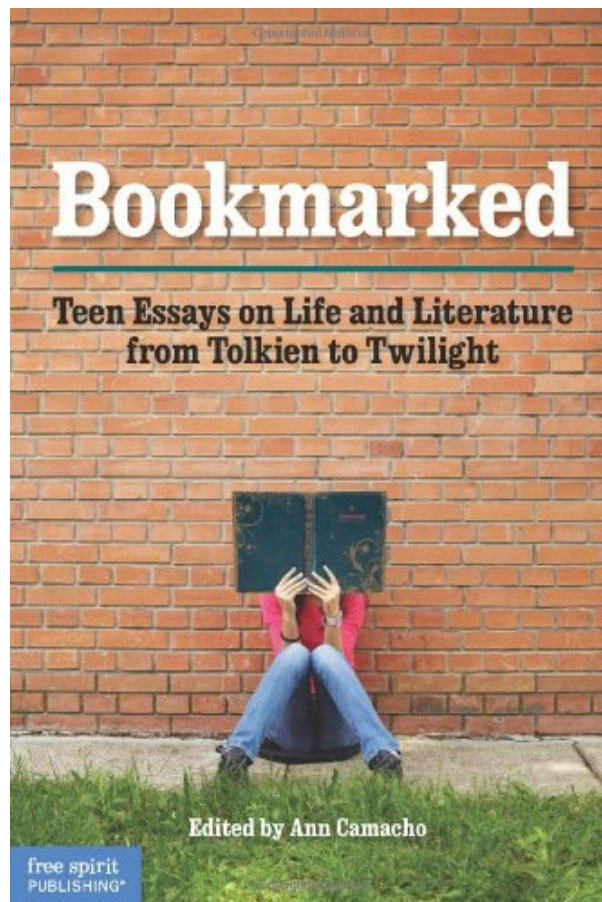
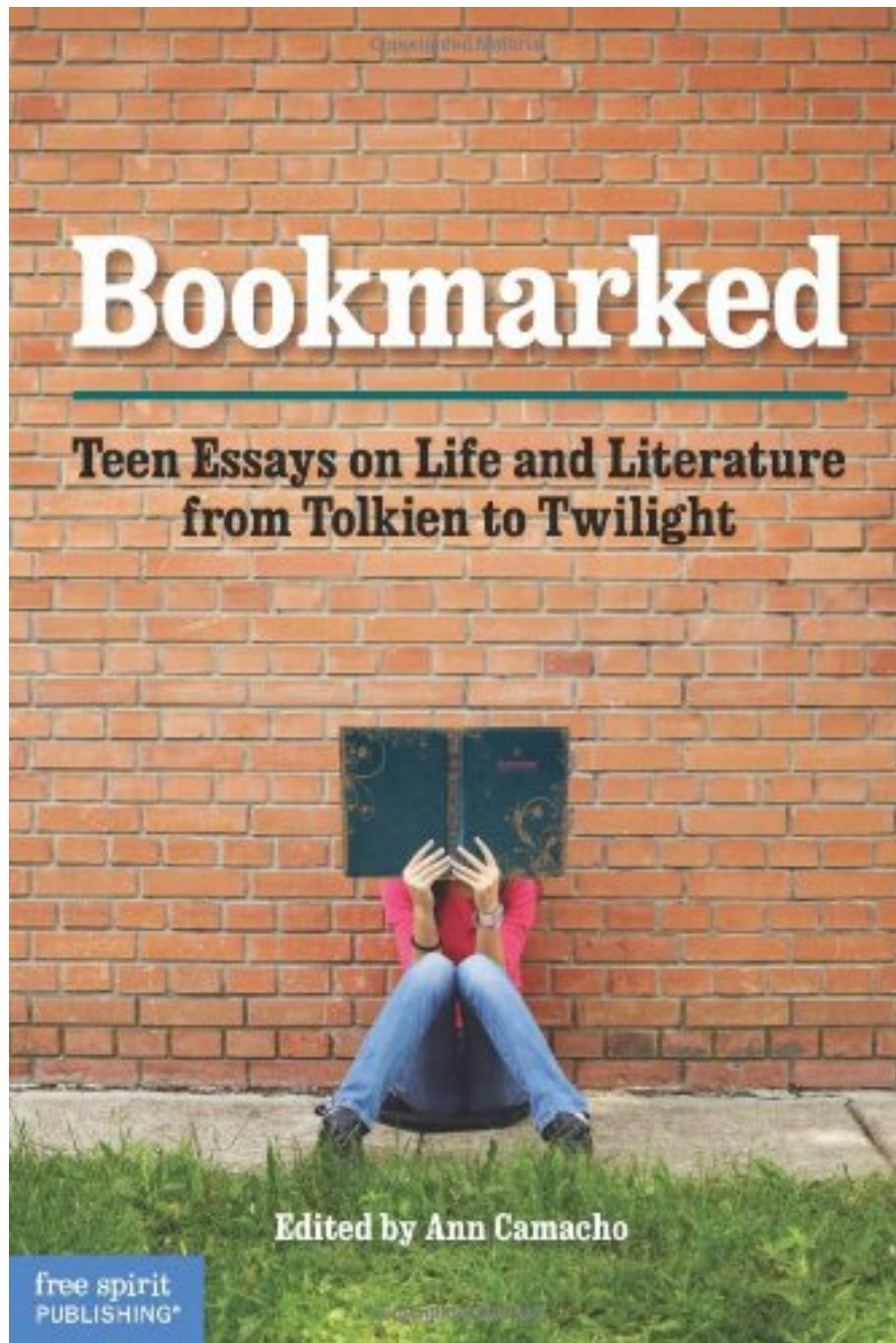


