

## Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher:	Ward	School:	OBMS
Book Title:	The Sledding Hill	Genre:	Realistic Fiction
Author:	Chris Crutcher	Pages:	256
Publisher:	Greenwillow Books	Copyright:	2006

*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.)

Eddie hasn't had an easy year

First his father dies. Then his best friend Billy accidentally kicks a stack of Sheetrock over on himself, breaking his neck and effectively hitting tilt on his Earthgame. Eddie and Billy were inseparable. Still are. Billy isn't going to let a little thing like death stop him from hanging in there with his friend. And when Eddie faces an epic struggle with the powers that be, Billy will remain right there beside him.

**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)

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.1

Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.3

Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.6

Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

**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 Publishers Weekly

Crutcher takes the fad in authorial intrusion one better, inserting himself as a character in this metafictional novel with a heavy-handed message, a schizophrenic presentation and a highly

entertaining plot. Eddie Proffit is the very definition of a sympathetic character, losing his Dad and best friend to violent accidents in the opening pages. His story is narrated in *Lovely Bones*-esque fashion by the dead friend, Billy, who, if not in Heaven, is in a very good place—free of pain and full of neat tricks to employ during his ghostly mission to help Eddie overcome sadness so deep he has stopped speaking. The exploration of death and of being silenced by grief takes a hairpin turn when book banning—a very different type of silencing—becomes the focus of the novel's second half. Eddie's elective mutism has his mother's minister, the villainous Sanford Tarter, convinced he needs to be baptized. Tarter also teaches English at the high school, but Eddie is enrolled in a class called Really Modern Literature, run by a librarian who prefers "books by authors who are still alive." She requires everyone read *Warren Preece* by the "relatively obscure" author Chris Crutcher. Naturally, this "good book with bad words" exercises Tarter, who incites a crusade to rid the library of all Crutcher's "irrelevant and only marginally well written" books. Plausibility is pushed aside for entertainment and moralizing—Billy's father loses his job as school janitor for reading the book aloud to students in the boiler room, a student comes out as gay at the public hearing, another admits openly that she cuts herself—but Eddie's cause, and his decision to speak out, is so honorable, these lapses are easily overlooked. The title – an allusion to a favorite spot the two friends enjoyed when both were alive—doesn't work but, despite its flaws, the story does. Ages 12-up. (May)

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### Review #2

From School Library Journal

Starred Review. Grade 7 Up—This clever, spirited post-modern meta-narrative is a quick read that is bound to be controversial. It has no profanity, sexual acts, drug or alcohol use, or bloody violence but takes dead aim at censors who can't get past counting swear words or the notion of a gay character who is still alive at the end of a book. Eddie Proffit, 14, is a prototypical Crutcher protagonist, a misunderstood teen who in quick succession has lost his father and best friend, Billy, in accidents. And he must deal with Mr. Tartar, who is both a feared English teacher at school and the minister to a flock of Protestant fundamentalists at the Red Brick Church. However, the author's approach to these familiar themes is fresh and fun, beginning when Billy, recently deceased, opts to keep his newly omniscient eye on Eddie, taking advantage of opportune "windows" to communicate, initially scaring Eddie into voluntary mutism but eventually working with him to bring about...the climax of the book. This centers around the use of Crutcher's faux novel, *Warren Preece*, in class and the community-wide uproar over it. The author's obvious delight in writing himself into the story (complete with e-mail address) does not diminish its effectiveness, though he occasionally gets his religious icons confused. Crutcherisms such as "When something seems mysterious and magical, it's because we don't have enough information" meld neatly with upbeat metaphysical speculation to give teen readers an involving story and plenty to think about.—Joel Shoemaker, Southeast Junior High School, Iowa City, IA

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

Title: **Every Day**

Author: **David Levithan**

Title: **Thirteen Reasons Why**

Author: **Jay Asher**

Title: **The Book Thief**

Author: **Markus Zusak**

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

**Document any potentially controversial content:**

Various teen problems, such as anorexia and cutting, are mentioned. Racism among religious zealots; A man and a boy are killed in accidents; brief mention of an abusive parent, masturbation and abortion. A gay character comes out. References to curse words, but none actually used.

**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):** 1010

**Date Submitted to Department Chair:** 4/9/2014

**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