

Table of Contents

About this Book	4
Introduction to the Real Stories Program	5
Why the Real Stories Program Works	6
Three Challenges	
Three Opportunities	
Why Use Stories by Teens?	
Why Use Excerpts from the Bluford Novels?	
How to Use this Book and the Lessons	8
How Long Are the Lessons? A Note on Timing	9
Who Should Read? A Note on the Read Aloud	9
About Freewriting	10
About Role Plays	12
Goals	
Rules	
Procedure	
How To Handle Sensitive Topics and Confidentiality	13
Five Tips	

The Stories

REAL LIFE: Making Connections

My School Is Like a Family.....	16
Bonding through Cooking	23
When Politics Gets Personal	33
Can a Teacher Be a Friend?.....	41

THE REAL ME: Being Yourself

Running from Myself.....	49
A Short Cut to Independence	62
I'm Black ,He's Puerto Rican. So What?	69
I've Been an Adult Too Long.....	75
Princess Oreo Speaks Out.....	83

REAL FRIENDS: The Meaning of Friendship

Fantastic Four.....	93
The Crew from the Parking Lot.....	101
Girl, Stop Fronting!	111
My Boy Had a Boyfriend.....	118
Fiction Special: The Bully.....	126

THE REAL WORLD: Meet the People in My World

A Sad Silence	141
My Father: Guilty or Innocent?	151
Just the Two of Us.....	160
Learning to Forgive.....	167
Fiction Special: Summer of Secrets	175

REAL TOUGH: Dealing with Difficult Situations

My Secret Addiction	189
I Could Have Been Elisa	200
Chinese Parents, American Me	208
The Man in the Glass	217
Fiction Special: The Fallen	226

REAL SOON: Taking Control of Your Future

Minnesota Merengue & An Army Life for Me 239
College Can Be Hell 249
Poetry Brought Out the Performer in Me 256
My Father’s Dream or Mine? 263

Additional Resources

Resources to Help You Run Groups 273

Establish Group Guidelines
8 Tips and Tricks for Leading Groups with the Stories and Lessons 274
Facilitation Strategies 276
 For Building Trust
 For Keeping and Honoring Trust
 To Encourage Participation
 For Facilitating Discussion

Teambuilding Activities and Icebreakers 278

Energizer Games
Get to Know Each Other Games
Focus Games
Thinking Games
Physical Games

Credits 281

About Youth Communication 282

About Development Without Limits 283

About Townsend Press 284

Acknowledgments 285

About the Writers 286