

Salinger, J.D.—***The Catcher in the Rye***

Fleeing his Pennsylvania prep school, Holden Caulfield holes up in New York City and rails against adult phoniness while trying to lose his innocence.

Smith, Betty—***A Tree Grows in Brooklyn***

Francie Nolan suffers in the Williamsburg slums of Brooklyn during the early part of the 20th century.

Spinelli, Jerry—***Stargirl***

Leo has a desperate crush on the flamboyant new girl and in an earnest, if misguided, attempt to help her avoid bullying, he suggests that she try being more normal.

Vonnegut, Kurt—***Slaughterhouse-Five***

Billy Pilgrim becomes unstuck in time and travels between his adult life, his life as a WWII soldier, and his time as a zoo exhibit on an alien world.

Zindel, Paul—***The Pigman***

A practical joke on lonely old Angelo Pignati becomes an extraordinary experience for two high schoolers.

Zusak, Markus—***The Book Thief***

During WWII, Death is enchanted by a young girl who steals and shares forbidden books with her neighbors and the Jewish man hiding in her family's basement.

Non-Fiction

TEEN 362.76 Pelzer 1995

***A Child Called It: One Child's Courage to Survive* by David Pelzer**

Memoir of a boy brutalized by his unstable, alcoholic mother who considered him no longer a boy, but an "it."

TEEN 921 Noah, Trevor 2020

It's Trevor Noah: Born A Crime: Stories from A South African Childhood

Comedian Trevor Noah recounts his South African childhood and offers a humorous look at today's politics and social systems.

A few notes:

- These book lists are examples, not complete lists of books which fit into the genre.
- Not all books will be of interest to or appropriate for every reader.
- Teen Scene staff are always eager to help you find a book that fits your personal taste and interests. Just ask!

Contemporary Classics



Suggestions for Young Adult books that ...

- Have stood the test of time
- Represent a variety of cultures and eras
- Were generally written after World War II

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Atwood, Margaret—***The Handmaid's Tale***

This look at the near future presents the story of Offred, a Handmaid in the Republic of Gilead, the former U.S.

Anderson, Laurie Halse—***Speak***

A traumatic event in summer devastates Melinda, causing her to fall silent during her freshman year in high school.

Blume, Judy—***Forever***

When Katherine meets Michael, they are sure it will last forever and take the relationship all the way.

Bradbury, Ray—***Fahrenheit 451***

Guy Montag, a fire-fighter and book-burner for the State, seeks his humanity by illegally preserving the books.

Chbosky, Stephen

The Perks of Being a Wallflower

After his best friend commits suicide, introverted Charlie has to navigate the ups and downs of ninth grade life.

Cisneros, Sandra—***The House on Mango Street***

A young Latina girl growing up in Chicago imagines who she will become through a series of vignettes.

Collins, Suzanne—***Hunger Games series***

(#1—*The Hunger Games*)

When her young sister is chosen to represent their district in a televised game of survival, Katniss volunteers instead.

Cooney, Caroline B.

The Face on the Milk Carton

A photograph of a missing girl on a milk carton leads Janie on a search for her real identity.

Cormier, Robert—***The Chocolate War***

A freshman discovers the devastating consequences of refusing to join in the school's annual fund raising drive.

Crutcher, Chris—***Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes***

Class discussions about contemporary issues frame a high-school senior's attempt to answer a dramatic cry for help.

Duncan, Lois

I Know What You Did Last Summer

Four teenagers who tried to conceal a hit-and-run accident are pursued by a mysterious figure seeking revenge.

Garden, Nancy—***Annie on My Mind***

Liza Winthrop and Annie Kenyon awkwardly navigate their growing romantic feelings for each other.

George, Jean Craighead—***My Side of the Mountain***

A young boy relates his adventures during the year he spends living alone in the Catskill Mountains.

Go Ask Alice (Filed under "Go")

A 15-year-old drug user chronicles her daily struggle to escape the pull of the drug world.

Golding, William—***The Lord of the Flies***

English schoolboys marooned on a tropical island bring both civilization and savagery to their community.

Green, John—***The Fault in Our Stars***

Hazel has accepted her terminal cancer diagnosis but starts to reexamine everything after meeting a charismatic boy at her support group.

Hemingway, Ernest

The Old Man and the Sea

Santiago realizes the dream of catching a giant marlin, but must battle sharks for two days to bring home his prize.

Hinton, S.E.—***The Outsiders***

Three brothers struggle to stay together and maintain their identities after their parents' death.

Lee, Harper—***To Kill a Mockingbird***

Small town Alabama in the 1930s is the setting for a child's brutal introduction to racial prejudice and adult injustice.

LeGuin, Ursula—***Earthsea Trilogy***

(#1—*A Wizard of Earthsea*)

A boy grows to manhood attempting to subdue the evil he unleashed as an apprentice to the Master Wizard.

Lowry, Lois—***The Giver Quartet***

(#1—*The Giver*)

Jonas becomes the Receiver of Memory and discovers the terrible truth about the society in which he lives.

Myers, Walter Dean—***Monster***

While on trial as an accomplice to murder, Steve writes a screenplay about prison, court, and his experiences leading up to his arrest.

Orwell, George—***1984 (Nineteen Eighty Four)***

Ignorance is strength and peace is war in a future controlled by Big Brother and the Thought Police.

Paulsen, Gary—***Hatchet***

Brian Robeson, sole survivor of a plane crash in the wilderness, must draw on untested skills to survive.

Riordon, Rick

Percy Jackson series

(#1—*The Lightning Thief*)

Percy learns that his father is the Greek god Poseidon and goes on a quest to prevent a war between the gods.