# OLENTANGY SCHOOLS LITERATURE SELECTION REVIEW FORM

## LOCATION

**Building(s):** High School
**Classes/Grade Level(s):** 9-12

## ABOUT THE BOOK

**Selection Title/Author:** *Students on Strike: Jim Crow, Civil Rights, Brown, and Me* by John Stokes
**Genre:** Memoir / Historical Nonfiction
**Lexile Reading Level:** 1030L
**Total Number of Pages:** 224

| **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) |
|---|---|
| • This memoir recounts John Stokes's personal experiences as a Black student activist during the Civil Rights Movement.<br>• Stokes describes growing up under Jim Crow segregation and how the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision directly affected his education and worldview.<br>• The book centers on student-led strikes, walkouts, and protests demanding equal educational opportunities and desegregation.<br>• Through first-person narration, the author illustrates the courage, risks, and consequences faced by young people who challenged institutional racism.<br>• Major themes include youth activism, racial injustice, civic responsibility, | **Racism & Discrimination**<br>Firsthand accounts of segregation, racial slurs, and unequal treatment of Black students under Jim Crow laws (Chapters 1–3)<br><br>**Civil Unrest & Protest**<br>Descriptions of student strikes, walkouts, and confrontations with school officials and law enforcement (Chapters 4–6)<br><br>**Violence & Threats**<br>Accounts of intimidation, threats, and fear experienced by student activists and their families (Chapters 5–7)<br><br>**Strong Language (Contextual)**<br>Historically accurate language appears in quoted dialogue and memoir reflections |

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| resilience, and the role of education in social change | All content is presented in a historical, reflective, and educational context and is appropriate for high school students when paired with guided discussion. |

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

- **Goodreads Summary – Students on Strike**
  https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/

## ABOUT THE CLASS

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

*Students on Strike: Jim Crow, Civil Rights, Brown, and Me* is an effective high school text because it provides a personal, student-centered perspective on the Civil Rights Movement. By focusing on lived experience rather than distant historical figures, the memoir helps students understand how ordinary young people participated in extraordinary acts of resistance.

The text encourages students to analyze the relationship between education, activism, and social change while fostering empathy and historical awareness. It supports cross-curricular connections to U.S. history and civics and invites meaningful discussion about the power of youth voices, protest, and democratic participation.

**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

- **RI.9–10.2** – Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development; provide an objective summary.
- **RI.9–10.3** – Analyze how the author unfolds a series of events and ideas, including connections among them.
- **RI.9–10.6** – Determine the author's point of view and analyze how personal experience shapes the narrative.
- **RI.9–10.10** – Read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 9-10 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. Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor

- **Themes:** Racial injustice, family, resistance to oppression, and resilience in the face of inequality.

- **Similarity to *Students on Strike*:** Both books tackle issues of racial inequality and discrimination, though from different time periods and contexts. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* is set during the Great Depression in Mississippi and follows the Logan family as they deal with the harsh realities of racism and the struggle for dignity and equality. *Students on Strike* deals with civil rights in the 1950s and 1960s, focusing on student activism. Both books highlight the importance of standing up for what is right and the personal and collective struggles that individuals face in the fight for justice.

- **Teaching Points:** The book would allow for an exploration of how racial prejudice shapes individuals' lives and communities. Both *Roll of Thunder* and *Students on Strike* explore the power of youth activism, the importance of family and community in times of hardship, and the emotional and psychological toll of living under systemic oppression. It also offers opportunities for students to discuss resistance and what it means to fight for equality.

## 2. The Watsons Go to Birmingham - 1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis

- **Themes:** Racism, the Civil Rights Movement, family, and social justice.

- **Similarity to *Students on Strike*:** *The Watsons Go to Birmingham- 1963* tells the story of an African American family from Michigan that travels to Birmingham, Alabama, during the height of the Civil Rights Movement. This book touches on key events like the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing, which is central to understanding the racial tensions of the time. Both books explore the lived experiences of young people navigating racial discrimination in America. *Students on Strike* focuses on the efforts of student activists during the Civil Rights Movement, while *The Watsons Go to Birmingham* captures the emotional journey of a family in a racially tense period, including how children and teens grapple with the realities of racism.

- **Teaching Points:** The book allows for an exploration of how young people experience and understand racism and social justice issues. It also highlights the role of families in supporting and guiding youth through times of societal unrest. This book, like *Students on Strike*, can be used to discuss the impact of the Civil Rights Movement on children and the development of their sense of justice and activism. It also offers insight into the emotional weight of historical events, particularly for young readers, and provides a jumping-off point for discussing how far (or how little) society has come since these events.

Both *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* and *The Watsons Go to Birmingham - 1963* provide young readers with a deep understanding of the racial struggles in the U.S., the Civil Rights Movement, and the importance of standing up against injustice. They also highlight how the younger generation, like the students in *Students on Strike*, played a key role in advocating for change. These books are great for fostering discussions on racism, activism, and the lasting impact of the Civil Rights Movement.

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

Teacher: ___ _____ Date:__4/13/26__

ELA Department Chair: _____ Date:_____

Building Principal: Date: 4/13/26

District Curriculum Administrator: Date: 5/4/26