

Books About Bullying and Teasing

For Young Adults

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FICTION ABOUT BULLYING AND TEASING FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Anderson, Matthew T. *Burger Wuss*.

Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 1999.

Anthony has trouble fitting in and looking cool. His troubles get worse when his girlfriend dumps him for an obnoxious bully named Turner who works at a fast food chain. Anthony wants revenge and comes up with a plan to get even. He gets a job at the same hamburger restaurant so that he can make life miserable for Turner and win his girlfriend back. Anthony's plan results in a war between the restaurant and another fast food chain, and he becomes the target of Turner's bullying and pranks.

Duane, Diane. *So You Want To Be A Wizard*.

New York: Delacorte Press, 1983.

Thirteen-year-old Nita is picked on and beaten up by Joanne and her gang of bullies at least once a week, but she never fights back. One day in the public library, Nita discovers a mysterious book about wizardry. The book leads Nita into another dimension and helps her find the courage to stand up to Joanne and look her in the eye without running away.

Flake, Sharon G. *The Skin I'm In*.

New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 1998.

Thirteen-year-old Maleeka Madison tries very hard to make friends and be accepted by her classmates in her inner-city school, but they tease her because her skin is too dark and her clothes are not fashionable. When Maleeka meets her new teacher, Miss Saunders, she is relieved to find someone who she thinks has it even worse than she does. Miss Saunders has a large white birthmark on her face caused by a rare skin condition, and is also taunted by the kids. Through her friendship with this teacher, Maleeka learns how to stand up to the harassment and how to love the skin she's in.

Friel, Maeve. *Charlie's Story*.

Atlanta, GA: Peachtree Publishers, 1997.

Fourteen-year-old Charlie Collins was abandoned in London at the age of four by her mother. Now she lives in Ireland with her father who won't talk about the past. When cruel classmates discover that Charlie has a troubled past, they bully and taunt her. The teasing eats away at her self-confidence until she is filled with despair. When a new friend comes to her rescue, she finally finds the strength to survive, confront her tormentors, and heal her wounds.

Friesen, Gayle. *Men Of Stone*.

Toronto, ON: Kids Can Press Ltd., 2000.

Fifteen-year-old Ben Conrad lives with his mother and three older sisters. It's hard enough living in a house full of women, but Ben also has to deal with the school bully who teases him when he finds out that Ben used to be a ballet dancer. As the bullying becomes more vicious, Ben gets angrier. When his Great-Aunt Frieda visits, Ben learns about his Mennonite roots and about his aunt's life in Russia. She tells him about the Men of Stone, Stalin's agents who terrorized her family. Great-Aunt Frieda's stories about how she coped with the problems in her life give Ben the courage to face his own.

Giles Gail. *Shattering Glass*.

Brookfield, CT: Roaring Book Press, 2002.

Simon Glass is the school nerd who is used to being bullied and ridiculed by other kids. Rob, the most popular boy in the high school, decides to turn Simon Glass into Prince Charming. Rob is manipulative and convinces the other guys in his clique to go along with his plan. They teach Simon how to dress, how to act, and how to drive. They make him go on a diet and start exercising. To Rob, it's like a game, but as Simon Glass becomes more popular and more self-confident, he comes up with some plans of his own. Rob and his clique's actions end in violence and tragedy.

Goobie, Beth. *Sticks And Stones*.

Victoria, BC: Orca Book Publishers, 2002.

Jujube is excited when Brent asks her to the Valentine's Day dance, but is shocked when she learns that Brent has spread a horrible, untrue rumor about what they did in the back seat of his car. Everyone at school is talking about how "easy" she is, and writing on the boy's bathroom walls that she is a slut. Her reputation has been ruined, and only her two closest friends believe her side of the story. Finally, Jujube decides to stand up for herself and teach her fellow classmates a meaningful lesson.

Hahn, Mary Downing. *Stepping On The Cracks*.

New York: Clarion Books, 1991.

It is 1944 and Margaret and Elizabeth both have brothers who are fighting in World War II. But these sixth-grade girls are fighting their own battles at home with the class bully, Gordy, who taunts and torments them. When the two girls decide to get even with him, they discover that Gordy's brother is an army deserter and that Gordy has been hiding his brother in his secret hideout in the woods. Learning Gordy's secret changes everything.

Howe, James. *The Misfits*.

New York: Atheneum, 2001.

Seventh-graders Bobby, Addie, Skeeze, and Joe have been best friends for years. They are unpopular misfits who have been called names since they were in grade school. They decide to create a third political party to run against the popular kids in the student council election. They call their party the No-Name Party and their slogan is "Sticks and stones may break our bones, but names will break our spirit." They want to show everyone at their school that name-calling can hurt, and that there is more to a person than the names he or she is called.

Lindquist, Susan Hart. *Summer Soldiers*.

New York: Delacorte Press, 1999.

It is the summer of 1918 and Joe's father is in France, fighting in World War I. So now 11-year-old Joe has to be responsible for taking care of his family's sheep ranch while his father is gone. Joe tries hard to be courageous, but it's not easy when the three Thornton brothers constantly bully Joe and his friends. On top of that, when his best friend's father, Mr. Morgan, decides not to join the army, people in the town turn against Mr. Morgan and call him a coward.

Mayfield, Sue. *Drowning Anna*.

New York: Hyperion, 2002.

