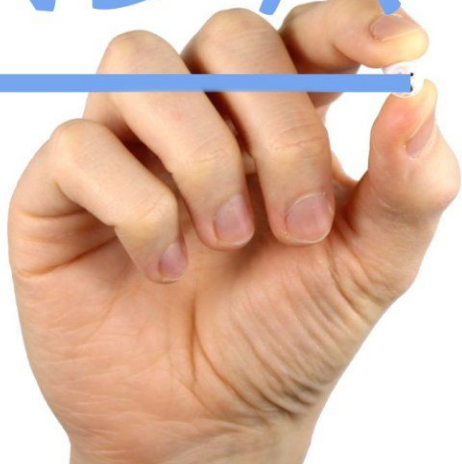


Secondary Novel Review Committee

Welcome!
The sign in sheet will be coming around shortly.

October 6, 2022
5:00-7:00 PM

AGENDA



1. Introductions
2. Review purpose, norms
3. Review of Question #6 on scoring rubric
4. Small group presentations and recommendations of books followed by whole group discussion
5. Individual recommendations
6. Round 2 book assignment and small group meeting

Introductions:



What was
your favorite
book when
you were a
child?

Introductions:



1. Your name
2. Your child's school or your position in the district
3. Your favorite book

Purpose

- a) To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum and Arizona Standards, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, learning styles, and maturity levels of the students.
- b) To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge and literary appreciation.
- c) To provide materials so that young people may have an opportunity to practice critical analysis and make informed judgments in their daily lives.
- d) To assure a comprehensive collection appropriate to the school community.

*(adapted from American Library Association)

Norms



What is needed to be successful as a committee?

- Be genuine with each other about ideas, challenges, and feelings
- Listen to understand
- Practice being open minded
- Be mindful of how often and how long you speak in consideration of hearing all feedback
- Ask questions for clarification
- Support the group's recommendation after consensus is reached

Responsibilities and Expectations

Upcoming Meetings and Due dates

Small group meeting:

Book #1 discussion: Week of September 26

★ Book #2 discussion: Week of November 7

Book #3 discussion: Week of December 12

Book #4 discussion: Week of February 6

Book #5 discussion: Week of March 6

Book #6 discussion: Week of April 17

Whole group meeting:

Meeting #1: August 25

★ Book #1 discussion: October 6

Book #2 discussion: November 17

Book #3 discussion: January 5

Book #4 discussion: February 16

Book #5 discussion: March 23

Book #6 discussion: April 27

Completion of rubric:

Book #1: September 26

★ Book #2: November 7

Book #3: December 12

Book #4: February 6

Book #5: March 6

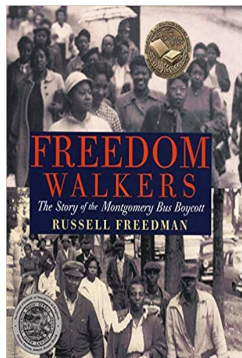
Book #6: April 17

Question #6: Does this novel meet the provision of HB 2495?

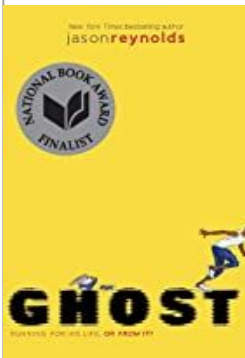
Choices:

1. Do you feel this novel contains sexually explicit content according to HB 2495?
2. Should this novel be excluded from use based on HB 2495?
3. Based on HB 2495, should this novel be required to have parents opt in for their students to read it?

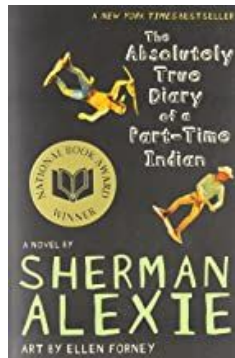
Small Group Novels



Grade 6:
Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott by Russell Freedman



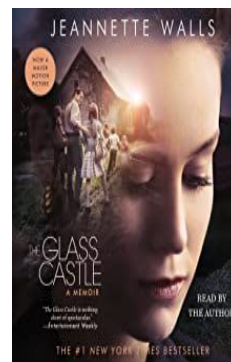
Grade 7: *Ghost* by Jason Reynolds



Grade 9: *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie



AP Language & Composition:
It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime by Trevor Noah



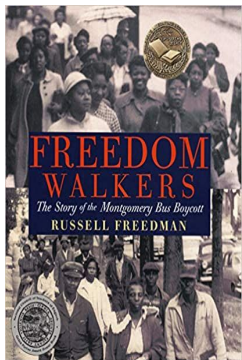
AP Language & Composition:
The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls



Grade 11 & Dual Enrollment:
Columbine by Dave Cullen



AP Language & Composition:
Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson



Grade 6:

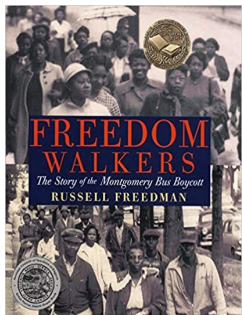
Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott by
Russell Freedman

This novel is recommended for use in Unit 4 of the StudySync ELA curriculum.

