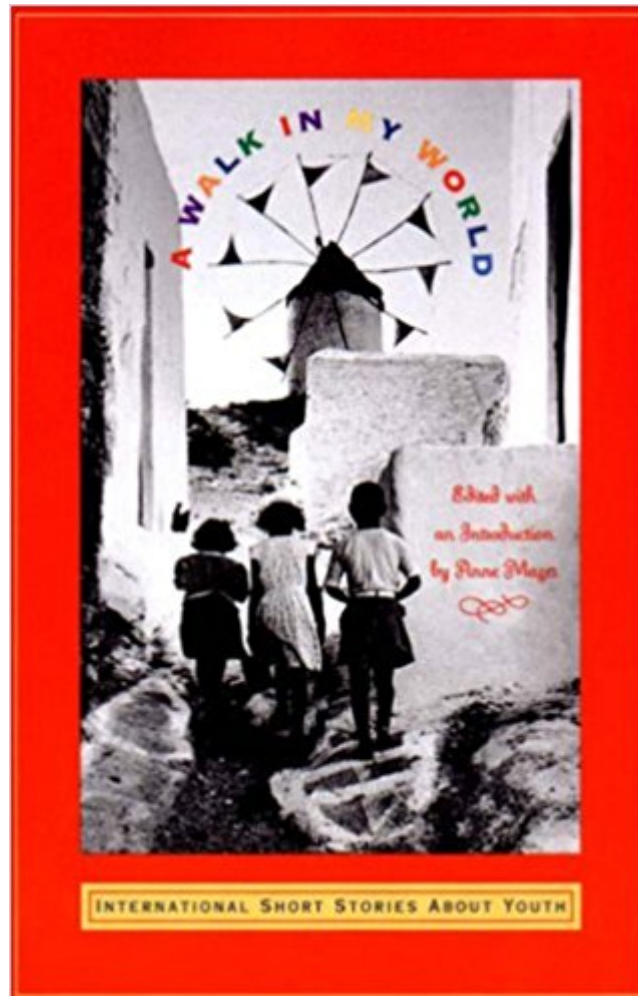




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# A Walk In My World: International Short Stories About Youth



## Synopsis

A treasury of short stories about young people, written by some of the world's best writers. This volume of sixteen stories written by some of the world's best writers--including three Nobel Prize winners--will transport readers to all parts of the globe to meet kindred spirits in other cultures on their journeys to adulthood. In Heinrich Böll's "The Balek Scales," a young German boy heroically tries to redress the centuries of injustice in his village. In Yasunari Kawabata's "The Jay," a girl's interest in a mother jay separated from her young becomes a metaphor for her own estrangement from her father. Set during the Pinochet regime in Chile, "The Composition" by Antonio Skarmeta is the story of a boy who resists betraying his parents through a routine school assignment. In Jamaica Kincaid's "To the Jetty," a teenage girl embarks on her first journey away from her island home of Antigua and into the wider world. Also included are stories by Ama Ata Aidoo (Ghana), Toni Cade Bambara (United States), Italo Calvino (Italy), Anita Desai (India), Elizabeth Jolley (Australia), Naguib Mahfouz (Egypt), Frank O'Connor (Ireland), V. S. Pritchett (England), Valentin Rasputin (Russia), Cora Sandel (Norway), and Xiao Hong (China). An introduction and lengthy biographical notes provide context and give insight into the lives of the authors.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In a starred review of this anthology of 16 modern stories, which include the works of three Nobel Prize winners, PW wrote that "Mazer invites readers to examine pearls of wisdom collected from five continents, and they will likely want to embark on future expeditions with the writers they discover

here." Ages 12-up. (June) n Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Grade 9 UpAn uneven collection of stories by writers from around the world. The introduction lays a good foundation for the various themes (rites of passage, the complexities of adulthood, etc.). There are certainly some strong selections here, such as Antonio Skarmetas *The Composition*, in which young Pedro learns of his parents' true feelings toward Chile's fascist government. Also guaranteed to strike a nerve with teens is Pramodya Ananta Toers *Inem*, a story centering around an eight-year-old girl's pending nuptials and the unfortunate situation that follows. Other entries present situations young adults will sympathize with and find interesting, but several of the offerings lack the plots and themes that usually sustain teen interest, and some of them seem to lose something in translation. Brief biographies of the authors are appended. This collection offers many compelling tales for pleasure reading or classroom discussion, but has too many misses to be considered as a first purchase. *Mazurs: Going Where I'm Coming From: Memoirs of American Youth* (1995) and *Working Days: Stories about Teenagers and Work* (1997, both Persea) are stronger anthologies. Karen Hoth, Marathon Middle/High School, FL Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Several junior high and high school teachers have written to me because of my review of *Into the Widening World*, edited by John Loughery and published by Persea Books. I mentioned in my review that I use that book for my university course in International Short Stories. I am not sure that is the best choice for younger readers, or for schools with strong guidance from the PTA and the school board. Those stories are live and startling because they often challenge taboos. This book, on the other hand, provides a group of stories by some of the same excellent writers, all of them of a high artistic achievement, that might be more age appropriate for junior high and high school students. Make no mistake, they are not kid's stories--they're about children. But they pick up a rhythm and simplicity of execution from the generally accepted nature of children's stories. You won't find a bad one among them. And what a wonderful exposure to international writing. I used this one in my college class to kick off a semester's study of fiction from around the world, and my students really loved it. So do I. That story "Hands" is as good as anything you could find in any collection, as is "The French Lesson." If you want a quick glimpse into this book, start with these. You'll read the rest.

The author of the SLJ review is wrong. Terribly, terribly wrong. A cretin, really. This collection is

remarkably consistent. The writing is quite fine and the stories, often relatively obscure, offer a huge breadth of theme, tone and subject matter. I've read many collections of this sort with an eye towards teaching them. This is by far the best. Both weak and strong readers can find much to enjoy. All of these writers are top drawer, and these stories selected carefully to fall within the understanding of young adults. This should be a standard text in all schools, libraries, etc.

A Walk in My World provides teens with a starting point for understanding other cultures, with a series of short stories by contemporary authors addressing the issues and concerns of teens around the world. From a Chilean boy's writings about his parents' politics to a headstrong girl's alienation from her mother, these are moving stories packing in social as well as cultural revelations.

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