OLENTANGY SCHOOLS LITERATURE SELECTION REVIEW FORM

LOCATION

Building(s): OSMS

Classes/Grade Level(s): 6th Grade

ABOUT THE BOOK

Selection Title/Author: My Fate According to the Butterfly by Gail D. Villanueva

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Lexile Reading Level: 660

Total number of pages: 183

Book Summary

When superstitious Sab sees a giant black butterfly, an omen of death, she knows that she's doomed! According to legend, she has one week before her fate catches up with her -- on her 11th birthday. With her time running out, all she wants is to celebrate her birthday with her entire family. But her sister, Ate Nadine, stopped speaking to their father one year ago, and Sab doesn't even know why.If Sab's going to get Ate Nadine and their father to reconcile, she'll have to overcome her fears -- of her sister's anger, of leaving the bubble of her sheltered community, of her upcoming doom -- and figure out the cause of their rift.So Sab and her best friend Pepper start spying on Nadine and digging into their family's past to determine why, exactly, Nadine won't speak to their father. But Sab's adventures across Manila reveal truths about her family more difficult -- and dangerous -- than she ever anticipated.Was the Butterfly right? Perhaps Sab is doomed after all!

Potentially Objectionable Content (list all categories and at least one example, referenced with a page or chapter number)

Racial Content

- Pg 8 Main character is talking about how her lighter skinned friend is beautiful and she recalls a conversation with her sister where her sister explained that the mentality of "white is beautiful, brown is not" comes from back when Spain colonized the Philippines.
- Pg 108 When they take the train they get ushered onto a specific car; the main character says it's because her friend is white and that gets them special treatment.

Drugs/alcohol

- Pg 52 Main character discusses the batang hamog- street kids who do drugs and cause mischief.

Violence

- Pg 54 The main character recalls a conversation she overheard between her father and a relative about a group of batang hamog who killed a child.
- Pg 185 The main character's sister is

	explaining how their justice system is corrupt in the Philippines and some people are framed and killed because they want to kill the president. (In the afterward the author explains the historical accuracy of this.) **Profanity** • Pg 105 Main character's sister tells them not to lose their tickets because "I went through hell for those".

Book Reviews (1-2 link(s)) *Note: teacher is not responsible for broken links*
From Kirkus Reviews:
A superstitious girl tries to fix her broken family before death catches her.
Ten-year-old Filipina Sabrina "Sab" Dulce believes all the superstitions her artist dad used to tell her before he and Mom split up. So, when she sees the Butterfly, a giant black omen of death, she knows she only has a week left to live. Determined to make the most of her last days, she convinces her American best friend, Pepper, a white girl, to help her reunite her family. Sab must uncover the truth behind the broken relationship between her college-age sister, Ate Nadine, and their father. Spying on her sister's journalism work and adventuring across Manila, Sab discovers family secrets that change her forever. Villanueva's debut is a beautiful #ownvoices middle-grade novel. Tough topics—the brutal war on drugs in the Philippines, family reconciliation, and recovery—are addressed, but warmth and humor, often in the vehicle of Sab's pet duck, bring lightness to Sab's story. The detailed writing offers a true look at life in Manila, with alluring descriptions of Filipino foods and landscape. The text is interlaced with Tagalog phrases and words, especially cultural honorifics. Sab's father is now in a same-sex relationship with a man Sab considers Dad No. 2, while her mother's boyfriend is Dad No. 3, details shared matter-of-factly and with love. This immersive novel bursts with life. (Fiction. 8-12)

From School Library Journal:
My Fate According to the Butterfly by Gail VILLANUEVA Gr 4–6—Sab's 11th birthday is approaching, but when she sees a black butterfly, she is afraid that she will die before then, since her father told her that the creature is a harbinger of death. She would like to spend her birthday with her father and Tito Wendell at the resort her grandmother ran before her death, but her sister Nadine has not spoken to her father in more than a year. Nadine is a journalism major in college and is working on a story about drug use in their neighborhood in Manila, the Philippines. Sab decides to investigate the cause of the rift and finds a friend of her father's from college. Sab begins reexamining things she already knew, which leads to the realization that her father was a drug addict. Sab is able to celebrate her birthday with the people she loves, and her awareness of her father's situation helps to bring the family back together. Told in simple, easily understood language, this novel combines elements of the mundane with a

timely story about how drug use and other issues can affect families.VERDICT A gentle title that skillfully addresses difficult issues of drug addiction and family tension from the perspective of a young girl. For those who appreciated Marie Miranda Cruz's Everlasting Nora, Padma Venkatraman's The Bridge Home, or Erin Entrada Kelly's The Land of Forgotten Girls.

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: _____ Date: 9/3/25

Department Chair: Valerie Biggam Date: 9.2.25

Building Principal: _____ Date: 9.16.25

District Curriculum Administrator: _____ Date: 9/26/25