Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) as Portrayed in Children’s Literature:  
A Bibliography of Award Winning Books


➢ Award: Schneider Family Book Award

Jason Blake, an ASD 12-year-old, connects with PhoenixBird online after she becomes a fan of his posted stories, but is terrified that when they meet in person, she won’t be able to see past his ASD to who he really is as a person and writer.

Age range: 9-11
USM: de Grummond; Cook Curriculum; Gulf Coast Curriculum


➢ Awards: Shortlisted for Canadian Library Association Young Adult Book of the Year Award; 2007 Manitoba Young Readers’ Choice Award nominee; 2007 Saskatchewan Young Readers’ Choice Willow Awards nominee; Canadian Children's Book Centre Our Choice Starred Selection; White Pine nominee, 2007

Taylor Simon is very much like other girls, but is also very different. As an 18 year old with Asperger’s syndrome, Taylor yearns for the comfort of the familiar. But this summer she and her mother go to Prince Albert National Park as the mother pursues her latest romantic adventure. Now Taylor must navigate getting a job, learn about herself, and understand that her mother has her own flaws. These are big lessons for Taylor as she moves forward with her life.

Age range: 12 and up
USM: not owned


➢ Awards: Dolly Gray Award

The second book in the trilogy Wild Orchid, the story continues for Taylor Simon, a Canadian 18 year old living with Asperger’s. Taylor’s world is becoming more complex as she steps outside her comfort zone. She has a pet hamster, is taking a class at the local university, and is riding her bike or taking a bus. As Taylor struggles for independence, she finds herself feeling out of control. She wants to be seen as an individual, not a person with a disability.

Age range: 12 and up
USM: not owned

Award: Michael L. Printz Award

This is the final book of the Wild Orchid trilogy which tells the story of Taylor Simon, a Canadian teen with Asperger’s syndrome. Unique in that the main character is female and has Asperger’s, the story is more a young woman’s coming of age than her diagnosis. Taylor is an extraordinary character and her story embraces her relationships, her friendships and her own special insights.

Age range: Young adult

USM: not owned


- Awards: Newberry Honor Selection; School Library Journal Best Book of the Year

Moose Flanagan and his family live on Alcatraz Island, where his Dad is a prison guard. Moose takes care of his sister Natalie, who was rejected by a school for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Moose asks one of the prison’s residents, Al Capone, to help his sister Natalie get into another special school.

Age range: 11-13

USM: de Grummond; Cook; Gulf Coast


- Award: Dolly Gray Award

Max, a young boy with ASD, is abducted from school. The only witness to the abduction is Max’s imaginary friend, Budo. Unable to tell anyone, Budo sets out on a mission to save Max.

Age range: Young adult

USM: not owned


Ted, who is ASD, and his sister Kat must solve the sudden disappearance of their cousin Salim when the police keep hitting dead-ends. Ted’s unique way of looking at the world gives him an edge in the race to solve the mystery of his cousin’s disappearance.

Age range: 8-12

USM: Cook Curriculum

Award: Dolly Gray Award

Having a younger brother who is ASD isn't easy. Sammy rides a special bus to a special school. He can't join in the play—he knocks down the building blocks and lies by himself under the trees looking at leaves. In spite of these barriers, the older brother tries to see things Sammy’s way and a special bond is formed between them.

Age range: 4 and up
USM: not owned


- Awards: Schneider Family Book Award

*Mockingbird* is narrated by Caitlin, a 5th-grader with Asperger’s. Caitlin struggles with Asperger's and her inability to empathize with others. Things are made worse when her older brother Devon is tragically killed in a school shooting. Caitlin and her family’s grief that they share helps Caitlin to empathize and to grow as a person.

Age range: 8-11
USM: de Grummond; Cook Curriculum


- Awards: Whitbread Book of the Year; Whitbread Novel Award

This novel is narrated in first person by a 15-year-old pet detective who tries to solve a pet homicide of his neighbor’s large black poodle. The unemotional personality of character Christopher Francis Boone has had many fans think that Boone is ASD—something author Mark Haddon has denied.

Age range: 13-adult
USM: Not owned


- Award: Rennes Prize nominee (France)

A 12-year-old girl, Lucy, befriends a 4-year-old boy, Matthew, who is ASD. Matthew’s mother encourages the friendship between Lucy and Matthew, hoping Matthew will learn social skills.

