

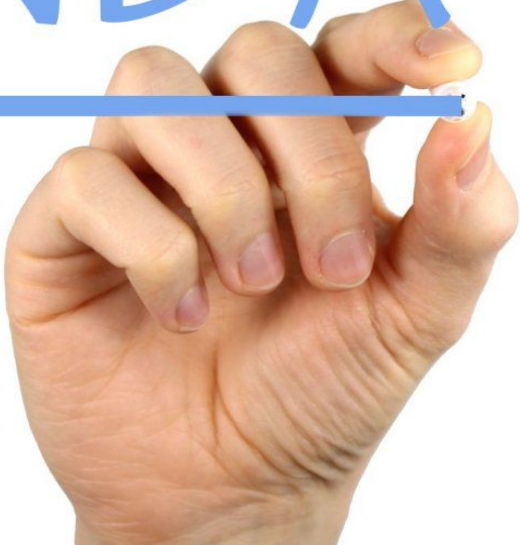
Secondary Novel Review Committee

Welcome!

Please sign in when the sheet comes to you.

March 7, 2022
5:00-7:00 PM

AGENDA



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

Introductions:

Tonight's Question:
Would you rather want
to know the history of
every object you
touched or be able to
talk to animals?
Why?



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

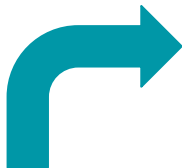
Completion of rubric:

~~Book #1: November 5~~

~~Book #2: January 7~~

~~Book #3 February 25~~

★ Book #4: April 1



Small group meeting:

~~Book #1 discussion: Week of November 8~~

~~Book #2 discussion: Week of January 10~~

~~Book #3 discussion: Week of February 28~~

★ Book #4 discussion: Week of April 4

Whole group meeting:

~~Book #1 discussion: November 15~~

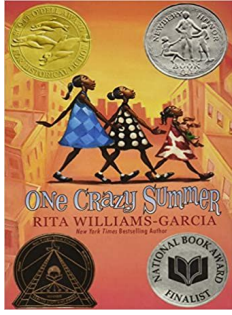
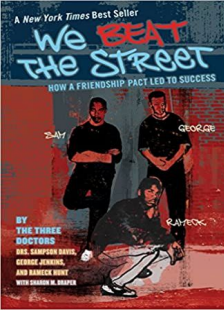
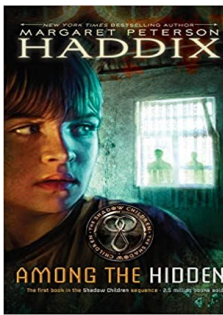
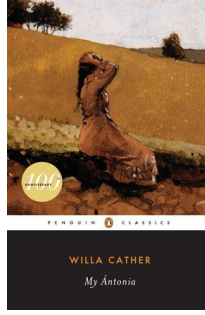
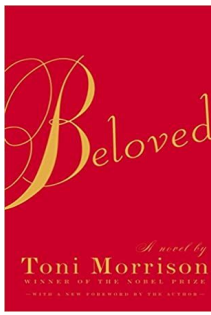
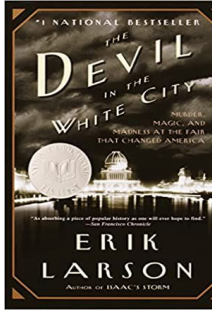
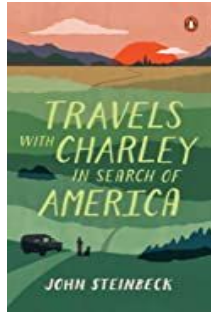
~~Book #2 discussion: January 18~~

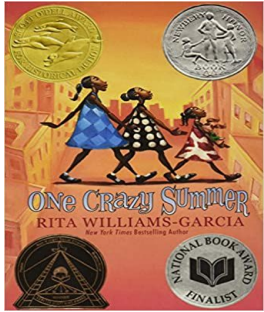
★ Book #3 discussion: March 7

Book #4 discussion: April 11



Round 3 Books:

