

USING YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE TO TEACH THE CLASSICS:  
A STUDY ON PAIRING YOUNG ADULT NOVELS WITH THE CLASSIC  
WORKS IN SECONDARY ENGLISH CLASSROOMS

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

Young adult literature is a genre of literature that is often overlooked. Adolescents would greatly benefit from reading young adult novels, academically and also for enjoyment. Educators are not using young adult literature as often as they should in the classrooms as a tool, due to strict curricula. However, young adult literature is a perfect tool for aiding with comprehension of the classic works. Pairing certain young adult books with classics would help adolescents understand the classic novel, but also assist in intriguing the student enough to pick up both books. After an online survey given to nine Seminole County school English or Reading teachers, I found that high school teachers today do feel as though young adult literature would benefit the students greatly.

## DEDICATIONS

This thesis is dedicated to three very important figures in my life.

To my mom, Susan: You raised me to be the person I am today. I would have never accomplished half the things I have today were it not for your constant support and love. You have pushed me to always be the best woman I can be, and I will never be able to repay you.

To my sister, Melanie, thank you for being the best friend any girl could ask for. You are truly an inspiration. I could have never been the teacher I am today without your encouragement. Our days of 'playing school' solidified my dream to be an educator, believe it or not!

And to my late dog, Casey. We miss you more than you know. I will forever remember what an amazing member of the family you were. Laying out by the pool and driving with windows down will never be the same. Thank you for putting a smile on my face for thirteen years.

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

It is unfortunate that today, students do not take pleasure in reading quality pieces of literature. However, our duty as educators is to promote reading, attempt to instill in our students a passion for reading, and introduce them to works of literature that assist in their maturation and development, as well as enjoyment. Not all classic works allow us to achieve that goal. The classic works of literature were not written for students of high school age, nor are many of the themes relevant to the students.

Perhaps, one of the best ways to teach the classic works of literature is through the use of young adult literature. Young adult literature is a genre of literature that is underused, but quite beneficial. Teachers can use the pairing of young adult books with classics to teach a similar theme, setting, or any other aspect of the books. Young adult literature is not only relevant to the students, but the character of young adult books is always also a young adult. Adolescents can relate to the characters and therefore are able to be drawn into the book even more. There are several subgenres within the genre of young adult literature, as well, and certainly each of these subgenres are useful in teaching specific elements of classic works.

In a study performed at a Central Florida high school in Seminole County, nine teachers were surveyed about their use of young adult literature in the classroom, as well as pairings of young adult books with classics. Eight out of nine teachers fully agreed that young adult literature would help to teach the classic works. Unfortunately, with the education system as it currently is, the nine teachers surveyed at this school concluded that they would use young adult literature in their classrooms, however that the county requires a strict curriculum with very little

time for anything outside of it. Nonetheless, using young adult literature to teach students the classic works of literature is not only important, but also beneficial to the students.



## CHAPTER TWO: WHAT IS A CLASSIC?

According to C. Hugh Holman and William Harmon, a classic is any literary work that “by common consent has achieved a recognized superior status in literary history” (Holman, 1992, p.1). The American Heritage Dictionary defines the canon as “an authoritative list, as of the works of an author” (Landow, 1989). One of the indicators that a work is considered in the canon is whether or not it appears in major anthologies. The Norton or Oxford anthologies are two of the largest (Landow, 1989). Most of the “classic works of literature” fall into the canon.

The major factor in defining a “classic” is time. “Charles Dickens’s literature is considered a classic primarily because it has stood the test of time” (Bushman, 1997, p. 149). Classic literature addresses the human condition. Bushman compares the classic and time debate to the common, “chicken or egg” theory (Bushman, 1997). Have the classics withstood the test of time because they are great works? Or are they great because they have withstood the test of time? (Bushman, 1997).

