

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

DEPARTMENT Language Arts

SCHOOL YEAR 2010-2011

CLASS English 11

REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS Sarah Johansen, Jennifer Passler, Kathy Nelson, Emily Knippel, Stephanie Janigo, Mike Feuerstahler

RECOMMENDED TEXT *The Road*

AUTHOR Cormac McCarthy's
PUBLISHER Vintage/Random House
COST \$10.17
COPYRIGHT 2006

TEXT BEING REPLACED ?

AUTHOR
PUBLISHER
COST
COPYRIGHT

OTHER TEXTS REVIEWED

NAME OF TEXT
AUTHOR
PUBLISHER
COPYRIGHT

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- Previous texts are outdated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 English 11

GRADE LEVEL(S) 11

TEACHER COMPLETING FORM Nelson

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): Provides contemporary companion piece to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as content for our Journey unit. OR this can serve as the centerpiece for the Loss/Renewal Unit.

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

For the Journey unit, students see that contemporary books can be literary gems--that not only old classics have merit. After reading of the actual physical journey of Huck Finn, students can use higher level thinking skills to imagine a fantasy journey making comparisons and contrasts with both. For the Loss/Renewal unit, students can appreciate that when all material things are lost, love prevails.

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

As stated above, students benefit reading this novel in tandem with *Huck Finn*. Unlike the strong racial message of the journey down the Mississippi River, this dark story offers many universal elements and appeals. And for the Loss/Renewal unit, the materialism loss is so profound, every student will be readily aware of it to make connections to this unit's theme.

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

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

It contains violence as some groups of survivors hunt others, hence, reference to cannibalism (However, the main characters always think and remind us that this is a BAD choice; and they will NEVER allow themselves to go to that extreme). A dead baby roasting on a fire may appear pretty gruesome and objectionable; but again, it is used to show the dark side the survivors take to keep going.

Despite this dark side to the novel, "the good guys" are constantly pushed to "carry the fire." The little boy may be seen as a Christ figure, carrying "the light," doing good, always trying to find the good in others, and helping his father never to succumb to any of the darker methods of survival. The message of persistence, of never giving up no matter what is the predominant theme the students come away with.

Recommendation for parent notification: Yes No

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

Given the dark nature of the book, activities will be planned to help students keep perspective on the American theme being studied (Loss or Journey). Students will be encouraged to focus on how the issues in the book pertain to America today. As a class, students will discuss the pertinent themes/issues and the teacher will facilitate.

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

Of Mice and Men

Devil in the White City

The Sound and the Fury

Summary of the book:

The Road Summary from <http://www.enotes.com/road-mccarthy>

The novel opens with a father and son sleeping outside in the cold. The father awakens from a dream of him and his child in a cave, facing a huge, nameless creature that eventually runs away into the dark. At dawn, the father (who, along with the son, remains nameless throughout the novel) surveys the landscape, trying to decide where they will travel next. He is unsure of month or day, because "he hadn't kept a calendar for years." The scene before him reveals ash from a post-nuclear holocaust falling from the sky and drifting across the landscape. The father and son are survivors, fighting to live in a world that has been destroyed by nuclear bombs and ravaged by chaos and confusion.

The boy wakens and they set off on their journey, following a road through the countryside. A grocery cart and knapsacks contain all of their belongings. There is a pervasive sense of danger, and they are constantly on the alert. Discovering an old, abandoned gas station, they explore the remains, hunting for food or other useful items. They find some motor oil and siphon it off to use in their only lamp. That night, at camp, the father reveals that they are heading south because it will hopefully be warmer there.

The boy and his father travel south for "days and weeks to follow," with not much break during the monotonous journey. They suffer from an endless "nuclear winter"—rain, snow, and bitter cold. The father has flashbacks to his childhood home, to fishing with his uncle, and to his wife, who likely killed herself because she could not bear living in such a dreary world. He also dreams, and when the dreams are pleasant, happy ones, he worries, feeling that bad dreams are normal, but happy ones are "the call of...death." He believes that his dreams, if pleasant, are harbingers of death to come. Weak and afflicted with a cough, he worries that if he dies he will leave his son behind to fend for himself. He also worries constantly about shoes, shelter, food, and the unnamed danger, which the reader eventually learns is from packs of barbaric survivors who have turned to cannibalism. The father and son carry a single gun with only three bullets as protection against those who hunt and kill any other survivors for food.

Along the road, they scavenge for blankets, canned food, and other useful goods from abandoned houses, grocery stores, barns, and sheds. The father at one point finds a can of Coca-Cola and gives it to the boy to try, who has never tasted the soft drink. They pass the house where the father grew up, and they walk through; however, the son is very afraid of being there. He is worried that there are people living... » Complete The Road Summary

Reviews and/or awards of the book or author:

Editorial Reviews from <http://www.amazon.com/Road-McCarthy>

From Publishers Weekly

In the bestselling *McCarthy's Bar*, McCarthy had one rule: never pass a bar with your name on it. In *Road* it's: never pass a part of the world with your name in or on it. Thus this genealogist-cum-pint-swilling adventurer embarks on a frolicsome, drunken globe-trot to uncover the roots of all things McCarthy and in the process expose what it means to be a McCarthy and, by extension, to be Irish. It's a lively, lusty quest; McCarthy travels like a Renaissance explorer with a film director's lens. In Tangiers, he finds a Moroccan McCarthy who puts a unique spin on the term "black Irish." He takes in America's premier Irish event, New York's St. Patrick's Day Parade (which he finds more Celtic and American than Irish and not a little Scottish besides). Next stop: Tasmania, the penal colony where so many Irish were sent by the British government. And how could he resist a visit to the town of McCarthy, Alaska, population 18? The ultimate mocking tour guide with acerbic charm, McCarthy delivers scathing critiques of people and places, himself included. His droll and often drunken existentialist view proffers a unique (and distinctly Irish) perspective on the world that is part history, part McCarthy's Law. Some may be put off by his frequent references to drugs, sex and overimbibing, but McCarthy is like a character out of contemporary Irish literature, a traveler on a winding road surrounded by life's imperfections yet finding them beautiful despite it all (especially after a pint or two). Photos, maps.

Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Booklist

McCarthy is one very funny man, and this is one very funny book. We last heard from him in the equally hilarious *McCarthy's Bar* (2001), in which he was searching for his Irish roots in Ireland. The journey continues, but now the indefatigable Anglo-Irishman expands his horizons to jaunt about the globe, from unlikely Tangier to that traditional Irish bastion, New York. As his readers well know, McCarthy will go anywhere and everywhere as long as a pint (or two) in a cozy pub awaits at journey's end. He risks life and limb, such as when he faces, with utmost courage, a rabid crowd of drunken Scots Catholic soccer fans, come from Glasgow to celebrate Paddy's Day in Manhattan. Betimes he stays closer to home, at an Ireland versus England rugby match in Dublin, for instance, but really, how can he resist visiting Tasmania, Montserrat, Butte (Montana), and a tiny (population 18) Alaskan town that somehow bears his name? Infectiously funny. June Sawyers

Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

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