

Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher: 7th Grade ELA (Beal, Greenwell, Klein)

School: Liberty MS

Book Title: Warcross

Genre: Sci-fi

Author: Marie Lu

Pages: 368

Publisher: G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers

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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.)

For the millions who log in every day, Warcross isn't just a game—it's a way of life. The obsession started ten years ago, and its fan base now spans the globe, some eager to escape from reality and others hoping to make a profit. Struggling to make ends meet, teenage hacker Emika Chen works as a bounty hunter, tracking down Warcross players who bet on the game illegally. But the bounty-hunting world is a competitive one, and survival has not been easy. To make some quick cash, Emika takes a risk and hacks into the opening game of the international Warcross Championships—only to accidentally glitch herself into the action and become an overnight sensation.

Convinced she's going to be arrested, Emika is shocked when instead she gets a call from the game's creator, the elusive young billionaire Hideo Tanaka, with an irresistible offer. He needs a spy on the inside of this year's tournament in order to uncover a security problem . . . and he wants Emika for the job. With no time to lose, Emika's whisked off to Tokyo and thrust into a world of fame and fortune that she's only dreamed of. But soon her investigation uncovers a sinister plot, with major consequences for the entire Warcross empire.

In this sci-fi thriller, #1 New York Times bestselling author Marie Lu conjures an immersive, exhilarating world where choosing who to trust may be the biggest gamble of all. (Summary from Amazon listing)

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

The 7th grade ELA department would like to integrate this title into our existing options for literature circle titles for our Science Fiction unit. Other titles offered include *Dry*, *The Martian*, *Unwind*, *Jurassic Park*, *House of the Scorpion*, and *The Maze Runner*. We will address the following Common Core standards through the reading of this novel:

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.3

Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.6

Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

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

“A down-and-out teen, days from eviction, competes in the championships of the world’s most popular virtual reality game.

Emika Chen, 18, has been on her own for six years, living in poverty with a juvenile record, supporting herself by bounty hunting. She survives on ramen, with \$13 and a debt of \$3,450 to her name, and few joys: memories of her dead father, her crush on the world-famous 21-year-old inventor Hideo Tanaka, and her passion for Hideo’s game, Warcross. Universally adored, Warcross is an immersive battle game with CGI-ready virtual combats. When Emi exploits a Warcross bug in a last-ditch attempt to make some cash, she glitches into the game. Suddenly, she’s a media darling, and Hideo Tanaka himself summons her to Japan for a top-secret job. Whisked away on a private jet, Emi is flabbergasted by the perks of her new position—one of which is membership on one of the world’s top pro teams. Emi (an American with an implied Chinese heritage) grows fond of her multiethnic team (with a wheelchair-using captain), but could one of them be a saboteur? Brief shoutouts to Lu’s Legend series will intrigue ardent fans, though they don’t seem to imply a connection between the worlds.

A stellar cyberpunk series opener packed with simmering romance and cinematic thrills” (Kirkus).

Review #2

“A highly engaging and incredibly exciting science fiction novel for young adults. Emika Chen is a bounty hunter living in a futuristic New York City. Emika has a juvenile record and spent time in the foster care system after her father died. She is struggling to pay her bills, and is banking on getting enough from the next bounty to settle up with her landlord. In the midst of her troubles, Emika gets involved in Warcross, a virtual reality video game played by nearly everyone. Players put on virtual reality glasses and can play others, build their own worlds, and keep memories there. There is a huge tournament where the best players from around the globe come together as teams to compete for the ultimate prize. When Emika tries stealing a valuable item in the opening ceremony, she glitches into the game and finds immediate fame. With this fame comes a job offer from the young Hideo Tanaka, creator of Warcross. He flies her to Japan on his private jet, and he asks for her help to find someone who is threatening the game. Emika is also a skilled hacker, so she accepts. The teen becomes a key player in the tournament and in Hideo’s life, as they develop a romantic relationship. Readers will move effortlessly through Lu’s fantastic writing, and they will enjoy getting to know this international cast of characters. The author adeptly weaves together exciting video games scenes, virtual reality, and romance. The great plot twist and cliffhanger ending clearly leaves room for a sequel. -VERDICT An enticing first purchase

for YA collections, especially where Lu’s other books and science fiction are popular” (School Library Journal August 2017 issue).

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

Title: *Ready Player One* Author: Ernest Cline
(Similar plot and genre, but more mature content in this alternative)

Title: *The Maze Runner* Author: James Dashner

Title: *Dry* Author: Neal Shusterman

Document any potentially controversial content:

Mild language, teenage romance and kissing (no sex), simulated video game violence, an explosion

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

Geared toward general ed or at risk due to Lexile level, but high interest content for middle school readers, especially gamers (check box not working).

Gifted/Accelerated Regular At Risk

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

Reading Level of this Title (if applicable):

810 L

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: *m.g. Gull* Date: 12/7/21

Department Head: *Mary Buchhoff* Date: 12/15/21

Building Administrator: *Nicholas...* Date: 12/7/21

Curriculum Supervisor: *[Signature]* Date: 12/29/21

