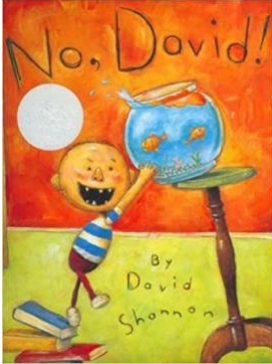


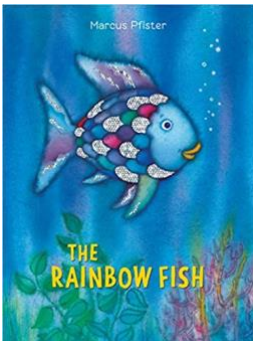
**Books for elementary students**



Shannon, D. (1998). *No, David!* Blue Sky Press

-Suggested for Kinder-3<sup>rd</sup>

- *No, David!* Highlights that even if you behave wrong, or your parents constantly get on to you, that they still love you. This is an important lesson for children because it shows that when we mess up, even if it is daily, that there is still love for them. David himself serves as a relatable figure for children who have behavioral issues that affect their impulse control or limit their perspectives and serves as a realistic role model with a positive ending for the kids. This book was also written by the author originally when he was a kid and thus describes these lessons in language easily understood by kids.



Pfister, M. (1992). *The rainbow fish* (A, James. Trans). North-South Books Inc.

-Suggested for kinder -3<sup>rd</sup>

- *The rainbow fish* is a heartwarming story of a fish who is essentially outcasted by its peers because it is unique. The other fish do not understand the Rainbow fish's unique scales and thus shun the fish because it is different from them. However, the rainbowfish, who has a heart of gold, decides to share its unique scales with the rest of the fish so that they can all get along and relate to each other. This story shows kids that their differences can be unique and positive aspects about them rather than be viewed negatively. Most people judge because they do not understand, but once the rainbow fish shared insight into its unique scales the other fish stopped judging and accepted the rainbow fish as their own. Overall highlighting that spreading

awareness about what makes us unique is a powerful and positive tool to make connections with others.

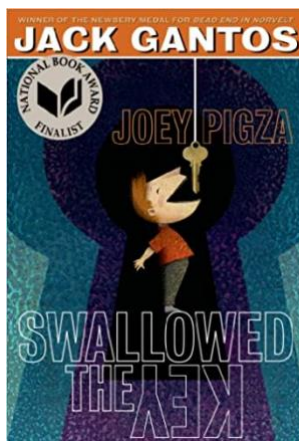


Ehrlich, E. (2014). *Nest* (T. White, Illus.). Random House Children's Books.

-Suggested for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade readers

-*Nest* is the story of 11-year-old Naomi who is faced with tragedy when her dancer mother is injured in an accident and succumbs into a deep depression. However, through the healing power of her newly found friendship with Joey, Naomi is able to find comfort and escape through the adventures they embark on together. This book is both a heart-warming and heart-wrenching story of how to handle mental health within the family and teaches children the power of friendship, adventure, perseverance, and patience. *Nest* serves as an honest yet powerful example of how to handle intense changes in family dynamics for young children while also educating them on depression and mental health as a whole.

### Books for middle school students

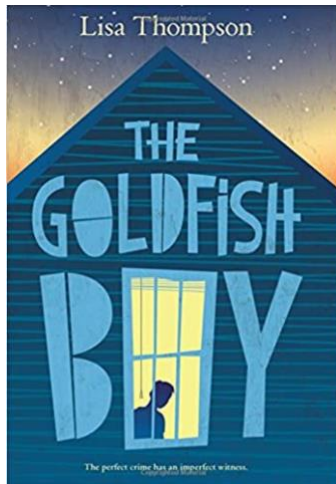


Gantos, J. (1998). *Joey pigza swallowed the key*. Harper Collins Publishers Inc.

-Suggested for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders mainly but would suffice for 8<sup>th</sup> grade as well

- *Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key* is a humorous yet honest look at what it is like to be a middle schooler with ADHD and behavioral problems. Joey feels dull and not himself when on his medication but is consistently categorized as “aggressive” when he is off them. This book serves as a realistic and personal look at what is like to be categorized at the “weird” kid due to impulsive behavior and highlights humor and self-love as impactful coping skills to embrace

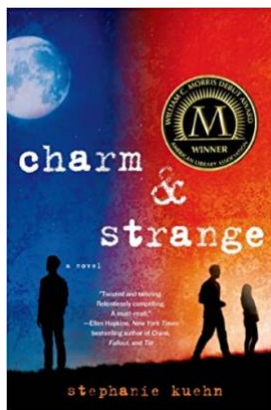
your own “weirdness”. Therefore, making *Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key* a wonderful reference to help teach children how to handle ADHD or behavioral problems while also serving as an educational tool for how to treat others that you may not understand.



