



# My Thirteenth Winter: A Memoir

By *Samantha Abeel*

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In this beautiful and chilling memoir, twenty-five-year-old Samantha Abeel describes her struggles with a math-related learning disability, and how it forced her to find inner strength and courage.

Samantha Abeel couldn't tell time, remember her locker combination, or count out change at a checkout counter -- and she was in seventh grade. For a straight-A student like Samantha, problems like these made no sense. She dreaded school, and began having anxiety attacks. In her thirteenth winter, she found the courage to confront her problems -- and was diagnosed with a learning disability. Slowly, Samantha's life began to change again. She discovered that she was stronger than she'd ever thought possible -- and that sometimes, when things look bleakest, hope is closer than you think.

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## **My Thirteenth Winter: A Memoir By Samantha Abeel Bibliography**

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up--Abeel writes of her torturous year in seventh grade when she was diagnosed with a learning disability. Having been a gifted, creative preschooler, she was not prepared for the realization, in second grade, that she could not do many of the tasks that her classmates could accomplish with ease. By seventh grade, her feelings of insecurity had reached an all-time high, and she began to experience anxiety attacks over everything from having to remember her locker combination to managing her schoolwork to staying overnight at a friend's. When she was finally diagnosed with dyscalculia, she and her family felt relief. At least now there was a name for her difficulties and strategies she could employ. This account is an interesting mix of factual information and memories. Abeel relates her experiences with detached clarity, but each situation is followed by the thoughts and feelings that finally forced her to face her differences. Occasionally, her well-phrased prose slips into cliché, and when she lists the math skills that she could not perform she becomes rather pedantic. While this book is not likely to be of great interest to casual readers, those with similar learning issues will identify strongly with the author's trials and triumphs. Pair this title with Abeel's book of poetry, *Reach for the Moon* (Scholastic, 2001), to inspire young people with learning disabilities and to educate others.--*Nancy Menaldi-Scanlan, LaSalle Academy, Providence, RI*  
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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 7-12. In painstaking detail, Abeel recounts her life, from kindergarten through college, with a learning disability that compromises her ability to learn skills based on sequential processing--especially math, spelling, and grammar. She writes frankly about her mental and emotional struggles to cope; while she looked like a "normal" child, she was unable to tell time, count change, or remember her locker combination. Her narrative is interjected with first-person remembrances of painful incidents that left a vivid imprint on her self-worth. After her disability was diagnosed, halfway through her story when she was in seventh grade, the school system provided both special and gifted classes that helped her. But still aching over missed social opportunities and suffering from panic attacks, she turned to writing, which became her life preserver. Upon college graduation, Abeel finally accepted that being learning disabled wasn't her fault. Abeel's raw emotional anguish, though certainly understandable, overwhelms the story, making it difficult to pinpoint an audience. Perhaps readers who have their own intimate knowledge of how learning disabilities derail life will be the most appreciative audience. *Julie Cummins*  
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About the Author

Samantha Abeel was a gifted child who excelled at language arts, yet she often had trouble with seemingly simple math problems. In her seventh-grade creative writing class, Samantha found refuge from the endless classes focused on math, measurements and algebra. When her parents enlisted the aid of an English teacher to help Samantha focus on her strength by creating writing assignments to be critiqued, she began the project that would become her first book, *Reach for the Moon*.

## Users Review

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**Kenneth Roberts:**

Nowadays reading books be a little more than want or need but also get a life style. This reading routine give you lot of advantages. The advantages you got of course the knowledge the rest of the information inside the book which improve your knowledge and information. The info you get based on what kind of publication you read, if you want get more knowledge just go with education and learning books but if you want sense happy read one together with theme for entertaining for instance comic or novel. Often the My Thirteenth Winter: A Memoir is kind of e-book which is giving the reader unstable experience.

**Dorothy Waddell:**

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**Gail Brasfield:**

Why? Because this My Thirteenth Winter: A Memoir is an unordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap that but latter it will shock you with the secret it inside. Reading this book alongside it was fantastic author who write the book in such incredible way makes the content within easier to understand, entertaining means but still convey the meaning fully. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this anymore or you going to regret it. This book will give you a lot of benefits than the other book have got such as help improving your skill and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to hold off having that book? If I have been you I will go to the e-book store hurriedly.

**Katrina White:**

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