

Chapter 8

Short Stories, Poetry, and Humor

The three genres considered in this chapter offer readers and struggling readers some of the most engaging reading material, often in compact but powerful packages. Short stories, poetry, and humor are mainstays in the young adult literature world with a strong focus on diverse students and a host of issues important to teens.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the criteria for selecting texts in each of the genres discussed and how they relate to Common Core Standards.
- Consider and be able to discuss the importance of students' having access to literature such as **short stories** that reflect circumstances they may have encountered in their own lives.
- Develop an understanding of the nature of **poetry** and how it might be integrated with technology, performance, and social justice issues.
- Know how to use a wide variety of genres such as **humor** to engage disenfranchised readers.
- Continue to create a database of young adult literature that includes the genres discussed in this chapter.

Vignette: Macy Garth's 11th-Grade Classroom

Eleventh-grade teacher Macy Garth sat down at her desk with a sigh. The school year had just begun and already the “real lives” of her students were intruding on her carefully written plans for a multigenre unit on Shakespeare aligned with the common core standards. One of her students was now homeless, another was pregnant, and many were dealing with issues of racism and discrimination. As she looked out the window at the dense urban neighborhood below, she remembered a recent workshop that used poetry and contemporary short stories focusing on teen experiences to illuminate the complexity of Shakespearean works. Macy opened her file drawer and combed through the workshop materials for the suggested titles of short stories, poetry, and videos that would make the classics come vividly alive for her students.

Common Core Standards

The following standards are addressed in this chapter.

RL.9-10.2, 11-12.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.9-10.3, 11-12.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

RL.9-10.4, 11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place and how it sets a formal or informal tone).

RL.9-10.5, 11-12.5 Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing and flashbacks) to create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

WORKING WITH ESTABLISHED GENRES OF YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

As you consider selecting short stories for young adults, the following criteria may be helpful. Look for the following:

- Authentic selections that realistically capture teen coming-of-age dilemmas and problems, stories, and situations teens can identify with as they search for ways to cope with their own life issues
- Selections that provoke questions and offer a forum for discussion of teen issues

Activity 8.1 provides an opportunity to discover additional short story young adult fiction.

ACTIVITY 8.1: Professional Reflection and Discussion

Directions: In your small group, share any issues you confronted as a teen and short story young adult fiction titles that helped you see other adolescents struggling with similar issues. Do an Internet search of other contemporary young adult short story titles that deal with problems (e.g., teen pregnancy, relationships, crime, gangs, poverty, racism, bullying, and so on). Share these titles in a subsequent class with your small group. How might some of those titles explicate the classic works required by common core standards? What text pairings are possible?

The long-standing short story genre now includes some excellent anthologies for young adults that go to the heart of issues teens confront in and out of school.

SHORT STORIES

In the not too distant past, **short stories** read by teens were primarily written by mainstream authors for adult audiences. For example, stories by the American author O. Henry (William Sydney Porter, 1862–1910) with their surprise endings have endured. Like O. Henry, Burmese author Saki (H. H. Munro, 1870–1916) left a rich legacy of stunning, surprise-ending gems that continue to captivate readers.

However, these collections deal mainly with adult characters and, given the social context of their times, may not engage contemporary teens' issues. Nevertheless, short stories remain popular with students, partly because of their compact format where the reader is rapidly propelled into a character's world. Every word counts in a short story, and conflict happens fast. This is a genre that opens the door for struggling and reluctant readers to participate in literary conversations. As you think about incorporating short stories in your classroom, consider the following selection criteria:



The short story genre includes anthologies for young adults that address issues teens confront in and out of school.

High-quality short stories should be the following:

- Realistic
- Fast moving
- Written as if every word counts
- Centered on teen's conflicts (e.g., family, relationships, identity, and sexuality)
- Easily read in a sitting

The young adult short story genre received its biggest boost from Donald Gallo's (1984) initial anthology, *Sixteen: Short Stories by Outstanding Writers for Young Adults*. Subsequent anthologies, including multicultural works like the collection *First Crossings: Stories About Teen Immigrants* (Gallo, 2007), offer a compelling look at many of our diverse students' experiences in a transnational world. The 10 stories in this collection span Latino, Chinese, Korean, and other ethnic groups' immigration stories.

