

Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher:	Ebersole/Ross	School:	OBMS
Book Title:	On the Fringe	Genre:	realistic fiction;short stories
Author:	Various;edited by Don Gallo	Pages:	221
Publisher:	Speak/Penguin Putnam	Copyright:	2001

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.)

In every school at every grade, there's a pecking order among students-an in crowd and those outside it, who are often ridiculed mercilessly for the "crime" of being different. This powerful anthology explores the teen outsider experience in electrifying, never-before-published stories by eleven of today's most acclaimed YA authors. A tomboy finds the relief of self-expression through her music, while in another tale a relentless bully tests the faith of an intensely religious girl. A cheerleader discovers that the true soul of her school can't be found within the cool clique; a football player finally stands up for a harassed fellow student; and a boy watches in horror as the school "freak" marches into his classroom with a loaded rifle.

Offering insights into popularity and peer pressure, nonconformity and persecution, acceptance and hate, these riveting, provocative tales will leave readers thinking and start them talking.

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)

Stories short and simple to dissect literary elements, while promoting deeper reading with possible universal themes. Linked to the following map standards: Reading Process - choose independent reading based on personal interests; Reading Applications-identify different types of characters and how they affect the plot, analyze the use of setting, explain how authors use climax, compare and contrast different points of view, identify universal themes by different authors, explain how an author conveys mood and tone

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

VOYA

In his introduction, Gallo writes that authors were invited to write short stories about teenagers who do not fit in, the "weirdos, geeks, nerds, freaks, faggots, and worse" for this collection. These epithets represent teens ostracized by their peers at school and misunderstood by society in general.

Gallo hopes that readers will gain "greater understanding and tolerance of others" by reading the stories, which are both engaging and thought provoking. In Nancy Werlin's *Shortcut*, readers learn that there is unity in strength, even for the outcasts. Jack Gantos's inspired writing offers a glimpse into a unique mind in *Muzak for Prozac*. Angela Johnson's *Through a Window* shows the heartrending consequences of a best friend's suicide. *WWJD* by Bill Weaver is a chilling account of what even a meek and mild pariah can do when pushed. Graham Salisbury's *Mrs. Noonan* and Alden R. Carter's *Satyagraha* provide two distinctive, incisive views of revenge. Perhaps the most affecting story is *Guns for Geeks* by Chris Crutcher, who tells a horrific account of a school shooting evocative of Columbine. The eleven stories in this anthology are all noteworthy, expertly written by prize-winning authors. Running the gamut from poignant to disturbing, they effectively portray the lives of disenfranchised teenagers. Any selection would serve as an excellent basis for discussion. Some strong language and violence suggest this book for students in grade seven and above. VOYA CODES: 4Q 4P M J S (Better than most, marred only by occasional lapses; Broad general YA appeal; Middle School, defined as grades 6 to 8; Junior High, defined as grades 7 to 9; Senior High, defined as grades 10 to 12)

Review #2

From School Library Journal

Gr 7 Up-Kids who are geeks, unathletic, poor, emotionally fragile, loners, or unattractive by current standards form the heart of this collection of exceptional stories by well-known YA authors such as Joan Bauer, Chris Crutcher, and M. E. Kerr. Inspired by the events at Columbine High School, the authors pondered what sorts of heartbreak could cause teens to react so powerfully and violently, and how being isolated and shut out of high school groups could tear down the fragile walls of self-esteem, making vulnerable individuals snap and cause massive destruction. The result is a compilation of short stories from the point of view of those tormented, and those who view others being bullied and how their perceptions change as they examine the situations. While all the stories are excellent, Jack Gantos's "Muzak for Prozac" is an exceptional example of the fragile balance that one teen struggles to maintain through the use of mood-stabilizing chemicals. A must-buy for all libraries.-Susan Riley, Greenburgh Public Library, Elmsford, NY
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What alternate text(s) could also fulfill the instructional requirements?

<u>Title:</u> 12 Impossible Things Before Breakfast	<u>Author:</u> Jane Yolen
<u>Title:</u>	<u>Author:</u>
<u>Title:</u>	<u>Author:</u>
<u>Title:</u>	<u>Author:</u>
<u>Title:</u>	<u>Author:</u>
<u>Title:</u>	<u>Author:</u>

Document any potentially controversial content:

Four out of the twelve short stories contain mature language and mature content. We have asked that parental consent is required at the middle school level for these stories.

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): YA

Date Submitted to Department Chair: 1/23/2012

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