

Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher:	OLHS English	School:	OLHS
Book Title:	A Separate Peace	Genre:	Fiction & Coming of Age
Author:	John Knowles	Pages:	208
Publisher:	Scribner; 1st Scrib. edition	Copyright:	(October 7, 2003) original copyright 1959

In a brief rationale, please provide the following information relative to the book you would like added to the school's book collection for classroom use. You may attach additional pages as needed.

Book Summary and summary citation: (suggested resources include book flap summaries, review summaries from publisher, book vendors, etc.)

Gene Forrester returns to his alma mater, the Devon School, and recalls events that occurred there 15 years ago. In the summer of 1942, he forms a competitive friendship with his roommate, Phineas (Finny), the school's best athlete. Soon, Gene resents Phineas's efforts to distract him from his studies. One day, as Phineas prepares to jump from a tree into a river, Gene jounces the limb they are standing on, causing Phineas to fall to the ground and shatter his leg. Phineas will never play sports again, and his leg must remain in a cast for a long time. During vacation, Gene visits Phineas and tries to confess that he caused the accident, but Phineas refuses to believe him. When Phineas returns to school during the autumn session, Gene changes his plans to enlist in the army because he feels that Phineas needs his help. Later, some classmates hold a mock trial to determine whether Gene is responsible for Phineas's accident. Phineas becomes terribly upset; upon rushing away from the students, he falls and reinjures his leg. When the school doctor tries to set it, some marrow from the shattered bone enters Phineas's bloodstream, killing him. Although Gene later serves in the army, he believes his real fight was at school, where he killed the enemy within himself.
Class Zone. McDougal Littell. <<http://www.classzone.com/novelguides>>

Provide an instructional rationale for the use of this title, including specific reference to the OLSD curriculum map(s): (Curriculum maps may be referenced by grade/course and indicator number or curriculum maps with indicators highlighted may be attached to this form)

A Separate Peace

by John Knowles

Rationale by Renana Kadden

Knowles masterfully interweaves his themes, develops his two main characters and constructs his plot. From the opening chapter of his novel, he skillfully selects his symbols and uses foreshadowing. The students learn to appreciate these literary techniques while they are reading a book that focuses on problems they can easily understand. Studying A Separate Peace is an experience that offers students both academic and emotional growth.

Bibliography

Knowles, John, A Separate Peace. Bantam Pathfinder Editions: New York, 1959.

Reviews

Fuller, Edmund, New York Times Book Review, Feb. 7, 1960, p. 35.

Lemay, Harding, New York Herald Tribune Book Review, March 6, 1960, p. 6.
London Times Literary Supplement, May 1, 1959, p. 262.
New Yorker, volume 36:159, April 2, 1960.
San Francisco Chronicle, p. 29, June 26, 1960.
Many other reviews can be obtained from Book Review Digest, 1960.

[At the time of original publication,] Renana Kadden has taught in public and private schools in the New York City area since 1966 and is presently employed as an English teacher at Avon High School in Avon, CT.

From Rationales for Commonly Challenged Taught Books. Themed issue of Connecticut English Journal, Diane P. Shugert (Ed.), vol. 15, no. 1, Fall 1983. Used with the permission of the Connecticut Council of Teachers of English.

Rational for Challenged Books. NCTE. CD-ROM. Urbana, IL:1998.

Standards

4. Apply reading comprehension strategies, including making predictions, comparing and contrasting, recalling, summarizing, making inferences and drawing conclusions. 12RPA,C

5. Demonstrate comprehension of print and electronic text by responding to questions (e.g., literal, inferential, evaluative and synthesizing). 12RPB rhetorical devices and valid and invalid inferences. 12RAIB

8. Critique the effectiveness and validity of arguments in text and whether they achieve the author's purpose. 12RAIC

9. Synthesize the content from several sources on a single issue or written by a single author, clarifying ideas and connecting them to other sources and related topics. 12RAID

10. Compare and contrast motivations and reactions of literary characters confronting similar conflicts (e.g., individual vs. nature, freedom vs. responsibility, individual vs. society), using specific examples of character's thoughts, words and actions. 12RALB

11. Recognize and analyze characteristics of sub-genres and American Literature. 12RALC

2. Analyze the characteristics of various literary periods and how the issues influenced the writers of those periods. 12RALC

13. Evaluate ways authors develop point of view and style to achieve specific rhetorical and aesthetic purposes (e.g., through use of figurative language, irony,

tone, diction, imagery, symbolism and sounds of language), citing specific examples from text to support analysis.
12RALD,E

Include two professional reviews of this title: (a suggested list of resources for identifying professional reviews is shown below. Reviews may be “cut and pasted” (with citation) into the form or printed reviews may be attached to the form)

Review #1

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 & Up--The volatile world of male adolescence provides the backdrop for John Knowles' engrossing tale of love, hate, war, and peace. Sharing a room at Devon, an exclusive New England prep school, in the summer prior to World War II, Gene and Phineas form a complex bond of friendship that draws out both the best and worst characteristics of each boy and leads ultimately to violence, a confession, and the betrayal of trust. Narrator Scott Snively's ability to switch seamlessly from the perspective of a teenager tormented by feelings he doesn't want to understand to the reflective musing of a man looking back at the formative experience of his youth provide both the story and the setting with an immediacy that quickly engages listeners. Not only does Snively give a distinctive voice to each of the main characters, he also delineates the mannerisms and personalities of the other boys and the teachers surrounding them. Intense, mesmerizing, and compelling, this rendition of a classic coming-of-age tale belongs in all public library collections, and will be especially helpful to high school students as an accompaniment to the written text.

Cindy Lombardo, Orrville Public Library, OH

Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Review #2

From AudioFile

Scott Snively tackles Knowles's famous novel about rivalries and relationships at the fictional Devon School, a prep school for boys, during WWII. The story is told from the point of view of Gene, a man looking back on his last year at Devon. Like Gene himself, Snively's narration is sometimes wistful, sometimes regretful, sometimes hesitant. Most of the performance is subdued, with subtle distinctions in the voices of the major characters. Snively does an excellent job conveying emotions in scenes of conflict. He ably conveys anger and sadness with changes in pitch and a few well-placed shouts in a way that sounds genuine, never forced. This is an excellent treatment of a modern classic. A.F. © AudioFile 2002, Portland, Maine-- Copyright © AudioFile, Portland, Maine --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

What alternate text(s) could also fulfill the instructional requirements?

Title: **All Quiet on the Western Front**

Author: **Erich Maria Remarque**

Title: **Death of a Salesman**

Author: **Arthur Miller**

Title: **Catch-22**

Author: **Joseph Heller**

Title: **Flowers for Algernon**

Author: **Daniel Keys**

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Document any potentially controversial content:

None to date.

Keeping in mind the age, academic level, and maturity of the intended reader, what is the suggested classroom use: (check all that apply)

Gifted/Accelerated Regular At Risk

GRADE LEVEL(S): 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Reading level of this title (if applicable):

Date Submitted to Department Chair: June 4, 2007

Suggested Professional Literary Review Sources:

School Library Journal

Horn Book

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates)

Library Journal

Book Links

Publisher's Weekly

Booklist

Kirkus Review

Wilson Library Catalog

English Journal (and other resources of the National Council of Teachers of English)

The Reading Teacher (International Reading Association)

Literature for Today's Young Adults