

Chapter 2

Bringing Young Adults and Literature Together

Overview

Chapter Two explores some strategies that teachers can use for choosing young adult literature and for bringing readers together with those books. The broad criteria of developmental, social, and literary significance are presented along with the typical stages of literary appreciation. Next, “literacy routines” provide approaches for organizing instruction that creates a unique environment for guiding students’ interaction with literary text. Tools for teachers to use to gather information about students are presented. The chapter concludes with a discussion of issues related to censorship.

Key Concepts

1. Teachers need to consider students’ interests, relevance, and literary quality when choosing literature for the classroom.
2. Three kinds of significance, developmental, social, and literary, need to be considered when choosing literature.
3. A variety of literary routines provide a balance of experiences with literature.
4. Tools are available to investigate literature reading levels and student interests.
5. The classroom teacher should be prepared to address issues of censorship and intellectual freedom that elicit controversial opinions.

Key Vocabulary

Banning	Literary canon
Book pass	Literary significance
Book sampling	Literature circles
Book sort	Mediated listening–thinking activity (ml–ta)
Book talk	Readability
Censorship	Reading workshop
Conscious delight	Self-conscious development
Developmental significance	Shared reading
Guided literature study	Social significance
Hook	Stage model of literary appreciation
Independent reading level	Teacher read-aloud
Interest surveys	Unconscious delight
Literacy routine	

Responding and Reflecting

1. Select one of the novels mentioned in this chapter. Using the sources given, determine the readability, interest level, and general suitability of this literature for a real or imagined student.
2. Select a short story or novel and practice reading it aloud in front of a mirror using the recommendations given in this chapter.
3. Compose a book talk and present it to the class or to a group of adolescents.
4. Consider the research findings from the National Foundation of the Arts. Are you among those adult readers whose time spent reading literature has declined? If yes, how might you become more engaged as a reader?
5. Select a young adult novel and read at least three reviews of the book. Some websites that include reviews are www.barnesandnoble.com and www.amazon.com. Both websites include reviews from readers as well as from professional publications such as *Publishers Weekly* and *Library Journal*. How do the reviews compare?
6. Describe your personal views in regard to book censorship.

Classroom and Young Adult Research

1. Talk with young adults about their reading interests, preferences, and levels of literary appreciation. What trends seem to appear? How do their responses compare to the research results shared in this chapter?
2. Try using the “Critical Incident Survey About Reading Literature.” How do these responses compare to the research results shared in this chapter?

Test Questions

True or False

1. **T or F** Because young adults have many new ways to access literature, they do not need teachers or librarians to help them choose a book that is right for them.
2. **T or F** Within excellent literature, the areas of developmental, social, and literary significance interact.
3. **T or F** Hughes-Hassell and Rodge (2007) indicated that bookstores were the primary source for student reading materials.
4. **T or F** Literary works that include minority characters or cultures that play a significant role in the story are socially significant literary selections.
5. **T or F** The literary canon includes the most popular contemporary literature selections.

6. **T or F** Models of literary appreciation have been created to describe how a reader's appreciation of literature grows and changes over time.
7. **T or F** Student literary development is uniform.
8. **T or F** Reading aloud by or with young adults should be avoided.
9. **T or F** Even though literature circles stress students carrying on book discussion, teachers must provide careful guidance to prepare students.
10. **T or F** Violence is the most frequent cause of censorship.

