Realistic Fiction

- **Classic Realistic Fiction**
- **Girls as Main Characters**
- **Boys as Main Characters**

**Classic Realistic Fiction**

**Estes, Eleanor**  
**Ginger Pye**  
FICTION EST J

When the Pye family's puppy, Ginger, disappears on Thanksgiving Day, the children are convinced that he has been abducted by a stranger in a yellow hat.

**George, Jean Craighead**  
**My side of the mountain**  
FICTION GEO J

A young boy relates his adventures during the year he spends living alone in the Catskill Mountains including his struggle for survival, his dependence on nature, his animal friends, and his ultimate realization that he needs human companionship.

**Nesbit, Edith**  
**The railway children**  
FICTION NES J

A mother, two daughters and son move to a rural area near a railway station after a false accusation places their father in jail.

**Paterson, Katherine**  
**The bridge to Terabithia**  
FICTION PAT J

The life of a ten-year-old boy in rural Virginia expands when he becomes friends with a newcomer who subsequently meets an untimely death trying to reach their hideaway, Terabithia, during a storm.

**Rockwell, Thomas**  
**How to eat fried worms**  
FICTION ROC J

The story of Billy, who, because of a bet, is in the uncomfortable position of having to eat fifteen worms in fifteen days. The worms are supplied by his opponent, whose motto is, unfortunately, "The bigger and juicier, the better!"

**Sachs, Marilyn**  
**The bears' house**  
FICTION SAC J

Although she sucks her thumb, smells bad, and loses herself in the make-believe world of the three bears' dollhouse, ten-year-old Fran knows how to take care of her baby sister better than anybody else.

**Realistic Fiction: Girls as Main Characters**

**Abbott, Tony**  
**Firegirl**  
FICTION ABB J

A middle school boy's life is changed when Jessica, a girl disfigured by burns, starts attending his Catholic school while receiving treatment.
Blume, Judy **Are you there God? It’s me, Margaret**  
Faced with the difficulties of growing up and choosing a religion, a twelve-year-old girl talks over her problems with her own private God.

Blume, Judy **Blubber**  
Blubber is a good name for her, the note said about Linda. Jill crumpled it up and left it on her desk. But Robby grabbed the note and before long it had gone halfway around the room. That's where it all started.

Blume, Judy **Otherwise known as Sheila the Great**  
A summer in Tarrytown, N.Y., is a lot of fun for ten-year-old Sheila even though her friends make her face up to some self-truths she doesn't want to admit.

Burg, Shana **Laugh with the moon**  
Massachusetts thirteen-year-old Clare spends nine weeks in a remote village in Malawi.

Buyea, Rob **Because of Mr. Terupt**  
Seven fifth-graders at Snow Hill School in Connecticut relate how their lives are changed for the better by "rookie teacher" Mr. Terupt.

Cassidy, Cathy **Indigo Blue**  
Eleven-year-old Indigo, her mother, and her toddler sister have to move out of their apartment because of troubles with Mum's boyfriend, while Indie is also having best friend problems at school, leaving her stressed, confused, and lonely.

Clements, Andrew **The Landry news**  
A fifth-grader starts a newspaper with an editorial that prompts her burnt-out classroom teacher to really begin teaching again, but he is later threatened with disciplinary action as a result.

Cohen, Tish **The invisible rules of the Zoe Lama**  
Twelve-year-old Zoe, famous for advising other people using her unwritten rules, has her hands full with chairing a school dance, training a new student to fit in, keeping her grandmother out of a nursing home, and trying to find a husband for her mother.

Comerford, Lynda **Rissa Bartholomew’s declaration of independence**  
When she begins middle school, eleven-year-old Clarissa decides to not be a part of the same group of friends she's had for her whole life. She discovers that being your own person doesn't always make you a hero.

Connor, Leslie **Waiting for normal**  
Twelve-year-old Addie tries to cope with her mother's erratic behavior and being separated from her beloved stepfamily when she and her mother move.
Creech, Sharon  **Bloomability**  FICTION CRE J
When her aunt and uncle take her from New Mexico to Lugano, Switzerland, to attend an international school, thirteen-year-old Dinnie discovers her world expanding.

DeClements, Barthe  **Nothing's fair in fifth grade**  FICTION DEC J
A fifth-grade class, repelled by the overweight new student who has serious home problems, finally learns to accept her.

