

## Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher: Amy Beal

School: OLMS

Book Title: Code of Honor

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Author: Alan Gratz

Pages: 278

Publisher: Scholastic Inc.

Copyright: 2015

*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.)

Kamran Smith has it all. He's the star of the football team, dates the most popular girl at school, and can't wait to go to West Point like his big brother, Darius. Although Kamran's mother is from Iran, Kamran has always felt 100% American. Accepted. And then everything implodes.

Darius is accused of being a terrorist on national TV. Kamran refuses to believe it, but Darius has been filmed making threats against his country, hinting at an upcoming, deadly attack. Suddenly everyone in Kamran's life turns against him and his family.

Kamran knows it's up to him to clear his brother's name. In a race against time, Kamran must piece together a series of clues and codes that will lead him to Darius—and the truth. But is it a truth Kamran is ready to face?

**Provide an instructional rationale for the use of this title, including specific reference to the OLSD curriculum blueprints and/or State standards.**

Students will examine concepts pertaining to perspective and identity. Our OLSD ELA Curriculum Map wants students to grapple with and consider multiple perspectives. Our main character is Iranian American and faces racism and prejudice. Students will engage in collaborative discussions and support analysis of text with strong and relevant evidence.

**Include two professional review 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). Reviews should suggest an appropriate grade-level or grade-band.

Review #1

An Iranian-American teen's faith in his beloved brother is pushed to the limit when it appears that he may be involved in a terrorist attack on the U.S. Embassy in Turkey.

High school senior Kamran and his parents are stunned when his brother, Darius, a U.S. Army Ranger, appears in a video following the embassy bombing, disheveled and rambling, claiming responsibility for the attack. The family's descent into a constantly monitored nightmare of confusion is believably horrific. When Kamran notices that Darius seems to be slipping references into his posted videos about imaginary games they used to play as children, his parents don't believe it could be a clue that all is not as it seems. Only when Kamran is wrested from his home by Homeland Security, bound, drugged, and spirited away to an unknown detention facility, does he meet an ally. Readers will be swept up by both the intrigue of puzzling out the truth behind Darius' presumed guilt and by the rapid pacing. Short, intricately plotted chapters spur the story forward, and the audience will be constantly unsure about who can be trusted. Action sequences are a little unlikely; readers may find it hard to believe that one teen can take on so many militarily trained adults.

Quibbles aside, Kamran is a smart and sympathetic narrator, and readers will be happy to spend time with him in this action-packed thriller. (*Adventure. 14-18*) *Kirkus Reviews*

Review #2

**Gr 8 Up** –Seventeen-year-old Kamran Smith is a typical American high school student. He plays football, has a girlfriend and friends, plans to attend West Point after he graduates, and has an older brother he idolizes, Darius, a U.S. Army Ranger. But when Darius is captured in Afghanistan and is then seen on television appearing to work alongside terrorists, Kamran and his family are viewed with suspicion. People, including all of Kamran’s friends, begin to distance themselves from the family. Fear, discrimination, and prejudice begin to rear their heads, as well as anti-Muslim and anti-Arab sentiment. Homeland Security eventually detains the family. And Kamran still has to deal with his own questions and doubts about his brother’s loyalty. As more footage airs, Kamran begins to believe that Darius may be trying to send coded messages to him. Determined to prove that his brother is not a traitor, Kamran enlists the help of a CIA operative. This riveting work, narrated by Dan Bittner, moves at a furious and intense pace. Because the story deals with events taken from today’s headlines, it takes on a gritty and frightening plausibility. **VERDICT** A fast-paced, relevant, and well-crafted story that will keep listeners guessing whether Darius is or is not a traitor. [“A winner for independent reading and deeper discussion with its timely topic, strong writing, and appealing characters”: *SLJ* 7/15 review of the Scholastic book.]-**Mary Oluonye, Shaker Heights Public Library, OH**

*This review was published in the School Library Journal January 2016 issue.*

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

Title: Lifeboat 12

Author: Susan Hood

Title: Love, Hate & Other Filters

Author: Samira Ahmed

Title:

Author:

**Document any potentially controversial content:**

Muslim racial slurs are referenced. Terrorist attacks and plots are referenced. There is violence during the mission to rescue his brother Darius.

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

X Gifted/Accelerated

X Regular

X At Risk

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

**Reading Level of this Title (if applicable):**

**Suggested Professional Literacy 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

**Signatures:**

**Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Department Head:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Building Administrator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Curriculum Supervisor:**     *Will Washfield*     \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_