When shy, talented Anna Goldsmith moves from London to a small Yorkshire town, she is ecstatic when Hayley Parkin, the most popular girl in school, chooses Anna as her new best friend. But Anna is surprised and confused when Hayley drops her. At first, Hayley just ignores

Anna, but gradually her bullying becomes crueler. She starts picking on Anna and insults and taunts her. She spreads nasty rumors about Anna, turns other kids against her, and is even physically violent towards Anna. As Anna's self-esteem shrinks, she becomes depressed and takes drastic steps to end her pain.

Mazer, Norma Fox. ***Out Of Control***.

New York: Morrow Junior Books, 1993.

Sixteen-year-old Valerie is a misfit at her high school. Rollo, Candy, and Brig are juniors who are best friends. They call themselves the "Lethal Threesome." They're always taunting other kids and messing with their minds. When they start picking on Valerie, they are surprised and annoyed when she stands up to them. But when they assault her at school one day when everyone else is at an assembly, and she tells the principal, things start to fall apart and life is never the same.

McNeal, Laura and Tom. ***Crooked***.

New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999.

Ninth-grader Clara Wilson has a crooked nose and parents who always fight. But life gets even tougher when her mother leaves home and her best friend drops her and starts talking about her behind her back at school. Life is also rough for Amos MacKenzie whose father is ill and whose mother suddenly finds religion. When Amos tries to stop two bullies, the Tripp brothers, from vandalizing property, he ends up getting beaten up. Amos and Clara start liking each other, and as their relationship grows, they become the target of the Tripp brothers' crooked cruelty. When the vicious bullies continue to harass Clara and Amos, together as a team they learn to stand up for themselves.

Plum-Ucci, Carol. ***What Happened To Lani Garver***.

San Diego, CA: Harcourt, Inc., 2002.

The people who live on Hackett Island have never met anyone like Lani Garver. This new kid is a complete mystery. People wonder where Lani came from, how old Lani is, and whether Lani is a boy or a girl. Sixteen-year-old Claire decides to become friends with Lani, even though the other kids in her shallow clique are ridiculing and harassing him. Lani helps Claire face some of her problems, including her alcoholic mother, her eating disorder, and her fear that her leukemia has returned. But her other friends are superficial and prejudiced, and they can't tolerate Lani's individuality. The clique's actions end in tragic violence.

Plum-Ucci, Carol. ***The Body of Christopher Creed***.

San Diego, CA: Harcourt, 2000.

Christopher Creed was a social misfit who was bullied, beaten up, and teased all his life. One day Creed disappears. No one knows if he ran away, was kidnapped, murdered, or committed suicide. Creed's disappearance causes the town of Steepleton to spin out of control. Nobody seems willing to take responsibility for how they treated him; they just want to blame somebody else. Classmate Torey Adams becomes obsessed with Creed's disappearance and is on a mission to solve this mystery. As 16-year-old Torey goes on his quest, he discovers important lessons about truth and reality.

Sachar, Louis. ***The Boy Who Lost His Face***.

New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989.

David is afraid of not fitting in and not being popular. And now his best friend is worried that being friends with David will ruin his reputation. Hoping to become more popular, David agrees to help some boys in his middle school harass an old woman and steal her cane. When strange

events start occurring in David's life, he wonders if the elderly woman is a witch who put a curse on him. David gets teased a lot and finally learns an important lesson about popularity.

Slade, Arthur. *Tribes*.

New York: Wendy Lamb Books, 2002.

Percy's father, who was an anthropologist, died 3 years ago in Africa. Ever since then, 17-year-old Percy has tried to look at the world like an anthropologist. He observes the kids at school and writes notes about them in his private field journal. Percy and his friend Elissa have special names for the cliques, or "Tribes," in the 12th grade class. There's the Jock Tribe, the Cool and Detached Tribe, and the Lipstick/Hairspray Tribe, just to name a few. But life isn't easy for Percy, who is shunned by most of his classmates. His best friend committed suicide a year ago, and he is confused about his relationship with Elissa. On the day of high school graduation, Percy realizes the truth about his father's disappearance and understands himself better.

Skinner, David. *The Wrecker*.

New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1995.

In this story of revenge, eighth-grader Theo is a social misfit who also happens to be a genius. The class bully has been tormenting both Theo and the new kid at school, Michael. So Theo convinces Michael to help him get revenge on the bully. Theo comes up with a wild plan to build a machine out of pieces of junk, which will "wreck" the bully.

Spinelli, Jerry. *Stargirl*.

New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000.

At Mica High School, just about everybody tries to conform, including 16-year-old Leo Borlock. But when Stargirl Caraway arrives at school, Leo and the rest of the students cannot figure her out. Stargirl stands out and is definitely bizarre, from her odd name to the way she dresses to her weird behavior. During basketball season, she cheers even when the other team makes a basket. At first, the other students think she is way too weird, but she fascinates them, and gradually she becomes the most popular girl in school. Stargirl's popularity, however, doesn't last long. After the basketball team starts losing games, the other students blame her and start to shun her. But Leo has fallen in love with her, and now he has to make a painful decision.

Trembath, Don. *A Fly Named Alfred*.

Custer, WA: Orca Book Publishers, 1997.

Harper Winslow enjoys writing an anonymous column, "Fly on the Wall," for his high school newspaper. Using the pseudonym "Alfred," Harper's column makes fun of students and teachers. Most of the students enjoy the column, except when they're the ones that Alfred is insulting. In his real life, Harper already has to put up with being teased and tormented by school bullies, but his life gets more complicated when one of the bullies demands that Harper find out who Alfred really is.