

## Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher:	Lesley Wolf	School:	Hyatts
Book Title:	Cut	Genre:	Fiction- Family & Relationships
Author:	Patricia McCormick	Pages:	160
Publisher:	Scholastic	Copyright:	2002

*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.)

Fifteen-year old Callie is so withdrawn that she's not speaking to anyone including her therapist at the residential treatment facility where her parents and doctor send her after discovering that she cuts herself. Her story unfolds primarily through dramatic monologues, gradually revealing the family turmoil that led to her self-destructive behavior. Her little brother, Sam, is ill he nearly died in her care. Since Sam's illness, Callie's mother has become so worried and fragile that she rarely leaves the house. Her father has responded to the psychological and financial stress of Sam's illness by disappearing into his work, and when that doesn't work, into his drinking.

Callie's efforts to understand herself and her family illuminate her process of recovery honestly and with hope. Cut provides an insightful look at the psychology of cutting a form of self-abuse an estimated 2 million teenage girls inflict on themselves.

**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)

10. Examine author's purpose and style.
13. Analyze plot, character, theme, point of view and setting in varied genres.
6. Write responses to literature that organize an insightful interpretation around several clear ideas, premises or images that support judgments with specific references to the original text, to other texts, authors and/or to prior knowledge.

**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

Publishers Weekly: In this adaptation of McCormick's debut novel, Lewis (TV's Ellen) imbues her reading with the cynicism and pain of the book's troubled 15-year-old protagonist, Callie. Callie faces some difficult emotional hurdles as a "guest" at the residential treatment center where she has been sent because she cuts herself with sharp objects. In a flat, unaffected tone, befitting someone unhappy with her situation, Lewis's Callie explains the daily routines and schedules at Sea Pines, the facility dubbed "Sick Minds" by Callie's roommate. Though she doesn't speak to her fellow guests, or even her doctors at first, listeners are always privy to Callie's feelings and her impressions

of her surroundings, be it what the anorexic guests don't eat or how the substance abuse guests cope. Details of her stressful, dysfunctional home life trickle out along the way; it's at these points that Lewis's vulnerable voice invites listeners to feel compassion for Callie. As Callie makes breakthroughs with her therapists and comes to better understand her behavior and its causes, Lewis meets the challenge of tearful scenes. Lewis never sounds phony, though, and conveys the hope in McCormick's ending, which suggests Callie's eventual recovery.

Review #2

VOYA: This extraordinary novel explores the psychological phenomenon of self-mutilation known as cutting. Written in first person, the book recounts the story of thirteen-year-old Callie, who has been placed in a residential treatment center. Although many patients have eating disorders, others, such as Callie, repeatedly cut their skin with sharp objects, creating physical scars, scabs, and sores that mirror the mental ones. The story unfolds through Callie's therapy sessions, her interactions with other residents, and her mental monologues. Mute by choice, Callie's silence is her sanity. Her younger brother Sam's severe asthma has altered the family dynamics and taken over their lives. Callie's coping mechanism is cutting. Although the road to recovery for any such patient is long and extensive, this book gives the reader just a glimpse into the psyche of one teenager who cuts. Realistic, sensitive, and heartfelt, this book explores the power of the human spirit as it struggles through mental illness. The well-developed characters, including the motherly, rock-solid secondary character of Ruby, one of the attendants, also reflect the author's strength as a writer.

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

Title: **You Don't Know Me**

Author: **David Klass**

Title: **Impulse**

Author: **Ellen Hopkins**

Title: **Go Ask Alice**

Author: **Anonymous**

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

**Document any potentially controversial content:**

Deals with the topics of "cutting".

**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):** Grades 7 and up

**Date Submitted to Department Chair:** Jan. 31, 2008

**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