



OLENTANGY SCHOOLS LITERATURE SELECTION REVIEW FORM

LOCATION

Building(s): OSMS

Classes/Grade Level(s): 6th Grade

ABOUT THE BOOK

Selection Title/Author: Rickshaw Girl by Mitali Perkins

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Lexile Reading Level: 730

Total number of pages: 96

Book Summary

In her Bangladesh village, ten-year-old Naima excels at painting designs called alpanas, but to help her impoverished family financially she would have to be a boy--or disguise herself as one.

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

Gender

A girl dresses and poses as a boy in an attempt to earn money for her struggling family (chapters 4-6).

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

From School Library Journal:

When 10-year-old Naima accidentally damages her father's rickshaw, their Bangladeshi family's only means of support, she decides to dress as a boy and find work. An easy-to-read text with a believable plot twist. Gentle black-line pastels incorporate cultural details

From The Horn Book:

Ten-year-old Naima may win prizes for designing and painting alpanas, the traditional decorative patterns that women use to adorn homes in their small Bangladeshi village, but, as her mother says, "Alpanas can't put rice on the table." Naima's parents can't afford school fees for both their daughters; now that it's her little sister's turn for schooling, disguising herself as a boy seems the only way for Naima to contribute much-needed earnings to her household. Naima's covert attempt to drive her father's rickshaw during his lunch break is met with disastrous results. Ultimately, though, Naima's recklessness leads to a solution that enables her to earn money with her talents--no disguise necessary. Perkins depicts a rural Bangladesh on the verge of change, as evolving gender roles travel from big cities to small villages. In addition to capturing contemporary Bangladeshi culture, Perkins even connects the vibrant plot to the economic model of microfinance--probably a first for an early chapter book! Black-and-white pastel drawings depict authentic alpina designs and also provide glimpses into Naima's dynamic world, underscoring the novel's accessible message about the



intersections of tradition and transformation. A glossary and an author's note are appended.

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. The Kaya Girl by Mamle Wolo



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

Teacher: *A. J. [Signature]* Date: 8/28/25
Department Chair: Valerie Brogan Date: 8.28.25
Building Principal: *[Signature]* Date: 8/29/25
District Curriculum Administrator: *Wendy Ford* Date: 9/26/25