

Middle School English Literature Selection Advisory Committee

2/17/20

Welcome!

Thanks for being here.



Agenda

A copy of the agenda was emailed to you & is in our shared folder.

Goals:

- ❑ Recap and update by grade level:
 - ❑ Core Lit decisions & rationale
 - ❑ What progress has been made since December?
- ❑ Back to work:
 - ❑ Finish (?) Supplemental Menus
 - ❑ Discuss next steps

Special Welcome

Kari Nygaard - 8th-grade
JLS teacher

Kelly Zalatimo - 8th-grade
Greene teacher

Kathie Laurence -
Director of Secondary Ed



6th Grade:

Jim Meininger

Erin Chan

Laura Hull

Ana Reyes

Brooke Tassa

Fenton Zarlengo

Shala Howell

Arturo Garrido
Gomez

7th Grade:

Hart Walsh

Maia Lin

Noel Woodward

Kim Lohse

Liz Lewis

Jenny Chin

8th Grade:

Shaina Holdener

Deanna Jones

Jedd Bloom

Olivia Souter

Ander Lucia

Jen Valero

Iva Reid

Kari Nygaard

Kelly Zalatimo

Kathie Laurence

Kristen Lee

Online Resources

Find and open the Resource Repository:

- ➤ Shared folder “MS English Literature Advisory Committee 2019-21”
 - ➤ Subfolder “Resources”
- Link also in Chat

Recap & Update by Grade Level

Grade 6

Core Lit Decisions & Rationale

6th Grade

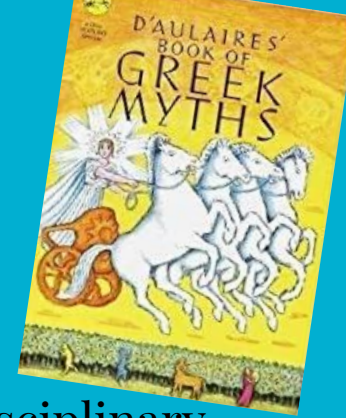
Keep D'Aulaires'
Greek Myths

Pilot *Hero Next Door*
as likely 2nd core lit
text

Here to explain the 6th-grade
group's thinking:

Jim and Erin

Keeping D'Aulaires' *Greek Myths*



Students:

- Previously stated high approval among sixth graders
- Rick Riordan's assorted Greek hero/myth series remains hugely popular
- Checks the fantasy box in student survey

Teachers:

- Beautiful fit for interdisciplinary units with social studies
- Enables us to teach traditional literature/non-fiction (1962) as well as exposure to liberal arts base
- Provides rigor through vocabulary, context, and theme
- Variety of projects already developed at sites including Hero's Journey, plays, artwork

Piloting *The Hero Next Door*

This book was chosen because...

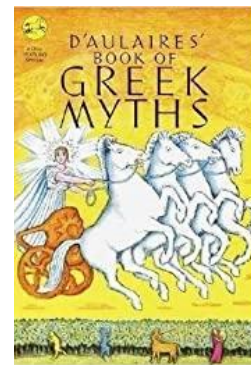
- it responds to the student request for diversity
 - Race, gender, ability, class, family configuration, religion
 - Positive representation in everyday situations
- the short story format is more flexible for teachers
- it includes a wide variety of genres and formats (fantasy, realistic fiction, graphic novel, science fiction, historical fiction)
- it is representative of kids who have various challenges (abilities, academic, social...) introducing students to a broad spectrum of societal problems without giving easy answers
- the authors are diverse, current, popular authors whose work student (and teachers) can explore further



Why pilot?

Student input
Teacher trial

Content Connections



Connections Between D'Aulaires and *Hero*:

- What does it mean to be a hero in Ancient Greece and what does it mean to be a hero today?
- Huge heroic acts in mythology and small, everyday acts of heroism

Connections to Other Content:

- Were historical figures heroic? How did they impact their civilizations? (DBQs, Alexander the Great, Hammurabi, Ashoka, Hatshepsut ...)

Progress Since December

<p>Release Day for teachers to plan <i>Hero</i> pilot: Jan. 28</p>	<p><i>Hero</i> distributed to students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Fletcher: Feb. 10❖ Greene: Feb. 3❖ JLS: Feb. 5	<p>Pilots have begun/will soon begin</p>
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Piloting 6th-Grade Teachers

Fletcher

Joanne

Suganthi

Shari

Greene

Hart

Erin

Bryson

Brooke

Kevin

JLS

Katie

Hayley

Ashley

Jim

Overview of Pilot

February - March

- ❑ Before pilot, a message went home to inform parents
- ❑ **Piloting of stories from *The Hero Next Door***
- ❑ After pilot, parents have opportunity to complete survey
- ❑ After pilot, students complete pilot evaluation form
- ❑ After pilot, teachers complete pilot evaluation form (by **3/31**)

Hero Next Door Pilot: Which Stories?

