OLENTANGY SCHOOLS LITERATURE SELECTION REVIEW FORM

LOCATION

Building(s): OSMS

Classes/Grade Level(s): 6th Grade

ABOUT THE BOOK

Selection Title/Author: Mikis and the Donkey by Bibi Dumon Tak

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Lexile Reading Level: 640

Total number of pages: 89

Book Summary	**Potentially Objectionable Content** (list all categories and at least one example, referenced with a page or chapter number)
One day, Mikis's grandfather has a surprise for him: a new donkey waiting! Mikis falls in love with the creature, but his grandparents tell him that the donkey is a working animal, not a pet. However, they still let Mikis choose her name -- Tsaki -- and allow the two of them to spend their Sundays together. Mikis and Tsaki soon become fast friends, and together the two have some grand adventures. Eventually, both Mikis and his grandfather learn a bit more about what exactly it means to care for another creature.	**Romance/Crushes** Ch 1- Mikis's teacher sometimes talks about her boyfriend in the book.

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

From Kirkus Reviews:

Inspired by a visit to a donkey sanctuary on the island of Corfu, this Dutch import offers a glimpse of a far-off land and a gentle lesson on caring for animals.

From his first meeting with his grandfather's new donkey, Mikis feels a sense of connection. Fascinated, he spends as much time as possible with the animal, and when he's given the opportunity to name her, he takes his time and even allows the donkey to have a vote of sorts. When not busy in school, the boy watches over Tsaki (as she is eventually called), urging his grandfather to treat her kindly, not to overburden her and to provide a comfortable stable. Slight subplots, more implied than fleshed-out, feature his teacher's romance with a motorcycle-riding boyfriend and Mikis' own affection for a classmate, Elena. Tsaki's occasionally stubborn personality adds some mild humor, but for the most part, the text is low-key and straightforward. Hopman's scratchy black-and-white illustrations provide context, showing a scrubby landscape, small houses crowded along the shore or the spreading tree in the center



of town where the old men gather to talk. Characterization and action are downplayed in favor of mood and setting, making this a book that will need some work to connect with readers. Those children who do connect with Dumon Tak's sweet, quiet tale are likely to find it will resonate deeply. (Fiction, 8-10)

ABOUT THE CLASS

Rationale for the Literature Selection (in addition to standards): (To be completed by the teacher or team)
This book is being used in 6th grade ELA as part of a cross-content ELA and social studies project on the 5 themes of geography, culture, and modern countries in the Eastern Hemisphere. Students will read the novel, and then research the country featured in the novel in preparation for sharing what they've learned with the class. They will research the elements of the country's culture and then they will evaluate the presentation of that culture in the novel they read.

This book has been selected because of its setting and genre. First, it is set in a modern day country in the Eastern Hemisphere, and second, it is a realistic fiction novel that allows students to learn about a culture by reading a story set in that culture. In addition to the culture of the country, students will be asked to describe the 5 themes of geography in relation to that specific country, and to evaluate whether the book's author accurately and fully portrayed the culture.

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

- RL.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL.6.2 Analyze literary text development. B. Incorporate a theme and story details into an objective summary of the text.
- RL.6.3 Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

ALTERNATIVE TEXTS

What alternative texts would allow students to meet the same objectives?
1. Middle School: Escape to Australia by James Patterson
2. Rickshaw Girl by Mitali Perkins

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

Teacher: [signature] Date: 9/3/25

Department Chair: Valerie Boggom Date: 9.2.25

Building Principal: [signature] Date: 9.11.25

District Curriculum Administrator: Elaine Ford Date: 9/20/25