Older multicultural short story collections continue to offer powerful pictures of families struggling with new social mores as they immigrate to the United States. For example, in Anne Mazer's (1993) short story collection *America Street: A Multicultural Anthology of Stories*, author Lensey Namioka explores the cultural minefield a dinner invitation poses for a Chinese family. In "The All American Slurp," the narrator declares at the outset of the story, "The first time our family was invited out to dinner in America, we disgraced ourselves while eating celery" (p. 55). The narrator goes on to recount how the host family stared at their Chinese guests when they ate raw celery, struggling to remove the shoots that got stuck in their teeth. Raw vegetables would have been cooked in China, but in an effort to be polite these guests did their best to eat the unfamiliar food.

Author Gary Soto's (1990) *Baseball in April and Other Stories* appeals to middle school readers and offers a glimpse into Latino teens in Fresno, California, trying to balance poverty and doing the right thing. For example, in "No Guitar Blues" (p. 54), Fausto wants a guitar more than anything. When he finds a lost and very fancy dog, he calls the number on the dog's collar and sets out to get a reward from the dog's owner by lying about where he found the pet. The grateful family gives him \$20 and some pastries, making Fausto feel bad about lying to them. He goes to church and donates the \$20 bill, forgoing the money that would have gone toward a guitar. At home, his mom gives him an old guitarra that belonged to his grandfather, an instrument played by Los Lobos, his favorite band. Clearly, these are fairly gentle stories with happy

endings. More contemporary collections feature relationships and identity issues that are much rawer.

For example, Sharon Flake's (2005) collection *Who Am I Without Him? Short Stories About Girls and the Boys in Their Lives* features Black vernacular and issues of body image, betrayal, and identity. The 12 stories in this anthology treat teen relationships realistically, and as the vignette demonstrated, they provide problem-based situations for discussion. The collection was acknowledged as a Coretta Scott King honor book.

In a short story collection that capitalizes on many teens' interest in all things vampire related, P. C. Cast's (2008) anthology *Immortal: Love Stories With Bite* features stories by the horror genres major authors.

In addition to these short story collections featuring established authors, Hanging Loose Press produces anthologies drawn from the high school section of *Hanging Loose* literary magazine (<http://hangingloosepress.com>). The fourth in this series of anthologies, *When We Were Countries: Poems and Stories by Outstanding High School Writers* (Pawlak, Lourie, & Hershon, 2010) features teen voices and issues of coming of age, living and caring for aging grandparents, special moments with a mom or dad, and accentuating the taken-for-granted moments in daily life.

Each of the collections profiled offers models for student writing, as well as themes that include coming-of-age issues, multicultural and international dimensions, and other themes that lend themselves to unit planning. In addition, a number of websites support outlets for teen reviews, journaling, and creative writing.

For example, *Teen Libris: Your Link to Teen Lit* (www.teenlibris.com) offers reviews, interviews, book lists, and a forum and blog for book discussion.

Another site, www.authors4teens.com, includes prominent young adult authors being interviewed by Donald Gallo. The site displays authors' biographical information, lists of their works, and other material.

Activity 8.2 explores teaching through guided reading and discussion of short stories.

ACTIVITY 8.2: Professional Reflection and Discussion

Directions: Locate a contemporary young adult short story collection. Identify a story you would like to use with your class. Share this selection with your small group, and brainstorm how you would go about teaching this selection in terms of guided reading and discussion. In particular, think about online support elements and websites that will expand students' interest and understanding of the short story genre. In addition to short story collections, poetry offers another genre that is compact but powerful.

POETRY

Poetry pays attention to the otherwise taken-for-granted scenes of young adult life. For example, Tom (Bean, 1970) wrote this free verse piece growing up in Hawai'i near the beach where long walks along the shoreline near Diamond Head offered time to reflect on nature.

Sand Crab

Blending with the seascape
yet rasping defiance at its changing immensity
He tows the Marlboro butt
away from his already crumbling home

In addition to short stories, poetry for young adults is now flourishing like never before. Partly because of the popularity of hip hop culture, the teachers we work with tell us that their teen students look favorably on poetry as a genre they can embrace. The explosion of blogging sites for sharing poetry, open mics, and poetry slams seems to be contributing to poetry's popularity (Albaugh, 2010). Fifty years ago, some 300 literary journals published poetry worldwide. Now, more than 2,000 online websites accept poetry and offer as many as 100 poems-per-issue (Albaugh, 2010). For example, *Poetry Daily* received millions of hits each month, reprinting a poem a day from books and journals.

