

Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher:	Mary Bischoff	School:	OLMS
Book Title:	One Crazy Summer	Genre:	Historical Fiction
Author:	Rita William-Garcia	Pages:	240
Publisher:	Amistad	Copyright:	2011

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.)

Set during one of the most tumultuous years in recent American history, *One Crazy Summer* is the heartbreaking, funny tale of three girls who travel to Oakland, California, in 1968 in search of the mother who abandoned them. It's an unforgettable story told by a distinguished author of books for children and teens, Rita Williams-Garcia.

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)

RL. 1,2,3, and RL. 9

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 School Library Journal

Starred Review. Grade 4–7—It is 1968, and three black sisters from Brooklyn have been put on a California-bound plane by their father to spend a month with their mother, a poet who ran off years before and is living in Oakland. It's the summer after Black Panther founder Huey Newton was jailed and member Bobby Hutton was gunned down trying to surrender to the Oakland police, and there are men in berets shouting "Black Power" on the news. Delphine, 11, remembers her mother, but after years of separation she's more apt to believe what her grandmother has said about her, that Cecile is a selfish, crazy woman who sleeps on the street. At least Cecile lives in a real house, but she reacts to her daughters' arrival without warmth or even curiosity. Instead, she sends the girls to eat breakfast at a center run by the Black Panther Party and tells them to stay out as long as they can so that she can work on her poetry. Over the course of the next four weeks, Delphine and her younger sisters, Vonetta and Fern, spend a lot of time learning about revolution and staying out of their mother's way. Emotionally challenging and beautifully written, this book immerses readers in a time and place and raises difficult questions of cultural and ethnic identity and personal responsibility. With memorable characters (all three girls have engaging, strong voices) and a powerful story, this is a book well worth reading and rereading.—Teri Markson, Los Angeles Public Library

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Review #2

From Booklist

Starred Review Eleven-year-old Delphine has only a few fragmented memories of her mother, Cecile, a poet who wrote verses on walls and cereal boxes, played smoky jazz records, and abandoned the family in Brooklyn after giving birth to her third daughter. In the summer of 1968, Delphine’s father decides that seeing Cecile is “something whose time had come,” and Delphine boards a plane with her sisters to Cecile’s home in Oakland. What they find there is far from their California dreams of Disneyland and movie stars. “No one told y’all to come out here,” Cecile says. “No one wants you out here making a mess, stopping my work.” Like the rest of her life, Cecile’s work is a mystery conducted behind the doors of the kitchen that she forbids her daughters to enter. For meals, Cecile sends the girls to a Chinese restaurant or to the local, Black Panther–run community center, where Cecile is known as Sister Inzilla and where the girls begin to attend youth programs. Regimented, responsible, strong-willed Delphine narrates in an unforgettable voice, but each of the sisters emerges as a distinct, memorable character, whose hard-won, tenuous connections with their mother build to an aching, triumphant conclusion. Set during a pivotal moment in African American history, this vibrant novel shows the subtle ways that political movements affect personal lives; but just as memorable is the finely drawn, universal story of children reclaiming a reluctant parent’s love. Grades 4-7. --Gillian Engberg --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

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

<u>Title:</u> Watsons Go To Birmingham	<u>Author:</u> Christopher Paul Curtis
<u>Title:</u> Bud, Not Buddy	<u>Author:</u> Christopher Paul Curtis
<u>Title:</u>	<u>Author:</u>

Document any potentially controversial content:

- A multitude of positive messages in this book, including responsibility, loyalty, overcoming one's past, moving through stereotypes, being open to change, making one's own decisions, making good decisions, respect, and both personal and societal freedom.

- Positive role models

Delphine, the main character, is a good role model. She is responsible for her sisters, makes difficult and quick decisions, knows how to read prickly situations and people very well, she is kind and smart, and open to growing beyond her own understanding. Big Ma and Pa are strong role models for their devotion to the kids and their values of respect and responsibility. Cecile is not a good role model, as she abandoned her kids to pursue her life of poetry and to be free, but she does represent behavior which contributed to changing roles for women. Many good kid and adult characters exist in this story.

- Violence

A minor character's father was arrested for his political beliefs, and the police knocked down his door at dinner time in front of the kids. Cecile was arrested but there was no violence about it.

- Sex
- Language

"Jesus," "Negro," "China boy," and "shut up."

- Consumerism

The author mentions products and TV shows as a way to place the story into a time period, including Get Smart, Captain Kangaroo, Flipper, Mike Douglas Show, I Spy, Mission: Impossible, Timex, Ajax, Pine-Sol, Safeway, Candy Land, Disneyland, and Magic Markers.

- Drinking, drugs, & smoking

Cecile smokes cigarettes. Papa smokes Viceroy's.

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): 8-12

Date Submitted to Department Chair: 12-19-2013

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