OLENTANGY SCHOOLS LITERATURE SELECTION REVIEW FORM

LOCATION

Building(s): OLHS

Classes/Grade Level(s): English 9

ABOUT THE BOOK

Selection Title/Author: *Gold Mountain* / Betty Yee

Genre: Historical Fiction

Lexile Reading Level: 870L

Total number of pages: 288

Book Summary (abbreviated, bulleted list or link to a book summary)	**Potentially Objectionable Content (list all categories and at least one example, referenced with a page or chapter number)**
Protagonist Tam Ling Fan is a 15-year-old girl in 1860s China whose life changes after losing her twin brother and seeing her father falsely imprisoned. To earn money to help free her father, she disguises herself as her brother and takes his labor contract to work on the Central Pacific Railroad in America. On the perilous "Gold Mountain," she faces extreme working conditions including tunnel blasts, avalanches, blizzards, and anti-Chinese hostility. Ling Fan must navigate challenges to protect her identity and family, testing her persistence, courage, and resilience.	**Violence / Danger:** Depictions of dangerous railroad construction including cave-ins, avalanches, and difficult working conditions (contextual, non-graphic). (Chapter 14, for example) **Prejudice / Racial Themes:** Exposure to historical xenophobia and challenges faced by Chinese laborers in America (non-graphic) (Chapter 6 and 12, for example) **Alcohol / Substance Abuse:** Certain scenes depict life in the railroad camps, including mention of drinking, smoking, and opium dealing. These situations are historical, and are presented as negative. (Chapter 18, for example, mentions opium dealing) **Sexual Content:** No sexual content is explicitly mentioned. Some scenes involve gendered disguise and vulnerability, but they are not sexual in nature.

Book Reviews (1-2 link(s)) *Note: teacher is not responsible for broken links* *https://historicalnovelsociety.org/reviews/gold-mountain/* *https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/betty-g-yee/gold-mountain/*	

ABOUT THE CLASS

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

This title will be a choice for our 9th graders in a book club study during Quarter 3. Our focus for quarter 3 is centered around the idea of culture, and how culture (family, friends, traditions, environment, etc) impact an individual's identity. Many different themes are developed throughout this novel, allowing for students to make connections and engage in in-depth conversations. We want this unit to be varied in the types of book available, and this particular book uses historical situations to explore that very idea.

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.9-10.2 Analyze literary text development.
    a. Determine a theme of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details.
2. RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

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. The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
2. The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini

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

Teacher: _____ Date: 1/12/26

ELA Department Chair: _____ Date: 1-16-26

Building Principal: _____ Date: 3/5/26

District Curriculum Administrator: _____ Date: 3/23/26