

Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher:	Jennifer Lieberman	School:	Orange MS
Book Title:	On My Honor	Genre:	Realistic Fiction
Author:	Marion Dane Bauer	Pages:	90
Publisher:	Yearling	Copyright:	1986

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:

During a bicycle trip to the state park, Joel dares his best friend, Tony, to a swimming race on the dangerous Vermillion River. The boys have been warned never to go near the river, but Tony can't let Joel think he's scared. Both boys jump in. When Joel reaches the sandbar, he turns to look for Tony and finds that he vanished, Joel is stunned. How can he face their parents and the terrible truth?

Provide an instructional rationale for the use of this title, including specific reference to the OLSD curriculum map(s):

- 13. Describe and analyze the elements of character development. 7RALA
- 14. Identify the main and minor events of the plot and explain how each gives rise to the next. 7RALC

Include two professional reviews of this title:

Review #1

From Publishers Weekly

This is a devastating but beautifully written story of a boy's all-consuming guilt over the role he plays in the death of his best friend. Joel and Tony have been together since they were babies. Although Tony's crazy jokes and wildness sometimes make Joel feel as if he were much older, and even make Joel angry, no one is as exciting as Tony. But when Tony suggests they climb the bluffs at Starved Rock, Joel is frightened, knowing how dangerous the bluffs are. He's also afraid of Tony's sharp tongue, though, so he asks his father for permission to ride his bike to Starved Rock, certain that his father will say no. When his father says yes, Joel finds himself riding Tony's old, beat-up bike while Tony coasts along on Joel's 10-speed out to the state park. Halfway there the boys cross the Vermillion River, and Tony, who earlier had refused to go swimming at the pool with Joel, decides to swim in the river instead. Angry at Tony's lack of sense the river is both dangerous and dirty Joel dares Tony to race out to a distant sandbar with him. Then the unthinkable occurs: Joel reaches the sandbar; Tony disappears. The realization slams into Joel with its hideous finality. Tony is dead, and it is all his fault. Joel's efforts to cope with his staggering sense of guilt are handled with stark reality, so that the reader shares his sense of the enormity of life's unfairness. Yet

within Joel's first perception of the total uncertainties of life, there is also the steadfastness of his father's love. While there is death, there is also love, and Bauer's honest and gripping novel joins the ranks of such as Katherine Paterson's *Bridge to Terabithia* in its handling of these issues.
Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Review #2

From School Library Journal

Grade 4-6 Twelve-year-old Joel has unwillingly agreed to bike out to the state park with his daredevil friend Tony. "On his honor," he promises his father to be careful, knowing that Tony wants them to climb the dangerous park bluffs. When they arrive, however, Tony abruptly changes his mind and heads for the river. With his promise jangling in his mind, Joel follows Tony in for a swim. Tony drowns in the dirty, turbulent water, leaving Joel to face his guilty conscience, and his father, alone. In this short but solid novel, Bauer effectively portrays the dilemma of pre-adolescents, old enough to want to meet their own challenges without adult interference, young enough to want grownup protection and reassurance. Joel understands only too well the moral dilemma he faces, but he is so bound by peer pressure that wrong choices and tragedy are almost inevitable. Bauer's association of Joel's guilt with the smell of the polluted river on his skin is particularly noteworthy. Its miasma almost rises off the pages. Descriptions are vivid, characterization and dialogue natural, and the style taut but unforced. A powerful, moving book.
Barbara Hutcheson, Greater Victoria Public Library, Canada

Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition

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

Title: **Bridge to Terabithia**

Author: **Katherine Patterson**

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Document any potentially controversial content:

A young child dies in the story. His friend is faced with a moral dilemma to tell the truth.

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): N/A

Date Submitted to Department Chair: 9/20/07

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