OLENTANGY SCHOOLS LITERATURE SELECTION REVIEW FORM

LOCATION

Building(s): EL Program
Classes/Grade Level(s): Middle School EL IELA

ABOUT THE BOOK

Selection Title/Author: *Accidental Love* by Gary Soto
Genre: Realistic Fiction / Coming-of-Age
Lexile Reading Level: 750L
Total number of pages: 208

Book Summary (abbreviated, bulleted list or link to a book summary)

- Marisa Rodriguez, a strong-willed Latina seventh grader, accidentally calls the wrong number and meets Rene, a quiet, intelligent classmate.
- Their unlikely friendship develops into a middle school romance that helps both characters grow emotionally and socially.
- Marisa begins to value academics and kindness, while Rene gains confidence and courage to face peer pressure.
- Themes include identity, personal growth, cross-cultural understanding, and learning to look beyond appearances.

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

Category	Example (with page/ chapter reference)
Mild Romantic Themes	Marisa and Rene develop a middle school romance (Chapters 8–12)
Mild Language	Occasional slang or attitude in dialogue, typical for middle school characters
Peer Pressure	Marisa is teased for dating a "nerd" (Chapter 9)
Cultural Stereotyping	Discussion of social expectations and stereotypes Marisa faces (Chapter 7)

All content is age-appropriate and supports meaningful discussion of adolescent development.

• The story provides humor and authenticity while portraying realistic middle school experiences. **Link to summary:** Publisher's Page – HMH Books	

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

- Kirkus Reviews – *Accidental Love* Soto's latest novel explores the complexities of young love, identity, and friendship in middle school. Marisa, a strong-willed Mexican-American girl, and Rene, a shy, intelligent boy, form an unlikely relationship that helps each grow. Soto captures the rhythms of teenage dialogue and the emotional turmoil of early adolescence with warmth and humor. *(Source: Kirkus Reviews, 2005)*

- School Library Journal Review via Goodreads Gr 6–8 – Marisa, a tough-talking Latina seventh grader, is surprised when a wrong number leads her to meet Rene, a smart, shy boy. Their friendship develops into something more, despite their differences and the disapproval of some peers. Soto skillfully portrays cultural diversity and the tension between appearance and authenticity. The book's accessible style and believable characters make it a solid choice for middle school readers. *(Source: School Library Journal, May 1, 2005)*

ABOUT THE CLASS

Rationale for the Literature Selection (in addition to standards): (To be completed by the teacher or team)

Accidental Love offers a relatable story for middle school students navigating identity, friendship, and early adolescence. It promotes empathy, self-reflection, and cross-cultural understanding, while also encouraging discussion about academic motivation and emotional growth. The accessible language and authentic voice make it ideal for grades 6–8 readers with diverse backgrounds and reading abilities.

The novel also supports social-emotional learning by helping students analyze how relationships influence choices and self-perception.

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.7.3** – Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).
2. **RL.7.2** – Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development; provide an objective summary.
3. **RL.7.6** – Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters.
4. **RL.7.10** – Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

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. Ten Things I Hate About Me / Randa Abdel-Fattah

2. All You Knead Is Love / Tanya Guerrero

(Both texts explore adolescents' identity and social relationships.)

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

Teacher: Suzanne K Fyr — Date: 10/22/25

ELA Department Chair: — Date:

Building Principal: Eric B Tulley — Date: 10/28/25

District Curriculum Administrator: Elonē N. Ford — Date: 11/11/25