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ENGL 112B

Dr. Warner

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Annotated Bibliography: Importance of Peer Relationships and how having friends helps one find their Identity

Young adult literature teaches life lessons for students to enjoy and empathize with. I found that by reading more young adult literature, it not only relatable to the youth, but it can be easily relatable to anyone. One aspect I wanted to focus on this semester is why its important for characters to have peer friendships. What makes having friends different from those who do not, and how it impacts the characters in positive and negative ways. Having a good or bad friend group can determine one’s identity and how they see themselves in relation to their world. Initially, I wanted to focus on just peer relationships, but in class when Dr. Warner brought journal articles we could read to help us begin our annotated bibliography, I found that peer relationships are important because it helps shape the identity of characters in young adult literature. The social group in which one character associates with contributes to how they act and even how they see the world around them. The way peer relationships work in a novel varies from story to story. For example, some characters thrive off of peer relationships they need to develop their identity, and some use a death or a loss of their peers to develop their own identity. In addition, I found that almost through all of the books I chose for my annotated bibliography, that they all possess a common Exeter quality, which is Exeter Quality 7 which almost all the characters experience some sort of emotional and intellectual growth through engaging in the personal issues that they go through. I found this essential in peer relationships and how it shapes a youth’s identity because it is seen commonly today that having a need for a social group and belonging is how one sees themselves in the world.

In this class, I was able to pull from different novels we have read so far to put in my annotated bibliography. Some that I chose are *We Were Here, Speak and Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. I decided to choose these three because I feel that in their own way, show how peer relationships can shape a young adult’s identity. For example, in *We Were Here* I found that with Miguel, although he wants to perceive himself as overly confident, he actually struggles with finding himself in a world where he has nobody. After the loss of his friend, Mong, he is able to see use his death to come to find himself, his purpose and to forgive himself for what he did. In *Speak,* Melinda deals with carrying this heavy burden of being raped and if it wasn’t for the support and help of her family and friends, especially her teacher, Mr. Freeman, she wouldn’t be able to have the confidence she needs to speak up about her rapist and to fight back during his second attempt in the closet. In *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban,* the support of Harry’s friends and the accompaniment of Hermione, Ron, with Lupin and Dumbledore’s help is what helped Harry get his fear, self-doubt, and help him feel like he belongs in a world where he feels displaced. I am glad I was able to make key connections with the texts that we covered in class because I am able to embed them in my Annotated Bibliography.

In addition to the class work, I feel really passionate about peer relationships and identity because I can say I identify a lot with these characters that I have read in some of these books. I find it important that using peer relationships and how it shapes a character’s identity can be relevant for any day and age where it is timeless, and the youth can continue to relate to these struggles like these characters in these books.

Annotated Bibliography

Asher, Jay. *Th1rteen Reasons Why: a Novel*. Razorbill, 2011.

(Have not read)

In Jay Asher’s *Th1rteen Reasons Why* is about how Hannah Baker is a young high school student who is betrayed and bullied, which lead to her suicide. She then creates audio tapes and has them sent to those that are the reason for her suicide. These tapes land with Clay Jensen and many others as they all learn two sides to Hannah’s story for committing suicide. Hannah Baker’s story is important because with her suicide, Clay learns to reach out to Skye Miller who he believes is suicidal just like Hannah. Clay choosing to not ignore the signs of suicide is his way of paying tribute to Hannah and her death because nobody took the time to acknowledge her signs and help her. This book is important because it discusses the difficulty of peer relationships, and although peer relationships can be helpful in some cases, some relationships can negatively impact a person’s identity, especially at a high school level. This book is also valuable because it discusses uncomfortable topics that not many literary canons discuss, such as rape and suicide, and the book uses Clay to discuss these topics and how to deal with them by being aware and to be a friend. This book is helpful because it opens the eyes of tough topics about peer relationships in high school and can be used as a tool for suicide prevention. Exeter Quality 7 is seen in this book the way that Clay is able to grow both emotionally and intellectually through Hannah’s tapes, and in the end, he is able to be the person that Hannah needed through Skye.

