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## Abstract

The Young Adult book category can provide adolescent readers the opportunity to examine and understand aspects of their identities, such as their mental health. Representing anxiety disorders in Young Adult fiction can help to destigmatize mental health struggles among adolescents. While anxiety disorders have been represented in Young Adult books before, some Young Adult books represent anxiety as a flaw a character must overcome. This can leave Young Adult readers with the harmful impression that one's anxiety is a part of them they must overcome. This goes against the reality that most people who are diagnosed with an anxiety disorder continue to struggle with their anxiety even while they're taking medication or attending therapy. For my Honors Thesis, I've researched how anxiety disorders continue to be a part of someone's life even after they have been diagnosed and started treatment. My research regarding anxiety disorders is showcased in "Somewhere Only We Know," a short story I wrote aimed toward Young Adult readers. Through my short story's main character, Mira Levy, I present Young Adult readers an opportunity to identify with character whose anxiety isn't a flaw but a part of who they are.

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