Which stories are being piloted?

- **“Reina Madrid” (G anchor, JLS anchor, F anchor)**
- “Home” (G anchor, F anchor, JLS choice)
- “The Assist” (G choice, JLS choice, F choice)
- “Girl’s Best Friend” (G choice, JLS choice, F choice)
- “Thrown” (G choice, JLS choice, F choice)
- “Everly’s Otherworldly Dilemma” (G choice, JLS anchor)
- “The Save” (JLS choice, F anchor)
- “Go Fish” (F choice)
- “One Wish” (F. choice)
- “Los Abuelos” (F choice)

Which stories are not being piloted?

- “Minnows and Zombies”
- “Ellison’s Cornucopia”
- “Rescue”

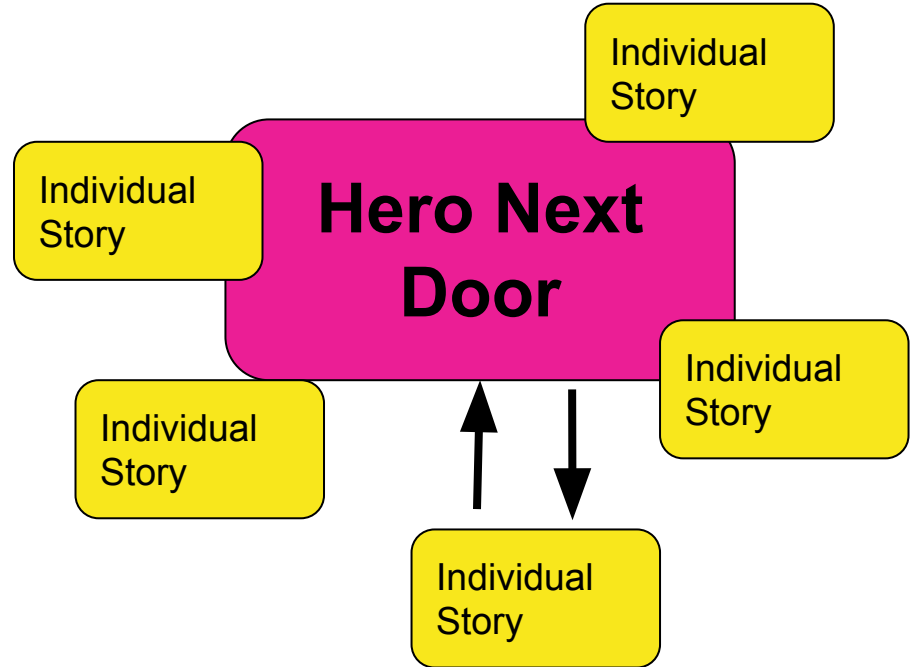


Hero Next Door Pilot: Which Focus?

Common Cross-Site Focus:

6th-Grade Reading
Standard for Literature:

Determine a theme or
central idea of a text and
how it is conveyed through
particular details



After Pilot: Data Collection

Short, optional community feedback form

Short, optional parent survey (for parents/guardians of piloting students)

In-class Student Pilot Evaluation Form – 21 questions

Lengthy Teacher Pilot Evaluation Form – Created using criteria from:

- Lit Committee Guiding Questions
- CCSS and ELA/ELD Framework

Committee Observations

You are welcome to observe lessons in piloting classrooms.

Please email piloting teachers directly and arrange for mutually-agreeable time.

See Resource Repository - Email Addresses



Any Questions Thus Far?



Grade 7

Core Lit Decisions & Rationale

7th Grade

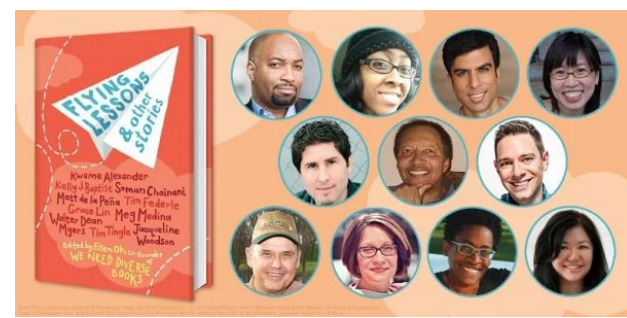
Decided on *Flying Lessons & Other Stories*

Either *Outsiders* or *Booked*. 7th-grade teachers read both & voted.