The **theme** of Unit 4 is "*Personal Best*," and the **Essential Question** for this unit is: "*Which qualities of character matter most?*"

Summary

This book focuses on one of the best known events of the American Civil Rights Movement; the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-56. The book chronicles the event by sharing the stories of not only well-known figures like Claudette Colvin, Rosa Parks, and Martin Luther King Jr., but the numerous people who contributed to the movement by organizing carpools, joining protests, and supporting legal defense efforts. The text includes eyewitness reports, photographs from the era, and primary sources. Freedman showcases the importance of cooperation and engagement, and the ways in which ordinary people can stand up for their beliefs and bring about meaningful change in the world around them.



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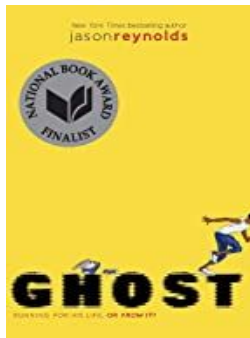
Positives

- Excellent treatment of a pivotal historical event.
- Provides an understanding of state and national legislative developments that began in the 50's.
- Excellent photographic history.
- Easy read for 6th grade (vocabulary, sentence structure, etc.).
- Shows the value of personal involvement of community issues.

Concerns

- Use of inflammatory language within the contexts of historical quotes.

Recommendation: Wholeheartedly recommend the book.



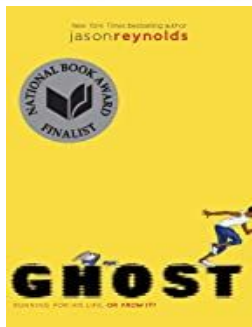
Grade 7:

Ghost by Jason Reynolds

This novel is recommended for use in Unit 2 of the StudySync ELA curriculum. The **theme** of Unit 2 is "*Highs and Lows*," and the **Essential Question** for this unit is: "*What do we learn from love and loss?*"

Summary

Ghost is a young adult novel by Jason Reynolds which follows seventh-grader Castle "Ghost" Cranshaw as he joins a track team and struggles to deal with his past and his present. As a child, Ghost had to flee his apartment with his mother when his father, in a drunken rage, tried to kill them. They took shelter at Mr. Charles's shop, where Mr. Charles took care of them and called the police, thus saving their lives. Years later, Ghost remains loyal and friendly with Mr. Charles, visiting him daily to buy sunflower seeds. Mr. Charles constantly encourages Ghost like a grandfather, always urging Ghost to do his best and break a world record. Ghost often studies a *Guinness Book of World Records*, given to him by Mr. Charles.



Grade 7:

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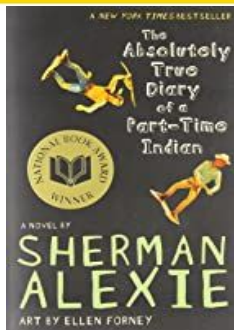
Positives

- Facing fears
- Overcoming adversity
- Joining a team
- Support for/from team
- Bonding with team
- Empathy for each others' "issues"
- Good lessons
- Works for two audiences: with similar experiences and those without

Concerns

We didn't see any controversial issues and/or reasons for this book not to be used in 7th grade.

Recommendation: We all enjoyed the book and recommend it to go on the approved list.



Grade 9:

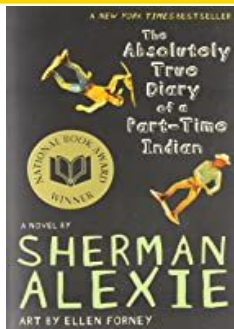
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie

This novel is used in the "Self Determination" unit. Students will explore this statement of inquiry: *"Our identities are shaped by our interactions and inclusion in different environments."*

Summary

Best selling author Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the rez to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.

Heartbreaking, funny, and beautifully written, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, which is based on the author's own experiences, coupled with poignant drawings by Ellen Forney that reflect the character's art, chronicles the contemporary adolescence of one Native American boy as he attempts to break away from the life he was destined to live.



