

SYNERGIA

LEARNING VENTURES

18441 Rainbow's End Road

Nevada City CA 95959

530 265-5490 ropes@synergia.us www.synergia.us

BOOK AND MOVIE LIST FOR TEENAGERS AND PARENTS

Compiled by Debra Weistar

Literature and film are excellent mediums to explore and share feelings and ideals with your teen. Listed here are stories that center on issues of freedom, power, romance, death, relationship, culture, justice and truth. The characters in many of these stories are faced with difficult decisions and challenging circumstances. They don't always know what to do or what the right thing to do is. Through struggle, they find within themselves the strength to live their lives fully and overcome the difficulties they encounter.

Young people in the teen years are concerned with issues of freedom, power, identity and individuality. Sexuality and romance are extremely important. Exploring shadow issues such as violence and anger (to name just two) is endlessly fascinating. The medium of film itself is especially suited to this age.

We recommend that you watch these titles (and other movies) *with your teen*. It may feel a little awkward at first, but you can use the movie to springboard into a discussion that can lead to authentic communication. Staying open and non-judgmental is key. Ask open questions—of your child and yourself. What would you do if faced with a similar circumstance? Have you ever felt as the character did when _____? Do you think the character did the right thing? What tells you s/he did the right thing? The topics and situations that some of the titles on this list explore can be very controversial. Some depict a high level of violence. We do not endorse indulging in the violence, but invite you to explore difficult topics with your children as a means to better understand and know each other.

At this time, these lists are simply lists—no reviews or specific guidelines are included. They are not put into categories or any particular order. We suggest you purchase a video guidebook that will help you get a better idea of the movie and what to expect. It's also a great way to discover new titles. Peruse the guidebook, make a list of interesting titles, then go to the video store prepared, with list in hand.

We are always surprised by how few of the movies listed here are ones today's teens have seen or even heard of. In the rush to see the latest popular film, or listen to the latest popular music, it seems that those that came earlier (and in this case we are talking only a few years) are forgotten. These now lesser-known titles are a treasure and can be a doorway into a whole new world of exploring human values, diversity, struggles, lifestyles and choices.

As for the books, unfortunately many young people's books go out of print almost as fast as they are printed. If your library doesn't have some of these titles, try used bookstores.

The important thing is simply to start, whether with books or movies, and find that common place where minds can meet, discovery can happen and the parent/child relationship can grow.

BOOK LIST FOR TEENAGERS

Title	Author
Farewell to Manzanar	Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston
The Witch of Blackbird Pond	Elizabeth George Speare
Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry Let the Circle Be Unbroken The Road to Memphis	Mildred D. Taylor
Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed	Philip Hallie
Homecoming Dicey's Song	Cynthia Voigt
The Color Purple	Alice Walker
Real Lives: eleven teenagers who don't go to school; The Teenage Liberation Handbook	Grace Llewellyn
West With the Night	Beryl Markham
Tracks Desert Places	Robyn Davidson
Lisa, Bright and Dark	John Neufeld
Bomb the Suburbs No More Prisons!	William Upski Wimsatt
I Refuse: Memories of a Vietnam War Objector	Donald L. Simons
The Monkey Wrench Gang	Edward Abbey
The Woman Warrior	Maxine Hong Kingston
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings	Maya Angelou
To Kill a Mockingbird	Harper Lee
I Never Promised You a Rose Garden	Hannah Green
Dead Man Walking	Sister Helen Prejean
Daughters of Copper Woman	Anne Cameron
The White Dawn	James Houston
An Island Like You: Stories of the Barrio	Judith Ortiz Cofer
The Awakened Warrior: Living With Courage, Compassion and Discipline	Edited by Rick Fields
Things Get Hectic: teens write about the violence that surrounds them	By Youth Communication (They publish several titles written by at-risk youth)
My Old Man and the Sea: A father and son sail around Cape Horn	Hays and Hays
South	Sir Ernest Shackleton
Choices for Our Future: a generation rising for Life on Earth	Ocean Robbins and Sol Solomon
The Vision (check his other titles)	Tom Brown
Soledad Brother: the prison letters of George Jackson	George Jackson
Always Coming Home A Wizard of EarthSea (trilogy)	Ursula K. LeQuin
Cry of the Panther	James P. McMullen
How Can I Help?	Ram Dass & Paul Gorman