Here to explain the 7th-grade group's thinking:

Liz and Noel

Choosing *Flying Lessons & Other Stories*



We chose *Flying Lessons & Other Stories* because:

- Allows for “Windows and Mirrors” as the stories reflect different cultures, experiences, historical periods, etc.
 - Addresses need for more diverse literature in curriculum
- Many stories are “relatable” for students and short story format allows for accessibility for students
- Thematic potential of connecting stories or connecting stories with other adopted lit
- Gives instructional flexibility to teachers – jigsaw, literature circles, etc.
 - Many teachers already use short stories and can “pick and choose” from this new collection
- Ties well with 7th grade subject-focus of “identity”

Reasons that a pilot didn’t seem necessary:

- Meets requests of teacher input: Most teachers asked for a compilation, or a collection-style text

A Tough Choice: *Booked* versus *The Outsiders*

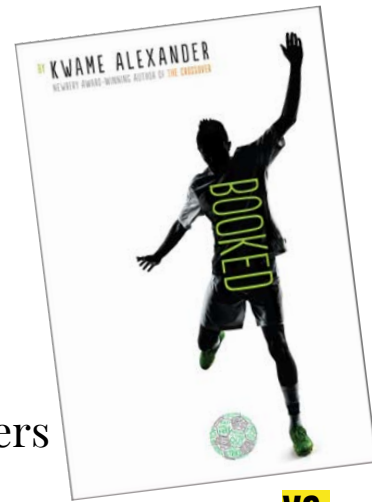
Both *Booked* and *The Outsiders* have advantages in the classroom:

Booked:

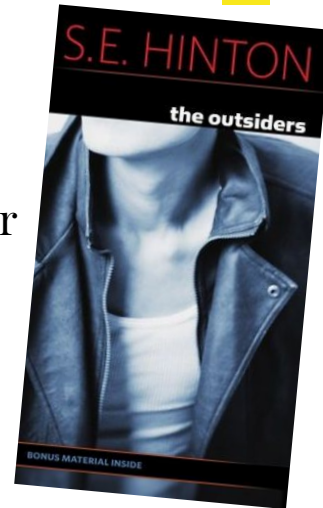
- “Mirrors” student experience
- Diversity - multi-racial perspectives/stereotype-defying characters
- Book in verse
- Thematic opportunities - identity
- Vocabulary and literature connections

The Outsiders

- Widely popular with 7th grade students - many remember years later
- Historical significance - The start of Y.A. literature
- Novel - First required novel study in Middle School
- Thematic opportunities - resonates with students
- “Window” into another time period and region



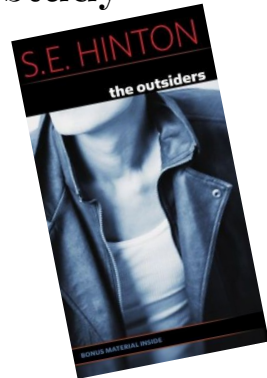
VS.



Content Connections

Connections between *Flying Lessons* and *The Outsiders*:

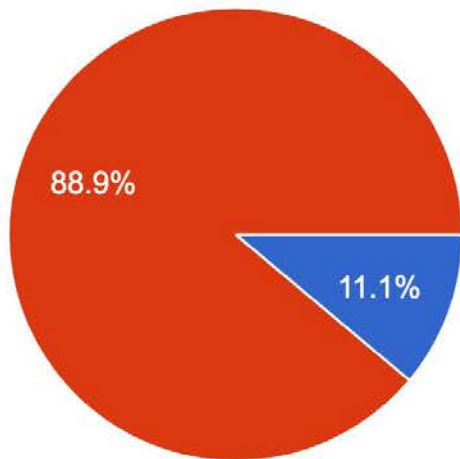
- Both tie to 7th Grade subject of “Identity” as well as staying true to oneself regardless of external pressures or influences
- Both feature characters finding out who they want to be in this world
- Many teachers already use *The Outsiders* to teach theme and character
- *Flying Lessons* also lends itself well to common theme and character study



Booked versus *Outsiders*: Results

My choice for core lit recommendation #2 is:

9 responses



- Booked by Kwame Alexander
- The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton

After reading both novels myself and having some students read both novels I think it would be a major mistake to select *Booked* over *The Outsiders*. *Booked* is a novel that adults think students will want to or should read, while *The Outsiders* is a book that students actually want to read. [...]

