

Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher:	Jana Thompson	School:	Hyatts Middle School
Book Title:	Choosing Up Sides	Genre:	Historical Fiction
Author:	John H. Ritter	Pages:	168
Publisher:	Penguin Young Readers Group	Copyright:	2000

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.)

Preacher's boy Luke Bledsoe is a left-hander in a right-handed world. He's spent his whole life feeling like an outsider. Until by chance he steps on a baseball field and discovers he can pitch. And he's good. Better than good—he's a lefty with a fastball straight out of heaven. There's only one problem: his father. The left side has always been the side of Satan, contrary to God, he tells Luke. And baseball itself is nothing but the Devil's playground. Strong words for a boy who grew up trying to please his pa. But in stealing away to pitch, to feel the passion and camaraderie of the game, Luke discovers a whole new side to life. And to himself. John H. Ritter, a major-league new talent in juvenile fiction, hits a home run with this inspirational story that's sure to appeal to baseball fans, reluctant readers, and all left-handers who have ever longed to be like their right-handed peers.

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)

Reading Process - Comprehension Strategies

5. Summarize the information in texts, recognizing important ideas and supporting details as well as noting gaps or contradictions. 7RPB

7. Predict or hypothesize as appropriate from information in the text, supporting with specific references to a literary work. 7RPB

Self-monitor

8. Apply self-monitoring strategies to clarify confusion about text and to monitor comprehension. 7RPD

History

7) Deduce how recent events have influenced modern day cultures, government & economies. S3 10HF

8) Identify significant individuals and assess their contributions to the social, political, and economic development of the modern world. S1a, S4

9) Compare different worldly perspectives on major events in recent world history. S2b, 10PA

Citizenship

1) Compare citizen perspectives of multiple countries/cultures on international issues.

2) Explain how opportunities for citizens to influence and participate in the political process vary under various forms of government, including: democracy, monarchy, dictatorship. S18, 8CA

3) Compare and contrast rights & responsibilities of citizens under various systems of government,

including: democracy, monarchy, dictatorship.S18,S22, 8CA

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 Publishers Weekly

Set during Prohibition, Ritter's debut novel features a rural Kentucky dialect and a sympathetic hero "stuck smack between two worlds." Luke Bledsoe's conflicts with his father, a volatile fundamentalist preacher, take on a new dimension when the seventh-grade southpaw discovers his pitching power. Classmates who have seen Luke accidentally throw with what his father calls "the Devil's arm" urge Luke to join the local baseball team, but Luke's left-handedness is not the only trouble: participation in sports is strictly forbidden by his church. The narrator is strongly tempted to side with "wild-as-a-witch-dog" Uncle Micah, another lefty, who encourages his nephew to follow his own natural course. Luke's movement toward independence is realistically cautious but frustratingly slow? until his father's accidental death brings a quick turn of events and tidy solution to problems. Criticisms of religious taboos and narrow-mindedness are hurled as forcefully as Luke's fastball. More artful, subtle expression may be found in the author's depiction of local color and metaphors mostly having to do with fishing and hunting. Despite its somewhat didactic tone, this story offers enough curve balls to keep readers engaged. Ages 10-14.

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Review #2

From School Library Journal

Grade 5-9A Baseball is the sport, but personal salvation hangs in the balance for 13-year-old Luke, whose father has been newly installed to shepherd the flock of the Holy River of John the Baptist Church in Crown Falls, OH. Pa's fundamentalist beliefs hold sports to be as "sinful as dancing." He's fought a long, difficult battle to "cure" Luke of his left-handedness (including tying Luke's left arm to his side with a belt for most of six or seven years) because the Bible clearly tells him that the left hand is of the devil. Luke admires and respects his father, but also fears him. Temptations arrive in the form of baseball for which Luke's left arm seems predestined for greatness, and Annabeth Quinn, a too-good-to-be-true girl who pushes him to play because in 1921, in this place, she cannot. Further influenced by his Uncle Micah, a flashy newspaper sportswriter, Luke sees Babe Ruth play a local exhibition game and plays enough ball himself to incur his father's wrath. Long a trapper and fisherman, Luke experiences an epiphany when he frees a snared rabbit and clearly perceives his own entrapment. Following a vicious beating by his pa that cracks his pitching arm, the boy resolves to run away. Sophisticated readers might find the climax over the topAa misstep plunges Pa, a nonswimmer, into the river, and Luke, hampered by his broken arm, is unable to rescue him. Cleverly told in a colloquial first-person twang, this thoughtful tale of authority questioned and dreams denied will be real enough too many readers. Joel Shoemaker, Southeast Jr. High School, Iowa City, IA

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

Title: **Heat**

Author: **Mike Lupica**

Title: **Striking**

Author: **Will Weaver**

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Document any potentially controversial content:

Multiple uses of the word "hell" and "damn" as used in the context of the plot. The book deals with a great deal of religious content.

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): Grade 6

Date Submitted to Department Chair: November 27, 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