Reference: Wikipedia contributors. "Thirteen Reasons Why." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 3 May. 2019. Web. 4 May. 2019.

Boyne, John, 1971-. *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* : a Fable. New York :David Fickling Books, 2006. Print.

(Have not read)

In John Boyne’s *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* is about a young boy named Bruno who naively experiences the world of World War II in Berlin. Bruno’s father gets a promotion for being loyal to Adolf Hitler which makes Bruno’s family move to Auschwitz and leaving his friends behind. Next to Bruno’s new home he sees a prisoner camp and what separates them is this big wire fence. The fence is where he meets one of the little Jewish prisoner boy, Shmuel, who ends up becoming his best friend. This book is very impactful and important because of how naïve Bruno is to the world that is around him. Bruno’s friendship that he forms with Shmuel reveals Exeter Quality 6, which is the difficult issue of this time period where Jews were sent to these concentration camps to die, and it allows the reader to emotionally be connected to this issue of one of the biggest massacres in history. Bruno’s unawareness of his identity and the differences that he shares with Shmuel follow him until the end, where they end up being in the gas chamber with Shmuel holding his hand and not letting go. The friendship that both Bruno and Shmuel form reveal how their odd friendship share the value of loyalty to one another although their obliviousness leads them to their death.

Reference: Wikipedia contributors. "The Boy in the Striped Pajamas." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 1 May. 2019. Web. 4 May. 2019.

Chbosky, Stephen. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*. New York :Pocket Books, 1999. Print*.*

(Have not read)

Stephen Chbosky’s *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* is about a boy named Charlie who documents his life through a series of letters about his experiences as a freshmen in high school. In this book, Charlie goes through the trials of acceptance of his peers, Patrick and Sam. He then starts trying drugs with Patrick and Sam’s friends, who he has earned his way to be a part of. During this little experiment, Charlie ends up having a bad episode while being on the drug, LSD. The drug makes Charlie remember the traumatic experience of losing his friend, Michael, who committed suicide and losing his aunt, who died in a car accident. Charlie gets admitted into a hospital because of his childhood trauma and two months after Charlie’s release, Sam and Patrick visit him. This book is helpful because it is relatable to young adults who are going through drastic changes in their life such as starting high school and experiencing peer pressure. An Exeter quality 7, which would be the emotional and intellectual growth that Charlie goes through that consists of interpersonal issues he deals with in the novel like the PTSD from being sexually assaulted by his Auntie. Charlie’s experiences with his friends, and his relationship with Sam are valuable to in establishing his identity and helping establish his sense of self through his friendships with Patrick and Sam.

Reference: Wikipedia contributors. "The Perks of Being a Wallflower." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 8 Mar. 2019. Web. 30 Apr. 2019.

Crowley, Cathy. (2017). *Words in Deep Blue*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

(Have Read)

Cathy Crowley’s *Words in Deep Blue* gives two perspectives of two childhood best friends, Rachel and Henry, who learn to fall in love with one another through writing letters to one another. Through the trial and hardships both Rachel and Henry face in their individual lives, they are reunited with their love for books and their friendship. Rachel and Henry struggle with communicating since Rachel has completely closed herself off after losing her brother, the way that they are able to get through these obstacles together despite the drastic, unavoidable changes happing in their life is through these letters. *Words in Deep Blue* is helpful because it reaches out to both male and female readers who are coping with difficult changes in their lives. Exeter Quality 1, 3, and 7 make this book relevant to teens and can be used as a resource for them to learn how to deal with personal issues going on in their lives. Exeter Quality 1 is seen with the shift between Rachel and Henry’s perspective through each chapter of the book, which allows a more complex plot and a more fascinating read for young readers. Exeter Quality 3 is seen with the relevance of relationships and crushes one may experience in high school. Exeter Quality 7 reveals the emotional and intellectual growth of Rachel and Henry through their own individual issues they experience in this novel. Collectively, this book is a resource for teens and older to have a book that empathizes with changes happening in one’s life, and how to cope with these changes with having friends and peers.

