

Secondary Novel Review Committee

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

January 5, 2023
5:00-7:00 PM

AGENDA



1. Introductions
2. Review purpose, norms
3. Review of November 17 Minutes
4. Small group presentations and recommendations of books followed by whole group discussion
5. Individual recommendations
6. Round 4 book assignment and small group meeting

Introductions:



What's Next?

The first person starts with any word they wish, but just one, such as “chocolate.” The next person has to add a word that is associated with that word, such as “chip.” This continues quickly, with each person adding just one word.

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

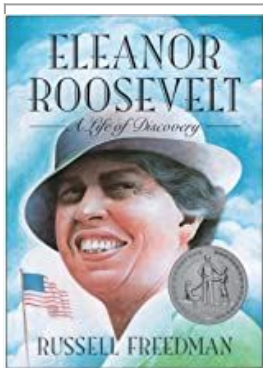
Book #6: April 17

November 17th Minutes

*Discussion

*Approval

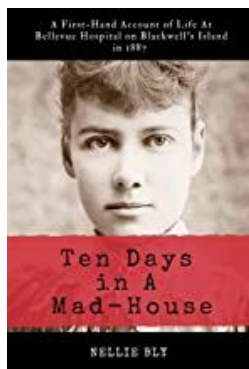
Small Group Novels



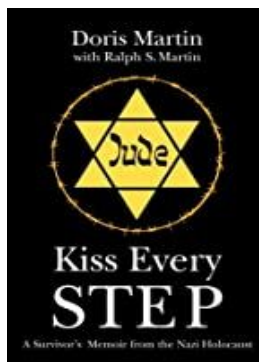
Grade 6:
Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery by Russell Freedman



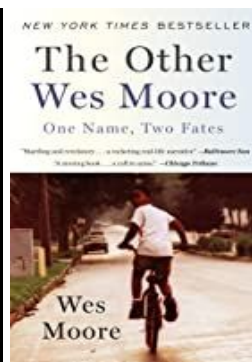
Grade 7: *Barrio Boy* by Ernesto Galarza



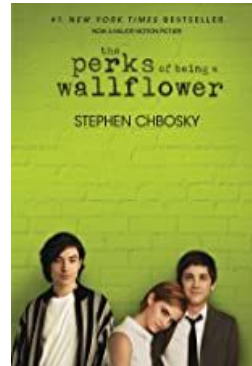
Grade 8: *Ten Days in a Mad-House* by Nellie Bly



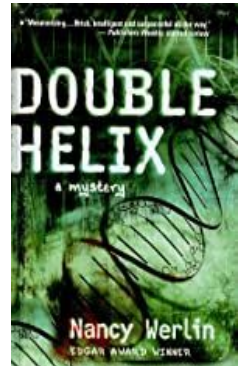
Grades 10-12
Holocaust/Genocide Class: *Kiss Every Step* by Doris Martin



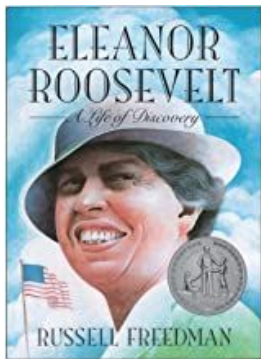
AP Language & Composition:
The Other Wes Moore by Wes Moore



AP Language & Composition/
Grade 11: *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky



Grades 9-10
Science: *Double Helix* by Nancy Werlin



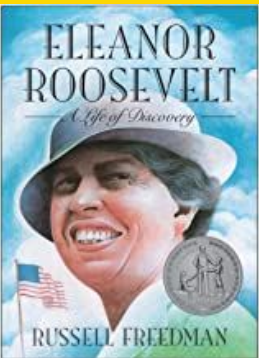
Grade 6:

***Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery* by Russell Freedman**

This novel is recommended for use in Unit 6 of the StudySync ELA curriculum. The theme of Unit 6 is “True to Yourself,” and the Essential Question for this unit is: “Who are you meant to be?”

Summary

This book traces the life of former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who is widely recognized as the most influential woman of her time. She began life as a timid, lonely child of wealthy, yet unhappy parents. She considered herself an “ugly duckling” and was serious and reserved compared to other high society women. As First Lady, she went beyond the long-established position of White House hostess to act as FDR's eyes and ears, traveling extensively to gather information and represent her husband in places he could not go. Mrs. Roosevelt became a passionate advocate for the weak and disadvantaged in American society. After her husband's death in 1945, she continued her activities on a global scale, serving as an American delegate to the United Nations, where her work on behalf of human rights earned her the title “First Lady of the World.” She had a vast range of interests and activities including journalism, politics, and humanitarian efforts. The book includes around 140 well-chosen black and white photos and won the Newbery Honor Award.