						
Grade 6: <i>One Crazy Summer</i> by Rita Williams Garcia	Grade 7: <i>We Beat the Street</i> by Dr. George Jenkins, et. al.	Grade 6: <i>Among the Hidden</i> by Margaret Peterson Haddix	Grade 9: <i>My Antonia</i> by Willa Cather	Grade 10: <i>Beloved</i> by Toni Morrison	Grade 11: <i>The Devil in the White City</i> by Erik Larson	Grade 12: <i>Travels with Charley</i> by John Steinbeck



One Crazy Summer, by Rita Williams Garcia, 6th Grade

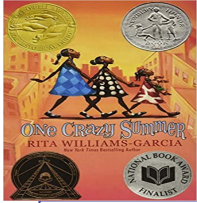
Unit 3

Essential Question: *How do you know what to do when there are no instructions?*

Summary

Eleven-year-old Delphine is like a mother to her two younger sisters, Vonetta and Fern. She's had to be, ever since their mother, Cecile, left them seven years ago for a radical new life in California. But when the sisters arrive from Brooklyn to spend the summer with their mother, Cecile is nothing like they imagined.

The girls hope to go to Disneyland and meet Tinker Bell; instead, their mother sends them to a day camp run by the Black Panthers. Unexpectedly, Delphine, Vonetta, and Fern learn much about their family, their country, and themselves during one truly crazy summer.



One Crazy Summer, by Rita Williams Garcia, 6th Grade

Unit 3 Essential Question: *How do you know what to do when there are no instructions?*

Positives

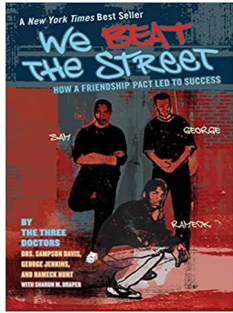
- This book has won numerous national awards.
- Well-written character development.
- The main character, Delphine, has many redeeming qualities.
- Powerful imagery - pulls the reader into the girls' experiences.
- Enjoyable read - interesting to watch the relationship between the girls and their mother change.

Concerns

- It is important to provide some background information on who/what the Black Panthers are prior to reading this book - sixth graders would most likely not have any idea.

Recommendation:

The group recommends this novel for sixth grade.

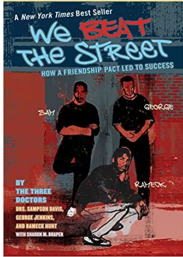


We Beat the Street, by Dr. George Jenkins, et. al., 7th Grade

Unit 3
Essential Question: *What makes a dream worth pursuing?*

Summary

This book details the inspirational story of how three friends overcame obstacles and became doctors. Growing up on the rough streets of Newark, New Jersey, Rameck, George, and Sampson could easily have followed their childhood friends into drug dealing, gangs, and prison. But when a presentation at their school made the three boys aware of the opportunities available to them in the medical and dental professions, they made a pact among themselves that they would become doctors. It took a lot of determination—and a lot of support from one another—but despite all the hardships along the way, the three succeeded. Each narrative chapter is followed by a one on one conversation where the doctors offer advice on how to deal and overcome real life obstacles. Retold with the help of an award-winning author, Sharon Draper, this book provides an inspirational story of friendship, hard-work, and overcoming difficulties to reach a goal.



We Beat the Street, by Dr. George Jenkins, et.al., 7th Grade

Unit 3 Essential Question: *What makes a dream worth pursuing?*

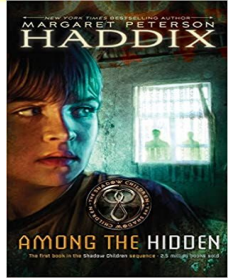
Positives

- Inspirational message of overcoming obstacles
- Supportive friendships and positive peer pressure
- Many positive role-models (adults, family, teachers)
- Anti-drug and violence theme
- Supports several SUSD core values and the essential question
- Different perspective than Scottsdale (inner-city Newark, NJ)
- Easy read (simplified language)

Concerns

- May reinforce negative stereotypes
- References to violence (i.e.: guns, fighting, knives, prison-rape)
- References to drugs and alcohol
- How much can Scottsdale students relate to the story?
- Easy read (simplified language)

Recommendation: All members of the committee support this book. This book may also be relevant for Social Studies.

