Olentangy Local School District
Literature Selection Review

Teacher: Ross   Grade: 8   School: OBMS

Book Title: Fallen Angels   Genre: realistic fiction

Author: Walter Dean Myers   Pages: 309

Publisher: Scholastic   Copyright: 05/01/2008

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.)
A coming-of-age tale for young adults set in the trenches of the Vietnam War in the late 1960s, this is the story of Perry, a Harlem teenager who volunteers for the service when his dream of attending college falls through. Sent to the front lines, Perry and his platoon come face-to-face with the Vietcong and the real horror of warfare. But violence and death aren't the only hardships. As Perry struggles to find virtue in himself and his comrades, he questions why black troops are given the most dangerous assignments, and why the U.S. is even there at all.

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)
This book is being used as an optional text for students to further explore the author, Walter Dean Myers. The focus of the unit is for students to get a glimpse of how the historical and cultural influences on an author's life can have an effect on his writing. It is also a time for students to analyze the author's writing style. The following statements are directly pulled form the OLSD 8th grade Integrated English Curriculum Map and are the guidance for the reading focus of this unit:
I can…
Reading Applications: Literary Text
*analyze the influence that the setting has on the story and other literary elements.
* identify and explain different types of characters and how their interactions and conflicts affect the plot.
*explain how the type of point of view a story contains, affects the plot.
* explain how an author paces the action of the story (plot).
* discuss and explain the major themes in a piece of writing, discuss how the same theme may cross over multiple works by the same author.
* identify the multiple ways an author makes his/her writing unique (style).
Reading Applications: Informational Text
*analyze an author's argument, perspective or viewpoint & explain the development of key points.
Reading Process
*apply reading comprehension strategies, including making predictions, comparing and contrasting, recalling and summarizing and making inferences and drawing conclusions.

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
Editorial Review - Kirkus Reviews
The powerful story of an introspective Harlem youth who is sent to fight in Vietnam. With dreams of college fading, Ritchie Perry (17) enlists, buying time to consider his future. By mistake, he's ordered to Southeast Asia and into a bloody, violent nightmare where he sees his fellows gunned down (sometimes by their own side), women and children mutilated and killed, desperate heroism and equally desperate cowardice; his articulate, dispassionate telling only accentuates his story's horror, Myers masterfully re-creates the combat zone with its "hours of boredom, seconds of terror," its crushing tension and the distortion of values brought on by the relentless proximity of death-- Ritchie says, "We were in the middle of it, and it was deeply within us." He survives racist officers, pitched battles, guerrilla raids, and multiple wounds—not all of them physical; whether his numbed spirit will eventually thaw is a question the author leaves open. War-story fans will find enough action here, though it isn't glorified; thoughtful readers will be haunted by this tribute to a ravaged generation.

Review #2
Parents need to know that this book realistically describes what it was like for American soldiers fighting in Vietnam in 1967-68. Expect profanity, poor grammar, and graphic violence; there are depictions of shootings and explosions, including a woman who booby-traps a small child to explode in an American soldier's arms. The story builds until the soldiers and readers are caught in a vortex of war. Richie asks some big questions -- about the reasons for the war, about the treatment of African-Americans, and more. The realism, humor, and intensity attract even reluctant readers and keep them reading -- and thinking about the cost of war. -CommonSense Media

What alternate text(s) could also fulfill the instructional requirements?
Title: Any novel writen by…   Author: Walter Dean Myers
Title: Author:
Title: Author:
Title: Author:
Title: Author:
Title: Author:

Document any potentially controversial content:
This is a gritty, realistic look at war through the eyes of a young, African-American man. It contains some profanity, violence, sexual language, and vulgarity, all within the framework of a war-time setting.

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): LX 650

Date Submitted to Department Chair: 1/23/12

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