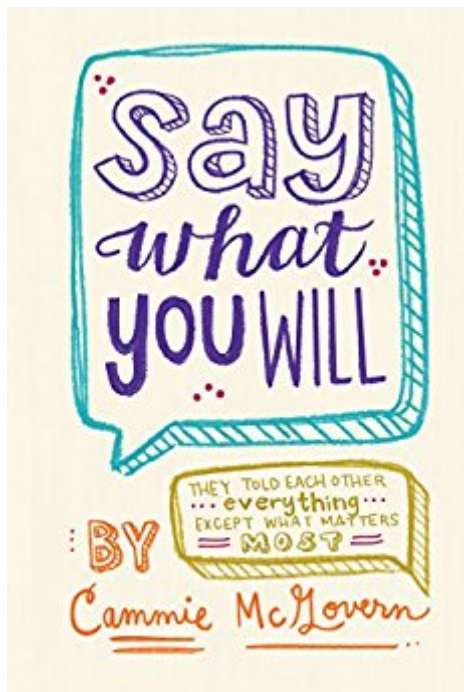


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# Say What You Will



## Synopsis

John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars* meets Rainbow Rowell's *Eleanor & Park* in this beautifully written, incredibly honest, and emotionally poignant novel. Cammie McGovern's insightful young adult debut is a heartfelt and heartbreaking story about how we can all feel lost until we find someone who loves us because of our faults, not in spite of them. Born with cerebral palsy, Amy can't walk without a walker, talk without a voice box, or even fully control her facial expressions. Plagued by obsessive-compulsive disorder, Matthew is consumed with repeated thoughts, neurotic rituals, and crippling fear. Both in desperate need of someone to help them reach out to the world, Amy and Matthew are more alike than either ever realized. When Amy decides to hire student aides to help her in her senior year at Coral Hills High School, these two teens are thrust into each other's lives. As they begin to spend time with each other, what started as a blossoming friendship eventually grows into something neither expected.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

From the very beginning, I was looking forward to this book about its premise. Although I have to say that I haven't read *The Fault in Our Stars* or *Eleanor & Park* (yes, I know it's a shame, don't judge), I put this on my tbr list as soon as I read the summary on Goodreads. *Say What You Will* is so different from anything that I have ever read before. In my entire life I have never read about a handicapped girl who is so brilliant to the point that I forgot about her disability & was awed at how incredible she was. Quote: "Instead of beauty, I have a face no one envies and a body no one would choose to live in. These two factors alone have freed up my days to pursue what other girls my age might also do if their strong legs weren't carrying them to dance and parties and places that feed a lot of insecurities..." I loved reading about her relationship with Matthew. They are two people that couldn't be more different and more similar at the same time. Born with cerebral palsy, Amy doesn't see herself as someone who should miss out on life just because she needs a voice box to communicate. & Matthew realizes that he has OCD which could get into a way of his friendship with Amy. Quote: "I asked if I could help you because I've never been able to do that for anyone. I wanted to see if I could. It's terrible always being the person who need help. I'm sorry if I misjudged everything. I'm so new at having friends that I make mistakes sometimes..." Books that leave me speechless are the worst to write a review for because my emotions simply can't be transferred into words. Cammie McGovern is so talented, I absolutely love her writing and the way she develops her characters. Definitely becoming one of my new favorite authors, McGovern is the author to watch for & be on the look out for new novels!

Teenage girl just wants to fit in. So where's the story in that? It's a story when she has a disability and needs an aide throughout the day to help with fun things like getting around the school, making sure the communication device is charged and accessible, help with going to the restroom...It's a story when Amy decides that she needs to learn how to have friends, and the adult aides just aren't cutting it. Unlike other stories that "feature" a person with a disability, Cammie McGovern creates the most genuine characterization I've come across. Amy is smart, funny, has cerebral palsy, cannot speak (but has a speech generating device: kudos to Ms. McGovern for getting that right!) has trouble eating solid food without being messy, uses a walker, and is largely ignored by her peers. She decides that peer helpers (rather than adult aides) will help her learn how to socialize (even if it means paid friendship). And that, gentle reader, is where the true story begins. This book is written for the YA audience, and is extremely well written. All of the characters "ring true". And as someone who is decades past the YA target audience, I thoroughly enjoyed this book. My career has focused on people with disabilities for more years than I care to admit: this book gets it right, but

the disabilities aren't glamorized or "challenges to overcome", or ennobling, or pitiful, or necessarily inspiring. Amy happens to have CP. And she's a teenager. It's obviously a big part of her life, and Ms. McGovern doesn't flinch in describing the "little things" that happen. Every. Single. Day. And the toll those "little things" can have on a person like Amy. Read read read this book! Then pass it on!

As a middle-school English teacher, I am frequently reading YA books in an attempt to know & recommend good books to my students. I teach 6-8 grades. While this would not be a book I recommend to my 6th graders, simply because there is a focus on sex, I will highly recommend this to my 8th graders & former students now in high school. I think the author, like John Green & Rainbow Rowell, doesn't dumb-down the plot despite the book's target audience. Additionally, she avoids stereotyping characters. Her voice is unique, as is her writing style--which uses a specific style for dialogue with regards to character with CP. Ultimately, the reader is given a unique glimpse into disabilities & ultimately learns--we all have disabilities--some just more visible than others.

Another story about disabilities. I actually have this phase right now where I am kind of obsessed with the fact "everyone had their own stories and problems to deal with" and this book shows that it is not a bad thing to let people into ur life. Things might not work out, things might, who knows, you'll never know unless u tried. U would think disabilities makes this unrelatable but I think it is just an exaggeration of the things we face in life. Amy is has a very unique character and she doesn't shows immense courage in the face of pain. She's a fighter and trying to prove something. Yet she is still vulnerable and in need of help. She didn't have any friends before Matthew came along and changed it. At the beginning Matthew wasn't a sociable person too, he had a terrible case of OCD. This caused him to freak out. Matthew was Amy's helper but then Amy started to help Matthew deal with her problems. Things happened and they bonded with small tasks. However, they realized it wasn't that one needed to be in constant help, part of life is accepting and moving on. Through hardships success will finally come. And friends were there to encourage and to help you. This was especially evident when Matthew stormed out when Amy confessed her plans and feelings. Staying friends was hard and they dropped it for a bit but it still came back, the emotions were still there. If Amy and Matthew, two people with their own problems and the rarest friendship built on disabilities could do it, why can't we do it? Matthew with OCD and Amy with a disability that has rendered her unable to walk and talk properly are best friends and maybe even something more ;)

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