Title	Author
What Are You Doing With Your Life?	J. Krishnamurti
The River Why	David James Duncan
Through the Eyes of the Judged: autobiographical sketches of incarcerated young men	The Gateway Program The Evergreen State College, Olympia, WA
Man's Search for Meaning	Victor Frankl
Of Water and the Spirit	Malidoma Patrice Some
Meetings With Remarkable Men	G.I. Gurdjieff
The Freedom Writers Diary	The Freedom Writers with Erin Gruell
Global Uprising: Stories from a New Generation of Activists	Welton and Wolf
Brave Hearts, Rebel Spirits: A Spiritual Activists Handbook	Brooke Shelby Biggs
It's Our World, Too!; We Were There, Too!	Phillip Hoose
33 Things Every Girl Should Know About Women's History	Tonya Bolden
Let The Mountains Talk, Let The Rivers Run	David Brower
Affluenza	De Graaf, Wann, Naylor
Finding Freedom: Writings from Death Row	Jarvis Masters
Free the Children	Craig Kielburger
Making a Difference	Amy Irvine
The Alchemist	Paolo Coelho
Dear America: Letters Home From Viet Nam	Edited by Bernard Edelman for the NY Viet Nam Veterans Commission
Ishmael: an Adventure of the Mind and Spirit	Daniel Quinn
One Makes the Difference The Legacy of Luna	Julia Butterfly Hill
The Future of Peace	Scott A. Hunt
Ecotopia	Callenbach
Island Brave New World	Aldous Huxley
The Secret Life of Bees	Sue Monk Kidd
Beloved	Toni Morrison
Fast Food Nation: the Dark Side of the American Meal	Eric Schlosser
Sophie's World	Jostein Gaarder
Sidhartha	Herman Hesse
Ramayana	
In the Shadow of a Rainbow	Robert Franklin Leslie
Kinship With All Life	J, Allen Boone
The Pearl The Red Pony The Grapes of Wrath East of Eden	John Steinbeck
At Play in the Fields of the Lord	Peter Mattiessen

BOOKS FOR TEENS RELATING TO SEX, SEXUALITY AND GENDER ISSUES

Title	Author
Changing Bodies, Changing Lives: A Book for Teens on Sex and Relationships	Ruth Bell
No Is Not Enough: Helping Teenagers Avoid Sexual Assault	Adams, Fay and Loreen-Martin
Period	Gardner-Loulan, Lopez, Quakenbush
The First Time: What Parents and Teenage Girls Should Know About Losing Your Virginity (Check the bibliography of this book for more titles)	Karen Bouris
Risky Times: How to be AIDS – Smart and Stay Healthy	Jeanne Blake
Daughters of the Moon, Sisters of the Sun: Young Women and Mentors on the Transition to Womanhood	Hughes and Wolf
33 Things Every Girl Should Know	Tonja Bolden
The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty are Used Against Women	Naomi Wolf
Brothel: Mustang Ranch and its Women	Alexa Albert
Real Girl, Real World	Heather M. Gray and Samantha Phillips
Ophelia Speaks	Sarah Shandler
Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls	Rachel Simmons
Our Boys Speak: Adolescent Boys Write About Their Inner Lives	John Nikkah
Boys Will Be Boys Will Be Girls..... coloring/cartoon book; ages 12 and up	JT Bunnell and Irit Reinheimer
Free Your Mind: the book for Gay, Lesbian and Bi-Sexual Youth and their Allies	Ellen Bass and Kate Kaufman
Possessing the Secret of Joy	Alice Walker
Leaves of Grass	Walt Whitman
Anatomy of Love	Helen Fisher
The Soul is Here for it's Own Joy: Sacred Poems from Many Cultures (especially the chapter Loving God through Loving a Man or a Woman)	Edited by Robert Bly
Ecstatic Poetry – any books	Rumi
Into the Garden: A Wedding Anthology	Robert Hass and Stephen Mitchell
Body and Soul: Black Erotica (art book of photographs)	Rundu

BOOKS RELATING TO DRUGS

Buzzed: the straight facts about the most used and abused drugs from alcohol to ecstasy	Kuhn, Swartzwelder, and Wilson of the Duke University Medical Center
---	--

Videos for Teens

Note: Parents should research any movie rated R before viewing with your teen. Videos listed here with !! before the title are known to be graphically violent or contain much offensive language. There may also be titles listed here without that warning that contain violence or sex or offensive language. Synopsis of titles can be found in video/movie guidebooks. We recommend the following titles for parents to watch *with* their teens and use for meaningful discussion and exploration of topics pertinent to teens.