Thompson, L. (2017). *The goldfish boy*. Scholastic Press.

-Suggested for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders but can suffice for 6<sup>th</sup> graders with higher level reading  
-*The Goldfish Boy* highlights the life of Mathew who suffers from severe OCD and anxiety which surfaced around the same time as the death of his baby brother. This book heart-wrenchingly describes what it is like to live in Mathew’s shoes firsthand; including his perceived inability to leave his room and intense germaphobia. However, when a neighborhood little boy goes missing Mathew is faced with the arduous choice of staying in his safety zone or tackling his fears to help solve the crime of the missing child. This book is full of humor, horror, and heart as it sheds light on what it is like to live with severe OCD while serving as a guide on how to overcome your personal “roadblocks” for the sake of the greater good. *The Goldfish Boy* serves as great representation for the OCD community through the main character and hero of the book while educating all readers on what it is truly like to live with this disorder.

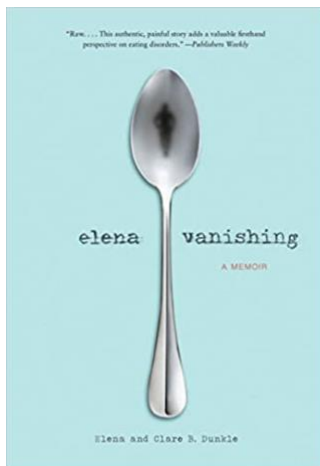
### Books for high school students



Kuehn, S. (2013). *Charm & Strang*. St. Martin’s Press.

-Suggested for 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade

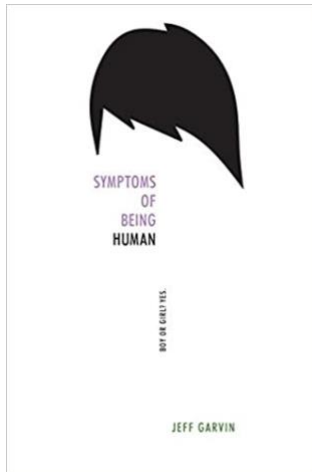
-*Charm & Strange* brings to light the personal life of Andrew Winston who is consistently at war with himself. Andrew suffers from violent impulses, isolative tendencies, family trauma, bullying, and eventually suicidal thoughts. But when Andrew is exiled to a remote boarding school he is forced to finally deal with his inner demons and make peace with his decision to live. This book is a devastating yet honest account of what it is like to be at war with your own mortality as well as the isolation, depression, and aggression that comes with the tiresome act of battling oneself daily. However, this book does prove that no matter how deep one might feel in their darkness it does not make that feeling permanent. Andrew's story has the ability to relate to many students who suffer with similar problems while still providing positivity through his realistic struggle and decision to live.



Dunkle, E. & Dunkle, C.B. (2016). *Elena vanishing: A memoir*. Chronicle Books LLC.

-Suggested for 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade

-*Elena Vanishing* is an in-depth memoir that describes Elena's struggle with both anxiety and anorexia. Co-written by a mother and daughter team this memoir dives into a heart wrenching and gruesome account of what it is like to succumb to the lose-lose war of starving oneself to please others. This book is difficult to read due to the severity of the accounts but serves as both an educational tool to spread awareness of eating disorders and also shows representation of what it is like to look back on your life with an eating disorder from a better place, as the author has done. *Elena Vanishing* proves that one can be healthy and live a successful life after dealing with an eating disorder while the author's themselves serve as role models in the community to look up to.



Garvin, J. (2016). *Symptoms of being human*. Harper Collins Publishers INC.

-Suggested for 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade

- *Symptoms of being human* is a realistic and uplifting story of a courageous non-binary teen who is forced into a situation where they must decide to either embrace who they are or succumb to the limiting desires of their conservative town. This book describes the harsh and insensitive bullying as well as feelings of anxiety and depression that many members of the LGBTQ community face. Riley serves as a powerful representation for the community because their story highlights both sides of the coin, both the experience of an “outcast” and the champion response to advocate for your community. Riley inspires students to embrace who they are, regardless of the environment, before they succumb to devastating effects on their mental health. This is a great proactive and inspiring book for members of the LGBTQ community and for those who need to be educated on how their words affect others.