

2008

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Recommended Citation

Buehler, Jennifer (2008) "*Text Messages* Brings You the Newest Titles in YA Lit," *Language Arts Journal of Michigan*: Vol. 24: Iss. 1, Article 18.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.9707/2168-149X.1113>

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New Opportunity From NCTE: Free Podcast Series on YA Literature

Text Messages Brings You the Newest Titles in YA Lit *Explore the ReadWriteThink Podcast Series*

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Are you a classroom teacher or English educator looking for ways to learn about the newest books being published for teens? Browsing the large teen sections in libraries or bookstores can be overwhelming, especially for those who aren't familiar with the ever-expanding field of Young Adult literature. Having a guide to navigate the field can make your forays into YA literature more manageable and can inspire you to get your hands on groundbreaking new titles.

This past spring, ReadWriteThink (<http://www.readwritethink.org/>)—a partnership between the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association—took steps to provide this guidance by developing *Text Messages*, a monthly podcast series featuring recommended reading for teens. Each podcast episode, downloadable in the form of an Internet audio file, presents reviews of recent publications organized around a theme. Book reviews are accompanied by suggestions of issues, questions, and ideas to consider in introducing specific titles to teens. Scott Filkins, a literacy content specialist for NCTE, has been the host of *Text Messages*, the teen podcast series, while Emily Manning, an elementary school teacher, hosts *Chatting about Books*, a similar series featuring titles for children.

In August 2008 I became the new host for *Text Messages*. As an avid reader of YA books during my own teen years and throughout my fifteen-year teaching career, I am thrilled to have the opportunity to publicize the amazing range and quality of titles being published for teens today. The September episode features books that explore the post-9/11 landscape. Current and future episodes will offer support and guidance on topics such as making sense of series books, identifying books worth owning, discovering new YA authors, and the role of book awards in promoting titles for teens.

The audience for the podcasts is intended for parents, tutors, and after-school workers; however, as a former high school English teacher and current doctoral candidate in English education, I have teachers in mind as well. My goal is to make you aware of high quality titles suitable for inclusion in classroom libraries, for literature circle discussions, or for whole class study. I hope you'll let me know (jlbuehler@yahoo.com) if there are ways I can improve the content, tone, and pitch of the podcasts so they will be relevant to your work with teens.

The field of YA lit has never been more dynamic, more innovative, or more popular. I look forward to bringing the best of these books—including new titles as well as past favorites—to your attention each month. You can find the podcasts by visiting the ReadWriteThink Web site (<http://www.readwritethink.org/beyondtheclassroom>) and clicking on "Podcasts and Videos." Under "Podcasts for Ages 11-18," you will find the September and October episodes of *Text Messages*, "Episode 6 —The Post-9/11 Landscape" and "Episode 7: Making Sense of Series Books."

About the Author

Jennifer Buehler (jlbuehler@yahoo.com) is a doctoral candidate at University of Michigan and an active member of ALAN, the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents of NCTE (<http://www.alan-ya.org/>).