Grade 9:

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie

This novel is used in the "Self Determination" unit. Students will explore this statement of inquiry: *"Our identities are shaped by our interactions and inclusion in different environments."*

Positives

- *Alexie adds much needed diversity to our book list.
- *Though it may not be familiar to the majority of our students, the book gives the perspective of a population that is prevalent in Arizona.
- *It is a good portrayal of how generational trauma affects people, and how it is difficult to leave a situation, even if it is unhealthy, because it's what you've known.
- *Even though his father is an alcoholic, he has a positive relationship with his father.

Concerns

- *Potentially offensive material - but is used intentionally and skillfully by the author to accurately depict a teenager's struggle with their identity.
- *Language issues - slurs
- *Reference to masturbation
- *References to alcohol abuse - his father

Recommendation: Recommended as a yellow novel on the high school novel list.



AP Language & Composition:

Trevor Noah: Born a Crime by Trevor Noah

Born a Crime would be used to analyze the use of persuasive elements in text. This text offers a variety of rhetorical strategies used by Noah to persuade his audience to look beyond the obvious and to consider a person's totality of experiences to understand who they are as a whole person.

Summary

Born a Crime is the story of a mischievous young boy who grows into a restless young man as he struggles to find himself in a world where he was never supposed to exist. It is also the story of that young man's relationship with his fearless, rebellious mother—his teammate, a woman determined to save her son from the cycle of poverty, violence, and abuse that would ultimately threaten her own life.

The stories collected here are by turns hilarious, dramatic, and deeply affecting. Whether subsisting on caterpillars for dinner during hard times, being thrown from a moving car during an attempted kidnapping, or just trying to survive the life-and-death pitfalls of dating in high school, Trevor illuminates his curious world with an incisive wit and unflinching honesty.



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Positives

- Well-written, easy to follow
- Inspiring story
- Cultural awareness, cultural competencies
- Peaceful Coexistence
- Education was important
- Followed his passions and utilized his creativity

Concerns

- Understand the context of the Hitler chapter
- While the book is not political, the author is left-leaning, Talk Show etc.
- Moral dilemma -- shoplifting experience
- If downloaded as an audible be sure the novel is the student version.

Recommendation: Novel is appropriate for intended purpose as proposed by the teacher and would be of high interest. May not be appropriate for a whole class novel. Would advise teachers to communicate in the syllabus that this is not a political commentary- but instead a biography describing the experience of Trevor Noah during the time period of Apartheid.



AP Language & Composition:

The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls

The Glass Castle lends itself to a deeper analysis of the rhetoric as the author persuades her audience to overcome adversity while also allowing for an argument of nonconformity and the impact that parenting has on children.

Summary

The Glass Castle is a remarkable memoir of resilience and redemption, and a revelatory look into a family at once deeply dysfunctional and uniquely vibrant. When sober, Jeannette's brilliant and charismatic father captured his children's imagination, teaching them physics, geology, and how to embrace life fearlessly. But when he drank, he was dishonest and destructive. Her mother was a free spirit who abhorred the idea of domesticity and didn't want the responsibility of raising a family.

The Walls children learned to take care of themselves. They fed, clothed, and protected one another, and eventually found their way to New York. Their parents followed them, choosing to be homeless even as their children prospered. *The Glass Castle* is truly astonishing—a memoir permeated by the intense love of a peculiar but loyal family.



AP Language & Composition: *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls

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Positives

- Good example of memoir format
- Allows for a complex rhetorical analysis of the memoir form
- Supports instructional objectives of an 11th grade AP Language and Composition Course
- Demonstrates a message of resilience
- Conveys a theme of staying true to oneself

Concerns

- Brief, unemotional descriptions of incidences of molestation
- Descriptions of physical, emotional abuse
- Alcohol abuse /alcoholism
- Child neglect
- Explicit language throughout including some use of “N” word
- Violence
- One character shares anti-establishment, anti-religious sentiments

Recommendation: Restricted to a choice novel for 11th grade AP Language & Composition class with required parent permission form signed.

COLUMBINE

Grade 11 & Dual Enrollment:

Columbine by Dave Cullen

The following unit questions will be addressed as this novel is read. How have pivotal events caused the United States to change? How do communities react to traumatic situations? What is the process we use to address issues in the United States? What role do journalists play in presenting information in the United States? What does it mean to be an American in 2022?

Summary

Dave Cullen's nonfiction book, *Columbine* (2009), chronicles the mass shooting at Colorado's Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. The perpetrators of the shooting, two Columbine High seniors, killed thirteen people—twelve students and one teacher—and injured another two-dozen, before taking their own lives. The book retells the events of the day, those leading up to it by using research taken from their diaries, as well as videos and interviews with their friends. It also follows the community and survivors in the years afterwards. Cullen focuses critically on the media's portrayal of the killers as loner outcasts and brings up—and then refutes—the copious amount of misinformation from the media and law enforcement swirling about after the massacre.