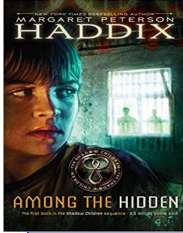


Among the Hidden, by Margaret Peterson Haddix, 6th Grade

Unit 3 **Essential Question:** *How do you know what to do when there are no instructions?*

Summary

Among the Hidden, takes place in a dystopian future where an oppressive government has placed strict population controls on the population due to food shortages. Families are only allowed to have two children, and violators are subject to death—with the illegal third children being condemned simply for being born. The story centers on Luke Garner, an illegal third child who has spent his entire life in hiding, having met no one outside of his family. When he meets a fellow third child, he becomes involved in the resistance demanding rights for third children.



Among the Hidden, by Margaret Peterson Haddix, 6th Grade

Unit 3 Essential Question: *How do you know what to do when there are no instructions?*

Positives

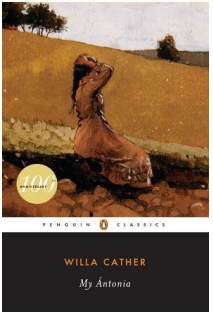
- Short and easy to read for 6th grader
- Age appropriate
- Complex issue of totalitarian government made easy to understand
- Media Literacy connections

Concerns

- Dated(written in 1998)
- No cross-curricular opportunities
- The novel doesn't really answer the question

Recommendation:

Approved

The image shows the front cover of the Penguin Classics edition of 'My Antonia' by Willa Cather. The cover features a painting of a woman in a long, flowing dress standing in a vast, open landscape under a pale sky. The Penguin logo is in the bottom left corner, and the text 'WILLA CATHER My Antonia' is at the bottom.

My Antonia, by Willa Cather, 9th Grade

Unit 1 Essential Question: *Is there such a thing as a "correct" way to "American"?*

Summary

Willa Cather's novels are famous for showing the American landscape and its intense social, psychological and spiritual impact upon its inhabitants. *My Antonia* is the story of a young man's growth upon the prairies of Nebraska. Jim meets Antonia, a girl whom he loves in the deepest way (like a sister, a lover, a mother and a Goddess) for the rest of his life. While describing his relationship with Antonia and others, Jim also depicts the immigrant farm families on the Great Plains. In this, as in many of her other works, Cather is able to show the great American spirit through nature and the mindset of the pioneers.

<http://www.schoolbytes.com/english/summary.php?id=408#.YiAGlHrMI2w>



My Antonia, by Willa Cather, 9th Grade

Unit 1 Essential Question: *Is there such a thing as a "correct" way to "American"?*

Positives

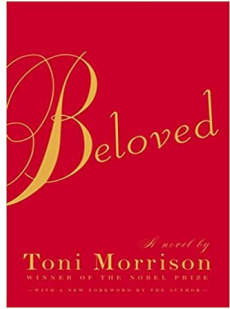
- Has strong literary merit
- Gives a voice to particular era/persons that we often don't see represented in the typical literary canon (prairie literature)
- Shows struggles and successes demonstrating a positive message of perseverance
- Presents characters approximately the same age as the targeted reader following the character's path through adolescents and into adulthood
- Has foundational themes such as friendship, community, survival, resiliency, perseverance, etc.

Concerns

- Does contain graphic depictions of physical acts of violence
- Has inconsistent pacing due to syntax when reading with some parts being slower than others
- Can be seen to portray immigrants in negative light with characters acting prejudicial towards them in the novel

Recommendation:

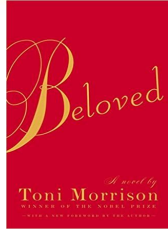
We recommend this novel with asterisks/signals due to some graphic depictions of violence including suicide and social issues such as immigration.



