

## Defining Middle Grade, Young Adult, and New Adult Fiction

MG	YA	NAF
<i>Typically inward-focused, with conflicts stemming from that. Struggling to find out who they are.</i>	<i>Typically starting to look outward as try to find their places in the world and realize that their actions have consequences in grander scheme of life.</i>	<i>Typically picking up the self-exploration that begins with adolescence, expanding their worldview, having a strong sense of exploration and experimentation after graduation or some other adult-regulated life.</i>
<p>-Ages 9-12, older elementary school into middle school, grades 4-7</p> <p>-Ages 10-14, middle school into early high school, grades 5-9, these kids may be reading older MG or younger YAs</p>	<p>- YOUNG YA: Ages 12 and up, older middle school into high school, grades 7-12</p> <p>- OLDER YA: Ages 14 and up, high school, grades 9 and up, generally understood to cap at age 18</p>	<p>-Featuring characters ages 18-25, post-high school through early career</p> <p>-Young people now living independently, now free from parent or some overarching adult oversight/authority</p> <p>-Includes the college experience, early career, general post-high school life.</p>
25,000-50,000 words	50,000-80,000 words	90,000-120,000 words
<p>-Readership includes reluctant readers; extensive series common, often publisher-generated; opportunities for single titles with potential for awards or state lists to drive word of mouth</p> <p>-POV: often first person; opening to multiple POVs (examples: <i>Wonder</i>, <i>One Morning and One Day</i> and <i>One Amazing Morning on Orange Street</i>)</p> <p>-Humor is popular; editors always seeking “boy books”; friendship and social relationships are popular themes</p> <p>-Open to nontraditional narrative formats like journals; may contain b/w spot illustrations</p>	<p>-POV: often first person, but frequently third person or omniscient; multiple points of view are becoming more common</p> <p>-Current dominant genre is realistic contemporary fiction but the category is very open to others</p> <p>-Often a romantic storyline or subplot</p>	<p>-Often dual-POV narratives (revealing male and female sides of same story; across series and within single novels)</p> <p>-Predominantly realistic contemporary and paranormal, but genre representation is increasing</p> <p>-Usually a romantic storyline, even if it’s secondary (note audience acceptance of explicit sexual content)</p>

## Crafting characters and circumstances that resonate with and feel youthful to your target audience

- Narrative sensibility: How a person responds emotionally and intellectually to a situation.

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* Extremes, lack of perspective ( <i>Example: The Ballad of Lucy Whipple. React in big ways, utilizing a lot of absolutes and hyperbole in their narrative</i> )		* Dealing with stress of living with change/instability
* Think big, take big action; in conflict, have a tendency to judge, act (often erroneously, making things worse), and then react		* Extreme decisions influenced by social expectation and personal desire to experiment and explore, w/o adult censorship
* Show more self-focus than adults in how they first focus on how things affect themselves first? ( <i>Example: All-American Girl</i> )		* Demonstrate more ability to consider others' perspectives, motives, and needs, as well as to examine their own behavior
* Intense relationships ( <i>Example: Starclimber: This example combines self-focus with their inability to put things into perspective when it comes to a relationship problem.</i> )		* Intense loyalties to family, friends, school, and self
* Confidence often an issue, either under- & over-		* Optimism about themselves even if they're grim about the world at large; generally positive sense of well-being
* Youthful dreams and fears, including dreams of full independence		* Reality clashes with high expectations for themselves and yearning for independence
	* Yearning for independence clashes with inexperience	* Desire to break from their teen social status and build an identity from scratch
	* Maturing in their decision-making and coping skills	* Still maturing in their decision-making; taking big risks due to need to experiment and explore, without adult oversight
	* First forays in romance, w/ romantic attraction becoming a significant part of life	* More intense exploration of romance, laced by self-exploration & influenced by new freedom to explore sexuality

## **WORKSHOP LINKS:**

DearEditor.com Revision Week Archives:

<http://deareditor.com/revision-week-archive/>

Writing Young Adult Fiction For Dummies cheat sheet about writing MG and YA:

<http://bit.ly/1zOxViJ>

Writing New Adult Fiction:

<http://bit.ly/newadultfiction1>