# **BOOKMARKED: TEEN ESSAYS ON LIFE AND LITERATURE FROM TOLKIEN TO TWILIGHT BY ANN CAMACHO**



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In more than 50 essays, young people from a wide range of backgrounds reflect on how words from literature connect with and influence their lives, goals, and personal philosophies. The essays explore topics including suffering the death of a parent, facing a life-threatening illness, letting go of perfectionism, making friends, realizing goals, and grappling with questions of faith and sexuality. Books cited range from *The Grapes of Wrath* and *The Great Gatsby* to *Twilight* and *Lord of the Rings*. Each essay includes a brief biographical sketch letting the reader know where the essay writer is today.

Teachers, guidance counselors, and parents working with teens on personal essays—including for college applications—will find that the book presents a varied, intriguing group of essays to use as samples, models, and inspiration. Teachers of literature, writing, and language arts classes can also use these essays as a way to help teens explore literature—and their own responses to it—through writing. Following each essay are questions to prompt conversation, writing, and deeper consideration of the issues raised. The back matter includes tips and ideas for teachers and teens on how to use the book, including ways to use it as a jumping-off point for creating personal essays.

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Most helpful customer reviews

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

This book is a must read for the young and the young at heart!

By Westcoast Gunner

After reading the introduction of *Bookmarked*, I was hooked--captivated by the challenge issued to present and former high school students to share their stories of self-reflection and life-lessons learned. I plunged deep into Part I and immersed myself in the courage and boldness of each essay. I could not part with the book. I carried it faithfully with me to work and simply could not wait for my morning and afternoon breaks or my commute home to read the next essay. What I absolutely loved about *Bookmarked* was the opportunity it allowed for me to find solace and comfort in my own reflections. The "Questions for Reflection, Discussion, and Writing" sections succeed as an outlet for the reader to further connect, not only to the essays, but to their own triumphs and tribulations.

I am an adult in my late thirties, but I must admit I carried *Bookmarked* with me for days after I finished reading the book. I shared the book and my feedback with those close to me: young and old. The essays sparked a dialogue between my teenage son and me--conversations I will forever cherish.