Beloved by Toni Morrison, 10th Grade

Unit: 3 **Essential Question:** *What factors determine who is free and who remains oppressed?*

The novel is set after the American Civil War. Sethe and her daughter, Denver, are former slaves living in a house haunted by the ghost of Sethe's child, Beloved. Paul D., another former slave who lived in captivity with Sethe arrives, starts a relationship with Sethe and settles into the house to the dismay of Denver and the anger of the ghost. Paul D. chases off the ghost and attempts to build a rapport with Denver. However, a mysterious woman with no recollection of her past arrives and is taken into the home by Sethe. This woman, who is the age Beloved would be if she had lived and bears several strange similarities to Sethe's deceased daughter, causes conflict between Sethe, Denver and Paul D.; this woman also exacerbates the internal conflict Sethe, Denver and Paul D. have managing the trauma of their pasts. Through a combination of flash-backs and present day storytelling, these internal and external conflicts evolve, intersect and finally resolve as each character comes to place in which they can balance the trauma of their past with a willingness to allow space for a future.



Beloved, by Toni Morrison, 10th Grade

Unit: 3 Essential Question: *What factors determine who is free and who remains oppressed?*

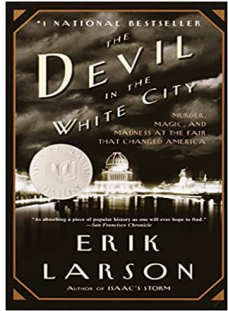
Positives

- Rich in style, theme and character
- Pulitzer Prize winning novel
- Supports understanding essential question

Concerns

- Very descriptive (graphic) imagery and language
- Mother takes the life of her own child

Recommendation: Potential consideration for 11th grade.



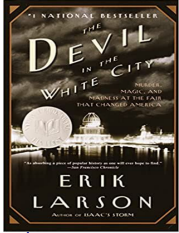
The Devil in the White City by Erik Larson, 11th Grade

Unit 5 **Essential Question:** *How do we respond when challenged by fear?*

Summary

The Devil in the White City is a book that takes a close look at the World's Columbian Exposition, the world fair that Chicago hosted in 1893 in celebration of the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America. The fair was tainted by deaths, a serial killer, and an assassination.

The novel is divided into four parts, the first three happening in Chicago between 1890 and 1893, while part four of the book takes place in Philadelphia circa 1895. The book interweaves the true tales of Daniel Burnham, the architect behind the 1893 World's Fair, and H. H. Holmes, a serial killer who lured his victims to their deaths in his elaborately constructed "Murder Castle".



The Devil in the White City, by Erik Larson, 11th Grade

Unit 5 Essential Question: *How do we respond when challenged by fear?*

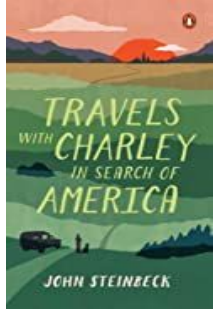
Positives

- Full of history about the World's Fair in Chicago
- STEM students interested in building the Fair
- Murder mystery

Concerns

- Slightly graphic details about the first known serial killer
- Time related fear - not really scary in 2022
- Teach in chronological order - might not work
- Too much detail - not that interested in lives of architects from over 150 years ago

Recommendation: No objections to teaching this book in the classroom. However, thought it better taught to AP or IB students in small groups - too dense for a whole group discussion.



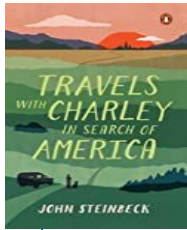
Travels with Charley, by John Steinbeck 12th Grade

Unit 6 Essential Question: *What does it mean to call a place home?*

Summary

To hear the speech of the real America, to smell the grass and the trees, to see the colors and the light—these were John Steinbeck's goals as he set out, at the age of fifty-eight, to rediscover the country he had been writing about for so many years.

