

Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher: Brian Nicola Grade: 10 School: OOHS

Book Title: Go Set a Watchman Genre: Fiction

Author: Harper Lee Pages: 278

Publisher: Harper Collins 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.)

Harper Lee's *Go Set a Watchman* narrates the homecoming of Jean Louise Finch as she faces a community rife with racial tension, an old friend turned love interest, and a father who no longer seems as perfect as she once believed him to be.

Jean Louise Finch returns to her childhood hometown of Maycomb, Alabama, for what she expects will be a typical visit. Soon, however, her growing attraction to an old friend named Hank begins to complicate her stay. Her difficulties grow even further with her discovery that both Hank and her father are part of an organization dedicated to preserving racial segregation. Jean Louise, who has always known her father as a champion of civil rights, feels betrayed. No longer sure whom she can trust, Jean Louise lashes out against the people she loves and condemns them for tolerating racism. Gradually, through conversations with her uncle Jack, Jean Louise learns to accept that her father is imperfect and human, capable of doing bad things as well as good (Cliffsnotes).

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)

See attached form with highlights. Primary focus will be related to reading through multiple lenses and author context. With this text, students will examine the changing characters of Jean Louise and Atticus Finch, especially in relation to *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

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 Harper Lee comes a landmark new novel set two decades after her beloved Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Maycomb, Alabama. Twenty-six-year-old Jean Louise Finch--"Scout"--returns home from New York City to visit her aging father, Atticus. Set against the backdrop of the civil rights tensions and political turmoil that were transforming the South, Jean Louise's homecoming turns bittersweet when she learns disturbing truths about her close-knit family, the town and the people dearest to her. Memories from her childhood flood back, and her values and assumptions are thrown into doubt. Featuring many of the iconic characters from *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Go Set a Watchman* perfectly captures a young woman, and a world, in a painful yet necessary transition out of the illusions of the past--a journey that can be guided only by one's conscience.

Written in the mid-1950s, *Go Set a Watchman* imparts a fuller, richer understanding and appreciation of Harper Lee. Here is an unforgettable novel of wisdom, humanity, passion, humor and effortless precision--a profoundly affecting work of art that is both wonderfully evocative of

another era and relevant to our own times. It not only confirms the enduring brilliance of To Kill a Mockingbird, but also serves as its essential companion, adding depth, context and new meaning to an American classic (Goodreads.com).

Review #2

Parents need to know that Go Set a Watchman is the much-discussed, latently discovered manuscript from Harper Lee, author of To Kill a Mockingbird. Although it is said to have been written before To Kill a Mockingbird, the book is set 15 or so years after the events of that book, with adult Jean Louise "Scout" Finch living in New York City and visiting her hometown of Maycomb, Alabama, for two weeks. Though some changes to Maycomb are happening too fast for Jean Louise, such as the boom in postwar building wiping out childhood places she cherished, some attitudes, especially those regarding segregation, are stuck too far in the past for her. Jean Louise struggles to see where she fits in Maycomb, as a modern woman and a born-and-bred Southerner.

The book highlights an interesting time in America's social and political landscape, especially the South's reaction to the Supreme Court's ruling on Brown v. Board of Education that declared segregation unconstitutional. Some of the characters' viewpoints may be upsetting to modern readers, but the book offers a good insight into the mindset of many Southerners during that era. A few characters drink and smoke. Some swear infrequently ("son of a bitch," "damn," "ass," "hell," "bastard," "God," and "Jesus Christ") and infrequently use the "N" word (Common Sense Media).

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

Title: Catcher in the Rye Author: J.D. Salinger

Title: Author:

Title: Author:

Title: Author:

Title: Author:

Title: Author:

Document any potentially controversial content:

Racial identity and discrimination plays a major role in this story, but is handled with a deft hand. Some language (including the n-word) is used sparingly, but with value and as a key piece of the story.

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): 9th grade and up

Date Submitted to Department Chair: August 6, 2017

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