The canon originally referred to texts that were “literary tradition” (Robinson, 1997). Those works withstood the test of time. They were called timeless, and the appeal was made to their universality. Over time, the canon remained the same. Around 1970, many began to look at the tradition from a feminist point of view and recognized the lack of female perspective. “The tradition was not only male, but white and male and Euro-American” (Robinson, 1997, p.101).

*The Texas Monthly* attacked the English department at the University of Texas, and faculty members were denounced for advocating a multicultural curriculum in literature (Robinson, 1997). Some professors chose to read the works of Sandra Cisneros in an American Literature course over F. Scott Fitzgerald, a great “classic” writer (Robinson, 1997). Changing

the canon then throughout the 1970s and 1980s became a major goal of women's studies, black studies, and other ethnic studies (Lauter, 1991).

The problem with the classic works both today and throughout history is that the elitist in society has the power to deem a work a "classic." "The literary canon is, in short, a means by which culture validates social power" (Lauter, 1991). Those with power in society are the ones who criticize and praise works of literature written and those without or with less power automatically assume those opinions are fact. Throughout history, many writers have been considered to be great authors and their works to be classic.

In the 1920s, in his book "The Chief American Prose Writers," Norman Foerster wrote "the nine writers represented in this volume have become, by general consent, the American prose classics." (Lauter, 1991). Over 40 years later, he wrote in his preface to "Eight American Writers" that the main contributors to the American classics were: Poe, Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville, Whitman, Twain, and Henry James (Lauter, 1991).

In the early 1970s, African American authors fought for their rights to be considered in academic anthologies that contained the major works by the best authors of the time. Some African American authors that were included were: Fredrick Douglass, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Charles Chesnutt, and Frances Harper (Csicsila, 2004). In the early twentieth century, women came forth and had secured their literary reputations. Edith Wharton, Willa Cather, and Ellen Glasgow were among the few (Csicsila, 2004).

In the early to mid nineteenth century, Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville were considered "major" authors (Csicsila, 2004). Nineteenth century poets that earned the titles of "major" American writers

included Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson (Csicsila, 2004, p. 55). Post Civil War major authors were Mark Twain, Bret Harte, William Dean Howells, and Henry James (Csicsila, 2004). Latter Nineteenth Century prose major authors included Harriet Beecher Stowe, Sarah Orne Jewett, and Kate Chopin (Csicsila, 2004).

Many of these classic works are being taught in classrooms today. The authors of the works that were infamous hundreds of years ago are still widely read by society and schools now. Most of these works are great novels, great poems, great pieces. However, the timelessness that makes them so infamous is also the reason why many students are fearful to pick them up.

### **Kids are not reading the classics**

Everyone knows about the classic works of literature that they lied about reading in high school English. The classic works of literature are “traditional” and have “stood the test of time” (Hipple, 1997, p. 15). The classics are certainly works that could potentially teach us a thing or two, however the reality is that students and young people are reading those classics less and less. Ted Hipple states that “it would make all educators proud and ecstatic if students loved *Hamlet* [or] returned every so often to Twain or Dickens just for the sheer pleasure of doing so” (Hipple, 1997, p.15). But, the truth is that the days of reading the classics solely for enjoyment or solely for a learning experience are long over. A bookstore manager interviewed by Hipple reported that buyers of classic works, including *The Scarlet Letter* and *Moby Dick*, are almost always buying the Cliffs Notes in addition to the actual book (Hipple, 1997).

In the 1950s, schools in the United States were pressured to focus on math and science. Then in the 1960s and 1970s, the schooling went through a more liberal shift (Bushman, 1997). The “back to basics” movement took place, where administrators and teachers removed most

elective courses that were comprised of thematic units emphasizing contemporary literature and replaced them with a curriculum design focusing on the use of the works in an anthology (Bushman, 1997). Students were taught American literature in the eleventh grade and British literature in the twelfth grade. The curriculum in the 1980s and 1990s consisted of “literature of the past,” or the classics (Bushman, 1997, p. 148).