De La Pena, Matt. *We Were Here.* Random House Inc., 2009.

(Have Read)

In Matt De La Pena’s *We Were Here* is about a young juvenile, Miguel, who writes down his experiences in juvey to a care home where he meets some of his closest friends. He arrogantly believes he is better than anyone else he encounters during his time incarcerated, that with the letters he is writing to the reader, it reveals his internal struggle with finding himself and his purpose despite his current consequences he is currently living with. His friends he encounters along the way in his journey help him on this road of discovering who he is his complex world. This book embodies Exeter Quality 4 and 7 because they collectively use experiences to promote growth of their personal issues. Exeter Quality 4 uses Miguel’s experience of finding his identity in one of the worse kind of situation to learn and grow as an individual despite his circumstances. Exeter Quality 7 reveals through Miguel the amount of growth he went through from the beginning of his journey to the end when he loses one of his close friends, Mong to suicide. Miguel goes on this journey of self-discovery, where he is trying to find out where exactly he belongs in a world where he doesn’t have anyone. With his friends Rondell and Mong, he is able to find purpose, meaning, and forgiveness within himself.

Green, John. *The Fault in Our Stars.* New York: Penguin Books USA, 2012.eBook.

(Have not read)

In John Green’s *The Fault in Our Stars* is about a young teen girl, Hazel Grace who is suffering from a cancer that is affecting her lungs. In a support group she attends, she meets Augustus Waters who becomes one of her best friends that she falls in love with. Through their journey of life despite their fates, Hazel and Augustus’s friendship reveal how loyalty goes beyond death, and how the friendship they experience is timeless. This book is important for young adult readers because Hazel and Augustus’s friendship dynamic can be relatable to a wide range of young readers who fall in love with their best friend. It also is valuable for young adults to read because cancer is becoming more of a common occurrence that is happening today, that those who are struggling with cancer can have a book that directly relates to them. *The Fault in Our Stars* embodies Exeter Quality 7, where Hazel is able to grow internally as a person as she deals with her own cancer and with losing Augustus to a cancer he kept a secret from her till the end. Hazel learns with her friendship with Augustus is that the death they will encounter one day is inevitable, but it’s the choice to be happy and make the most of it is that choice. This text not only explores the growth of Hazel and finding her happiness in such unfortunate consequences, but it is also about how one should cope with death as well.

Reference: Wikipedia contributors. "The Fault in Our Stars." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 27 Mar. 2019. Web. 4 May. 2019.

Halse Anderson, Laurie. *Speak*. Square Fish, 1999 New York.

(Have Read)

In Laurie Halse Anderson’s *Speak* is about a girl named Melinda who is attending her first year of high school. She attends a party where she gets raped and has to carry this burden with her, alone, every day. This horrible experience ruins her friendships, grades and disconnects her completely from her family. Feeling like she can’t tell anybody about this huge secret, she suffers internally, and it consumes her through out the whole book. This book reveals how Melinda is able to recover through the trauma that happened with her with the help of Mr. Freeman, and ends up valuing true friendships by reuniting with Ivy in the end and dropping Heather. *Speak* embodies Exeter Quality 3, where it reflects the experience of being a rape victim, which is something not seen in the literary canon. The book also uses Exeter Quality 7 by revealing Melina’s emotional and intellectual growth after the trauma she went through and coming out as a survivor who finally uses her voice to speak out the truth of what happened to her. Speak reveals how having friendships and peer relationships is valuable for going through tough situations like Melinda, where with their support she is able to find her voice and use it to speak the truth of her rapist, Andy.

Lowry, Lois. *The Giver.* New York : Laurel Leaf Books, 2002, c1993. Print.

