

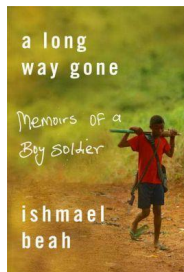
## Resource List: Memoirs By Alison Eagles

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There is abundant research demonstrating that reading fiction can foster increased empathy, but what about non-fiction? Reading about the lives of real people around the world, especially other teens, can provide insight into what it is like to be someone else and experience what they've experienced.

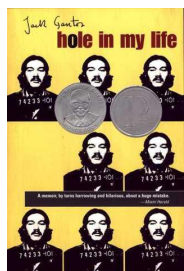
So, what is a biography, and what is a memoir? People often confuse these terms but they are actually different things. A biography or autobiography is the story of a person's entire life. On the other hand, a memoir someone's story about a certain event or period of time in their life (Kelly 2015). This is not just a reporting of events; a good memoir is a work of literature, with a beginning, middle, and resolution, and expressed character development (Reisner, 2009). It can be fascinating to read someone's true story, and really getting inside the experiences of another person. Memoirs aimed at young adults have been increasing in popularity (Kelly 2015).

The following is a list of some selected memoirs that teens may enjoy:



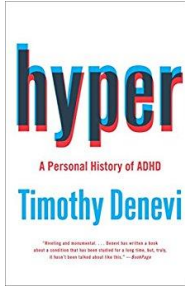
*A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* by Ishmael Beah

This book tells the story of war, as it is experienced by a young teen forced into life as a child soldier. At times, Ismael's story is difficult to read, but can help understanding of the life of another person in a different part of the world. Readers may be inspired by the ability to overcome difficulties and trauma.



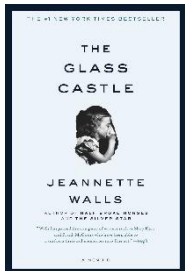
*Hole in My Life*, by Jack Gantos

He thought it would be an easy way to make some money, but turned out to be a mistake that changed his life forever. This book tells the story of someone learning from this mistake, and how he was able to overcome it and realize his dream of becoming a writer.



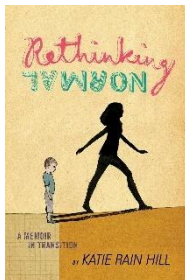
*Hyper: A Personal History of ADHD*, by Timothy Denevi

This is a story of what it is like to live with ADHD. Teens with ADHD may identify with the writer of this story, while other may come to better understand their peers who are struggling with these issues. In addition to his personal experiences, Timothy provides background research into the history of the disorder and how it has been treated by the medical community since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



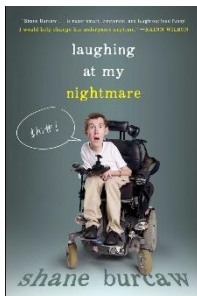
*The Glass Castle*, by Jeannette Walls

Tells the story of overcoming a difficult childhood and youth involving poverty and mentally ill parents. Many teens may relate to some of Jeannette's experiences described in this book.



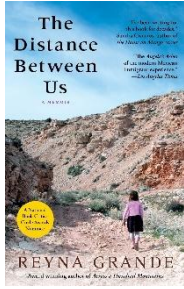
*A Rethinking Normal: A Memoir in Transition* by Katie Rain Hill

Tells the story of a teenager going through gender reassignment, written in a way that is accessible to young adult readers. Living as a male, Katie suffered from body dysphoria and depression until deciding to transition at fifteen. This is a coming of age story about identity, honesty, and self-acceptance.



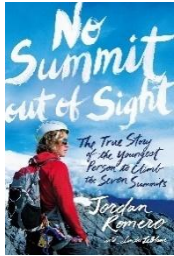
*Laughing at my nightmare*, by Shane Burcaw

What began as a blog, Shane's funny, honest and real account of growing up with spinal muscular atrophy turned into this memoir. Written in a humorous tone, the book portrays his relentlessly optimistic perspective on life.



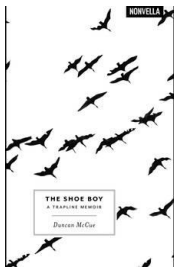
*The Distance between Us* by Reyna Grande

When their parents leave Mexico for the United States to try to establish a new life, Reyna and her siblings are left behind with their grandparents. This memoir tells a unique story of immigration, from the perspective of children who are separated from their parents during their youth before joining them in their new home.



*No Summit out of Sight: The True Story of the Youngest Person to Climb the Seven Summits* by Jordan Romero and Linda LeBlanc

As the youngest person to climb Mount Everest, Jordan's story proves that young people can accomplish great things. In this memoir by a self-described "fanatic", he describes how he worked toward his goals. For teens who like adventurous stories or inspiring stories, this will be an appealing read.



*The Shoe Boy*, by Duncan McCue

After graduating high school, Duncan McCue spent five months learning to hunt and trap with a Cree community in Northern Ontario. This is his story of being a young First Nations teen struggling with identity, growing up, and reconnecting with his indigenous culture.

References

Kelly. (January 8, 2015). *Get genrefied: YA Memoirs*. Stacked. Retrieved from <http://stackedbooks.org/2015/01/get-genrefied-ya-memoirs.html>

Reisner R. (November 19, 2009). *Teens Need to Read Memoirs, Too*. A Reader's Place. [Blog post]. Retrieved from <https://areadersplace.net/2009/11/19/teens-need-to-read-memoirs-too/>