Dee, Barbara  **Just another day in my insanely real life**  FICTION DEE J
Twelve-year-old Cassie has a lot to cope with when her father moves "out of the picture." Her mom's constantly working overtime, her teenage sister's going AWOL, and her little brother seriously needs attention. It's up to Cassie to prevent total chaos at home--or so she thinks.

Dowell, Frances O'Roark  **The second life of Abigail Walker**  FICTION DOW J
Bullied by two mean girls in her sixth-grade class, a lonely, plump girl gains self-confidence and makes new friends after a mysterious fox gently bites her.

Dowell, Frances  **The secret language of girls**  FICTION DOW J
Marylin and Kate have been friends since nursery school, but when Marylin becomes a middle school cheerleader and Kate begins to develop other interests, their relationship is put to the test.

Gibson, Sarah  **The truth about horses, friends, and my life as a coward**  FICTION GIB J
Filled with hilarious horse capers and the real truth about life as a weenie, this laugh-out-loud story shows why a horse isn't always a girl's best friend.

Graff, Lisa  **The life and crimes of Bernetta Wallflower**  FICTION GRA J
After her "best friend" implicates her in a cheating scam, 12-year-old Bernetta loses her school scholarship but spends the summer earning the tuition money and getting revenge.

Graff, Lisa  **Umbrella summer**  FICTION GRA J
After her brother Jared dies, ten-year-old Annie worries about the hidden dangers of everything, from bug bites to bicycle riding, until she is befriended by a new neighbor who is grieving her own loss.

Harlow, Joan  **Secret of the night ponies**  FICTION HAR J
In 1965 Newfoundland, thirteen-year-old Jessie's brave and impulsive nature leads her to commit a variety of daring acts, including rescuing a herd of wild ponies.

Hilmo, Tess  **Skies like these**  FICTION HIL J
Twelve-year-old Jade is sent to Wyoming to her aunt’s house for the summer. These she meets a boy who calls himself Roy Parker—just like the real name of the legendary rebel cowboy Butch Cassidy. Roy wants Jade to be his Sundance Kid and help him pull some stunts worthy of Butch Cassidy. Jade wants to be a good friend, but she’s not so sure about Roy’s schemes.
During a summer visit, twelve-year-old Lucy must come to terms with both her grandmother's failing memory and how her mentally-challenged neighbor will impact her popularity when both enter the same middle school in the fall.

Two fifth-graders with very different backgrounds start a petition to keep their teacher, Mr. In, from being fired.

Fashion-loving twelve-year-old Tess moves with her deaf younger brother and impulsive single mother to Schenectady, New York, where they open an ice-cream shop and lead a campaign for urban renewal.

Reading this novel is probably as close as you want to come to experiencing a hurricane.

What can make fifth-grader Cally talk again?

When ten-year-old Drita and her family, refugees from Kosovo, move to New York, Drita is teased about not speaking English well, but after a popular student named Maxine is forced to learn about Kosovo as a punishment for teasing Drita, the two girls find friendship.

Eleven-year-old Martha tries to keep her family together after her mother's death as her father struggles with alcoholism.

Ten-year-old Sprig no longer gets along with her twelve-year-old sister, Dakota, but the two pull together during their father's extended business trip to Afghanistan, sharing concerns about his safety, an elderly neighbor's health, fights with their best friends, and boys.

Todd and Amy Davidson may be twins, but they're complete opposites. With chapters that alternate between Todd's and Amy's points of view, this novel is a realistic and sometimes funny portrayal of a family adapting to changing roles.

Mimi is determined not to give up on anyone or anything, but since Mammy died, her father never smiles, her sister Sally is in a bad mood, brother Conor keeps to himself, and even Sparkler the dog does not want to go for walks.
O'Connor, Barbara    **On the road to Mr. Mineo's**    FICTION OCO J
Sherman, a one-legged pigeon, sets everyone aflutter in a small southern town.

O'Dell, Kathleen    **Agnes Parker keeping cool in middle school**    FICTION ODE J
Agnes tries to maintain her old persona and keep a low profile in middle school, but her best friend Prejean's problems, persistent harassment from the eighth-grade boys, and a friendship with an interesting boy in her art class make it difficult.

Olson, Gretchen    **Call me Hope**    FICTION OLS J
Eleven-year-old Hope begins coping with her mother's verbal abuse by devising survival strategies for herself.

Paterson, Katherine    **The great Gilly Hopkins**    FICTION PAT J
An eleven-year-old foster child tries to cope with her longings and fears as she schemes against everyone who tries to be friendly.

