OLENTANGY SCHOOLS LITERATURE SELECTION REVIEW FORM

LOCATION

Building(s): OHS

Classes/Grade Level(s): 12th

ABOUT THE BOOK

Selection Title/Author: Tao Te Ching by Laozi, translated by Stephen Mitchell

Genre: Poetry

Lexile Reading Level: **910-1250**

Total number of pages: 108

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)
Lao-tzu's Tao Te Ching, or Book of the Way, is the classic manual on the art of living, and one of the wonders of the world. In eighty-one brief chapters, the Tao Te Ching looks at the basic predicament of being alive and gives advice that imparts balance and perspective, a serene and generous spirit. This book is about wisdom in action. It teaches how to work for the good with the effortless skill that comes from being in accord with the Tao (the basic principle of the universe) and applies equally to good government and sexual love; to child rearing, business, and ecology. *Stephen Mitchell's bestselling version has been widely acclaimed as a gift to contemporary culture.*	**Religion, questions the existence of God in a Christian or monotheistic sense:** **Poem 4: "It [the Tao] is older than God"** **Poem 16: "Each separate being in the universe returns to the common source."** **Poem 57: "I let go of religion"** **Biological sex and anatomy, references and metaphors:** **Poem 20: "I drink from the Great Mother's breasts"** **Poem 42: "All things have their backs to the female and stand facing the male. When male and female combine, all things achieve harmony"** **Poem 55: "It doesn't know about the union of male or female, yet its penis can stand erect, so intense is its vital power."**

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

https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/a/bennett-b-sims-2/lao-tzu-and-the-tao-te-ching/

https://doi.org/10.1093/litthe/fraa023

ABOUT THE CLASS

Rationale for the Literature Selection (in addition to standards): (To be completed by the teacher or team)
This class is designed around the following:

This book would be read in the first quarter of English 12 in which students are writing college application letters or composing a reflective essay about their life.

This ancient collection of Chinese poems and proverbs embodies values, teachings, and lessons any college admissions board, employer, coworker, or friend would seek in someone else. Students would read and analyze the metaphors and words of the poems to tease out lasting lessons and wisdom they find applicable and related to their own lives. This would help them to reflect on and connect how their own experiences manifest meaning, humility, and compassion that would in turn inform and embolden their personal writing. In a college application essay or any reflective writing piece, honesty, authenticity, and humility are essential to having a strong ethos and appealing to your audience; the Tao Te Ching teaches all of these.

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

1. RL.11-12.2 Analyze literary text development.
    a. Determine two or more themes of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another.
    b. Produce a thorough analysis of the text.
2. RL.11-12.4 Determine the connotative, denotative, and figurative meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text; analyze the impact of author's diction, including multiple-meaning words or language that is particularly evocative to the tone and mood of the text.

ALTERNATIVE TEXTS

What alternative texts would allow students to meet the same objectives? (1-2 texts, title/author; Note: these texts must also have lit. reviews forms associated with their selection)

1. *A Long Way Home* by Saroo Brierly
2. *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank
3. *I Am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai

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

Teacher: John Chirico Date: 8/5/25

ELA Department Chair: Date: 8/18/25

Building Principal: Date: 8/18/25

District Curriculum Administrator: Date: 9/2/25