

Talking About Books

Using Book Clubs to Foster
Adolescent Literacy and a Love for
Reading in Class, Outside of Class
and for Life.

**A presentation* by Grace Griffin
for the Guam Council IRA
September 12, 2009
Guam Reef Hotel**

Based on Deborah Appleman's and Carol Jago's Workshop, Minneapolis, MN
On May 5, 2009



Judith Ortiz Cofer on Books

“ Books kept me from going mad. They allowed me to imagine my circumstances as romantic: some days I was an Indian Princess living in a *zenanda*, a house of women, keeping myself pure, being trained for a brilliant future. Other days I was a prisoner: *Papillon*, preparing myself for my great flight of freedom.”



Questions

- What role do books and reading play in your life?
- What role do books and reading play in the life of your students?



Every teacher is limited by the books they know.”

Teachers must offer access to a lot of books — and offer suggestions — but, Jago says, “every teacher is limited by the books they know.”



Twenty Novels Guaranteed to Give a Teenager Pause

Bastard out of Carolina, Dorothy Allison
The Handmaid's Tale, Margaret Atwood
Hunger, Lan Samantha Chan
Waiting for the Barbarians, J.M. Coetze
White Noise, Don DeLillo
Blue Raft over Yellow Water, Michael Dorris
Birdsong, Sebastian Faulks
A Lesson Before Dying, Ernest Gaines
My Son's Story, Nadine Gordimer
Narcissus and Goldmund, Herman Hesse
A Prayer for Owen Meany, John Irving
One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Ken Kesey
Always Outnumbered, Always Outgunned, Walter Mosley
Bone, Fae Myenne Ng
The Things They Carried, Tim O'Brien
Sula, Toni Morrison
Imagining Argentina, Lawrence Thornton
Johnny Got His Gun, Dalton Trumbo
Sacred Hunger, Barry Unsworth
Philadelphia Fire, John Edgar Wideman



For more book recommendations
for young adults, go to

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/booklistsawards/bestbooksya/09bbya.cfm>



Reading Between the Lines

ACT Report on college readiness in reading,
April 2006

- Performance on complex text is the clearest differentiator in reading between students who are more likely to be ready for college and those who are less likely to be ready.



Reading Between the Lines

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- A complex text will contain multiple layers of meaning, not all of which are immediately apparent to students upon a single superficial reading. Such texts require students to work at unlocking meaning by calling upon sophisticated reading skills and strategies.



Common Textual Challenges

- Vocabulary
- Background knowledge
- Difficult syntax
- Complex characters
- Too much description
- Figurative language
- Tone
- Length



Timing Your Reading

1. Record starting page number.
2. Read for twenty minutes.
3. Record ending page.
4. Determine how many pages you have read.
5. Multiply the number of pages by 3 to give you the number of pages you are able to read in an hour.
6. Now calculate how long it will take to complete tonight's homework assignment OR finish reading the book.



Gary Soto's Passage

- Read the passage
- Find a person to talk about this scene.
- Take turns.
- Share.



HANDOUT HIGHLIGHTS

- Questions
- Sample conversations
- Recommended books

Q & A and Concluding Remarks

Thanks for attending!