I work primarily with English learners and was surprised to see how connected some of the long term EL students felt with the characters in the book. They, just like the greasers, felt disenfranchised and for the first time saw themselves in a novel. While they didn't share the same ethnicity or race, they faced similar challenges. Long term ELs who mentioned hating reading were reading for the first time. [...]

I really enjoyed reading *Booked* by Kwame Alexander and would be happy to teach it, but I think it would be more powerful as part of a lit circle option with other novels written in verse...which we would not be able to do if it is required as core. So, my vote is more to provide that flexibility. *The Outsiders* ... engages even my most reluctant readers. [...]

It would have been nice to know what led the committee to choose *Booked* and what plans or resources would be put forward to create meaningful learning experiences with this text, especially since reading and teaching a book in verse is very different from a novel or poetry [...]

Progress Since December

Teachers voted to keep
Outsiders.

Volunteer to re-vet?

Optional input on *Flying Lessons* is being/will be collected

Next Steps: Data Collection

Short, optional community feedback form

Optional Student Input Form for *Flying Lessons* – 22 questions, very similar to Student Pilot Evaluation Form for *Hero*.

Feedback will be collected via:

- Library Book Clubs
- 7th-Grade Classrooms: Can 7th-grade teachers on the Committee help with this?

Any Questions Thus Far?



Grade 8

Core Lit Decisions & Rationale

8th Grade

Keep *Twelve Angry Men*

Continuing to meet, read, and vet new titles

Here to explain the 8th-grade group's thinking:

Jen and Kelly

Keeping *Twelve Angry Men*

Teachers:

- History of jury service (when women can serve, when non-whites can serve)
- Jury selection – the role of race in our justice system
- Drama – different genre
- Curriculum units built around this text are strong (social justice, justice system, nonfiction connections, book groups)
- Good fit for interdisciplinary units (history)

Students:

- Opportunity to learn about our justice system and the role of facts, bias, sympathy, privilege, prejudice
- HS Panel: found the text relevant and engaging (in spite of text's age)
- Accessible for readers
- High engagement
- Good opportunity for debate for classes (death penalty)
- Not just learning skills, but students are learning new content and information
- Jury service – civic duty, working with others to find what's true, challenging your own assumptions, trying to be fair (what does it mean to have justice?)

8th-Grade Plan

- Expanded 8th-grade group
- Expanded second semester meeting calendar
- Slowed down the process:
 - Continuing to read & vet new titles in order to identify additional Core Lit Contenders and supplemental texts
 - Pilots of 8th-grade finalist titles will happen in fall

Progress Since December

Jan. 20:

Divided up
8th-grade awards
lists & identified
12 new titles to
read or re-read

Feb. 10:

Identified possible new core
lit contenders: *Pet*, *Take the
Mic*, *Port Chicago 50*, *This
Land is Our Land*, *March
Book 3*, *Poet X*.

Identified 2 additional titles
to read.

Added onto supplemental
menu.

Future

Meetings:

March 10, March
31, April 13

Goal

Keep identifying Core Lit contenders.

By the end of the April 13th meeting (ideally), reach a decision on which titles to pilot in fall.



Any Questions Thus Far?



Back to Work: Supplemental Menu

Finish(?) Supplemental Menus (by 5:45)

In grade-level breakout rooms:

1. **Vetting:** Titles on the Supplemental Menu need to have been vetted and given a “yes.” Do any titles still need to be vetted?
2. **Adding New Titles:** Have any additional titles come up since December that need to be added to your menu?
3. **Categorization and Organization:** Figure out how to make your menu user-friendly. This includes considering its overall appearance.
4. **SLJ Ratings & Lexile Levels:** Do these correspond to the span that you want your Supplemental Menu to cover?

Debrief:

What progress did you make tonight on the supplemental menu?

How close is your supplemental menu to being “ready for the public”?



Next Steps

Suggestion: Optional March meeting to finalize the menus

Smaller, self-selected group:

- Wednesday, 2/24, 4:00-5:30?
- Tuesday, 3/2, 4:00-5:30?
- Wednesday, 3/17, 4:00-5:30?

Who might be willing to participate? Strawpoll

Agenda Items for Next Meeting

Wednesday, Apr. 21, 2021, from 4:00–7:00

- Examine 6th-grade pilot data (student & teacher evaluation forms, parent surveys, etc.)
- Examine 7th-grade data (optional student input forms)
- Discuss & make recommendation for 6th and 7th grade
- Draft Board report

Thank you! Good night!