Every high school student would greatly benefit from reading *Bookmarked*, especially eleventh and twelfth graders. Just knowing that they are not alone, that other students share the same fears, doubts, family issues, cultural norms, hopes, dreams, and aspirations, is sheer motivation to keep moving forward no matter what obstacles may come along.

*Bookmarked* has left an indelible mark on my soul. Well done to the editor and to the young people who shared a glimpse into their own lives so that our lives may be more enriched and empowered. *Bookmarked* continues to pay it forward, one student at a time! Keep reading and keep sharing.

Mallonda Okonkwo

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

*Bookmarked*: A project to be repeated

By Kendra

I have been teaching 8th grade for a while and I understand, perhaps better than people might think, that for even our brightest most mature students, 7th and 8th grade are transitional years. Good kids do crazy things and get suspended. Readers stop reading. And everyone else seems like Rose and Jack, holding on desperately to the Titanic railing as it gets sucked into the very cold Atlantic.

It will get better, we try and tell parents. We have enough lifeboats; it's just getting the kids into them.

"*Bookmarked: Teen Essays on Life and Literature from Tolkien to Twilight*" is a book that every middle school and high school teacher should buy. It's not available on Kindle, so I had to buy an actual book off of amazon and even though it was paperback, I was struck by how heavy it was. I'm such a wimp now. Thank you Kindle.

If I have any complaints about the book is that it focuses maybe too much on books from the high school canon so lots of quotes from "Hamlet" and "To Kill a Mockingbird" and "The Great Gatsby", and not that there's anything wrong with those, but I wish that more of the books that had moved these students were books they had discovered on their own. But there were those too.

The project assigned to the students was to pick a quote from a book that had moved them and tie it into their own lives. What you get are 2-3 page mini memoirs motivated by these quotes. What I enjoyed most is that these students came from a wide variety of backgrounds and that each piece ended with where the student is today and each one of them had found success in some manner.

"Bookmarked" shows students who suffered through the death of friends and parents, parent divorces, anorexia and just about every other thing you can think of that plagues kids today. It did not shy away from controversial issues, from religion to sexuality. Sometimes the memoir addressed both.

Ann Camacho, the editor and teacher, says this about reading: "Books are blueprints for living and roadmaps for our lives."

This is what we should be teaching our students. The stories are moving and so are the quotes:

From Gandalf in "The Fellowship of the Ring:" "All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."

From Christopher Robin in "Winnie the Pooh:" "You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think."

From Dumbledore to Harry Potter in "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets:" "It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities."

Reading--what a thing of beauty.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Yearning for a Philosophical or Psychological Journey?

By Young Mensan BookParade

Ann Camacho, a high school English teacher, was inspired to create a compilation of essays written by her former and present students called Bookmarked. They were given the task of writing an essay based off of a quote that spoke to them, and each writer wrote a story that was then separated into five parts; beliefs and ideals, family, friends, and love, and hard times and hope are just a few. Since each student opted for an individual quote, there is no plot that the book follows.

However, it combines ideas and tales that appeal to young adults and teenagers because most of the stories tackle some form of identity crisis or development - something that, coming from a teenager, all teens go through. They provide insight and guidance from others who have gone through scenarios akin to those present in our everyday lives, allowing us to form a connection with the students.

A more modern version of Chicken Soup for the Soul branch, this book finds a spot in every adolescent child's heart. The book is loveable and an easy read. Each component of Bookmarked is essentially its own short story, making it fun and bound to keep the attention of every busy teen. The author poses questions at the end of each section, causing the reader to think about what he or she has just read. It helps make this book perfect for students about to journey into the college application world or, perhaps, someone who

yearns for a philosophical or psychological journey. The book is a valuable addition to any library.

Rate: 4 stars

Review by Young Mensan Anika T., age 17

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