

**Olentangy Local School District
Literature Selection Review**

Teacher: OBMS English Department

School: Berkshire Middle School

Book Title: *Brown Girl Dreaming*

Genre: memoir

Author: Jacqueline Woodson

Publisher: Nancy Paulsen Publisher

Copyright: 2016

Book Summary and Summary Citation: (suggested resources include book flap summaries, review summaries from publisher, book vendors, etc.)

Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child's soul as she searches for her place in the world. Woodson's eloquent poetry also reflects the joy of finding her voice through writing, stories, despite the fact that she struggled with reading as a child. Her love of stories inspired her and stayed with her, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become. (Amazon)

Provide an instructional rationale for the use of this title, including specific reference to the OLSD curriculum blueprints and/or State standards.

Brown Girl Dreaming provides the opportunity to study theme, character development, and how the structure of a story influences our perception of the story elements and the author's purpose. As a memoir written in poetic form, it offers students a unique perspective and format through which to practice these skills. We will cover the following state standards in depth through our study of this text: RL8.1, RL8.2, RL8.3, RL8.4, RL8.5, and W8.2.

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). Reviews should suggest an appropriate grade-level or grade-band.

Review #1- "*Brown Girl Dreaming*, Jacqueline Woodson's highly lauded collection of free-verse poems about her childhood in New York and South Carolina, has language simple enough to be accessible to tweens and young teenagers and more than enough complexity to engage older readers. The winner of a Newbery Honor, NAACP Image Award, National Book Award and Coretta Scott King Award, *Brown Girl Dreaming* presents the story of Woodson's experiences living with the remnants of Jim Crow during the 1960s and 1970s. The author confronts issues like faith, racism and sexual abuse using the elegant, spare language and powerful imagery she has come to be known for." —*TIME MAGAZINE* (Amazon.com)

Review #2 - * “Mesmerizing journey through [Woodson’s] early years. . . . Her perspective on the volatile era in which she grew up is thoughtfully expressed in powerfully effective verse. . . . With exquisite metaphorical verse Woodson weaves a patchwork of her life experience . . . that covers readers with a warmth and sensitivity no child should miss. This should be on every library shelf.”—*School Library Journal*, **STARRED REVIEW (Amazon.com)**

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

- **The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros**
- **Enchanted Air by Margarita Engle**

Document any potentially controversial content:

Set during the 1960s Civil Rights Movement, there are brief references to violence in response to the protests. The main character does not witness these things directly so they are not described in detail. There is also a reference to name-calling among children as well as a discussion of “swear words” and how the main characters are forbidden to use them but the actual words are not included explicitly.

Keeping in mind the age, academic level, and maturity of the intended reader, what is the suggested classroom use: (check all that apply)

x Gifted/Accelerated x Regular x At Risk

GRADE LEVEL(S): 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Reading Level of this Title (if applicable):

lexile level - 990

reading level - grades 7-12 (according to Scholastic)

Suggested Professional Literacy 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

Signatures:

Teacher: Taylor Dalzell

Date: 10/12/21

Department Head: Katelyn Baker

Date: 10/12/21

Building Administrator: _____

Megan Nagel

Date: 10/13/21

Curriculum Supervisor: _____

[Signature]

Date: 10/30/21