Free-verse poems have overcome many of the barriers to students' enjoyment of this genre. Indeed, poet Georgia Heard's (2009) chronicle of her work with struggling readers in an 8th-grade urban setting shows the transformational power of poetry writing for urban youth. Heard noted,

One of the reasons to invite poetry into the lives of our students is to meet our invisible guests—grief, joy, anger, doubt, and confusion. We read poetry from this deep hunger to know ourselves and the world. (p. 9–10)

In her work with students in this school site, Heard gets to know a student named Celestino who comes to regard poetry reading and his own free-verse creations as a refuge from the gangs that prowl his neighborhood. Poetry lends itself to a social justice stance, and a number of websites support this effort (Ciardiello, 2010). For example, student poetry dealing with human rights issues can be found at the ePals Global LearningCommunity website: www.epals.com/content/humanrights.aspx.

Multicultural poetry collections like *Cool Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Growing Up Latino in the United States* edited by Lori Carlson (1994) show the double-edged emotions that accompany leaving one's home and first language behind. For example, in Gina Valdez's poem, "English con Salsa," the sardonic voice in the poem notes

In four months you'll be speaking like George Washington,
in four weeks you can ask, More coffee?
In two months you can say, May I take your order?
In one year you can ask for a raise, cool as the Tuxpan River. (p. 3)

A newer collection of bilingual poems in both Spanish and English, Lori Carlson's (2005) anthology *Red Hot Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Being Young and Latino in the United States* includes some teen poets as well as established figures.

Although written primarily by established authors like Sandra Cisneros and Luis J. Rodriguez, there are also poetry collections that feature up-and-coming teen poets. For example, the short story and poetry anthology we mentioned previously, *When We Were Countries: Poems and Stories by Outstanding High School Writers* (Pawlak, Lourie, & Hershon, 2010), features teen voices and hard scrabble coming-of-age scenes.

Solid Ground edited by Judith Tannenbaum (2006) is another anthology that features strong teen poet voices schooled by English teachers in the San Francisco, California Writers Corp project of the San Francisco Arts Commission. In 16-year-old poet Michelle Vail's poem "This is the Year," she declares hopefully,

This is the year that my friends won't die.
They will last as long as the trees reach toward the sky.
There will be no guns or bullets to shoot people in the head. (p. 135)

Other poetry collections featuring young poets include Naomi Shibab Nye's (2010) *Time You Let Me In: 25 Poets Under 25*. Many of the poems deal with diasporas and immigration issues where the authors find themselves not fitting into their homeland or their new home and culture.

In Case 8.1, we look in on Macy Garth's high-school literature class again as her students culminate a poetry unit.



One reason to invite poetry into the lives of our students is to give voice and experience to a variety of emotions.

CASE 8.1: Ms. Garth's Students Write Poetry

Ms. Garth has been concluding her poetry unit for the past few years with a culminating activity where her students write, edit, and archive their original poetry in an online anthology. She uses previous class examples to frame this project and encourages her students to incorporate media into their online compositions.

James: Okay, Ms. Garth. I want to write about my neighborhood and all the graffiti on our fences and walls. Some of its colorful murals people have painted to make our neighborhood better.

Ms. Garth: Great, James. Why don't you focus your poem and photos on that? Include how a particular mural looks, what emotions it produces, and take digital photos to go along with your poem.

James: Yeah, I got it. It's going to be good.

Ultimately, James creates a poem around a mural that depicts Latino emigration journeys into the Los Angeles basin from Mexico. Hot and dry with the sun beating down, the characters in the mural are bent over but moving toward California, leaving their homes behind.

In addition to traditional anthologies that feature poetry by or for adolescents, several online resources offer yet another venue for teens interested in having their work read by others. For example, poetry addressing critical human rights issues is flourishing and includes civil rights, ethnic exclusion, and language discrimination. Multimodal digital poems combining text and media including iMovies offer students a powerful medium for tackling human rights issues (Gainer & Lapp, 2010). For example, you can learn more about digital storytelling at the website (www.storycenter.org/cookbook.html).

Visual approaches to poetry that involve video creation and production ramp up students' interest in the poetry genre (Stuart, 2010). Websites offer guidance in how to analyze multimedia texts and progress to creating an original project. For example, the ReadWriteThink site that follows provides instruction in how to create an original multimedia project (Stuart, 2010: see) (www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=1088).