Grade 6:

***Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery* by Russell Freedman**

This novel is recommended for use in Unit 6 of the StudySync ELA curriculum. The theme of Unit 6 is “True to Yourself,” and the Essential Question for this unit is: “Who are you meant to be?”

Positives

- Represents a role model for young people who may be shy and lack self-esteem.
- Entertainingly written - showed both the personal and public sides of Mrs. Roosevelt.
- Fabulous photos that were sequenced with text.
- Completely meets (and exceeds) the purpose of the theme.
- Shows a person who finds their voice

Concerns

- FDR’s infidelity was addressed but not sensationalized.
- Dysfunctional family as a child (father was an alcoholic) was addressed with sensitivity.

Recommendation: Highly recommend this book for all to read.



Grade 7:

***Barrio Boy* by Ernesto Galarza**

This novel is recommended for use in Unit 4 of the StudySync ELA curriculum. The theme of Unit 4 is “Moment of Truth,” and the Essential Question for this unit is “How can one event change everything?”

Summary

Originally published in 1971. This is the story of one boy’s journey from a Mexican village so small that its main street didn’t have a name, to the barrio of Sacramento, California, bustling and thriving in the early decades of the twentieth century. A vivid and dramatic autobiography that provides exciting and incisive insights into the process of acculturation of a young boy from a relatively simple existence in a Mexican village to a somewhat hectic and complex life in a different culture and in an urban setting.



Grade 7: *Barrio Boy* by Ernesto Galarza

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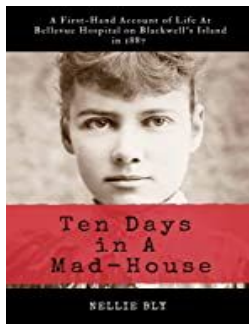
Positives

- *There is an excerpt of this novel in the StudySync anthology.
- *Provides a unique perspective - at the time there were not many Latino writers.
- *Vivid descriptions

Concerns

- *Hard to read; in-depth descriptions of the landscape, buildings, food, etc.
- *No characters in the first part of the novel - just describes the lay of the land
- *Swear words in broken English, killing of the dog that contracted rabies
- *Not very engaging - dry - there are better, more engaging novel choices for seventh grade readers

Recommendation: Approved, but would recommend looking for a novel that is more engaging.



Grade 8:

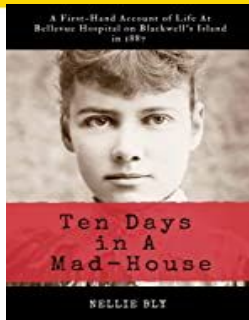
***Ten Days in a Mad-House* by Nellie Bly**

This novel is recommended for use in Unit 1 of the StudySync ELA curriculum. The theme of Unit 1 is “Everyone Loves a Mystery,” and the Essential Question for this unit is: “What attracts us to the mysterious?”

Summary

Ten Days in a Mad-House is an 1887 book by American journalist Nellie Bly. It was initially published as a series of articles for the *New York World*. Bly was on an undercover assignment, feigning insanity at a women's boarding house so as to be involuntarily committed to the *Women's Lunatic Asylum on Blackwell's Island* to investigate the reports of brutality and neglect.

The book received widespread acclaim. The combination of her reportage and the release of her content brought her fame and led to a grand jury investigation and financial increase in the Department of Public Charities and Corrections.



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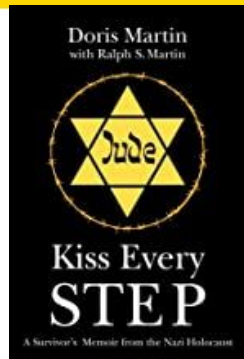
Positives

- Strong female protagonist (for 19th century)
- Important time period, topic of mental health, role of women - insight into how people were treated
- Style of reporting/writing kids may not have been exposed to yet
- Led to reform - positive message to try to get things done - she's a helper/advocate and had empathy towards patients
- Great example of complex text

Concerns

- Difficult to read - antiquated terminology, style of writing,
- Difficult to see perspective change from Bly to Brown (her undercover name), so hard to follow
- Acts of violence/torture against patients that were reported (*not gratuitous, but present*)
- Unsure if it makes a connection to the essential question or writing prompt.

