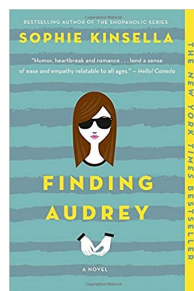
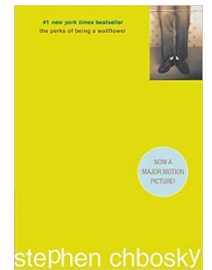


Books to Share with Teens About Kindness & Empathy

The following are beautifully written books that offer lessons about friendship, understanding, thoughtfulness and compassion. These books capture the power of kindness, the ability to see outward, as well as the sense of purpose and pride that can come from helping someone. They also teach kids that you don't have to perform a heroic act to make the world a better place, but that even the smallest act of kindness can make a huge difference.

The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky

This book follows observant “wallflower” Charlie as he charts a course through the strange world between adolescence and adulthood. First dates, family drama, and new friends. Sex, drugs, and The Rocky Horror Picture Show. Devastating loss, young love, and life on the fringes. Caught between trying to live his life and trying to run from it, Charlie must learn to navigate those wild and poignant roller-coaster days known as growing up.

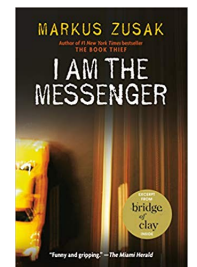


Finding Audrey by Sophie Kinsella

An anxiety disorder disrupts fourteen-year-old Audrey's daily life. She has been making slow but steady progress with Dr. Sarah, but when Audrey meets Linus, her brother's gaming teammate, she is energized. She connects with him. Audrey can talk through her fears with Linus in a way she's never been able to do with anyone before. As their friendship deepens and her recovery gains momentum, a sweet romantic connection develops, one that helps not just Audrey but also her entire family.

I Am the Messenger by Markus Zusak

Ed Kennedy is an underage cabdriver without much of a future. He's pathetic at playing cards, hopelessly in love with his best friend, Audrey, and utterly devoted to his coffee-drinking dog, the Doorman. His life is one of peaceful routine and incompetence until he inadvertently stops a bank robbery. That's when the first ace arrives in the mail. That's when Ed becomes the messenger. Chosen to care, he makes his way through town helping until only one question remains: Who's behind Ed's mission?

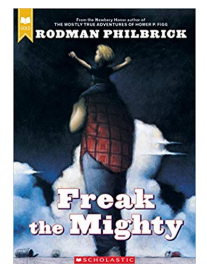


Wonder by R. J. Palacio

August Pullman was born with a facial difference that, up until now, has prevented him from going to a mainstream school. Starting 5th grade at Beecher Prep, he wants nothing more than to be treated as an ordinary kid, but his new classmates can't get past Auggie's extraordinary face. *Wonder* begins from Auggie's point of view, but soon switches to include his classmates, his sister, her boyfriend, and others. These perspectives converge in a portrait of one community's struggle with empathy, compassion, and acceptance.

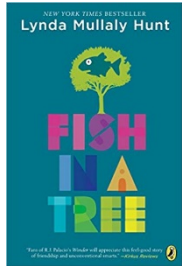
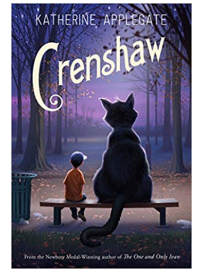
Freak the Mighty by Rodman Philbrick

The heartwrenching story of two "special ed" boys who pair up to form a unique and empowering friendship. Two boys, a slow learner stuck in the body of a teenage giant and a tiny Einstein in leg braces, forge a unique friendship when they pair up to create one formidable human force.



Crenshaw by Katherine Applegate

Jackson and his family have fallen on hard times. There's no more money for rent. And not much for food, either. His parents, his little sister, and their dog may have to live in their minivan. Again. Crenshaw is a cat. He's large, he's outspoken, and he's imaginary. He has come back into Jackson's life to help him. But is an imaginary friend enough to save this family from losing everything? This book proves in unexpected ways that friends matter, whether real or imaginary.



Fish in a Tree by Mullaly Hunt, Lynda

Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the trouble maker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. As her confidence grows, Ally feels free to be herself and the world starts opening up with possibilities. She discovers that there's a lot more to her, and to everyone, than a label, and that great minds don't always think alike.

The Summer I Saved the World ... in 65 Days by Michele Weber Hurwitz

Its summertime and thirteen-year-old Nina Ross is feeling kind of lost. Her beloved grandmother died last year, her parents work all the time, her brother is busy and her best friend is into clothes, makeup and boys. While Nina doesn't know what her thing is yet, it's definitely not shopping and makeup. And its not boys either. This summer, Nina decides to change things and she hatches a plan. There are sixty-five days of summer and every day she will anonymously do one small but remarkable good thing for someone in her neighborhood. Along the way she discovers that her neighborhood and her family are full of surprises and secrets.



Lost in the Sun by Lisa Graff

Everyone says that middle school is awful, but Trent knows nothing could be worse than the year he had in fifth grade, when a freak accident on Cedar Lake left one kid dead, and Trent with a brain full of terrible thoughts he can't get rid of. Trent's pretty positive the entire disaster was his fault, so for him middle school feels like a fresh start. If only Trent could make that fresh start happen. It isn't until Trent gets caught up in the whirlwind that is Fallon Little, the girl with the mysterious scar across her face, that things begin to change. Because fresh starts aren't always easy.

Ms. Bixby's Last Day by John David Anderson

Ms. Bixby is the sort of teacher who makes you feel like school is somehow worthwhile. Who recognizes something in you that sometimes you don't even see in yourself. Who you never want to disappoint. Ms. Bixby is one-of-a-kind. Topher, Brand, and Steve know this better than anyone. And so when Ms. Bixby unexpectedly announces that she won't be able to finish the school year, they come up with a risky plan, more of a quest, really, to give Ms. Bixby the last day she deserves. Through the three very different stories they tell, we begin to understand what Ms. Bixby means to each of them—and what the three of them mean to each other.