The National Writing Project website (www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/1785) offers numerous articles and teaching ideas for incorporating poetry into your classroom.

In addition, state writing projects like the University of California Irvine Writing Project and others have a wealth of resources, workshops, and university-supported course offerings to support the infusion of student poetry reading and writing.

In the final section of this chapter, we take a look at a genre that serves to balance the serious nature of many young adult coming-of-age novels, short stories, and poems. Humorous novels abound and take the edge off of adolescent life.

HUMOR

“Humor is the Rodney Dangerfield of literary forms: It gets no respect!” notes young adult author and literature analyst Michael Cart (1995, p. 1). Yet scholar Don Nilsen (1993) believed that “Humor is a very important aspect of much of children’s and adolescent literature” (p. 262). Despite some teachers’ initial reluctance to situate humor as a legitimate genre in literature, Matthew D. Zbaracki (2003) argued for the vital nature of humor in the classroom, especially when engaging reluctant readers: “It is time for humorous literature to receive more respect. **Humor** is a genre that can engage children in reading. It motivates them, requires them to use various reading strategies, and encourages social interaction so they can share what they have read. By combining humorous literature with reading engagement a teacher may reach all readers” (p. 122). Moreover, research by Zbaracki and others suggests that humor may indeed motivate adolescent boys and prevent their disengagement from reading. As a means of promoting reading engagement through humor as well as other genres, Zbaracki and classroom teacher Charlie McCarthy created the website *Educating Zombies* (www.educatingzombies.com). In this cleverly tongue-in-cheek and inviting website, teachers, librarians, administrators, and parents can explore various titles and topics related to keeping readers engaged. In the section that follows, we offer a peek into the website and some of the recommended titles you may find there.

In *No More Dead Dogs* (2002), author Gordon Korman takes a deadly aim at the “heroic dog meets tragic end” genre. Sure to



Humorous literature may increase reading engagement and pleasure.

appeal to teens who resist such sentimentality, the protagonist in this book, Wallace Wallace, has written a hilarious yet unfavorable book report on *Old Shep, My Pal*. Despite the English teacher's displeasure, Wallace will not tell a lie—he hated every minute reading that book! Why does the dog in every classic novel have to die at the end? After refusing to do a rewrite, Wallace is forced to go to the rehearsals of the school production of the book as punishment. Although Wallace does not change his mind, he does end up changing the play into a rock-and-roll rendition.

Author and master of the macabre, David Lubar returns with 35 more warped and creepy tales in *The Battle of the Red Hot Pepper Weenies: And Other Warped and Creepy Tales* (2009). Similarly to the three previous *Weenie* collections—*In the Land of the Lawn Weenies: And Other Misadventures* (2003), *Invasion of the Road Weenies: And Other Warped and Creepy Tales* (2005), and *The Curse of the Campfire Weenies: And Other Warped and Creepy Tales* (2008)—he reveals the inspiration behind each story at the end of the book.

Prolific and popular author Gary Paulsen (2004) uses his experiences as a 13-year-old boy in *How Angel Peterson Got His Name: And Other Outrageous Tales of Extreme Sports*. To stave off boredom and impress girls, Gary and his friends engaged in the following:

- Shooting waterfalls in a barrel
- Breaking the world record for speed on skis by being towed behind a souped-up car, and then . . . hitting gravel
- Jumping three barrels like motorcycle daredevil Evel Knievel, except they only have bikes
- Wrestling . . . a bear?

This book is sure to appeal to anyone who is 13, has been 13, or had a crush on a 13-year-old.

Although these titles are a tiny sample of titles of various genres that use humor, the website given above as well as resources such as *Best Books for Boys* (Zbaracki, 2008) or websites such as www.boysread.org and author Jon Scieszka's site www.guysread.org will provide you with many more titles as well as strategies for engaging reluctant readers.

Humor is also a common element in romance novels, often serving to defuse tensions around developing relationships and awkward moments. For example, in *A Novel Idea* (Friedman, 2005), Norah, an avid reader, starts a book club where James, her potential boyfriend, remains standoffish, so she

decides to act like a heroine in a romance novel. Norah's missteps in this role create an endearing romantic comedy with numerous references to other young adult novels.

Perfect Strangers (Malcolm, 2004) pits classmates Madison and Jeremy running against each other for junior class president. Madison hates Jeremy because, in their freshmen year, he played a nasty prank on her. She talks regularly about Jeremy with her e-pal she has never met, and he seems to really understand her. Of course, as the novel unfolds, they will eventually meet.

Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist (Cohn & Levithan, 2006) features dual points of view, alternating between Nick's and Norah's voices in a single night as they go to punk clubs to hear music, deal with the ups and downs of friendships, and cope with the growing affection they feel for each other. In another novel with a couple on a road trip home from Oregon to Kansas, *From Bad to Worse: A Novel (with Girls)* (Hafer & Hafer, 2007), characters Griffin and Amanda share their deepest secrets surrounding Griffin's dysfunctional family and his feelings for Amanda, just a friend when they start the drive east.

In a similar, sardonic vein, Sarah Dessen's (2002) *This Lullaby* features Remy, a girl who, on the heels of her mother's multiple marriages, simply does not believe in love. Her cynical view of romance is challenged by a rocker named Dexter, who is in love with Remy for the long haul. Humorous and biting, this popular romance novel is followed by *Lock and Key* (Dessen, 2008).

As suggested by these titles and others that you will encounter, humor is a vital and vibrant means of engaging adolescent readers and should be given the same respect as other genres. Indeed, humor may reach students that were previously disenfranchised from literature and literacy. asks you to visit either www.educatingzombies.com or www.guysread.com to explore how you can use humor in your own classroom.

ACTIVITY 8.3: Professional Reflection and Discussion

With a partner, visit either of the above websites. What resources are available? What titles recommended would you add to your library? Visit the "technology" page on Educating Zombies and talk with your partner about some of the creative uses for integrating technology into the classroom, especially as a means for students to create their own literary works.

MULTIMEDIA TEXT SET

This multimedia text set is drawn from the Educating Zombies website, and many of the books listed can be found directly linked from the website to an Amazon booklist. The aim of this text set is to provide a starting point for developing a collection of books and other texts to engage even the most reluctant reader. As Zbaracki and McCarthy state on their website

Buy some or even all of the books below this drivel, then put those books on a high shelf in your room (classroom, library, bookstore, conservatory with a wrench . . .), then pull a book from the shelf for a student. Tell them it can't go home because you'd hate to lose it . . . Make sure eavesdropping children are present. Soon you'll have a small cluster of kids begging to borrow your "special" books. (Retrieved May 31, 2012 from <http://www.educatingzombies.com/Books.html>)

1. Keller, L. (YEAR). *Arnie the doughnut*. New York, NY: Henry Holt.

This is a rather silly story about a doughnut who narrowly escapes his doughnut fate. Arnie is proud to be chocolate covered, with bright-colored candy sprinkles. His first day on the planet is a big one. He is (a) cut into a ring, (b) deep fried, (c) cooled, (d) iced, (e) sprinkled, and (f) named Arnie. What he does not realize is that step (e) is being eaten by a human. So, when a customer, Mr. Bing, starts to put him in his mouth, he screams, "What are you doing?" Arnie is further crushed when he calls the bakery to warn the others only to discover that all the other pastries are aware of this arrangement.

2. Katz, A. (2008). *The flim-flam fairies*. Philadelphia, PA: Running Press Kids.

Say the word "fairies" and it conjures up images of little winged beings made of gossamer and light, exquisitely dressed in shimmering gowns or twirly, little bejeweled skating costumes. Well, you have not met The Flim-Flam Fairies.

3. Moore, A. (1995). *Watchmen*. New York, NY: DC Comics.

This Hugo Award-winning graphic novel chronicles the fall from grace of a group of superheroes plagued by all-too-human failings. Along the way, the concept of the superhero is dissected as the heroes are stalked by an unknown assassin. One of the most influential graphic novels of all time and a perennial bestseller, *Watchmen* has been studied on college campuses across the nation and

is considered a gateway title, leading readers to other graphic novels such as *V for Vendetta*, *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*, and *The Sandman* series.

4. Scieszka, J. (2008). *Knucklehead: Tall tales and almost true stories of growing up Scieszka*. New York, NY: Penguin.

How did Jon Scieszka get so funny, anyway? Growing up as one of six brothers was a good start, but that was just the beginning. Throw in Catholic school, lots of comic books, lazy summers at the lake with time to kill, baby-sitting misadventures, TV shows, jokes told at family dinner, and the result is *Knucklehead*. Part memoir, part scrapbook, this hilarious trip down memory lane provides a unique glimpse into the formation of a creative mind and a free spirit.