Pollet, Alison    **Nobody was here: seventh grade in the life of me, Penelope B.**    FICTION POL J
Life in New York in the 1980s is made more difficult for a middle school girl by problems at home and at school.

Ryan, Pam Munoz    **Paint the wind**    FICTION RYA J
After her overprotective grandmother has a stroke, Maya, an orphan, leaves her extremely restricted life in California to stay with her mother's family on a remote Wyoming ranch, where she discovers a love of horses and encounters a wild mare that her mother once rode.

Sachar, Louis    **Sixth grade secrets**    FICTION SAC J
When Laura Sibbie starts a club called Pig City, she incites a near-war among her sixth-grade classmates and generates the creation of a rival club that has designs on Pig City's precious box of secrets.

Shreve, Susan    **Blister**    FICTION SHR J
When a family tragedy occurs, ten-year-old Alyssa "Blister" Reed changes schools, moves to an apartment with her depressed mother while her father gets his own place, and tries to believe her grandmother, who tells her she is "elastic" and can handle it all.

Sonenklar, Carol    **My own worst enemy**    FICTION SON J
As she begins classes at a new middle school, Eve decides to try to fit in so that her father, who has just lost his job, will have less to worry about, but she finds that being true to herself is really the best thing to do.

Spinelli, Eileen    **The Dancing Pancake**    FICTION SPI J
Eleven-year-old Belinda "Bindi" Winkler and her family find their way through tough times with the love and support of the community that grows around their newly opened restaurant, "The Dancing Pancake."
Spinelli, Eileen  
**Lizzie Logan wears purple sunglasses**  
FICTION SPI J

When her family moves to a new neighborhood, Heather meets ten-year-old Lizzie Logan, whose brash and bossy ways make Heather wonder if they can ever be friends.

Watson, Stephanie  
**Elvis and Olive**  
FICTION WAT J

In spite of their differences, Natalie Wallis and Annie Beckett become friends and decide to spend their summer spying on their neighbors.

### Realistic Fiction: Boys as Main Characters

Abbott, Tony  
**Firegirl**  
FICTION ABB J

A middle school boy's life is changed when Jessica, a girl disfigured by burns, starts attending his Catholic school while receiving treatment.

Baker, Kim  
**Pickle: the (formerly) anonymous prank club of Fountain Point Middle School**  
FICTION BAK J

Using a bogus name, the League of Picklemakers, sixth-grader Ben and three recruits start a prank-pulling club and receive funding from their middle school's PTA.

Baskin, Nora  
**Anything but typical**  
FICTION BAS J

Jason, a twelve-year-old autistic boy who wants to become a writer, relates what his life is like as he tries to make sense of his world.

Bauer, Marion Dane  
**On my honor**  
FICTION BAU J

Joel and Tony take a swim in the treacherous Vermillion River, which they have been told not to do. Tony disappears under the water and Joel dives repeatedly to find him and cannot. Back at home Joe wonders what to do as pressures mount from the outside and within.

Blume, Judy  
**Superfudge**  
FICTION BLU J

Peter describes the highs and lows of life with his younger brother, Fudge.

Buyea, Rob  
**Because of Mr. Terupt**  
FICTION BUY J

Seven fifth-graders at Snow Hill School in Connecticut relate how their lives are changed for the better by "rookie teacher" Mr. Terupt.

Christopher, Matt  
**The fox steals home**  
FICTION CHR J

Already troubled by his parents’ divorce, Bobby Canfield is further distressed when he learns that his father, who has coached him in running bases, intends to move away.

Cleary, Beverly  
**Dear Mr. Henshaw**  
FICTION CLE J

Sixth-grader Leigh lives with his mother and is the new kid at school. He’s lonely, troubled by the absence of his father, a cross-country trucker, and angry because a mysterious thief steals from his lunchbag. When Leigh's teacher assigns a letter-writing project, Leigh writes to Mr. Henshaw, whose surprising answer changes Leigh’s life.
Clements, Andrew  
*Frindle*  
FICTION CLE J

When he decides to turn his fifth-grade teacher’s love of the dictionary around on her, clever Nick Allen invents a new word and begins a chain of events that quickly moves beyond his control.

DeFelice, Cynthia  
The missing manatee  
FICTION DEF J

While coping with his parents’ separation, eleven-year-old Skeet spends most of spring break in his skiff on a Florida river, where he finds a manatee shot to death and begins looking for the killer.