COLUMBINE

Grade 11 Choice & Dual Enrollment Required Reading: *Columbine* by Dave Cullen

The following unit questions will be addressed as this novel is read. How have pivotal events caused the United States to change? How do communities react to traumatic situations? What is the process we use to address issues in the United States? What role do journalists play in presenting information in the United States? What does it mean to be an American in 2022?

Positives

- Author's purpose of the book - covered event and realized need to set story straight
- Helps us with our media literacy - we see that the story can often be wrong - don't believe everything you hear
- Addresses the questions well
- Presented information without bias

Concerns

- Kids struggling with mental health issues may be upset/have a response
- Kids have anxiety coming out of COVID
- Are teachers well versed and comfortable having tough conversations?
- Strikes too close to home - Uvalde or other gun related events in our state

Recommendation: Keep as Grade 11 choice (already Yellow), For Dual Enrollment add a Yellow designation - (not currently on Gr 12 list)



AP Language & Composition:

Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson

Just Mercy not only encompasses issues relevant today, it is also applicable to the major elements of AP Language & Composition with the ability to synthesize information. It is not only about WHAT Stevenson writes but also HOW he tells his story and persuades the reader along the way. Students will be able to take a deep dive into the persuasive strategies he uses to encourage criminal justice reform.

Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinksmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever.

Just Mercy is at once an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer's coming of age, a moving window into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice.



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Positives

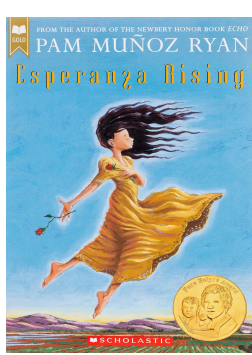
- *The author presents empathy with a theme of mercy - a beneficial message for all to consider.
- *Provides a well-rounded, all-encompassing explanation of the plethora of possibilities that underlie social injustice, not focusing on one particular characteristic.
- *It does not attempt to place blame on an entire system or group, but instead lays out several real-life examples of the author's own experience working with individuals.

Concerns

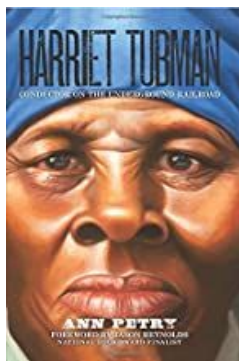
- *Not a very complex read

Recommendation: This is an appropriate, thought-provoking book for AP Language and Composition students.

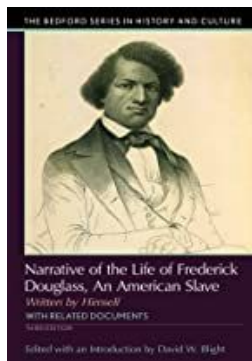
Small Group Novels



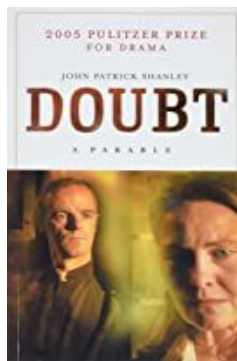
Grade 6:
Esperanza Rising by Pam Munoz Ryan



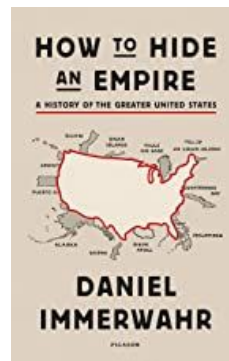
Grade 7: *Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad* by Ann Petry



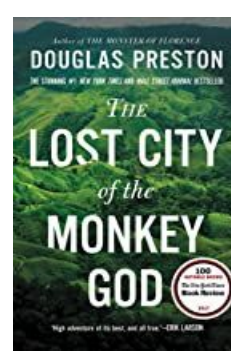
Grade 8:
Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass by Frederick Douglass



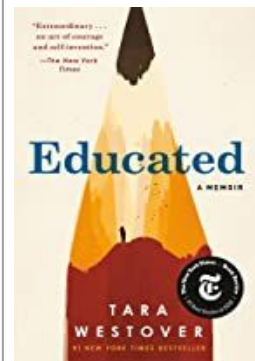
Grade 11:
Doubt: A Parable by John Patrick Shanley



AP US History -
Grade 11: *How to Hide an Empire* by Daniel Immerwahr



AP Language & Composition:
The Lost City of the Monkey God by Douglas Preston



AP Language & Composition:
Educated by Tara Westover

*Thank
you*

Next whole group meeting date:

November 17, 2022
5pm, MDA

