

The Role of Young Adult Literature

Why do we think students should read YA literature?

The Reader's Bill of Rights

- 1) The right not to read something
- 2) The right to skip pages
- 3) The right not to finish
- 4) The right to reread
- 5) The right to read anything
- 6) The right to escapism
- 7) The right to read anywhere
- 8) The right to browse
- 9) The right to read out loud
- 10) The right to not defend your tastes

Daniel Pennac (1992)

Reader's Bill of Rights --- Revisions

Readers have the right to...

...not like everything they read. Reading a book is like entering into a new relationship – some work out, some don't.

... talk about books they didn't like.

... not find a deeper meaning in everything they read.

... read about books. Pour over book reviews; peruse dust jackets; read books about books and the people who collect them: all of it is fascinating.

... read books NOT on their reading level. Read everything: young adult novels, children's literature, cookbooks, how-to manuals, bestselling mysteries, biographies, philosophical texts, and scholarly physics journals that make you feel small. IT ALL COUNTS.

... get in a rut. Get stuck in a vampire/sci-fi phase that lasts about 4 years...

... surprise themselves. Started reading biographies and poetry or even if you have been a self-proclaimed skeptic of both genres.

... keep lists of books you want to read, and then ignore them.

... check out more books from the library at one time than you could ever possibly read in 21 days.

... buy books that you'll never read, or won't get to for a few years.

... own multiple copies of the same title.

What Readers' Rights would you allow in your classroom?

What to read?

What is appropriate?

How to find good options?

Helping students to choose.

Reading Level: Challenge books, Just Right books, and Holidays.

Genres

What appeals the most: plot, characters, prose, settings, etc.

Young Adult Literature in Schools

How to manage individual choice, parent permissions, managing books

Managing class reading – Approval, parent awareness, managing sensitive topics, reading levels,

Managing Differentiated Reading Instruction

Reading Workshops

Silent Sustained Reading (and all the newer mutations...)

Teaching students to think about reading:

Efferent Reading

Aesthetic Reading



(Louise Rosenblatt)

(What you carry away, learn from)

(Personally lived through)

Connecting to Reading (and keeping in the zone) (Nancie Atwell)

- *Text to self*
- *Text to Text (reading like writers)*
- *Text to world*

Responding to Reading

Book Talks

- Not book reports. Oral presentations endorsing a book they enjoyed. No notes, audiovisuals
- Several talks at once. Students listen with their reading notebook to add titles of interest to their “someday” list to read later
- Quick presentation: Book information. Response, Brief synopsis/ teaser, what they liked best. “Questions, Comments, Interested Takers”

Letter Essays - (a thoughtful piece instead of weekly logs)

- In a journal every three weeks to teacher or classmate who will respond
- At least two pages in length written as a personal, critical response to one book
- Students choose a book they read to respond to. Skim it to review and select at least one important passage.
- In the letter:
 - Letter style telling friend about the book (title and author).
 - Students discuss: theme, character development, plot arc, style
 - A passage that represents something essential in the book to share and respond to
 - Discuss experience as a reader of that book (questions, thoughts, connections, responses, etc.)

Unsent Letters

Writing letters in response to reading that will not be mailed...

- To a character in the book offering advice or reactions
- As if they were one character needing to talk to another
- To the author
- To a character a year after the end of the book, imagining an epilogue

Other Approaches?

Rules for Reading Workshop

1. You must read a book. Magazines and newspapers don't offer the extended chunks of prose you need to develop fluency. More important, they won't help you discover who you are as a reader of books.
2. Don't read a book you don't like. Don't waste time with a book you don't love, when there are so many great titles out there waiting for you—unless you've decided to finish it so you can criticize it. Do develop your own criteria and system for abandoning an unsatisfying read.
3. If you don't like your book, find another. Check out the books-we-love display. Check your list of someday books. Browse our shelves. Ask me or a friend for a recommendation.
4. It's more than all right to reread a book you love. This is something good readers do.
5. It's okay to skim or skip parts of a book if you get bored or stuck: good readers do this, too.
6. On the forms inside your reading folder, record the title of every book you finish or abandon, its genre and author, the date, and your rating, 1 to 10. Collect data about yourself as a reader, look for patterns, and take satisfaction in your accomplishments over time.
7. Understand that reading is thinking. Try to do nothing that distracts others from the reading zone: don't put your words into their brains as they're trying to escape into the worlds of words created by the authors of books they love. When you confer with me about your reading, use as soft a voice as I use when I talk to you: *whisper*.
8. Take care of our books. Sign out each book you borrow on your cards, then sign it back in *with me*—I'll draw a line through the title and initial the card—when you're ready to return it. Shelve the returned book in its section in our library, alphabetically by the author's name—or, if it's a book you loved, add it to the books-we-love collection.
9. Read the whole time.
10. Read as much as you can.

