

Book Recommendations for High Schoolers

PARENTS - I have grade levels on here, but please keep in mind:

- Some students may BE ready to read more mature content
- Some student may NOT BE ready for particular themes and content
- You may want to read reviews before allowing your teen to read something

Memoir & Inspirational Nonfiction

Everything Is Possible by Jen Bricker (Grades 9–10)

Born without legs, Jen still went after her dreams. She roller-skated, played volleyball, and kept a joyful attitude.

I Am a Girl from Africa by Elizabeth Nyamayaro (Grades 9–12)

An amazing story of rising from an orphaned childhood in Zimbabwe to UN humanitarian leadership. Check her out on Youtube! Extremely inspiring story. Lots of beautiful descriptive language as well.

Maid: Hard Work, Low Pay, and a Mother's Will to Survive by Stephanie Land (Grades 11–12)

An emotionally honest memoir revealing poverty, dignity, and motherhood through domestic work.

The Sun Does Shine by Anthony Ray Hinton - there is also a young reader edition (Grades 9–12)

Innocent for thirty years on death row, Ray's strength shines through this moving, hopeful truth about justice and resilience.

The Hiding Place by Corrie ten Boom (Grades 10–12)

A family hides Jews during the Nazi regime. They are eventually betrayed and sent to a concentration camp. About the power of love, faith, and resilience.

Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson (Grades 10–12)

This book opened my eyes to the unjust realities in our courts. Written with facts and statistics but told more in memoir fashion. A compelling true story.

Limitless by Jim Kwik (Grades 10–12)

Jim Kwik is a "brain coach" and he has powerfully shown people how to "unlock their true capabilities" and live a limitless life. What are your limiting beliefs? Read this book and know you can move past that.

We Should All Be Millionaires by Rachel Rodgers (Grades 9–12)

Super inspirational book written by an amazing millionaire woman, who believes anyone can build generational wealth and have a very joyful life. A motivational guide empowering women (and men) to become entrepreneurs with tangible advice in how to do this – at 16 or 60.

Faith-Based

Redeeming Love by Francine Rivers (Grades 11–12)

A can't-put-down story about the redeeming love of Christ and how important we are to Him.

Healing and Hope

Punching the Air by Ibi Zoboi & Yusef Salaam (Grades 9–12)

Written in verse - teenager is sent to prison for a crime he didn't commit and how he uses art and poetry to stay strong and tell his story.

Girl in Pieces by Kathleen Glasgow (Grades 9–12)

About a girl who is struggling with pain, loss, and self-harm, but as she works through her past, she slowly begins to heal and find her voice again.

Heroine by Mindy McGinnis (Grades 9–12)

A gripping look at a teen athlete, serious injury, and the hard road through addiction and recovery.

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Realistic Fiction & Social Justice

The Girl Who Wasn't There by Penny Joelson (Grades 9–12)

A teen with a disability witnesses something strange and no one believes her.

Dear Martin by Nic Stone (Grades 9–12)

A teen writes letters to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as he tries to make sense of racism, injustice, and what it means to do the right thing in today's world.

Now Is the Time for Running by Michael Williams (Grades 9–11)

Two brothers escape a crumbling Zimbabwe in a story packed with brotherhood, hope, and survival.

It Ends With Us by Colleen Hoover (Grades 11–12)

A tender but intense story of love, abuse, and the courage to break the cycle of abuse.

Hard-Hitting History

Night by Elie Wiesel (Grades 11–12)

This short Holocaust memoir is an account of survival in Nazi death camps. Also addresses “what the Holocaust was, what it meant, and what its legacy is and will be.” (Description on Amazon)

The Hiding Place by Corrie ten Boom (Grades 11–12)

A family hides Jews during the Nazi regime. They are eventually betrayed and sent to a concentration camp. About the power of love, faith, and resilience.

Thrillers & Mystery

The Housemaid by Freida McFadden (Grade 12)

Fast-paced, twisty, and packed with secrets. Kept me guessing until the very end!

A Good Girl's Guide to Murder by Holly Jackson – (Grades 11–12)

A teen reopens a closed case for a school project and uncovers deadly truths.

One of Us Is Lying by Karen M. McManus (Grades 9–12)

Five students in detention. One ends up dead. Someone is lying. Who is it?