5. The Chronicles of Harris Burdick

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3kpYep7EQw&list=PLE028262F81694192>

Author Lemony Snicket interviews famous children and young adult literature authors about Chris Van Allsburg's book *The Mystery of Harris Burdick* (1981) and their participation in the YA book for which they each wrote a story based on the intriguing illustrations.

6. Brief History of Comic Books

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcgSQ-9AAnI&list=PLE028262F81694192>

This short YouTube video offers a brief history of comic books and their place in American literature.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, we considered established genres of young adult literature including short stories, poetry, and humor. We also introduced websites that can support students' reading, discussion, and writing across each of these literary genres.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the criteria for selecting texts in the genres discussed, and how do they relate to Common Core Standards?

2. Consider your own experiences as an adolescent. Was there a book that helped you to relate or cope with events in your life? Why is it important for students to have access to literature that reflect circumstances they may have encountered in their own lives?
3. Thinking of your own or future classroom, how might you use technology to help your students write and “perform” poetry or explore social issues?
4. How can genres such as humor engage disenfranchised readers? Do you see any drawbacks to using humor in the classroom?

KEY TERMS

Humor 159

Short Stories 153

Poetry 156

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: TEACHING SHORT STORIES, POETRY, AND HUMOR WITHIN A MULTIMEDIA FRAMEWORK

Directions: Read one of the selections within the genres treated in this chapter (short stories, poetry, and humor). Think about how you would teach this selection through a multimedia framework. Look over the websites listed in the chapter, and create a plan for a two-week unit centered on the genre you have selected. Share this unit in your small group, including assessment approaches.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Ciardiello, A. V. (2010). “Talking walls”: Presenting a case for social justice poetry in literacy education. *The Reading Teacher*, 63(6), 464–473.

This author uses the example of young Chinese immigrants who wrote wall poetry to protest their imprisonment at the Angel Island Detention Center in San Francisco Bay during the early 1900s. The article offers several websites and lists of social justice poetry by Gary Soto and others.

Heard, G. (2009). Celestino: A tribute to the healing power of poetry. *Voices from the Middle*, 16(3), 9–14.

This article features poet Georgia Heard’s (2009) chronicle of her work with struggling readers in an 8th-grade urban setting. It shows the transformational power of poetry reading and writing for urban youth.

Stuart, D. H. (2010). Cin(E)-poetry: Engaging the digital generation in 21st century response. *Voices from the Middle*, 17(3), 27–35.

Students can create digital literacy productions that truly capitalize on the rich array of media available including music, color, sound, graphics, and so on.

RECOMMENDED YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE FEATURED IN THIS CHAPTER

Carlson, L. M. (1994). *Cool salsa: Bilingual poems on growing up Latino in the United States*. New York, NY: Fawcett Juniper.

This poetry anthology captures the double-edged emotions that accompany leaving one's home and first language behind. The poems are powerful and offer a model for teen authors interested in chronicling their own transnational lives.

Carlson, L. M. (2005). *Red hot salsa: Bilingual poems on being young and Latino in the United States*. New York, NY: Henry Holt.

A newer collection of bilingual poems in both Spanish and English, Lori Carlson's (2005) anthology includes some teen poets as well as established figures.

Cast, P. C. (2008). *Immortal: Love stories with bite*. Borders Books.

This collection features short stories by the horror genres major authors.

Dessen, S. (2002). *This lullaby*. New York, NY: Viking.

This popular and humorous novel features Remy, a girl who, on the heels of her mother's multiple marriages, simply does not believe in love. Her cynical view of romance is challenged by a rocker named Dexter, who is in love with Remy for the long haul.

Flake, S. G. (2005). *Who am I without him? Short stories about girls and the boys in their lives*. New York, NY: Hyperion.

This short story collection gets at the tensions arising in relationships where the characters' sense of self sometimes gets lost in love. These are realistic accounts of the complex trials of love and longing.

Gallo, D. (Ed.). (1984). *Sixteen: Short stories by outstanding writers for young adults*. New York, NY: Delacorte.

This early short story collection began a wave of new anthologies. Editor Donald Gallo moved the field of short stories for teens in a new direction with this anthology. The stories in this collection remain powerful and engaging.