Recommendation: Yes (might not want to use entire book with class)



Grades 10-12 Holocaust/Genocide Class: ***Kiss Every Step* by Doris Martin**

This is a teacher request. “In my Holocaust/Genocide class, I would like to use this book to have the students read a memoir of a survivor of the Holocaust. It is written from Doris’s perspective and tells the story of her and her family escaping the Nazis. It shows perseverance, empathy, struggle and success. It’s a survival story that has a positive ending of Doris coming to live in Flagstaff, AZ.

Summary

The German army swept into Poland on September 1, 1939, and four days later into Dora Szpringer's hometown of Bendzin. To begin their reign of terror, the Nazis burned down Bendzin's beautiful synagogue with some 200 helpless Jews inside. Most Jewish families in Bendzin, and the rest of Poland were completely wiped out by the Holocaust. The Szpringers were just an ordinary middle-class family, but through many incredible strokes of luck, or perhaps miracles, all seven of them survived. For an entire Jewish family in Poland to survive the Holocaust is amazing--likely unique. What is more remarkable is how they survived. This is their story.



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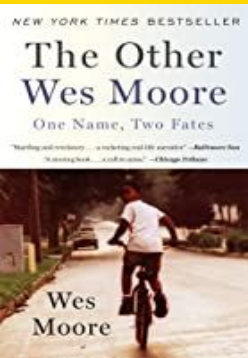
Positives

- Tells the story of a Holocaust survivor.
- Story of how to survive during hardships.
- Supports the intended use shared by the requesting teacher.
- Length is realistic for use during a semester.

Concerns

- If not taught in the Holocaust/Genocide course, be sure to provide geographical context and accurate pronunciation of the language.
- Story jumps around and can be difficult to follow.
- Sexually explicit, anatomy, rape.

Recommendation: Good book. May be appropriate to share the Sexually Explicit Content Permission Slip, especially if used in a course other than this HS elective course. Both Sides of the Wall (also has PHX connection) could be considered for review to compliment readings in this course.



AP Language & Composition:

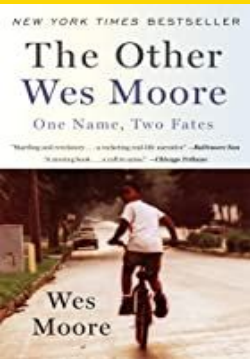
***The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore**

This is a teacher request. “This is a riveting memoir that explores how some survive and others sink. The power of this memoir in relation to current national events allows students to explore argumentation of a variety of topics. This novel provides the ability to complete practice in each of the the three essays for the AP exam (synthesis, rhetorical analysis, and argumentation).”

Summary

Two kids named Wes Moore shared much more than a name, they shared remarkably similar circumstances. Both grew up fatherless and had difficult childhoods; both hung out on street corners with their crews; both ran into trouble with the police. How, then, did one grow up to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated veteran, White House Fellow, and business leader, while the other became a convicted murderer serving a life sentence? Wes Moore, the author of this fascinating book, sets out to answer this profound question. In alternating narratives that take readers from heart-wrenching losses to moments of surprising redemption, *The Other Wes Moore* tells the story of a generation of boys trying to find their way in a hostile world.

Quote from book: “The chilling truth is that his story could have been mine. The tragedy is that my story could have been his.”



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Positives

- Great for generating discussion
- An effective example of a rhetorical argument
- Promotes making “right” choices, mentors, education
- Concerns (drugs, gangs, violence) were dealt with in matter-of-fact way (not glorified, or explicit) to show consequences of choices

Concerns

- Drug use and sales
- Violence
- Gangs
- Alcohol use/abuse
- Physical abuse
- Teen pregnancy

Recommendation: Yes, with parent permission due to concerns (teen pregnancy issues may trigger law).



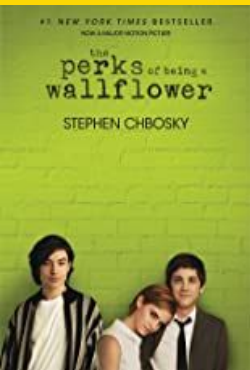
AP Language & Composition/Grade 11

***The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky**

This is a teacher request. “This is an age appropriate bildungsroman (A novel dealing with one person’s formative years or spiritual education. It generally goes through four stages: loss, journey, conflict & personal growth, maturity.) likened to a modern version of *The Catcher in the Rye*.”

