

**MANY VOICES LITERATURE**

# *Snapshots*

Literature for Young Adults

Second Edition



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**PERFECTION LEARNING**

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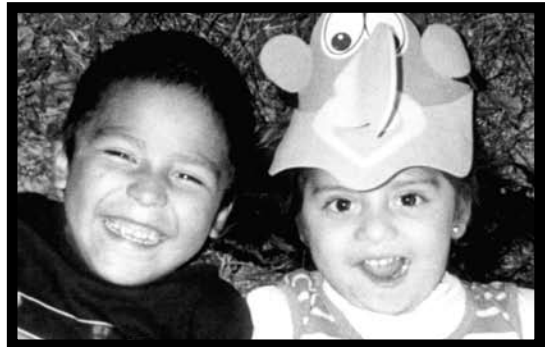
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# *Life in the Middle*



Adults sometimes think that kids have it easy—no job to get to, no debts, and no major responsibilities. But you know that’s not the real picture. You have a job all right—to attend school and learn all you can. You may not have the same concerns that adults have, but you do have concerns, and many young people today feel an overwhelming sense of responsibility to their friends, their schools, and their families.

They also worry about what the future holds—never mind getting through one more day in the present. Most students your age feel lost and confused now and again. “Who am I and where am I going?” you may ask. Finding out is an important part of growing up.

We have gathered the selections in this book with your life in mind—your hopes, your dreams, your fears, your interests, your happy times, and your sad times, too. We have chosen stories and poems written by the finest authors of our time—people who understand the human condition and delight in sharing their interesting perspectives with readers your age. They know that becoming an adult is not an easy journey. You will encounter dead ends, rough roads, and washed out bridges. But you will also experience the exhilaration of the wind in your hair and the sun in your face.

Your life right now may not always be what you’d like it to be, but at least on a good day, it should be exciting, challenging, and educational. It should offer you the chance to be creative and adventurous—and to get to know yourself a little better, too. We hope you enjoy what you read in the pages to come, and that your reading helps you better understand your “life in the middle.”

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# Active Reading

## What Is It and Why Is It Important?

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Reading is a lot like sports. Both require practice and a good understanding of the rules. In both you have a goal, either to reach the finish line or to finish the last line. And both demand active participation. Of course reading does not leave you sweaty and exhausted like a good game of soccer, but it does require lots of activity—mind activity. Like a good athlete, a good reader must be on his or her toes, ready at all times to spring into action.

That is what Active Reading is all about: Jumping into your reading with both feet, getting involved, being a part of the action, and relating to the characters. The chart below will help you understand, remember, and use the Active Reading strategies. If you train yourself to use these strategies every time you read, they will become second nature to you. Soon, you will be using them without being aware of them. You will become a skilled reader who learns efficiently and enjoys reading.

### The Six Active Reading Strategies

- **Questioning** Ask questions that come to mind as you read.  
Example: *The first little pig built his house of straw, what will the second little pig use?*
- **Predicting** Use what has happened to guess what will happen next.  
Example: *The Big Bad Wolf is going to huff and puff and blow the stick house down, just as he did the straw house.*
- **Clarifying** Clear up confusion and answer any questions you may have.  
Example: *The wolf blew down two houses, but does he really think he can also blow down a brick house? Yes. He tries, but fails.*
- **Connecting** Compare the text with something in your own experience or with other things you have read or seen.  
Example: *I think that the wolf has met his match. If I were the wolf, I would leave this third pig alone.*
- **Summarizing** Review what has happened so far.  
Example: *The wolf has been able to blow down a straw and a stick house, but not the brick house of the third little pig. He is now going to climb down the third little pig's chimney.*
- **Evaluating** Use evidence in the selection as well as your common sense to form opinions and arrive at conclusions.  
Example: *The story of the wolf and the three little pigs is a good example of using the right materials to combat disaster.*