Multiple Choice

1. What does a critical literacy approach do?
 - A. It stresses only the positive aspects of minority characters or culture.
 - B. It raises questions.
 - C. It assigns blame.
 - D. It is critical of the author's style.
2. Which of the following is true regarding the literary canon?
 - A. It is no longer relevant and does not provide personal and social relevance for young adults.
 - B. It can be taught in ways to provide personal and social relevance for young adults.
 - C. It has too many obstacles that include changes in language and customs that cannot be overcome.
 - D. It is no longer a requirement in many schools.
3. What is one of the most important elements in developing literary appreciation?
 - A. Time spent reading
 - B. Comprehension
 - C. Attitudes toward reading
 - D. Academic excellence
4. What information do interest inventories provide?
 - A. Information about students' interests and reading preferences
 - B. Information about students' reading habits
 - C. Both A and B
 - D. Information about students' friends
5. Readability formulas are useful tools for which of the following?
 - A. Comparing a readability number to a student's grade level
 - B. Providing a rough prediction of how hard a text is
 - C. Finding the exact readability level of a novel
 - D. Determining final grades

6. How is the “Book Pass” strategy done?
 - A. As a whole class
 - B. In small groups
 - C. Individually
 - D. Either individually or in small groups
7. Which of the following is true about outside recommendations such as Accelerated Reader and Scholastic Book Wizard?
 - A. They provide accurate book reading and interest levels.
 - B. They are identical in their rating of levels.
 - C. They also need to include teacher evaluations, as other factors may affect readability and interest levels.
 - D. They are essential tools for leveling books.
8. Professional book reviews do which of the following?
 - A. Show what experienced professionals think about the quality or literary merit of a particular work
 - B. Provide similar, if not identical evaluations, so teachers only need to read one review
 - C. Are not useful for the classroom teacher
 - D. Are not readily available
9. What did Ivey and Broadus’s survey of sixth-grade students show?
 - a. Students reported that the best reading experiences were related to assigned reading.
 - b. Students were unwilling to read.
 - c. Students wanted choice.
 - d. Students wanted teacher direction.
10. Books for young adults that help teens to see themselves in the literary works are part of what type of significance?
 - a. Literary
 - b. Social
 - c. Developmental
 - d. Academic

Short Answer

1. What developmentally significant factors comprise issues related to matching books and students
2. List and briefly discuss the development of literary appreciation.

Essay Questions

1. What professional resources and tools can teachers use to select appropriate literature?
2. Describe three literacy routines and describe how these routines organize instruction so that diverse groups of students can engage successfully with a wide range of literature.

Answer Key

True or False

1. F
2. T
3. F
4. T
5. F
6. T
7. F
8. F
9. T
10. F

Multiple Choice

1. B
2. B
3. A
4. C
5. B
6. C
7. C
8. A
9. C
10. B

Short Answer

1. The answer should include most or all of the following points:
 - physical changes
 - changed relationships with parents
 - new expectations from other adults
 - increased academic demands
 - roles and status in relation to peers of both sexes
2.
 - Unconscious delight—finds personal satisfaction in the reading experience
 - Self-conscious development—trying to find oneself in the literature

- Conscious delight—pleasure and satisfaction of the literary experience comes from understanding the craft of writing

Essay Questions

1. Resources and tools include most or all of the following:

- Interest inventories (describe a few types of inventories: interests, reading preferences and habits, open ended, close ended)
- Critical incidents survey
- Readability (accelerated reader, scholastic book wizard, Fry readability scale)
- Book sampling (book pass, book sorts)
- Outside recommendations (professional book reviews)

2. Choose three literacy routines from the following:

Teacher read aloud—The teacher models fluency and comprehension, but students are then active using ML-TA.

(Stages of appreciation—unconscious delight, self-conscious development; key selection criteria developmental/literary/social significance)

*Guided literature study—Guides discussions about texts and between texts, not only literary significance, but also social and cultural issues, along with personal connections

(Stages of appreciation—self-conscious development and conscious delight; key selection criteria literary significance)

*Literature circles—Students carry on discussions about books they have chosen; teacher establishes groups and procedures

(Stages of appreciation—all three levels; selection criteria all three)

*Reading workshop—gain independence, teacher establishes procedures

(All three stages of appreciation, developmental and social significance)

*Unit-centered reading—Teacher identifies topics and themes for study. That can be genre units, author studies, or literary themes designed to organize connections among literary texts.

(All three stages of appreciation along with social and literary significance).