Summary

Standing on the fringes of life offers a unique perspective. But there comes a time to see what it looks like from the dance floor. This novel is about the dilemma of passivity vs. passion. This is the story of what it's like to grow up in high school. More intimate than a diary, Charlie's letters are singular and unique, hilarious and devastating. We may not know where he lives. We may not know to whom he is writing. All we know is the world he shares. Caught between trying to live his life and trying to run from it puts him on a strange course through uncharted territory. The world of first dates and mixed tapes, family dramas and new friends. The world of sex, drugs, and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, when all one requires is that perfect song on that perfect drive to feel infinite.



AP Language & Composition/Grade 11

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Positives

- Promotes inclusivity in a way that kids can relate to
- Addresses personal growth and maturity

Concerns

- Hits on just about every single issue: sexuality, substance abuse, physical abuse, suicide, depression, self-harm
- Graphic details
- Lots of triggers for a wide range of students

Recommendation: Not recommended in accordance with A.R.S. Section 15-120.02 (HB 2495)



Grades 9-10 Science

Double Helix by Nancy Werlin

This is a teacher request. “The instructional purpose is to learn about a genetic disorder called Huntington’s. We look at how genetic engineering can be used for good by altering genes of a zygote of a debilitating condition and the risks as well as the moral dilemma of changing nature.”

SUMMARY

Double Helix **attempts to explore the life saving and life destroying aspects of genetic engineering.** The book proposes that, while Eli's life was saved by avoiding the Huntington's disease gene, his concept of life and self were destroyed when he found out he was genetically engineered to be a certain way.



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Positives

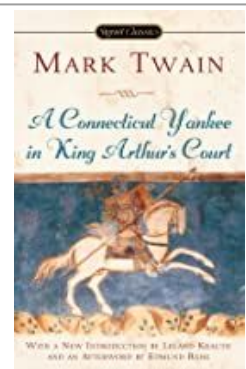
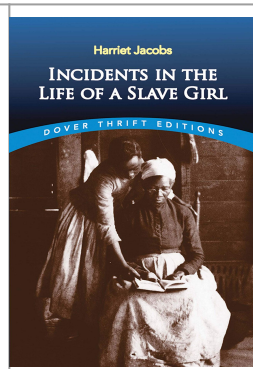
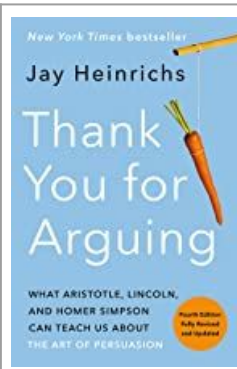
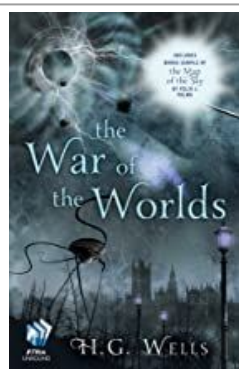
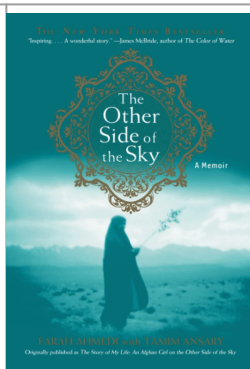
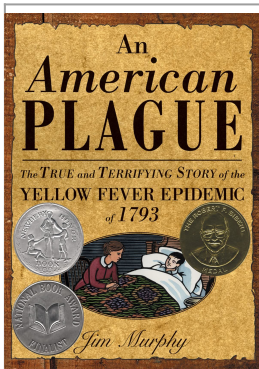
- Interesting book - science part
- Mystery aspect was powerful
- Engaging
- Well written
- Good conversations for a science class
- Relevant relationships - go off to college, stay with girlfriend
- Information is accurate based on articles about the book
- Science and real world connection/context

Concerns

- Innuendo of sex but nothing offensive

Recommendation: Highly recommend this book for use in a science classroom. We all enjoyed it!

Small Group Novels



Grade 7: *An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793* by Jim Murphy

Grade 7: *The Other Side of the Sky: A Memoir* by Farah Ahmed (with Tamim Ansary)

Grade 8: *The War of the Worlds* by H.G. Wells

Grades 10-12
Holocaust/Genocide Class: *A Holocaust Memoir of Love & Resilience: Mama's Survival from Lithuania to America* by Etti Zilber

AP Language & Composition: *Thank You for Arguing* by Jay Heinrichs

Grade 10: *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* by Harriet Jacobs

Grade 12: *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* by Mark Twain

*Thank
you*

Next whole group meeting date:

February 16, 2023
5pm, MDA