Basic Questions for Self-Evaluating in Reading

- How many books did you finish this trimester?
- How many were Holidays, Just Rights, or Challenges?
- What genres are represented?
- Which book of the trimester was your favorite? Why—what did the author do in crafting it?
- What are your favorite genres to read these days?
- Which poems of the trimester were your favorites? Why—what did the poets do in crafting them?
- Who are your favorite authors these days? Why these writers?
- Who are your favorite poets?
- What was your favorite read-aloud?
- What progress did you make toward the reading goals we set at the end of last trimester?
- What are your goals for yourself as a reader for the coming trimester, in terms of:
 - your productivity and pace—the number of books next trimester or pages per night?
 - your work with genres and authors?
 - your written responses to books in your reading journal letters?

Some Questions I Ask as I Roam Among Readers

Always:

What page are you on?

Mostly:

What do you think so far?

How is it?

What's happening now?

And also:

Any surprises so far?

How did you feel when you got to the part about _____?

Main character queries:

Who's the main character in this one?

What's the main character like?

What's his problem, or hers?

How's the character development in general? Are you convinced?

Author queries:

Who wrote this one?

What do you think of the writing so far?

Do you know anything about the author?

Any theories about why he or she might have written this?

How is it so far, compared to his or her other books?

Critical queries:

What genre is this one?

How is it so far, compared with other books about _____?

Is it plausible?

How's the pace?

What's the narrative voice?

How's that working for you?

What do you think of the dialogue/format/length of chapters/flashbacks/inclusion of poems/diction choices/author's experiments with _____, and so on (depending on the book)?

When it's a page-turner:

What's making this a page-turner for you, vs. a literary novel? What are you noticing? For example, is it formulaic—easy for you to predict?

Process queries:

Why did you decide to read this one?

I can't believe how much you read last night. Tell me about that.

Why did you decide to reread this one?

Where did you find this book?

When there's no zone:

Is this book taking you into the reading zone?

Why do you think it's taking you so long to read this?

Can you skim the parts that drag—the descriptions, for example?

Are you confused because it's hard to understand the language, or because you can't tell what's going on?

Are you considering abandoning this book? Because if you're not hooked by now, that's more than okay. You can always come back to it someday.

Do you want to skim to find out what happens, or even read just the ending, then move on to a better book?

What's on your someday list?

Do you know what other book I think you might like?

Finis:

Now that you've finished it, what will you rate this one?

Is this one worthy of a booktalk? Do you want to schedule a talk for tomorrow?

What are you planning to read next?

Writing About Reading: Some Openers

I was surprised when/angry about/satisfied with/moved by/incredulous at/...

I liked the way the author

I noticed how the author

I don't get why the author

If I were the author I would have

I'd compare this author to

This book reminded me of

The main character

The character development

The narrative voice

The structure of this book

The climax of the plot

The resolution of the main character's problem

The genre of this book

I'd say a theme of this book is

I wish that

I didn't agree with

I understood

I couldn't understand

Why did

This is how I read this book:

I rated this one _____ because

And always: I was struck by/interested in/convinced by this passage: "..."

It shows ... about this author's writing.

Meeting the Standards through Young Adult Literature

PA Core Standards for ELA Grade 8 (sample standards)	Ideas for using YA Literature
CC 1.3 Reading Literature: Students read and respond to works of literature- with an emphasis on comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and making connections among ideas and between texts with a focus on textual evidence.	
CC1.3.8 A Determine the theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.	
CC 1.3.8 B Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences, conclusions, and/or generalizations drawn from the text.	
CC 1.3.8 C Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.	
CC 1.3.8 D Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader.	
CC 1.3.8 F Analyze the influence of the words and phrases in a text including figurative and connotative meanings and how they shape meaning and tone.	
CC 1.3.8 I Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade-level reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies and tools.	
CC1.3.8.K Read and comprehend literary fiction on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.	
CC 1.4 Writing: Students write for different purposes and audiences. Students write clear and focused text to convey a well-defined perspective and appropriate content.	

CC 1.4.8. C Develop and analyze the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples; include graphics and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.	
CC 1.4.8. E Write with an awareness of the stylistic aspects of composition: Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. Use sentences of varying lengths and complexities. Create tone and voice through precise language. Establish and maintain a formal style.	
CC 1.4.8 G Introduce and state an opinion on a topic.	
CC 1.4.8 S Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research applying grade-level reading standards for literature and literary non-fiction.	