



# HE'S MY BROTHER

## DELVE DEEPER READING LIST



These suggested readings provide a range of perspectives on issues raised by the POV documentary *He's My Brother* and allow for deeper engagement. This list of books was created by Constance Zack of the School Library Association of Rhode Island.

## **Contributors**

**Constance Zack**

# ADULT NON-FICTION

**Elkins, Kimberly. *What is Visible*. Twelve, 2015.**

An account of the life and challenges of Laura Bridgman, the first deaf and blind woman to learn language, and those who helped her, including the founder of the Perkins Institute, with whom she was in love, and her beloved teacher.

**Girma, Haben. *Haben: The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law*. Twelve, 2019./**

Girma grew up with her family in the Eritrean city of Asmara during Eritrea's thirty-year war with Ethiopia. Defining her disability as an opportunity for innovation, she learned non-visual techniques for everything from dancing salsa to handling an electric saw. She developed a text-to-braille communication system that created a new way to connect with people. Pioneering her way through obstacles, Girma graduated from Harvard Law, and now uses her talents to advocate for people with disabilities. This is a testament to her determination to find the keys to connection.

**Heumann, Judith. *Being Heumann: An Unrepentant Memoir of a Disability Rights Activist*. Beacon Press, 2021.**

One of the most influential disability rights activists in US history tells her personal story of fighting for the right to receive an education, have a job, and just be human. A story of fighting to belong in a world that wasn't built for all of us and of one woman's activism-- from the streets of Brooklyn and San Francisco to inside the halls of Washington--Being Heumann recounts Judy Heumann's lifelong battle to achieve respect, acceptance, and inclusion in society.

**Keller, Helen. *The Story of My Life*. Doubleday, 1954.**

An illness makes Helen Keller both deaf and blind when she is a little child. With the help of an untiring and patient teacher, she learns how to communicate with the outer world through sign language signed into her hand. This opens the world to her and later she learns to read and communicate and even attends university. She becomes a world renowned speaker and writer who is an amazing source of inspiration to others.

**Krouk-Gordon, Dafna and Barbara Jackins. *Moving out: a Family Guide to Residential Planning for Adults with Disabilities*. Woodbine House, 2013.**

Mothers and fathers of children with special needs often report that “Letting go was the hardest thing I ever did.” But finding the right residential situation for an adult son or daughter with a disability does not have to be overwhelming. This practical guide shares decades of combined experience on helping families find housing.

**Meyer, Don and Emily Holl. *The Sibling Survival Guide: Indispensable Information for Brothers and Sisters of Adults with Disabilities*. Woodbine House, 2014.**

A book expressly for a teenaged or adult brother or sister of someone with a disability. It offers a sense that you're not alone, tips on how to talk to your parents about plans for your sibling, and a crash course in guardianship, medical and legal issues, and government benefits if you're already caring for your sib.

**Sauerburger, Dona. *Independence Without Sight or Sound: Suggestions for Practitioners Working with DeafBlind Adults*. American Printing House for the Blind, 1993**

*Independence without Sight or Sound* covers the essential aspects of communicating and working with deaf-blind adults--individuals who have both vision and hearing loss. Written in a personal and informal style, it is filled with practical information for any professional who works with someone who is deaf-blind, such as how to talk with someone who is deaf-blind, how deaf-blind people can communicate with strangers and interact with people in public, and how they can overcome isolation and assert control over their own life. Written by an expert in orientation and mobility, this guide emphasizes adapting orientation and mobility techniques for deaf-blind travelers.

**Sjunneson, Elsa. *Being Seen: One Deafblind Woman's Fight to End Ableism*. Tiller Press (imprint of Simon and Schuster), 2021**

A Deafblind writer and professor explores how the misrepresentation of disability in books, movies, and TV harms both the disabled community and everyone else.

As a Deafblind woman with partial vision in one eye and bilateral hearing aids, Elsa Sjunneson lives at the crossroads of blindness and sight, hearing and deafness--much to the confusion of the world around her. While she cannot see well enough to operate without a guide dog or cane, she can see enough to know when someone is reacting to the visible signs of her blindness and can hear when they're whispering behind her back. And she certainly knows how wrong our one-size-fits-all definitions of disability can be.

