OLENTANGY SCHOOLS LITERATURE SELECTION REVIEW FORM

LOCATION

Building(s): Shanahan
Classes/Grade Level(s): ELA 6-8

ABOUT THE BOOK

Selection Title/Author: Look Both Ways by Jason Reynolds
Genre: Realistic Fiction
Lexile Reading Level: 750L
Total number of pages: 188

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)**
• From Amazon: Jason Reynolds conjures ten tales (one per block) about what happens after the dismissal bell rings, and brilliantly weaves them into one wickedly funny, piercingly poignant look at the detours we face on the walk home, and in life. • National Book Award Finalist *Look Both Ways* is a series of ten short stories that interconnect and depict what middle schoolers' lives are like after the bell rings: homework, family, friends, crushes, illness, injuries, bullying, and fun.	**Violence** Bullying is mentioned in a few chapters, with physical violence such as: punching a bully in retaliation on pg. 24; bullies trying out wrestling moves on a victim on pg. 50; and a boy missing school after being punched and kicked on pg. 80. Domestic violence is hinted at, but not described or shown on pg. 54. A crossing guard is injured after pushing a student to safety and being clipped by the edge of a school bus on pg. 177. **Offensive Language** Bullies claim that a character "pissed" himself on pg. 50 and call another character "gay" on pg. 86. **Romance/Dating** The "Rogers St." chapter (pp. 157-169) is about a group of friends who help a boy get up the courage to ask a girl for her phone number. **Crime** In the "Placer Street" chapter (pp. 19-40), characters steal loose change in order to buy ice cream for a

	parent going through chemotherapy treatments.

Book Reviews (2-3 links):

From Common Sense Media:
Parents need to know that *Look Both Ways: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks*, by Jason Reynolds, is a set of 10 interconnected short stories set in the context of kids walking home from school. It doesn't follow a conventional structure with a beginning, middle, and end. Each story can stand alone; together they add up to a bigger picture. This book, which was named a 2020 Coretta Scott King (Author) Honor Book, could be a good match for readers who get impatient with long chapter books, and also for advanced readers who can appreciate the literary qualities. There are many potentially distressing descriptions of bullying. A group of kids whose families have lost financial footing due to a parent's cancer form an entrepreneurial "gang" to steal change. One girl is grieving the death of her older sister.

From School Library Journal:
Gr 5-8–Ten short stories paint a picture of what happens one particular afternoon after the dismissal bell at Latimer Middle School. Each tale focuses on one student or group of friends. The magic of this book is Reynolds's ability to weave the same teachers and various students in and out of the ten stories. Students after school swirl and eddy. Ms. Post the crossing guard helps everyone cross the street while her son looks on from his spot by the stop sign; Ms. Wockley, the principal, stands in the hall yelling at students; and Ms. CeeCee sells penny candy from her house. Some backstory in each piece puts the characters' actions into perspective, with each entry ending with a bit of a surprise. The very last one ends where the first one begins, with a mythical flying school bus. Poetic language is used throughout to help distinguish one character from the next. VERDICT The perfect book to hand to reluctant middle grade readers, who will relate to the hectic and uncertain lives of these characters.

ABOUT THE CLASS

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

The use of multiple perspectives, as well as themes of community and friendship, make *Look Both Ways* an excellent text for teaching how various elements of literature work together to create an overall theme, mood, tone, and plot. The brief length of the entire book as well as each chapter make it appropriate for whole class use.

The Ohio Department of Education ELA Standards (list priority standards *only and* abbreviations of the main ideas of the priority standards):

1. RL.7.2a: Analyze literary text development; determine a theme of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text.
2. RL.7.6: Analyze how an author uses the point of view to develop and contrast the perspectives of different characters or narrators in a text.
3. RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

ALTERNATIVE TEXTS

What alternative texts would allow students to meet the same objectives? (Title/author)

1. Seedfolks by Paul Fleishman
2. Refugee by Alan Gratz

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

Teacher: Kim Nichols Date: 4.21.25

Department Chair: Valerie Boggan Date: 4.21.25

Building Principal: Date: 4.21.25

District Curriculum Administrator: Date: 5-9-25