There are two main problems for young adults reading the classics: the classics were written for adults and they were written for an audience that does not exist anymore today (Bushman, 1997). The classics were never actually written for young adults. Many of the classic works deal with the human condition, however young adults have issues relating to this because they have not fully lived enough yet, nor had enough experiences to really understand. Robert Frost states “I don’t want to analyze authors. I want to enjoy them. Youth, I believe, should not analyze its enjoyments. They’ll get to that soon enough. Let them build up a friendship with the written word first” (Bushman, 1997, p. 151).

If teachers really want their students to understand the literature, they need to pick literature that young people can relate and respond to (Bushman, 1997, p. 152).

### **How do we get kids to read?**

French author, Daniel Pennac, wrote *Better Than Life*, and in one of his chapters, he gives a Reader’s Bill of Rights. They are: “The right to not read; the right to skip pages; the right to not finish; the right to reread; the right to read anything; the right to escapism; the right to read anywhere; the right to browse; the right to read out loud; the right to not defend your tastes” (Hipple, 1997, p. 17). These rights can change how teachers teach and how students feel about reading.

The question still remains: How do we get young adults to read? Not “simply for their assignments, but just to read for the sake of reading?” (Hipple, 1997, p. 15). The answer: young adult literature.

Pairing young adult novels with classics is one of the best ways to use young adult literature in the classroom. Rather than exposing students solely to the complex classic work, reading a young adult novel either before or after the classic helps with comprehension. Reading a young adult book with similar themes, symbols, plot, and characters allows for the young adult to better understand the classic work.

## **CHAPTER THREE: YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE**

Young adult literature has had many names over the years: adolescent literature, adolescent fiction, juvenile fiction, and junior teen novels (Bushman, 1997). Publishers tend to like the term “juvenile fiction,” however schools do not like the term. Instead, “young adult literature” is the term that is more common and widely accepted (Bushman, 1997, p. 2).

Young adult literature has changed drastically since 1967 when it was first identified (Herz, 1996). Young adult literature has the main literary elements of adult literature: plot, setting, point of view, style, and theme. However it also exhibits the following characteristics: the main character as a teenager, the story is narrated by a teenager, the story is about a problem or issue of which teenagers can identify, the first page or two demands the readers’ attention, enticing them to continue, and the book is rarely more than 200 pages (Herz, 1996).

Young adult literature is a genre that “focuses on adolescent problems written in their language” (Hipple, 1997, p. 15). The language young adults use in their daily lives and the issues that they discuss are the same ones that are found in young adult literature. Erikson’s stages of social development state that the major task of adolescence is “formulation or reformulation of personal identity” (Bushman, 1997, p. 6). Young adults do not know who they are yet, nor who they want to be. They are still asking the question “who am I?” (Bushman, 1997, p. 6). School may be the primary location where this self-discovery occurs. Young adult literature is beneficial in the classroom for many reasons. However, perhaps the most important reason for incorporating young adult literature into the school curriculum is because students will actually read it, from my experiences.

## Characteristics of Young Adult Literature

The main character of almost all young adult novels is also a young adult. Young adults are relatively selfish. The world revolves around them and what is happening in life that directly affects them. Teenagers do not want to read about a thirty year old character and the problems that character faces. Rather, young adults enjoy reading about characters that are similar to them. In young adult literature, the protagonists are almost always fully developed, while the minor characters are flat (Bushman, 1997). Young adult readers look at the interactions between the characters and to see whether or not the characters respond realistically, especially as they would in the same situation (Bushman, 1997).

Events or problems in the characters' life need to be similar to those that would affect a young adult, as well. Getting fired from a corporate job or raising children are not issues that would generally interest an adolescent, mostly because they are unable to directly relate. Four plot types in young adult literature exist: protagonist against self, protagonist against society, protagonist against another person, and protagonist against nature (Bushman, 1997). The ending of a young adult novel also determines its quality. All young adult readers want to keep guessing throughout the book and want everything to be okay at the end of the story.