# ADULT FICTION

**Doerr, Anthony. *All the Light We Cannot See*. Scribner, 2014.**

In August 1944, Marie-Laure is a blind 16-year-old living in the walled port city of Saint- Malo in Brittany and hoping to escape the effects of Allied bombing. Her father was a locksmith and craftsman who made scale models of cities that Marie-Laure studied so she could travel around on her own. Her path collides with a German boy as both try to survive the devastation of World War II. Marie-Louise uses the special skills her father has taught her to navigate the city and aid the war effort.

**Fell, Blair. *The Sign for Home*. Emily Bestler Books, 2022.**

Arlo Dilly is young, handsome and eager to meet the right girl. He also happens to be DeafBlind, a Jehovah's Witness, and under the strict guardianship of his controlling uncle. His chances of finding someone to love seem slim to none. And yet, it happened once before: many years ago, at a boarding school for the Deaf, Arlo met the love of his life—a mysterious girl with onyx eyes and beautifully expressive hands which told him the most amazing stories. But tragedy struck, and their love was lost forever. Or so Arlo thought.

**Muller, Clair. *Signing to the Angels*. Dancing with Bears, 2014.**

Shelly is a feisty and challenging deafblind 2 year old with very special needs when she is placed in foster care. Here she touches lives and inspires others to find love, fulfillment and understanding of the meaning of life and death.

# YOUNG ADULT NON-FICTION

**Buckley, Kara and Lily Collison. *Pure Grit: Stories of Remarkable People Living with Physical Disability*. Gillette Children's Healthcare Press, 2021.**

Nineteen people from across the globe, ranging in age from twenty to seventy-plus, tell their stories of living and thriving in diverse fields – in sport, the arts, medicine, business and more while dealing with various disabilities. With refreshing frankness, they share their successes along with their struggles. Grit is the one characteristic they all have in common. These are not stories of people overcoming disability – they're stories of people accommodating disability while pursuing their dreams.

**Frost, Helen. *All He Knew*. Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2020.**

A true story about Henry who has been deaf from an early age--he is intelligent and aware of language, but by age six, he has decided it's not safe to speak to strangers. When the time comes for him to start school, he is labeled "unteachable." Because his family has very little money, his parents and older sister, Molly, feel powerless to help him. Henry is sent to Riverview, a bleak institution where he is misunderstood, underestimated, and harshly treated. Victor, a conscientious objector to World War II, is part of a Civilian Public Service program offered as an alternative to the draft. In 1942, he arrives at Riverview to serve as an attendant and quickly sees that Henry is far from unteachable--he is brave, clever, and sometimes mischievous. In Victor's care, Henry begins to see how things can change for the better.

**Hale, Natalie. *Oh Brother! Growing Up with a Special Needs Sibling*. Magination Press, 2004.**

Living with a sibling who has special needs can be difficult for a child to deal with, day after day. This book provides anecdotal examples, self-help guidelines and practical coping techniques to promote positive, realistic attitudes as well as the benefits of having a special needs sibling.

**Strohm, Kate. *Being the Other One: Growing Up with Brother or Sister who has Special Needs*. Shambhala, 2005.**

When there's a disabled child in the family, how are normally developing siblings affected? According to Kate Strohm, a counselor and health educator, siblings of the disabled face particular emotional challenges that are often overlooked. Able siblings commonly struggle with feelings of isolation, grief, anger, and anxiety--and these and other emotional issues can have lifelong effects.

# YOUNG ADULT FICTION

**Draper, Sharon. *Out of My Mind*. Atheneum, 2010.**

Considered by many to be mentally retarded, a brilliant, impatient fifth-grader with cerebral palsy discovers a technological device that will allow her to speak for the first time.

**Friend, Natasha. *How We Roll*. Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2018.**

Quinn is a teen who loves her family, skateboarding, basketball, and her friends, but after she's diagnosed with a condition called alopecia which causes her to lose all of her hair, her friends abandon her. Jake was once a star football player, but because of a freak accident--caused by his brother--he loses both of his legs. Quinn and Jake meet and find the confidence to believe in themselves again, and maybe even love.

