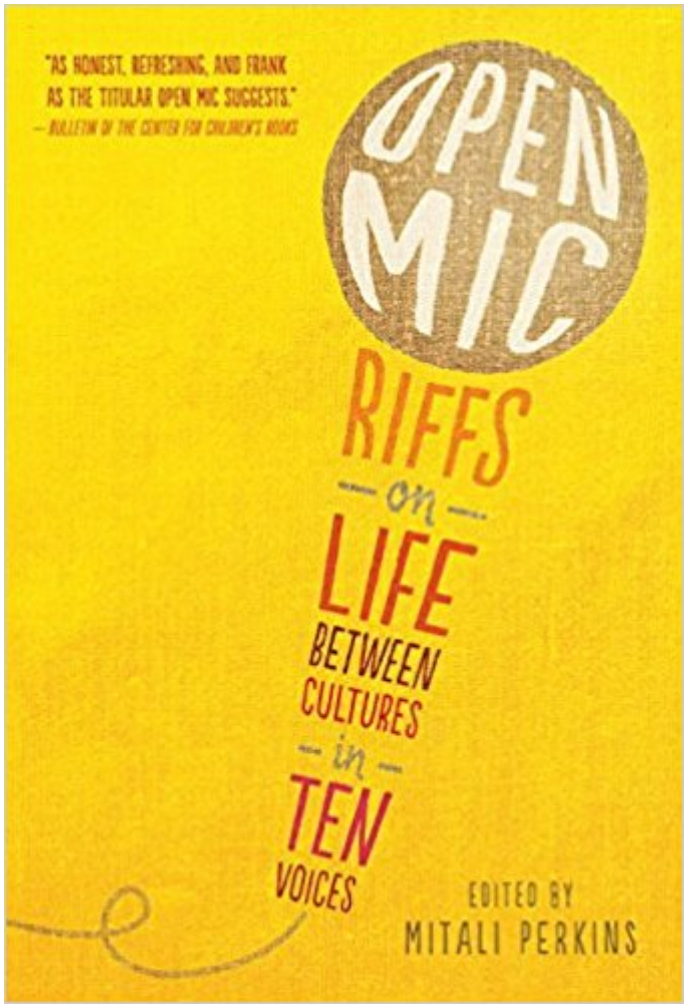
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Open Mic: Riffs On Life Between Cultures In Ten Voices



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Synopsis

Using humor as the common denominator, a multicultural cast of YA authors steps up to the mic to share stories touching on race.Listen in as ten YA authors Ã¢â ¬â • some familiar, some new Ã¢â ¬â • use their own brand of humor to share their stories about growing up between cultures. Henry Choi Lee discovers that pretending to be a tai chi master or a sought-after wiz at math wins him friends for a while Ã¢â ¬â • until it comically backfires. A biracial girl is amused when her dad clears seats for his family on a crowded subway in under a minute flat, simply by sitting quietly in between two uptight white women. Edited by acclaimed author and speaker Mitali Perkins, this collection of fiction and nonfiction uses a mix of styles as diverse as their authors, from laugh-out-loud funny to wry, ironic, or poingnant, in prose, poetry, and comic form.

Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #161,751 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #90 inÃ Â Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Short Stories #139 inÃ Â Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Prejudice & Racism #199 inÃ Â Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Prejudice & Racism

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Gr 6Ã¢â ¬â œ10Ã¢â ¬â •Perkins introduces her new anthology with guidelines for telling humorous stories about life between cultures: good humor pokes fun at the powerful, builds affection for the 'other,' and is self-deprecatory. Perkins reads her own contribution, which describes the agony of teenage dating, a shared American experience that's complicated by the need for secrecy from her FOB ("fresh off the boat") parents. Nine other YA writers, from a variety of backgrounds, explore the theme in fiction, poetry, and a personal essay in graphic format. On audio, six actors competently

