

**ARROWHEAD UNION HIGH SCHOOL
LITERATURE TEXT ADOPTION RECOMMENDATION**

DEPARTMENT Language Arts

SCHOOL YEAR 2005-2006

CLASS Modern Literature

REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS Donna Smith, Greg Budzien, Andy Freeburg,
Diane Judd, Deidre Stoffel

RECOMMENDED TEXT The True
Story of Hansel and Gretel
AUTHOR Louise Murphy
PUBLISHER Penguin
COST \$14.00
COPYRIGHT 2003

TEXT BEING REPLACED
AUTHOR
PUBLISHER
COST
COPYRIGHT

OTHER TEXTS REVIEWED

NAME OF TEXT 10th Grade
AUTHOR Joe Weisberg
PUBLISHER Random House
COPYRIGHT 2003

NAME OF TEXT
AUTHOR
PUBLISHER
COPYRIGHT

RATIONALE FOR LITERATURE TEXT PURCHASE (check all that apply)

- Previous texts are worn
- Previous texts are outdated
- There was a change in curriculum
- Text rotation
- Other Please explain: _____

The following has been taken into consideration in the selection of this literature text.

CONTENT

- Meets state and national standards
- Meets local Power Standards
- Aligns with course curriculum
- Integrates with other content areas
- Reflects a cultural and pluralistic society
- Appropriate for age group
- Provokes critical discourse
- Reflects board policy for selection of materials

Please explain any areas not checked and/or elaborate on the qualities of the book chosen.

ARROWHEAD UNION HIGH SCHOOL
TEACHER'S RATIONALE FOR LITERATURE IN THE CURRICULUM

DEPARTMENT Language Arts

CLASS Modern Literature

GRADE LEVEL(S) 11-12

TEACHER COMPLETING FORM Deidre K. Stoffel

Approximate date(s) a book will be used: Semester 1 Semester 2

This book will be (check one or more):

- studied by the whole class.
- studied by small groups.
- placed on a reading list.
- recommended to individual students.
- part of a larger study of (explain):
- other (explain):

Ways in which the book is especially appropriate for students in this class:

The students should be familiar with the history of WWII. This book takes a look from the differing perspectives of both victims and participants of the war in Poland. Also, the students should be familiar with the fairytale, Hansel and Gretel, which will help them see the connections between fact and fiction.

Ways in which the book is especially pertinent to the objectives of this course or unit:

The True Story of Hansel and Gretel pertains to Modern Literature in that it is a recently published book. In addition it addresses topics that are still relevant today such as religious persecution, stereotypes, coming of age, and history.

Indicate types of concepts in this book that might be questionable to some readers:

(for example: explicit sexuality, violence, profanity, etc.)

One scene in the book addresses the rape of a young girl in a very inexplicit and tactful manner.

Recommendation for parent notification: Yes No

Special problems that might arise in relation to the book and some planned activities that handle this problem:

Discussion of the rape scene may be difficult for some students. The issue needs to be addressed as factual part of history and as a reality of today. Group discussions will help the students to define rape, to compare how rape cases were handled then and now, and to answer any questions the students may have concerning the issue.

Some other appropriate books an individual student might read in place of this book:

Briar Rose by Jane Yolen

Summary of the book:

From Publishers Weekly:

Windling's Fairy Tale series has produced several excellent fantasy novels inspired by classic fairy tales. This is one of the series's most ambitious efforts, and only a writer as good as Yolen (Sister Light, Sister Dark) could bring it off. Yolen takes the story of Briar Rose (commonly known as Sleeping Beauty) and links it to the Holocaust--a far-from-obvious connection that she makes perfectly convincing. Rebecca Berlin, a young woman who has grown up hearing her grandmother Gemma tell an unusual and frightening version of the Sleeping Beauty legend, realizes when Gemma dies that the fairy tale offers one of the very few clues she has to her grandmother's past. To discover the facts behind Gemma's story, Rebecca travels to Poland, the setting for the book's most engrossing scenes and its most interesting, best-developed characters. By interpolating Gemma's vivid and imaginative story into the larger narrative, Yolen has created an engrossing novel. She handles a difficult subject with finesse in a book that should be required reading for anyone who is tempted to dismiss fantasy as a frivolous genre.

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Reviews and/or awards of the book or author:

From Publishers Weekly:

A provocative transformation of the classic fairy tale into a haunting survival story set in Poland during WWII, Murphy's second novel (after *The Sea Within*) is darkly enchanting. Two Jewish children, a girl of 11 and her seven-year-old brother, are left to wander the woods after their father and stepmother are forced to abandon them, frantically begging them never to say their Jewish names, but to identify themselves as Hansel and Gretel. In an imaginative reversal of the original tale, they encounter a small woman named Magda, known as a "witch" by villagers, who risks her life in harboring them. The story alternates between the children's nightmarish adventures, and their parents' struggle for survival and hope for a safe reunion. This mirror image of the fairy tale is deliberately disorienting, as Murphy describes the horrors of the outside world compared with the haven inside Magda's hut, and the fear and anguish of the other people who conspire to save the children and protect their own families, too. The naive siblings are only half-conscious of much of this, though they are perfectly aware of their peril should they be discovered. The graphic details--the physical symptoms of near starvation, the infestations of lice, the effects of bitter cold--make it plain that this is the grimmest kind of fable. Eventually, the Nazis indulge in wholesale slaughter, and the children barely survive, hiding and on the run. No reader who picks up this inspiring novel will put it down until the final pages, in which redemption is not a fairy tale ending but a heartening message of hope.

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Also reviewed by *The New York Times*, *KLIATT*, *Library Journal*, and *Kirkus Reviews*.

Louise Murphy is the winner of a *Writers Digest Award* for formal poetry. *The True Story of Hansel and Gretel* was named a *San Francisco Chronicle Best Book of the Year 2003*.

Once approved, a copy of the Rationale for Literature in the Curriculum should be posted on the AHS web page.

Department Chair/Department Liaison Signature

Date

This form must be completed and on file with the district administrator before purchasing materials.

4/05