

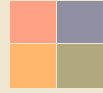


much too fast. Angel worried even more when her mother came home from the doctor one day and announced she was going to have a baby. It seemed to Angel the size of the family was perfect. But even bigger changes are in her future because Angel will be spending the summer in Greece with her new grandparents who do not speak English. Now there will be all kinds of new things to worry about. Angel is fortunate to have a mother, stepfather, and stepgrandparents who are sensitive to her worrying. With a little help from her grandfather's worrying beads, she realizes what she imagines is often much worse than what actually happens.



Holt, Kimberly Willis. *Mister and Me*. New York: Puffin Books. 1998.

Jolene's father died when she was a young child. When her mother remarries, she feels the same feelings of displacement and anxiety that children of divorce often do. Jolene does not understand why her mother wants a boyfriend because the way she sees it, her family is just fine the way it is. She also cannot figure out why her mother likes Leroy Redfield – he seems so loud and is much too big. Jolene's way to fight this intrusion into her

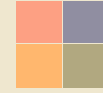


family is to call him "Mister" – never Leroy. It is only when Jolene's mother and grandfather go out of town to attend a funeral and leave her in the care of Leroy, she comes to realize how special he is. Jolene slowly begins to realize how much the family needs Leroy.



Peterson, P.J. *I Hate Weddings*. New York: Dutton Children's Books. 2000.

Dan should have known this would not be like the usual once-a-month weekend visits with his father in which they just hang out and have fun. To begin with, his father is getting married, and Dan has to wear a tuxedo. Second, his father is very late picking him up at the airport. When he does show up, there is another boy with him. Third, instead of spending time together, Dan is deposited at his future stepmother's house where things are so very different from what he is used to. Dan feels like an intruder. To Dan it appears the new stepfamily does not want him staying there anymore than Dan wants to be there. Eventually the wedding goes off without a hitch. Dan is cautiously looking forward to his next visit and hoping things will go better.



DIVORCE BIBLIOGRAPHY



KIDS IN GRADES 3-6



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When parents divorce, children often feel confusion, sadness, anger, and guilt. They may wonder what is going to happen to them and how their lives will change. Should remarriage occur, children may feel displaced by the new stepparent. They may feel jealous that so much effort and time is going into this new relationship. Getting along with stepsiblings can pose a real challenge, too. Children who are in this situation may turn to books for comfort. By reading about fictional characters who are dealing with similar situations, children can put words to their emotions and realize that others have face similar challenges. The books reviewed in this bibliography have upper elementary characters who are experiencing their parents divorce, remarriage, or a blended family.



Cleary, Beverly. *Dear Mr. Henshaw*. New York: Morrow Junior Books. 1983.

Leigh Botts's parents are divorcing. His mother finally put her foot down and said she could not continue to live with a truck driver who was away most of the time. Leigh thinks that being in the company of his father a little bit is preferable to not

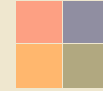


at all. It is only after Leigh writes to his favorite author as part of a school assignment that he wrestles with his concerns about the divorce, his father's absence, and the difficulty of being the new kid at school. A byproduct of keeping this journal is that Leigh becomes interested in creative writing. After winning an honorable mention for one of his short stories, he is chosen to lunch with a famous author who tells him he has much potential as a writer. In addition to Leigh's new found interest in writing, his ingenuity in putting together an alarm system to catch the school's lunch box thief brings him attention and new friends. This is a charming story about a boy who builds resiliency as a result of hobbies and because the school custodian takes interest in him.



Cruise, Robin. *The Top-Secret Journal of Fiona Claire Jardin*. San Diego: Harcourt, Inc. 1998.

Ten-year-old Fiona Clair Jardin's parents are divorcing. Fiona says that she used to be like other kids, but that was before she and her younger



brother were told about the divorce. Now she neither laughs nor cries, and she often suffers stomachaches. In this book, Fiona writes about how hard it has been for her to handle all the bad things that have happened to her since the divorce. Besides not living with both parents, she misses her big old house with the large back yard in which her mother grew cucumbers. Fiona is having trouble dealing with memories of what it used to be like when they were happy and her mother was a fulltime homemaker. To Fiona, everything seems so topsy-turvy. Will things ever be like they were? Probably not, but Fiona has learned that "no matter what happens, I still have my family: Mom, Dad, and Sam – plus all the other Jardins and Ryans. I'd also forgotten that no matter what, I'm still me – the one and only Fiona Claire Jardin" (151).



Delton, Judy. *Angel Spreads Her Wings*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 1999.

Angel hates change. She constantly worries about everything. Ever since her mother remarried, Angel has had lots to worry about. Even though Rudy is a nice stepfather, things have changed too