



## OLENTANGY SCHOOLS LITERATURE SELECTION REVIEW FORM

### LOCATION

Building(s): OSMS

Classes/Grade Level(s): 6th Grade

### ABOUT THE BOOK

Selection Title/Author: The Turtle of Oman by Naomi Shihab Nye

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Lexile Reading Level: 700

Total number of pages: 320

#### Book Summary

Aref does not want to leave Oman. He does not want to leave his elementary school, his friends, or his beloved grandfather, Sidi. He does not want to live in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where his parents will go to graduate school. His mother is desperate for him to pack his suitcase—but he refuses. Finally, she calls Sidi for help. But rather than pack, Aref and Sidi go on a series of adventures. They visit the camp of a thousand stars deep in the desert, they sleep on Sidi's roof, they fish in the Gulf of Oman and dream about going to India, they travel to the nature reserve to watch the sea turtles. At each stop, Sidi finds a small stone that he later slips into Aref's suitcase—mementos of home.

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

**There is no potentially objectionable content in this novel.**

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

From Kirkus Reviews:

A warm and humorous peek at the profound and mundane details of moving from one country to another—a perfect pick for kids...Aref does not want to leave Oman. He does not want to leave his elementary school, his friends, or his beloved grandfather, Sidi. He does not want to live in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where his parents will go to graduate school. His mother is desperate for him to pack his suitcase—but he refuses. Finally, she calls Sidi for help. But rather than pack, Aref and Sidi go on a series of adventures. They visit the camp of a thousand stars deep in the desert, they sleep on Sidi's roof, they fish in the Gulf of Oman and dream about going to India, they travel to the nature reserve to watch the sea turtles. At each stop, Sidi finds



a small stone that he later slips into Aref's suitcase—mementos of home. This accessible, exquisite novel shines with gentle humor and explores themes of moving, family, nature, and immigration. Naomi Shihab Nye has created what Kirkus called "a warm and humorous peek at the profound and mundane details of moving from one country to another—a perfect pick for kids on the move." Features black-and-white spot art and decorations by Betsy Peterschmidt.

## 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: Alia Date: 9/3/25  
Department Chair: Valerie Briggman Date: 9.2.25  
Building Principal: S. Tait Date: 9-11-25  
District Curriculum Administrator: Cheri Ford Date: 10-1-25