With Charley, his French poodle, Steinbeck drives the interstates and the country roads, dines with truckers, encounters bears at Yellowstone and old friends in San Francisco. Along the way he reflects on the American character, racial hostility, the particular form of American loneliness he finds almost everywhere, and the unexpected kindness of strangers.



Travels with Charley, by John Steinbeck 12th Grade

Unit 6 Essential Question: *What does it mean to call a place home?*

Positives

- Steinbeck's work has stood the test of time and this autobiographical work is as brilliantly written as his fiction.
- The premise of the tale is brilliant and brings back memories of traveling via car across the country as both a passenger and later as a driver.

Concerns

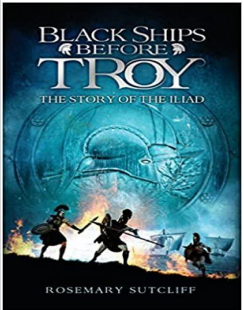
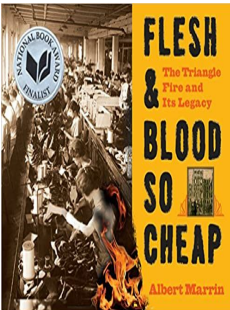
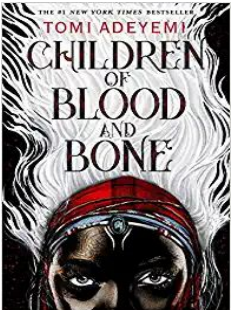
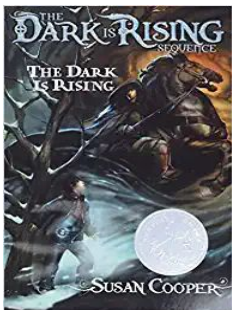
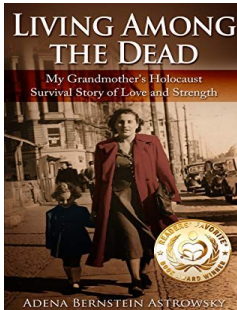
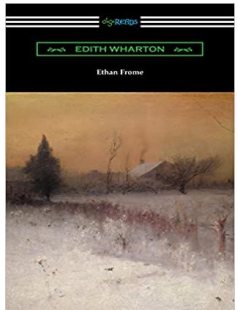
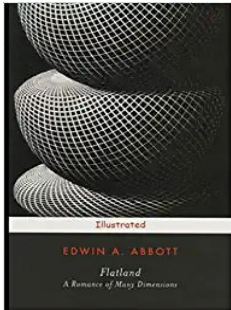
- If students have read *Of Mice and Men* and/or *The Grapes of Wrath*, what is the purpose of another Steinbeck written text?
- While this book has significant rigor, and historical relevance, it has very little current relevance to a senior in high school
- The contextual underpinnings of this particular book may turn some students off (e.g., the use of some colloquial derogatory terms, specific contextual references to the 1960 election, regional biases, stereotypes and prejudices in full display).
- It would take a deftly skilled educator to be able to address all of the situations that come up in this text with the gravitas and cultural relevance they deserve.

Recommendation: We would not recommend this book.

Recommendation Directions

- Please do *not* write your first and last name on your ballot.
- For each novel check your choice of: **yes**, you would recommend this book to be used in SUSD, or **no**, you would not recommend this book to be used in SUSD.
- When you are finished marking your choices, hand your ballot to your group facilitator.

Round 4 Books:

						
Grade 6: <i>Black Ships Before Troy</i> by Rosemary Sutcliff	Grade 7: <i>Flesh & Blood So Cheap</i> by Albert Marrin	Grade 8: <i>Children of Blood and Bone</i> by Tomi Adeyemi	Grade 8: <i>The Dark is Rising</i> by Susan Cooper	Grade 9: <i>Living Among the Dead</i> by Adena Bernstein Astrowsky	Grade 11: <i>Ethan Frome</i> by Edith Wharton	Grade 12: <i>Flatland</i> by Edwin A. Abbott

*Thank
you*

Next whole group meeting date:

**April 11 , 2022,
5pm, MDA**