Another important characteristic of young adult literature is the style in which the book was written (Bushman, 1997). It is crucial that the dialogue is comparable to the language spoken by young adults. The point of view of the story and main character is generally similar to the point of view a young adult would have (Hipple, 1997). Omniscient point of view is the most widely used style in young adult novels. Readers are able to get the full story about each character. First person point of view is limiting. However, the reader can really empathize and

understand the events and characters through one character's eyes (Bushman, 1997). While readers cannot get into the minds of the other characters, they are able to get to know the main character very well. For this reason, first person point of view is very popular in young adult literature. Young adults love to truly connect with the main character (Bushman, 1997).

Decisions and actions an adolescent would make or interpretations of certain situations should be similar. Profanity in young adult literature is criticized, however when the author does not use the same language as young adults use in reality, that is criticized, as well (Bushman, 1997).

Many other literary elements make for a quality young adult novel. Alliteration is used frequently, but not too important. It generally peaks the reader's interest if used in the title or important parts of the story (Bushman, 1997). It also helps to keep the story flowing and therefore, motivates young adults to continue reading (Bushman, 1997). Metaphors and similes are found in young adult literature to help readers understand better a situation or idea by comparing it to something familiar (Bushman, 1997). Flashbacks are found in many young adult novels. Flashbacks, a "memory or retelling of past event that has importance to the immediate storyline," is very effective when done correctly. Most of the time, small sections of books are written in flashback, rather than the entire plot. Foreshadowing keeps young adult readers on their feet. It is an "author's technique for giving clues or hints to the reader about forthcoming action" (Bushman, 1997, p. 34). Effective beginnings are absolutely crucial to a successful young adult novel. Often, young adults will put down a book after the first page because they are simply not interested. Good beginnings allow young people to read more. Additionally, reading good examples of effective beginnings in young adult books can help students with their own writing (Bushman, 1997). Humor is a great tool that entices the reader to continue reading. A



great example of humor in a young adult book is *Sleeping Freshmen Never Lie* by David Lubar. Young adult novels should contain imagery that give readers visual pictures in their minds of what they are reading, helping students who may be reluctant readers or not enjoy reading as much. Allusions are very important in young adult literature. Any kind of connection a student can make is a good thing. Robert Cormier's *I Am the Cheese* is an allusion to the old nursery rhyme and the game The Farmer and the Dell. With all forms of teaching, making connections is key to learning. Allusions cleverly allow for connections between other stories and the novel being read, and therefore making it easier for a young adult reader to read (Bushman, 1997).

Young adult novels are short, usually not more than 200 pages. Unfortunately, even when a book is intriguing and interesting, a young adult will not pick it up if the length is intimidating. A book that is hundreds of pages long is likely to not be picked up by a young adult. Young adults like to read books about common, every day adolescents like themselves, or about situations that may happen to adolescents their age (Herz, 1996).

According to Isabelle Holland, an adolescent is “any human being on a journey that great, amorphous sea called adolescence” or any age between 12 and 19 (Lenz, 1980, p. 33). The Young Adult Service Division of the American Library Association defines the age range of a young adult as ages 10-19 (Wilson). Early adolescence is considered to be grades 5, 6, and 7. Middle adolescence is grades 8, 9, and 10. And later adolescence is considered grades 11 and 12. Perhaps the most important aspect of identifying young adult literature is whether a work is written for and marketed to young adults. Many forms of literature have had young adult characters. For instance, *Huckleberry Finn*, was not intentionally been intended for young adult audiences. “While young adults...will read ‘classics’ with teen protagonist- such as Mark

Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*...or Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* or even William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*- such novels are not strictly considered young adult literature. Similarly, contemporary novels popular with young adults and young people, such as those written by Danielle Steel, Tom Clancy, and Stephen King, are also not in the category of young adult literature (Christenbury, 1944). The most important part of all the aspects and characteristics of young adult literature is that the story was written for young adults and marketed to young adults (Wilson, 2010).