DeFelice, Cynthia  
*Signal*  
FICTION DEF J

After moving with his father to upstate New York, twelve-year-old Owen faces a lonely summer until he meets an abused girl who may be a space alien.

Dowell, Frances  
*Chicken boy*  
FICTION DOW J

Since the death of his mother, Tobin's family life and school life have been in disarray, but after he starts raising chickens with his seventh-grade classmate, Henry, everything starts to fall into place.

Gantos, Jack  
*Jack on the tracks*  
FICTION GAN J

Moving with his unbearable sister to Miami, Florida, Jack tries to break some of his bad habits but finds himself irresistibly drawn to things disgusting, gross, and weird.

Greenwald, Tommy  
Charlie Joe Jackson's guide to not reading  
FICTION GRE J

Middle schooler Charlie Joe is proud of his success at avoiding reading, but eventually his schemes go too far.

Harkrader, Lisa  
The adventures of Beanboy  
FICTION HAR J

Tucker MacBean loves comic books, so when his favorite comic has a contest to create a sidekick, he is hopeful that he can win, thereby fixing his struggling family.

Henkes, Kevin  
*Words of stone*  
FICTION HEN J

Busy trying to deal with his many fears and his troubled feelings for his dead mother, ten-year-old Blaze has his life changed when he meets the boisterous and irresistible Joselle.

Houtman, Jacqueline  
The reinvention of Edison Thomas  
FICTION HOU J

Middle school student Eddy Thomas loves science and inventing, but has trouble with people. Finally he meets some friends who appreciate his abilities and respect his unique view of the world. With their help can he rethink his definition of success?

Kimmel, Eric  
*Hiss-s-s-s!*  
FICTION KIM J

When a Muslim American boy named Omar finally convinces his family that he should have a pet snake, it escapes and Omar learns why his mother is so scared of them.
In 1862 Nevada Territory, after finding his foster parents murdered and scalped, twelve-year-old Pinky Pinkerton, son of a railroad detective and a Sioux Indian, inherits a valuable deed and must hide from dangerous Whittlin Walt and his gang of desperados.

Todd and Amy Davidson may be twins, but they're complete opposites. With chapters that alternate between Todd's and Amy's points of view, this novel is a realistic and sometimes funny portrayal of a family adapting to changing roles.

Eleven-year-old Sam, who has leukemia, writes a book during the last four months of his life, in which he tells about what he would like to accomplish, how he feels, and things that have happened to him.

Ten-year-old Auggie Pullman, who was born with extreme facial abnormalities and was not expected to survive, goes from being home-schooled to entering fifth grade at a private middle school, which entails enduring the taunting and fear of his classmates as he struggles to be seen as just another student.

Alex 'Skinnybones' Frankovitch is starring in a TV commercial after sending a prizewinning letter to a cat food company. Alex is signing autographs in preparation for his newfound celebrity, but things don't work out the way he hoped.

Thirteen-year-old Eric discovers there are consequences to not standing by and watching as the bully at his new school hurts people, but although school officials are aware of the problem, Eric may be the one with a solution.

An unmanageable, but lovable, eleven-year-old misfit learns to believe in himself when he gets to know the new school counselor, who is a sort of misfit, too.

Seventh-grader John "Crash" Coogan has always been comfortable with his tough, aggressive behavior, until his relationship with an unusual Quaker boy and his grandfather's stroke make him consider the meaning of friendship and the importance of family.

Suds learns that his best friend is wrong. You don't have to be a tough guy, a "rat," to be a grown up fourth grader.
Spinelli, Jerry  
**Wringer**
FICTION SPI J
As Palmer comes of age, he must either accept the violence of being a wringer at his town’s annual Pigeon Day or find the courage to oppose it.

Stauffacher, Sue  
**Donuthead**
FICTION STA J
Franklin Delano Donuthead, a fifth grader obsessed with hygiene and safety, finds an unlikely friend and protector in Sarah Kervick, the tough new student who lives in a dirty trailer and is as "irregular" as he is.

Stead, Rebecca  
**Liar & spy**
FICTION STE J
While seventh-grader Georges is moving from a house to an apartment, he meets Safer, a boy who wants his help spying on another resident of their building.

Wallace, Bill  
**A dog called Kitty**
FICTION WAL J
A poignant story about the trust that grows between a farm boy and a stray pup.