OAHS Library

Book Review Program

Selection and Approval of Books

- Students wishing to earn extra credit for reading and reviewing an OAHS Library book must first receive approval from the extra credit-granting teacher and the librarian. Books being read for extra credit must be approved no later than 3 weeks before the end of the marking period.
- Students may read and review any OAHS Library fiction or nonfiction title that fits within the course content and reading level of a participating class. This includes eBooks. Search the library catalog and look at our Resources Lists for ideas of books that
- Reviews must be submitted through the Destiny library catalog and will be featured in our catalog with the book catalog to assist other students with finding good books!
- Extra credit will be assessed by the librarian based on the following guidelines and the book review rubric.

Book Review Writing Guidelines

- Book reviews may be NO LONGER THAN 1,000 CHARACTERS (letters, spaces, & punctuation) – USE WORD COUNT.
- Spelling, grammar and punctuation should be perfect.
- Reviews should generally include the elements in the order below, but do not have to follow exactly.
- All reviews are graded using the book review rubric on the library website and submitted to Turnitin.com
- Read the entire book (reviewing without reading the whole story is unfair to the author!)
- It is helpful to make notes of important things you want to include in your review.
- Remember that the audience for your review is other teens just like you. Imagine you are describing the book to a friend.
- Hook ‘em! Good writing helps promote books. Remember this as you compose your review; it should be interesting and make someone want to read!

Each review should include:

1. Rating - give the book a rating on a scale of 1 to 5 stars; 1 for poor, 5 for awesome
2. Book Description
   a. If the book is fiction, describe the plot and/or main theme of the story. Mention the important characters and the issues they face in the book. Be sure not to give away the ending (no spoilers!). If the book is nonfiction, describe the subject/topics and coverage (broad or in-depth) of the book. What is its purpose?
   b. Special features
      i. Note if fiction is written in a non-standard format like verse or a series of emails or text messages.
      ii. For nonfiction, list any special features the book contains such as illustrations, maps, photographs, media, etc.
   c. Comparison to similar works
      i. Mention if the book is fits into a specific genre (mystery, adventure, science fiction, supernatural fiction, romance, horror, etc.).
      ii. How does the book compare to similar books or even television or films? For fiction, compare to other books in the same genre, for nonfiction, compare to books on the same subject/topic.
      iii. Is the book part of a series? How does the book compare to other works by the author?
   d. Author notes
      i. Read a little background about the author to learn about their professional writing background, education and life experiences. This will give you some perspective on their writing and works.
3. Evaluation
   a. Consider the plot, setting, character development and overall quality of the writing (language, sentence structure, use of literary devices). Does the book achieve its intended purpose? Does it provide compelling information about and interesting topic?
   b. Opinions should be honest and to-the-point; try using supporting details or short quotes from the book to help illustrate your opinion.
   c. Include a recommendation for other high school students. To whom would you recommend the book?
SUBMISSION

Reviews should be submitted through Destiny (http://destiny.oxford.k12.pa.us), the High School Library's online catalog, using the following instructions.

- Log in to Destiny using your district username and password.
- Find the book in Destiny.
- Click into the “Reviews” tab.
- Click “Add review.”
- Give the book a star rating from 1 (poor) to 5 (awesome).
- Copy and paste or type your review into the text box.
- Mrs. Liljestrand will review it, grade it (if applicable) and it will be published to the library catalog.

EXAMPLES

Student Review Example - FICTION
One of Those Hideous Books Where the Mother Dies. *****
By Sonya Sones
Imagine this: your mother just died and you are forced to move away from your friends into a completely different life with your father. That's how Ruby Milliken's life gets turned upside down. She gets shipped off to live with the father who abandoned her and her mother. Ruby had to leave behind her boyfriend and best friend in Massachusetts. One minute, she's worrying about a girl named Amber from her old school trying to steal her boyfriend. The next minute, she's writing emails to her dead mother. Author Sonya Sones puts some events from her life into her writing, which gives it a natural feel. This original story will definitely take your breath away. Sones illustrates the characters in ways that teenagers can relate. Young adult readers should read all of Sones' books. They are unforgettable. ~Rachael F.

Student Review Example - NONFICTION
A long way gone : memoirs of a boy soldier
By Ishmael Beah
This is a true story about a boy who went through the gates of hell and back. A Long Way Gone, is a memoir about Ishmael Beah, a boy from Sierra Leone. The story begins as he is an innocent rap music-loving boy who loves his family and friends. Becoming a child soldier is never a thought he entertained. At the age of 13 he was picked up by government troops that changed him forever. He had to make a life changing decision; either die, or fight in the war. One gruesome task after another this young man would have to face. Finally by the age of 15, he was picked up by UNICEF, then underwent 6 months of rehabilitation to try and erase all of his childhood trauma. Now Ishmael Beah lives in New York, telling the devastating tale of his childhood. ~By William D. (Conestoga Valley High School)

Professional Review Example - FICTION
School Library Journal (September 1, 2008)
Hunger Games
By Suzanne Collins
In a not-too-distant future, the United States of America has collapsed, weakened by drought, fire, famine, and war, to be replaced by Panem, a country divided into the Capitol and 12 districts. Each year, two young representatives from each district are selected by lottery to participate in The Hunger Games. Part entertainment, part brutal intimidation of the subjugated districts, the televised games are broadcasted throughout Panem as the 14 participants are forced to eliminate their competitors, literally, with all citizens required to watch. When 16-year-old Katniss's young sister, Prim, is selected as the mining district's female representative, Katniss volunteers to take her place. She and her male counterpart, Peeta, the son of the town baker who seems to have all the fighting skills of a lump of bread dough, will be pitted against bigger, stronger representatives who have trained for this their whole lives. Collins's characters are completely realistic and sympathetic as they form alliances and friendships in the face of overwhelming odds; the plot is tense, dramatic, and engrossing. This book will definitely resonate with the generation raised on reality shows like "Survivor" and "American Gladiator." Book one of a planned trilogy. Recommended for Grades 7 and Up. ~Jane Henriksen Baird, Anchorage Public Library, AK Copyright 2008 Reed Business Information.