Films with aspects of sex, relationships and sexuality within the film, but also with themes of freedom, identity, and individuation

- Pump Up the Volume
- The Color Purple
- The Power of One
- She's Having a Baby
- Dead Poet's Society
- Harold & Maud
- Philadelphia
- If These Walls Could Talk (on the subject of abortion)
- If These Walls Could Talk 2 (on the subject of lesbianism)
- Pretty in Pink
- Breakfast Club
- Some Kind of Wonderful
- Say Anything
- Good Will Hunting
- Love and Basketball
- Beautiful Thing
- Benny and Joon
- Twin Falls Idaho

On the subject of drugs and/or substance abuse

- Clean and Sober
- !! Clockers
- Trainspotting

Documentaries

- Regret to Inform
- Dear America: Letters Home From Viet Nam
- Be Good, Smile Pretty
- Affluenza
- Bowling for Columbine
- Dogtown and Z-Boys
- Celluloid Closet
- Trembling Before G_D
- Devil's Playground: Amish Youth coming of age
- Step Into Liquid
- The Teen Files. Documentaries on the subjects of drugs, violence, hatred, alcohol, sex, smoking, identities.
- Spellbound
- One Nation Under God
- Iron Jawed Angels
- Super Size Me
- Frontline: The Lost Children of Rockwell County
- The Merchants of Cool
- Murderball
- Born Into Brothels
- Hoop Dreams

Seven part documentary series titled "The Teen Files". Probably hard to find in a video store. See their website for a description of each video's subject and ordering info. Teen Files website: www.teenissues.com The seventh video, The Truth About Surviving High School was filmed in part with the Weistar's Outdoor Education program in 2000 and it won an Emmy award. Disclaimer: these films were made by the same producer who made "Scared Straight." The approach is fact-based, 'scare-em-with-the-consequences' style. While we don't advocate such an approach, there is interesting material for discussion here. The Truth About Hate is the least scare-tactic oriented and is more about confronting prejudice.

Recommended titles for themes of freedom, identity, ideals, being true to oneself, choice.

- Stand by Me
- Flatliners
- Emerald Forest
- Primary Colors
- Mississippi Burning
- Schindler's List
- !! Dead Man Walking
- !! Shawshank Redemption
- Fried Green Tomatoes
- Rainman
- Scent of a Woman
- !! Dolores Claiborne
- !! The Fisher King
- Thelma & Louise
- Wag the Dog
- !! American History X
- Mad City
- Born on the 4th of July
- A Bronx Tale
- !! Sleepers
- Sling Blade
- The Truman Show
- Ghandi
- Norma Rae
- Shine
- Silkwood
- Losing Isaiah
- At First Sight
- White Squall
- JFK
- !! Natural Born Killers (**extreme** violence and profanity. For older teens only 16-19)
- October Sky
- The Apostle
- Patch Adams
- The Long Walk Home
- Swing Kids
- American Beauty
- Smoke Signals
- Girl, Interrupted
- !!The Green Mile
- !!Fight Club
- The Hurricane
- Malcolm X
- Men of Honor
- Finding Forrester

- Remember the Titans
- 12 Angry Men (both versions)
- Bread and Roses
- Billy Elliot
- Dangerous Beauty
- Light it Up
- Guinevere
- White Oleander
- Changing Lanes
- Resurrection (earlier title with Ellen Burstyn)
- One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
- Edward Scissor Hands
- Searching For Bobby Fischer
- Lorenzo's Oil
- The Life of David Gale
- Whale Rider
- Bend it Like Beckham
- 25th Hour
- Mona Lisa Smile
- Erin Brockovich
- Igby Goes Down
- Real Women Have Curves
- My Life Without Me
- Bloody Sunday
- !!Elephant
- Life is Beautiful (Italian with English subtitles)
- El Norte (Spanish with English subtitles)
- Wonder Boys
- Rebel Without a Cause
- My Life as a House
- Get Real
- And the Band Played On
- Matewan
- Dogfight
- The Station Agent
- Maria Full of Grace
- Coach Carter
- Hotel Rwanda
- The Corporation
- Something the Lord Made