convey the humor, which ranges from witty to funny to hilarious. Listeners, however, will miss the unspoken emotion expressed in the visual storytelling of Gene Yang's "Why I Won't Be Watching the Last Airbender Movie." The work concludes with an evocative poem by Naomi Shihab Nye, who honors her peace-loving Palestinian father and her own biracial identity: "half-baked, mix of East and West, balancing flavorsÃ¢â ¬Â¦" as do many American students today.Ã¢â ¬â •Toby Rajput, National Louis University, Skokie, IL --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In this anthology that blends fiction and nonfiction, Indian American editor Perkins has assembled 10 original selections about race that have in common a humorous take on an often serious subject. Humor has the power to break down barriers and draw us together across borders, Perkins writes in her introduction. Aside from their humor, these border-breaking stories all share a viewpoint from within the culture that provides the setting and subject. The stories are varied in format: twoÃ¢â ¬â •by G. Neri and Naomi Shihab NyeÃ¢â ¬â •are stories in verse, while a third, by Printz AwardÃ¢â ¬â œwinner Gene Luen Yang, is in the format of a graphic novel. Several of the stories come perilously close to being didactic, but all are, in their respective ways, enlightening. As for humor, David YooÃ¢â ¬â„¢s excellent Becoming Henry Lee is the one that will probably elicit the most laughs. But all invite sometimes rueful smiles or chuckles of recognition. And all demonstrate that in the specific we find the universal, and that borders are meant to be breached. Grades 5-8. --Michael Cart --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is a Goodreads December book club title and each of the ten stories by YA authors who have lived between cultures (Mitali Perkins, Varian Johnson, G. Neri and Francisco X. Stork, to name a few) and have penned mainly stories with humor to give readers their multicultural view of the world. As I read the verse story, Under Berlin by G. Neri, I was constantly surprised by her father as they stood in a crowded train filled with white Germans and their black father and Hispanic mother. It was a game her played with his children and I chuckled with how G. Neri unfolded each word to show her father's calm, his conversation, his friendliness, and how to snag seats for his family. In Francisco X. Stork's, Brotherly Love, it is his older sister he goes to for information to a nagging question. Mitali Perkins short story, Three-Pointer, was a great story about sisters, love and the points it can garner. I am looking forward to re-reading all of these stories; they are real, poignant, and funny

My daughter read this as summer reading prior to her freshman year in high school. She thought some of the stories were interesting but all in all, only read it because it was required.

I am making a pledge this year to read more diverse books, so I started it off right by getting a hold of the audiobook of this gem of a collection. Open Mic: Riffs on Life Between Cultures in Ten Voices edited by Mitali Perkins has the perfect mix of humor, a little heartache, and a whole lot of strength, capturing the reality of experiences of people trapped between cultures.There is a mix of fiction and nonfiction; a mix of prose, verse, and graphic within the pages. But while each entry may be different, the underlaying purpose rings true. As Perkins writes in her introduction, the purpose is to "...to break down barriers and draw us together across borders.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• And this collection succeeds. From the romantic, in Cherry Cheva's "Talent Show" to the empowering, in Olugbemisola Rhuday-Perkovich's "Confessions of a Black Geek; from half-way across the world, in G. Neri's "Under Berlin", to one's own house, in Francisco X. Stork's "Brotherly Love" and everything in between the autobiographical feeling of being trapped between two cultures, and the journey to fight against racism and the expectations of each culture is clear.The audiobook was excellently done, with multiple voice actors doing the readings (a majority of whom are POC as far as I could figure out). This made it much easier to differentiate between each entry right away, and also brought great character to the stories. I love that Mitali Perkins narrated her own story, which is about her life. It gave it just something special to hear her telling her story of being a boy-crazy Indian-American teenager trying to figure out how to "score some points" (read it to find out more!!!!).I would love to see a Volume 2 come out in 2017, especially with the climate of America the way it is currently. Diverse books containing stories from the very people represented in them is necessary and so impactful. Each of these authors are amazing contributors to both the Young Adult and Middle Grade genres, but put them all together and is it amazing! A great addition to the #ownvoices movement (published ahead of its time) and a necessary book that helps bridge the gap in our country, shining a light on racism and multicultural issues through humor.

Open Mic provides glimpses into that territory of straddling two cultures. Ten different authors used a bit of humor, remembrances from their past, and their writing talent to create a unique collection of works that spoke to me in different ways. I appreciated that there were even a variety of forms. The book contains poetry, non-fiction, a comic, and short stories to show readers what it can be like to live between cultures.At the very beginning, Mitali Perkins shares a few rules about the humor in the stories. To view the rules, visit her guest post over at Cythia Leitich Smith's blog. She seems to

believe that humor can make conversations more pleasant, less serious. I would have to agree.As I look back over the ten stories, I notice that although many of them contained humor, a significant number of them were dealing with pretty serious issues. The line, "I thought I knew the face of racism" from "Confessions of a Black Geek" speaks volumes. Gene Luen Yang's comic is a fascinating look into a bit of activism delivered in a matter of fact tone. Other stories, simply tell about life as a teen and include some of the complications of living between cultures and facing typical teen issues.The pieces that wrung my heart the most were "Confessions of a Black Geek" by Olugbemisola Rhuday-Perkovich, "Brotherly Love" by Francisco X. Stork, and "Lexicon" by Naomi Shihab Nye. The face of racism is exposed in one and a heart is broken, a boy sees himself through his sister's eyes in another, and the other shows the soul of a loving man, friend to all.Others in this collection came with more laughter than tears. I loved the amusing game that a family plays on the subways and the stereotype defying characters in several stories. There are playful moments mixed with everyday events and on occasion ugliness. Overall, the stories are upbeat and encouraging. Beyond sharing cultural issues, the stories also speak to anyone who has been an outsider for any reason.I would definitely recommend this book to readers of young adult lit. The pieces are fresh and meaningful without being preachy. I would love to see more works like this and am hoping for a second volume.Review originally posted at Reading Through Life [...]

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