Age range: 9-14
USM: not owned

- Award: Dolly Gray Award

This story focuses on sibling relationships where younger brother Ian is ASD. Narrator Julie wants to take a walk to the park with her big sister Tara, but Ian wants to go, too. A very simple plot tells a complex family story with a wide range of feelings—resentment, anger, loyalty, and love.

Age range: 6-9

USM: Cook Curriculum


- Award: Newbery Honor

12-year-old Catherine just wants a normal life. She’s very patient with her brother who has Autism Spectrum Disorder—and tries to help him avoid his own embarrassing behaviors. But one summer Catherine meets Jason and Kristi—the friend she’s always wanted. But it’s Catherine’s own shocking behavior that changes everything and compels her to ask, what is normal?

Age range: 9-12

USM: de Grummond; Cook Curriculum; Gulf Coast Curriculum


- Award: Society for School Librarians International

A story told in the form of letters written between two Canadian teens living across the country from each other, Sween and Jessica, create their own world and connection in spite of the distance. Jessica’s brother is ASD and her father has abandoned the family. Sween is a pool-playing rebel and drop-out estranged from his family. On paper they have a support system. Will the relationship change when they meet?

Age range: Young adult

USM: de Grummond


- Award: Schneider Family Book 2015

Rose, an emotionally and mentally challenged fifth-grader, lives with her damaged father. She is obsessed with homonyms and her own set of obsessions and rules. When her father finds a lost dog, Rose names it Rain—a lucky name because it has two homonyms—reign and rein. In Rain, she finds companionship and acceptance. Then careless father allows Rain to get out during a bad storm. Will Rose find the
strength to venture into the dark and wet to find her beloved Rain? Is someone else searching for Rain, too?

Age range:  9-13

USM: de Grummond; Cook Curriculum


- Award: National Council for Social Studies

A picture book written and illustrated by Peter Reynolds, “I am here” is what a shy, sensitive, possibly ASD little boy says as he sits apart from the other children who are laughing and enjoying themselves at the school playground. The story is a springboard for discussions about empathy and acceptance. It also conveys a strong anti-bullying message.

Age range:  3-7

USM: Cook Curriculum


- Awards: ALA/YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults

14-year-old Nathaniel Clark, who has Asperger’s, hopes that by writing songs for his rock band, he can prove his genius and become a member of the Aldus Institute, a premier organization for the profoundly gifted.

Age range: 12-adult

USM: de Grummond (uncorrected proof)


- Award: Children’s Book Council of Australia

Although Spence never identifies the baby as being ASD, her description of the behavior, tendencies, and habits clearly fit the spectrum. How the family copes and adjusts, even moving to the city for special schooling, is an emotionally charged and powerful story. Not an easy story, but honest and thoughtful in its telling. The impact of a disable child affects the entire family.

Age range: 10 and up

USM: not owned


- Awards: Schneider Family Book Award; Once Upon a World Award
Marcelo Sandoval, a high-functioning 17-year-old boy with Autism Spectrum Disorder, goes to work for his father in the mailroom of a corporate law firm. Marcelo faces new challenges, including romance and injustice.

Age range: Young adult

USM: de Grummond; Cook Curriculum; Gulf Coast Curriculum


➢ Awards: Dolly Gray Award; National Parenting Center Seal of Approval Winner Holiday 2008

An excellent introduction to the topic of Asperger’s Syndrome told in third-person past tense. First we find out positive things about Sam—he is a happy boy who loves to giggle. But Sam does not like loud noises; he has trouble making friends; he walks away at night to the fairgrounds. After the diagnosis of Asperger’s, we learn to accept Sam as a child with differences. This book is a good introduction that raises awareness and understanding of ASD.

Age range: 5-7

USM: not owned


➢ Awards: Dolly Gray Award & 2014 Skipping Stones Honor

Fourteen year old Johnny is not having the summer vacation he planned. Instead of trips to the lake and swimming and pizzas and video game marathons with his friends, he has to stay with his goofy aunt and 16 year old cousin with ASD, Remember, in the city. Seeing each other through dramas and adventures, the boys eventually learn to appreciate each other and have the best summer ever!

Age range: 11-15

USM: not owned


➢ Award: Young Voices Foundation Bronze Award.

Mia is different from other children in several ways. She has Asperger’s. She also has a unique bond with her mother. As an unborn spirit in Heaven, Mia hand-picked her earth mother. Yet Mia still must deal with the challenges of being bullied in school.

Age range: Young adult

USM: not owned

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