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LIS 527

May 10, 2017

Annotated Bibliography: Young Adult Literature

Draper, Sharon M. *The Battle of Jericho*. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2013

Realistic Fiction, Grade Level 7-12. This book is about a six-teen year old boy, Jericho, and his cousin, Josh, who are being invited to join an exclusive and prestigious club in their school. Before becoming members, the boys must go through an initiation process which proves to more much more difficult than they could have imagined. The boys are forced to make choices between doing the right thing or changing who they are just to fit in. The book takes us on the unfortunate series of events, or hazing, that the boys go through to be a part of this so called prestigious group. In the end, we see the high price that is paid just to attempt to fit in. This book is appealing due to its relevance today of what teens will do to fit in. this book would be good for teaching moral lessons. The fiction elements in this book also make it a great one for reinforcing plot, character traits and using to compare to another realistic fiction piece.

Green, John. *The Fault in Our Stars*. New York: Penguin, 2014

Realistic Fiction, Grade Level 9-12. The main characters, Hazel and Augustus meet, after Hazel, who is depressed, is sent by her doctor to support group for kids battling cancer. During their time, there the two form a relationship and bond over Hazels favorite book, which ends up taking them on an adventure. Hazel and Augustus struggle with their disease but we see the importance of —life, love, and death- throughout this story. This story can be used whole class or in book clubs. It addresses a few sensitive issues and maybe helpful to students dealing with these issues personally or through someone else.

Grover, Lorie Ann. *Hold Me Tight*. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2005

Poetry, Grade Level 5-10. This book is written in poetic prose. It tells the story of 12-year-old, Essie, who is dealing with several of life’s toughest events all at once. Her father announces he is leaving, her mother is pregnant, a classmate is kidnapped, and a family friend attempts to molest her. Essie finds the strength she needs from her loved ones and realizes how important those family bonds are. This story brings up some major talking points for teens of today. There is also a note at the end that discusses the Amber Alert system.

Hall, Shyima. *Hidden Girl: The True Story of a Modern-Day Child Slave.* Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2014.

Nonfiction Memoir, Grade Level 9-12. This story is full of emotions and is unfortunately a relevant topic in our world today. We read the words from Shyima Hall who is the survivor of modern day slavery. She was born in Egypt on September 29, 1989, the seventh child of extremely poor parents. By the time she was 8 her parents sold her into the harsh world of slavery. The family who owned her eventually moved to California and took Shymia with them. Several years after moving to America, an anonymous call became the end of her slavery. Since then she has become an advocate for human trafficking and continues to pursue her dream to become an immigration officer. This book could be used for a comparison to slavery today vs. the past and researching the topic of modern day slavery.

Parks, Rosa & Haskins, James. *Rosa Parks: My Story*. New York: Dial Books, 1999

Nonfiction- Autobiography, Grade Level 6-12. This is a true glimpse into the life of a huge contributor to the civil rights movement in our country. Rosa Parks tells of the trials in her life that led up to her brave act of her refusing to give up her seat to a white man, as well as the arrest that followed. Parks talks of the continued fight for equality and the active role she played civil rights even after the brave moment she is most known for. This would be a great read to follow up with a class project presenting all the struggles she faced, to help in the civil rights movement, other than the one she is mostly known for.

Pfeffer, Susan Beth. *Life as We Knew It.* HMH Books for Young Readers, 2008

Fantasy, Grade Level 7-12. This book is the first in a series, which follows a teenage girl, named Miranda, through her journal entries. We follow Miranda and her family as they struggle to survive after a meteor strikes the moon, throwing it off its axis, thus creating horrible events here on Earth. Let me just say this book seems very real, to the point where I felt the need to go stock up on supplies. This book would tie in well with a science lesson on space, as well as, dealing with real catastrophes that we have faced such as earthquakes, tornados and hurricanes.

Osa, Nancy. *Cuba 15.* New York: Delacorte Press, 2003

Multicultural Fiction, Grade Level 7-12. The main character, Violet Paz does not know very much about her half-Cuban, half-Polish heritage, she sees herself as an “American”. Part of her Cuban family is insisting she have a Quinceañera, which is a celebration of coming of age when a girl, typically of Latin American background, turns 15. Violet is hesitant at first, but soon learns that her party doesn’t have to be as traditional as she thought, and she can in fact have a theme that she selects. So, she finds a way to mix traditional customs with her own flair and personality. To prepare for the event, Violet, researches and learns more about her culture. While researching, she does something sneaky without informing her family. Along the whole journey she finds her first boyfriend and discovers again how valuable her two best friends are to her. This book would be great to trigger discussion into several topics such as: other types of coming of age events, family history, and immigration.

Taylor, Mildred D. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry.* New York: Puffin Books, 1997.

Historical Fiction, Grade Level 8-12. In this story, we follow nine-year-old Cassie Logan and her family for one year as they're traumatized by inequality and racism in their small Mississippi town. Cassie doesn’t fully understand the importance of her family’s farm land, which is trying to be taken away by a white neighbor. As the story progresses Cassie is growing as a person. The story does a great job of portraying the intense racism that was alive in Mississippi during the 1930’s. This could be used to class rooms in multiple ways but I think it would be great to give students a glimpse of what life was like during that time frame, from the dialect to the scenes the author depicts.

White, Kiersten. *The Chaos of Stars.* New York: HarperTeen, 2013

Fantasy, Grade Level 9- 12. In this romantic fantasy story, we follow, Isadora, the human daughter of immortal Egyptian gods. Her mother is the Egyptian goddess of motherhood and fertility. Isadora is fed up with her parents and leaves them behind as she strikes out on her own in California. But when dark dreams start haunting her, she discovers that she and her family are in grave danger. She makes some new friends, including the handsome and mysterious Ry, who help Isadora race back home to save her family before it's too late. While I don’t know that this book has a huge teaching point I would use it for for a small group or club of students who have an interest in romantic fantasy and Greek gods.

Zusak, Markus. *The Book Thief.* New York: Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2006

Historical Fiction, Grade Level 9-12. This book tells of a young German girl named Liesel. The book begins with her and her brother going to live with foster parents. On the way to her new home her brother dies. After the death of her brother she steals a book from his grave, though she cannot read. It's only the first of what will become a series of book thefts. Liesel eventually learns to read and her book-stealing and story-telling talents help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding, as well as their neighbors. The historical elements in this story make it a good piece to read along with studying World War II.