Gallo, D. (Ed.). (2007). *First crossings: Stories about teen immigrants*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

These 10 stories get at the heart of teenage diaspora where characters have been wrenched out of the comfort zone of their native language and homeland. Transnationalism is more often than not the norm in our classrooms where students represent multiple ethnicities and languages mixing in a hybrid form of cross-cultural practices.

Hafer, T., & Hafer, J. (2007). *From bad to worse: A novel (with girls)*. London, UK: Think.

Main character Griffin Smith must confront his fragmented family after a trip home from Oregon with his high school sweetheart, Amanda Mac.

Korman, G. 2002. *No more dead dogs*. New York, NY: Hyperion.

Wallace writes an unfavorable book report of *Old Shep, My Pal* questioning the need for dogs always dying in classic novels, propelling him into a school play on *Old Shep*.

Lubar, D. (2009). *The battle of the red hot pepper weenies: And other warped and creepy tales*. New York, NY: Tom Doherty Associates, LLC.

In this macabre collection, the father of a girl who does not have a date for a school dance makes one in his laboratory and each of the titles that follow feature twisted tales.

Lubar, D. (2003). *In the land of the lawn weenies: And other misadventures*. New York, NY: Starscape.

Lubar, D. (2005). *Invasion of the road weenies: And other warped and creepy tales*. New York, NY: Starscape.

Lubar, D. (2008). *The curse of the campfire weenies: And other warped and creepy tales*. New York, NY: Starscape.

Mazer, A. (1993). *America street: A multicultural anthology of stories*. New York, NY: Persea Books.

Older multicultural short story collections like this one continue to offer powerful pictures of families struggling with new social mores as they immigrate to the United States. This collection features well-known authors including Langston Hughes, Lensey Namioka, and Gary Soto, along with stories capturing the challenges of leaving one's homeland and grappling with new and often disturbing cultural norms.

Nye, N. S. (2010). *Time you let me in: 25 poets under 25*. New York, NY: Greenwillow.

This collection features young poets reacting to a host of cultural and ethnic issues. Many of the poems deal with cultural displacement and immigration issues where the authors find themselves not fitting into their homeland or their new home and culture.

Paulsen, G. (2004). *How Angel Peterson got his name: And other outrageous tales of extreme sports*. New York, NY: Yearling.

Pawlak, M., Lourie, D., & Hershon, R. (Eds.), (2010). *When we were countries: Poems and stories by outstanding high school writers*. Brooklyn, NY: Hanging Loose Press.

The fourth in this series of anthologies features teen voices and issues of coming of age, living and caring for aging grandparents, special moments with a mom or dad, and accentuating the taken-for-granted moments in daily life. This collection can serve as a model for teen short story and poetry writing aimed at real audiences.

Soto, G. (1990). *Baseball in April and other stories*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace.

This early multicultural short story collection for teens offers ethical dilemmas that lend themselves to discussion. Characters are immersed in situations where multiple choices are possible.

Tannenbaum, J. (2006). *Solid ground*. San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Books.

This teen poet anthology features strong teen poet voices schooled by English teachers in the San Francisco, California, Writers Corp project of the San Francisco Arts Commission. Poems deal with gang violence, homelessness, immigration issues, and a host of other topics relevant to urban teens.

Van Allsburg, C. (1981). *The mysteries of Harris Burdick*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin.

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

Young Adult Books

Teen Libris: Your Link to Teen Lit, www.teenlibris.com, offers reviews, interviews, book lists, and a forum and blog for book discussion.

Young Adult Short Stories

Another site, www.authors4teens.com, includes prominent young adult authors being interviewed by Donald Gallo. The site displays authors' biographical information, lists of their works, and other material.

Young Adult Literary Magazines and Online Resources

An excellent website for learning about *Hanging Loose* a literary magazine that regularly includes teen's creative writing alongside established authors, <http://hangingloosepress.com>

Young Adult Poetry Resources

Student poetry dealing with human rights issues can be found at the ePals Global Learning Community website: www.epals.com/

The National Writing Project website offers numerous articles and teaching ideas for incorporating poetry in your classroom. The site can be found at the following URL: www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/1785

Young Adult Multimedia Resources

Learn more about digital story telling at the following website: www.storycenter.org/cookbook.html

The ReadWriteThink site that follows provides instruction in how to create an original multimedia project (Stuart, 2010): www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=1088

Other resources encompassing video poetry include www.bloomingtonlibrary.org/see_&d_do/videos

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