**Gervais, Allison. *The Silence Between Us*. Blink, 2019.**

Deaf teen Maya moves across the country and must attend a hearing school for the first time. As if that wasn't hard enough, she also has to adjust to the hearing culture, which she finds frustrating--and also surprising when some classmates, including Beau Watson, take time to learn ASL. As Maya looks past graduation and focuses on her future dreams, nothing, not even an unexpected romance, will not derail her pursuits. But when people in her life--Deaf and hearing alike--ask her to question parts of her Deaf identity, Maya stands proudly, never giving in to the idea that her Deafness is a disadvantage.

**Green, Tim. *Left Out*. Harper, 2016.**

A moving story about a deaf boy's journey to change how others see him--both on and off the football field.

**Lizotte, Ann Clare. *Set Me Free*. Scholastic, 2021.**

This sequel to *Show Me a Sign* takes place three years after fourteen-year old Mary Lambert was kidnapped from her home in Martha's Vineyard. She receives a letter from Nora O'Neal, a servant in the house where she was held, who tells her of an eight-year-old girl where she is now employed whom Nora believes to be a deaf-mute, but who is being treated as insane, and asks Mary to come and teach the nameless child; a little scared, but intrigued, and bored with domestic life, Mary agrees--only to find that there is more to the child's story, and that freeing her from a world of silence and imprisonment may be more dangerous than anyone anticipated.

**LiZotte, Ann Clare. *Show Me a Sign*. Scholastic, 2020.**

Mary Lambert has always felt safe and protected on her beloved island of Martha's Vineyard. Her great-great-grandfather was an early English settler and the first deaf islander. Now, in 1805, over a

hundred years later, many people there, including Mary, are deaf, and nearly everyone can communicate in sign language. Mary has never felt isolated. She is proud of her lineage. But recent events have delivered winds of change. Mary's brother died, leaving her family shattered. Tensions over land disputes are mounting between English settlers and the Wampanoag people. And a cunning young scientist has arrived, hoping to discover the origin of the island's prevalent deafness. His maniacal drive to find answers soon renders Mary a "live specimen" in a cruel experiment. Based on a true story written by LiZotte, herself a deaf person.

**Nijkamp, Marieke. *Unbroken: 13 Stories Starring Disabled Teens*. Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2018.**

This anthology explores disability in fictional tales told from the viewpoint of disabled characters, written by disabled creators. With stories in various genres about first loves, friendship, war, travel, and more, *Unbroken* will offer today's teen readers a glimpse into the lives of disabled people in the past, present, and future.

# BOOKS FOR YOUNGER LEARNERS AND CHILDREN

**Hayward, Mark. *I See Without My Eyes*. AuthorHouse, 2009.**

A young blind girl demonstrates how she is able to function in spite of her disability by relying on her other 4 senses, using Braille and a guide dog. Children gain acceptance and understanding as they learn that she is just like them in many ways. Colorful illustrations add appeal.

**Meyer, Donald. *Views From Our Shoes: Growing Up with Brother or Sister who has Special Needs*. Woodbine House, 1997.**

45 siblings share their experiences as the brother or sister of someone with a disability. The children whose essays are featured here range from four to eighteen and are the siblings of youngsters with a variety of special needs, including autism, cerebral palsy, developmental delays, ADD, hydrocephalus, visual and hearing impairments, Down and Tourette syndromes. Their personal tales introduce young siblings to others like them, perhaps for the first time, and allow them to compare experiences. A glossary of disabilities provides easy-to-understand definitions of many of the conditions mentioned.

**Palacio, R.J.Wonder. Knopf, 2014.**

Ten-year-old Auggie Pullman, who was born with extreme facial abnormalities and was not expected to survive, goes from being home-schooled to entering fifth grade at a private middle school in Manhattan, which entails enduring the taunting and fear of his classmates as he struggles to be seen as just another student.

**Rusick, Jessica. *Understanding Physical Disabilities*. Abdo Publishing, 2022**

Readers learn common symptoms and behaviors of physical disabilities and how it affects kids at school and in relationships. Text includes suggestions on how to be a kind and respectful friend to someone who has physical disabilities and appropriate activities kids can enjoy together.

**Willems, Mo. *Can I Play Too?* Hyperion, 2010.**

Gerald and Piggie meet a new snake friend who wants to join in a game of catch. But how can he catch without arms? Perhaps there are other ways to play when you have different abilities.