

OLENTANGY SCHOOLS LITERATURE SELECTION REVIEW FORM

LOCATION

Building(s): OLMS

Classes/Grade Level(s): 6,7,8

ABOUT THE BOOK

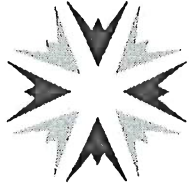
Selection Title/Author: *American Born Chinese* / Gene Luen Yang

Genre: Contemporary Fiction / Graphic Novel

Lexile Reading Level: 740L

Total number of pages: 233

Book Summary (abbreviated, bulleted list or link to a book summary)	Potentially Objectionable Content (list all categories and at least one example, referenced with a page or chapter number)
<p>A tour-de-force by <i>New York Times</i> bestselling graphic novelist Gene Yang, <i>American Born Chinese</i> tells the story of three apparently unrelated characters: Jin Wang, who moves to a new neighborhood with his family only to discover that he's the only Chinese-American student at his new school; the powerful Monkey King, subject of one of the oldest and greatest Chinese fables; and Chin-Kee, a personification of the ultimate negative Chinese stereotype, who is ruining his cousin Danny's life with his yearly visits. Their lives and stories come together with an unexpected twist in this action-packed modern fable. <i>American Born Chinese</i> is an amazing ride, all the way up to the astonishing climax.</p>	<p>Profanity/Language: There are various racial slurs used to describe Asian Americans, "nippy," "gook," and "chin" (pages 96, 97).</p> <p>There is kissing and a few sexual innuendos about masturbation, but it is not explicit (page 91), and one about breasts (page 1).</p> <p>There is some cartoon violence when a monk is impaled (page 151) and two kids fight (page. 205-212).</p>
<p><i>American Born Chinese</i> is the winner of the 2007 Michael L. Printz Award, a 2006 National Book Award Finalist for Young People's Literature, the winner of the 2007 Eisner Award for Best Graphic Album: New, an Eisner Award nominee for Best</p>	



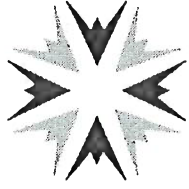
Coloring, a 2007 Bank Street Best Children's Book of the Year, and a *New York Times* bestseller. Gene Luen Yang was the fifth the National Ambassador for Young People's Literature and is a MacArthur Fellow, a recipient of what's popularly known as the MacArthur "Genius" Grant.

Book Reviews (1-2 link(s)) Note: teacher is not responsible for broken links

<https://www.fulcolibrary.org/blogs/post/book-review-american-born-chinese-by-gene-luen-yang/>

Jin Wang feels like an outsider at school, the only Chinese-American student there; the Monkey King, lord of all the Monkeys, rises too far, too fast and faces retaliation from the other gods; teenager Danny is at his wit's end dealing with the yearly visit of his cousin, Chin-Kee, who personifies the perfect negative stereotype of the Chinese. Yang brings these three very separate stories come together to illustrate the experience of a Chinese-American boy growing up in a place that is not always very welcoming to his real and perceived differences.

Graphic novels lend themselves to "issue" books better than most genres, because the underlying issues can be lightened by the format and seem less "preachy." This book is the perfect example of that: what would normally be a fairly tough topic to discuss (racism) is done in such a comic manner that it goes down better. There is an underlying strain of melancholy in the book; no one ever has a happy ending, but characters come to a better understanding of themselves and others. Chin-Kee would be problematic in any other story (and may still be for some readers), but the "laugh track" that accompanies his actions makes it clear that he is meant to be a representation of all the "worst" traits that westerners view of the Chinese. At first the reader won't understand why Yang keeps shifting among these three different stories, but when he brings them together it has an impact that makes you go back and read it again, to pick up what you missed. A must read for anyone who ever felt like they didn't fit in.



<https://www.publishersweekly.com/978-1-59643-152-2>

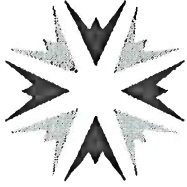
As alienated kids go, Jin Wang is fairly run-of-the-mill: he eats lunch by himself in a corner of the schoolyard, gets picked on by bullies and jocks and develops a sweat-inducing crush on a pretty classmate. And, oh, yes, his parents are from Taiwan. This much-anticipated, affecting story about growing up different is more than just the story of a Chinese-American childhood; it's a fable for every kid born into a body and a life they wished they could escape. The fable is filtered through some very specific cultural icons: the much-beloved Monkey King, a figure familiar to Chinese kids the world over, and a buck-toothed amalgamation of racist stereotypes named Chin-Kee. Jin's hopes and humiliations might be mirrored in Chin-Kee's destructive glee or the Monkey King's struggle to come to terms with himself, but each character's expressions and actions are always perfectly familiar. True to its origin as a Web comic, this story's clear, concise lines and expert coloring are deceptively simple yet expressive. Even when Yang slips in an occasional Chinese ideogram or myth, the sentiments he's depicting need no translation. Yang accomplishes the remarkable feat of practicing what he preaches with this book: accept who you are and you'll already have reached out to others. (Sept.)

ABOUT THE CLASS

Rationale for the Literature Selection (in addition to standards): (To be completed by the teacher or team)

7th Grade ELA can work this book into their science fiction unit as it deals with many of the tropes and themes of the genre. It is also a complex book about identity and storytelling that can be used by many other teachers for focusing on heritage and tradition—what can be saved through stories.

The Ohio Department of Education ELA Standards (list priority standards *only and* abbreviations of the main ideas of the priority standards) [Link to Ohio's ELA Standards](#)



SIGNATURES (embedded jpegs of authentic signatures are fine OR download/print form and obtain traditional signatures)

Teacher: Nath B Date: 5-17-23
Department Chair: Hay Brockhoff Date: 5/18/23
Building Principal: Mark R. [unclear] Date: 5-17-23
District Curriculum Administrator: [unclear] Date: 5/31/23