

**Olentangy Local School District
Literature Selection Review**

Teacher: Mikela Thomas
School: OAO/Equity & Inclusion Team
Book Title: Simone Breaks All the Rules
Genre: YA Fiction
Author: Debbie Rigaud
Publisher: Scholastic Press

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

Simone Thibodeaux's life is sealed in a boy-proof container.

Her strict Haitian immigrant parents enforce no-dating rules and curfews, and send Simone to an all-girls school. As for prom? Simone is allowed to go on one condition: her parents will select her date (a boy from a nice Haitian immigrant family, obviously).

Simone is desperate to avoid the humiliation of the set up -- especially since she's crushing on a boy she knows her parents wouldn't approve of. With senior year coming to a close, Simone makes a decision. She and her fellow late-bloomer friends will create a Senior Year Bucket List of all the things they haven't had a chance to do. On the list: kissing a boy, sneaking out of the house, skipping class (gasp!), and, oh yeah -- choosing your own prom date.

But as the list takes on a life of its own, things get more complicated than Simone expected. She'll have to discover which rules are worth breaking, and which will save her from heartbreak.

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

This book will be used as part of the district-wide African American Read In where participation is optional. Author Debbie Rigaud will be apart of a panel presentation on February 28th at district offices. She will discuss her journey to becoming a writer, the writing process, and any upcoming work she would like to share. The corresponding Ohio Department Education Standards are within ELA/Reading Literature 6-12.

Specific District and Common Core Standards include (please include a link to the ELA Standards document and list the specific standards):

<https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/English-Language-Art/English-Language-Arts-Standards/ELA-Learning-Standards-2017.pdf.aspx>

RL.7.2 Analyze literary text development. a. Determine a theme of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text. b. Incorporate the development of a theme and other story details into an objective summary of the text.

RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

RL.11-12.2 Analyze literary text development. a. Determine two or more themes of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another. b. Produce a thorough analysis of the text.

Include two professional reviews of this title: (links to the reviews are fine; Common Sense Media should be used, if available)

GoodReads Review: https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/53200402-simone-breaks-all-the-rules#other_reviews

Simone Breaks the Rules is a sweet, entertaining, and sometimes hilarious coming-of-age YA novel. The book follows an awkward teen on the path to reclaiming her life from her controlling, overprotective immigrant parents. Featuring strong connections to Haitian culture, a love of New York City, and positive female friendships, this one is perfect for fans of sweet YA with a dash of humor.

Kirkus Review: <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/debbie-rigaud/simone-breaks-all-the-rules/>

New Jersey high school seniors make an attempt at rebellion before graduation. Simone Thibodeaux wants to choose her own date for the prom and to live on campus during college. And while those two things might not seem like a big deal for some high school seniors, they are when your parents are strict Haitian immigrants. Simone attends an all-girls Catholic school, has a curfew, and isn't allowed to date until college. While she has been responsible, focusing all her energy on academics, even getting into Rutgers via early decision doesn't persuade her parents that living away from home is a good idea. Their plan is for her to follow in her sister's footsteps and suffer the embarrassment of a preselected date for prom (a boy from a nice Haitian family, of course) and commute to Rutgers. Simone joins forces with two classmates who also have overprotective parents—one the daughter of Indian immigrants and one a white girl whose family was targeted on social media—to create a senior year bucket list and claim some level of independence. Baseball-loving Simone is a wonderfully crafted character, and Rigaud uses the awkwardness of the late bloomers' attempts to be cool with perfect comedic timing. This is a great depiction of Haitian American culture that both affirms and informs. Offering a steady mix of romance and humor, this is a home run. (*Fiction. 12-18*)

Publisher's Weekly Review: <https://www.publishersweekly.com/978-1-338-68172-7>

Rigaud (*Truly Madly Royally*) infuses a delightfully funny narrative with a diaspora-specific lesson—Simone learning to value the sacrifices of her immigrant parents—within a universally relatable tale of seeking oneself and independence amid warm relationships with family, friends, and community. Ages 12-up. Agent: Laura Dail, Laura Dail Literary. (June)

What alternate text(s) could also fulfill the instructional requirements? (alternates should be previously reviewed texts or a new text needs a new review form)

There are no alternate texts for this book as it is not used to fulfill instructional requirements.

Document any potentially controversial content (clear, descriptive, accurate, and examples of a page number or two):

- "If I'd known that would be my only lip-lock so far, I would've used more tongue." (pg. 11)
- "...the aroma of fresh-brewed coffee, the clinking of stirring spoons, and, of course, loud-ass conversation in the kitchen." (pg. 71)
- "One sharp tone from anybody and I just may let loose *chupee* from hell." (pg. 80)
- "One girl silk-screened photos of Black Lives Matter iconography on her skirt." (pg. 137)
- "With its BLACK LIVES MATTER bumper sticker right next to a rainbow flag, we're in good company." (pg. 138)
- "Finding a Black baseball fan is sorta like finding a Black Republican. I'm not sure if he's joking or if he really thinks that to be true." (pg. 157)
- "Ma Tante sadly passed away three years ago, and I miss her every day." (pg. 160)
- "You do know what this means your body can now make babies." (pg. 162)
- "I'm going to Gavin's house! Oh my God. Are we going to kiss? But wait, is this a ploy to get me somewhere private so he can be alone with me? To do more than kiss? When Mummy's "Boys only want one thing" refrain pos into my had, I swat it away..." (pg. 243)
- "And now seeing Gabby with Gavin has added another layer of what the hell on my confusion cake." (pg. 264)
- "ish just went off the rails." (pg. 266)
- "I feel the shea-buttery warmth of his skin, and finally the softness of his lips." (pg. 284)
- "I kissed Ben. Ben and I kissed...I spend all day thinking about Ben and our kiss." (pg. 285)
- "...Terrence's husband, Jeremy..." (pg. 299)
- "It's a full-on soft lips on tingling face kiss." (pg. 301)
- "He looks so handsome doing this, I have to refrain myself from leaning over to kiss his cheek as he places the sweet-smelling corsage on my wrist." (pg. 302)
- "In this case they are prom queen and queen Alexa and Stacie..." (pg. 304)
- "...in front of a much smaller audience than the one at Citi Field, we kiss." (pg. 307)
- "I can't wait to kiss him again. He pulls me close and we kiss again." (pg. 308)

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): (indicate the grade band or the grade level): Grades 6-12

Reading Level of this Title (lexile level) 950+

Suggested Professional Literacy Review Sources:
School Library Journal

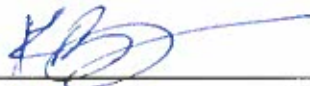
Horn Book
Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books
VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates)
Library Journal
Book Links
Publisher's Weekly
Booklist
Kirkus Review
Wilson Library Catalog
English Journal (and other resources of the National Council of Teachers of English)
The Reading Teacher (International Reading Association)
Literature for Today's Young Adults

Signatures:

Teacher: Mikela Thomas **Date:** 1/22/22

Department Head: Jeanette Kenney **Date:** 1/24/22

Building Administrator: N/A **Date:** _____

Curriculum Supervisor:  **Date:** 1/24/22