

Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher:	John Giusto	School:	OLMS
Book Title:	Dangerous Skies	Genre:	Realistic Fiction
Author:	Suzanne Staples	Pages:	240
Publisher:	Farrar, Straus and Giroux	Copyright:	August 1, 2006

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.)

Along the Virginia shoreline where their families have lived for generations, Buck and Tunes Smith defy tradition. Raised together like brother and sister, they are bound by surname, but not by skin color. And just as Buck has come to rely on Tunes, Tunes has come to trust that even in a place where race can mean so much, their friendship will remain as dependable as the tides.

But then the horrifying events of one spring afternoon tear them apart -- and change their world forever. Desperate to hang on to the thing that he values most, Buck struggles to uphold their friendship -- without realizing that his efforts are pushing Tunes farther and farther away.

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:

Develop and apply strategies to comprehend and interpret text.

Comprehension Strategies

5. Read purposefully and automatically, using comprehension and self-monitoring strategies. 10RPA,C

Reading Applications Literary:

Gain and demonstrate a deeper understanding of human story by reading varieties of genres.

10. Examine author's purpose and style. 10RALG

11. Determine purpose for reading and strategies needed for comprehension.

12. Compare and contrast literary elements in similar literary works.

13. Analyze plot , character, theme,

point of view and setting in varied genres. 10RALA,B, 12RALA

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 Booklist

Gr. 7[^]-10. Sharing the same last name as well as a deep love of the land, Buck and Tunes have grown up together, companionably fishing the waters near Buck's father's Virginia farm and investigating the wild secrets of their Eastern Shore home. But in school, their friendship is hidden, with Tunes retreating into silence, determined to remain out of the limelight while Buck mingles easily with white students like himself. Buck has always accepted Tunes' reticence as natural--her father, Kneebone, who works the farm like his black forebears did, is equally quiet. Buck comes to understand the real reasons for Tunes' restraint, however, after the friends discover a dead man they knew and liked floating in the creek. Buck also learns Tunes' terrible secret: she's been sexually abused by the man the children are convinced is the murderer--a white man, respected if not liked by most of the town. Prejudice, individual and community, is at the core of this retrospective coming-of-age novel, in which a boy faces painful truths that destroy the cozy harmony and order of his life. The description of the natural surroundings slows the beginning, but Staples rebounds with some supremely frightening sequences and a sharp depiction of children's powerlessness not only in the face of an evil adult but also in the everyday world. There's no sweet ending here: Buck sees prejudice even in his beloved father and learns that grown-ups, including parents, can betray you. But writing with heart and a keen understanding of human nature, Staples doesn't shy away from harsh realities: she asks hard questions and, by setting her story in the recent past, sends a clear message about how far we yet must go to heal deep wounds. Stephanie Zvirin (From www.amazon.com)

Review #2

From Kirkus Reviews

Stubborn na<vet, destroys a close interracial friendship in this long, turgid story from the author of Haveli (1993), set on Virginia's Eastern Shore. After finding the floating body of a migrant worker, Buck, 12, is horrified when his best friend, Tunes, becomes a suspect. Sure that the real killer is prosperous, respected Jumbo Rawlins, ``six foot seven, every inch lean, mean, and ill-intentioned," Buck urges Tunes to tell her side of the story. Instead, Tunes disappears. When Buck tracks her down, he's horrified to learn from her that Rawlins has been abusing her physically and sexually. Tunes tries to tell him that a black girl's word won't carry much weight against that of a white adult, but Buck is so convinced that justice will out that he persuades her to come out of hiding. As predicted, she's arrested and tried while Rawlins remains untouched; though not convicted, Tunes moves away and drops out of Buck's life forever. In matching smart, resourceful, opaque Tunes to innocent and blindly loyal Buck, Staples creates a telling contrast, but her penchant for explaining characters, relationships, and situations rather than showing them, plus a plot that wanders like the setting's swampy waterways, slows the pace; ambiguities in Tunes's story, plus Buck's disillusioned, now-it's-five-years-later-and- life-goes-on finish, are puzzling. (Fiction. 11-13) -- Copyright ©1996, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. (From www.amazon.com)

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

Title: **Watsons Go To Birmingham**

Author: **Curtis**

Title: **The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman**

Author: **Gaines**

Title:
Title:
Title:
Title:

Author:
Author:
Author:
Author:

Document any potentially controversial content:

Mild profanity & racial slurs used within the context of the setting and characters' background.

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): 5

Date Submitted to Department Chair: May 8, 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