(Have Read)

In Lois Lowry’s *The Giver* is about a young twelve year old boy named Jonas who experiences the difficulties of finding his identity in his community where they control and decide who they want him to be. The peer pressure Jonas receives from his peers and even family members to conform to societies standards pushes Jonas to seek his own individuality in his controlling community, whose goal is to preserve order and the safety of their community. Jonas’s struggling with his identity when he is given the job of the receiver of memory is …The Giver embodies Exeter Quality 6 because it reveals truth of the world to the reader, and in this case, Jonas’s world can be interpreted as a parallel to society today where society puts a pressure on people to conform to societies standards of “normal”. Similarly Jonas goes through this same struggle of feeling this pressure to conform to what his society wants him to be. This book also embodies Exeter Quality 7 which is seen with Jonas going through emotional growth by going through the struggle of finding the depth of who he really is with the pressures of his society trying to stem his growth. This resource further discusses how the pressures of a society and from peers can be relatable to teens who experience peer pressure to conform to society’s sameness, and with these pressures, how to deal and cope with these difficulties in ones life.

Rowling, J. K., author. *Harry Potter and The Prisoner of Azkaban*. New York :Arthur A. Levine Books, 1999. Print.

(Have Read)

In J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter and The Prisoner of Azkaban* is about a young thirteen year old wizard named Harry, who goes through the fear and struggle of his past, which follow him into his present. Harry’s experience in attempt to establishing his identity within the split of two worlds, The muggle world and the wizarding world, without parents. Harry also deals with his hatred towards Sirius Black because he believes that Sirius betrayed his father, which shows how important friendships are in the book, and how they are the core to your identity. Through the help of his really close friends, and the guidance of Lupin and Dumbledore, Harry is able to grow and establish his identity with his support system. This book is helpful and valuable because it makes this fictional world, relevant to teens who feel out of place in the world that surrounds them just like Harry. It is also valuable because the fictional experience allows readers to develop from Harry’s experience in their own lives, such as seeing the value of friendships and how peer relationships are essential and core when going through difficult times of feeling alone. *Harry Potter and The Prisoner of Azkaban* embodies Exeter Quality 4 where Harry’s experience goes beyond typical experiences because of the adventure he goes through in search of finding himself in a world he feels displaced. This book also uses Exeter Quality 7 which is the emotional growth Harry goes through when he is This book can be used to further discuss the issue of fear, and self-doubt, which is what Harry struggles with the most when he has to continuously encounter the Dementors and having to overcome that fear is how he begins to formulate his identity.

Paterson, Katherine. *Bridge to Terabithia*. New York :HarperCollins, 1977. Print.

(Have not read)

In Katherine Paterson’s *Bridge to Terabithia* is about two kids, Jess and Leslie who meet in school and end up becoming friends right away. They make up a fantasy world in the woods where they go and play and call it Terabithia. In order for them to get there, they have to swing across the creek with a rope as a right of passage. Unfortunately, Jess loses Leslie when she drowns in a creek trying to swing to Terabithia by herself while Jess was on a school fieldtrip. Losing Leslie makes him go through grief and feels like he will have to go back to being who he was before who was always insecure and fearful. This text is important because with Leslie’s death, he is able to establish his new identity and sense of self through growing from her passing and bringing May Belle to experience and live for Terabithia just like ow Leslie did. This text is valuable for young adults because it discusses how losing friendships because of death can cripple one’s own identity, like when Jess loses Leslie. *The Bridge to Terabithia* embodies Exeter Quality 2, where it has exciting plots that make this book really intriguing for young adult readers, and it is also an easy read to really get invested in the book. This book also uses Exeter Quality 7 because the theme of friendship allows Jess to grow emotionally with losing his friend Leslie and uses her death to celebrate life by introducing this magical world to his sister May Belle. The text further discusses the grieving process of losing a friend, and how to cope with it by celebrating new life and honoring them through memory.

Reference: Wikipedia contributors. "Bridge to Terabithia (novel)." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 23 Apr. 2019. Web. 4 May. 2019.