVE  
After enduring his father's suicide, his own suicide attempt, broken friendships, and **more** in the Bronx projects, Aaron Soto, sixteen, is already considering the Leteo Institute's memory-alteration procedure when his new friendship with Thomas turns to unrequited love. (850L)

**WINGER** by Andrew Smith ~~~~~YA SMITH  
Two years younger than his classmates at a prestigious boarding school, fourteen-year-old Ryan Dean West grapples with living in the dorm for troublemakers, falling for his female best friend who thinks of him as just a kid, and playing wing on the Varsity rugby team with some of his frightening new dorm-mates. (890L)

**EVERY LAST WORD** by Tamara Ireland Stone ~~~~~YA STONE  
Consumed by a stream of dark thoughts and worries that she can't turn off, a girl coping with Purely-Obsessional OCD learns to accept herself and take control of her life through her experiences in poetry club. (HL750L)

**MARCELO IN THE REAL WORLD** by Francisco X. Stork ~~~~~YA & TEEN STORK  
Marcelo Sandoval, a seventeen-year-old boy on the high-functioning end of the autistic spectrum, faces new challenges, including romance and injustice, when he goes to work for his father in the mailroom of a corporate law firm. (700L)

**LOVE & LEFTOVERS** by Sarah Tregay ~~~~~YA TREGA  
Fifteen-year-old Marcie's depressed mother forces her to move to New Hampshire when Marcie's father begins dating another man, and just as Marcie is getting used to her new life, she is forced to move back home, where she finds all of her old relationships have become strained. (840L)

**THE LIST** by Siobahn, Vivian ~~~~~YA VIVIA  
Every year at Mount Washington High School somebody posts a list of the prettiest and ugliest girls from each grade-- this is the story of eight girls, freshman to senior, and how they are affected by the list. (750L)

**HIGHLY ILLOGICAL BEHAVIOR** by John Corey Whaley ~~~~~YA WHALE  
Agoraphobic sixteen-year-old Solomon has not left his house in three years, but Lisa is determined to change that--and to write a scholarship-winning essay based on the results. (HL700L)

**THE PROBABILITY OF MIRACLES** by Wendy Wunder ~~~~~YA & TEEN WUNDE  
Having spent several years in and out of hospitals for a life-threatening illness, pragmatic sixteen-year-old Cam is relocated by her miracle-seeking mother to a town in Maine known for its mystical healing qualities. (800L)

**STORY OF A GIRL** by Sara Zarr ~~~~~YA & TEEN 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. (760L)

**FRESHMAN YEAR & OTHER UNNATURAL DISASTERS** by Meredith Zeitlin ~~~~~YA ZEITL  
Smart and ambitious, though occasionally insecure, Brooklyn 14-year-old Kelsey Finkelstein embarks on her freshman year of high school in Manhattan with the intention of "rebranding" herself, but unfortunately everything she tries to do turns into a total disaster.

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Updated December 2016 Any questions? Contact Nanette Feder, Teen Services Librarian at [teens@emmaclark.org](mailto:teens@emmaclark.org)  
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