### **Genres of Young Adult Literature**

There are eight genres of young adult literature: realistic fiction, historical fiction, adventure/mystery/horror, science fiction/fantasy, biography, nonfiction/informational, graphic novels, and novels in verse/poetry. Each of these genres can be used when looking for an appropriate pairing for a classic work of literature.

Realistic fiction is any story set in modern time with events that could happen, however the characters are fictional. Stories in this genre mirror real moral and ethical dilemmas and are believable. Some themes of realistic fiction can be: overcoming fears and accepting responsibilities, accomplishing goals, developing and maturing, finding romance, coping with death, disease, divorce, accidents, developing sexual relationships, living in a global society, understanding religion, and many more (Wilson, 2010). Young adults favor these stories because the situations in the novels are often similar and easily relatable to the young adult reader. Examples of great realistic fiction novels include: *Inexcusable* (Lynch), *Speak* (Anderson), *Monster* (Myers), and *The Earth, My Butt, and Other Big Round Things* (Mackler).

Historical fiction is a genre of novel that is set in the past, at least one generation, however, most of the characters are fictional. This genre must recognize that the story cannot have been set in any other time or place in history to make sense. Historical fiction novels must be set in the past, but not directly tied to specific historical characters or events, directly relate to actual historical events, or be a mixture of historical and fictional. Some themes of historical fiction include: clashes of cultures, wars and conflict, quest for freedom, overcoming adversity, and surviving the challenges of everyday life (Wilson, 2010). Some quality examples of historical fiction are *Out of the Dust* (Hesse), *In the Time of the Butterflies* (Alvarez), *Fever 1793* (Anderson), *Chains* (Anderson), and *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing* (M. Anderson).

Science fiction deals with fictional characters in situations or environments that could easily become realistic with the advancement of science. Science fiction stories may take place in the future, have an off-earth setting, or involve new technology. Fantasy differs from science fiction in that the plot or setting of fantasy stories is not possible, even with advancements in technology or science. Young adult science fiction novels are *Feed* (Anderson), *The Giver* (Lowry), *Ender's Game* (Card), *The Uglies Trilogy* (Westerfeld), and *The Hunger Games* (Collins). Books that fall into the Fantasy category include: *Harry Potter* series (Rowling), *Chronicles of Narnia* (Lewis), and the *Young Merlin* trilogy (Yolen).

The biography genre includes both biography and autobiography. They give descriptions of a person's life, serves as an informational source, and provides entertainment to the young adult reader, for they are generally filled with the frustrations, obstacles, and achievements of various people in the past and present. Biographies can be about politicians, scientists, leaders, inventors, explorers, artists, athletes, writers, actors, musicians, or other young adults growing

up. Biographies are generally authentic and honest, contain accurate details and emotions, avoid stereotypes, depict feelings, beliefs, and decisions made by the focal person, and they appeal to adolescents (Wilson, 2010). Some well written young adult biographies include: *Helen Keller: Rebellious Spirit* (Lawlor), *Hole in My Life* (Gantos), and *I Am Scout: Biography of Harper Lee* (Shields).

Nonfiction is a genre of specific information that is direct and true. Nonfiction can be about religion, science, health, the arts, sports, history, real adventures, or growing up as a teenager (Wilson, 2010). The biggest benefit of teaching using nonfiction works is that teachers can establish a purpose for reading for the young adults. Adolescents can develop reading skills, increase vocabulary, and read about current information in an interesting format. Good young adult nonfiction novels include: *They Called Themselves the KKK: The Birth of an American Terrorist Group* (Bartoletti), *Sex: A Book for Teens: An Uncensored Guide to Your Body, Sex, and Safety* (Hasler), *The Good, the Bad and the Barbie: A Doll's History and Her Impact on Us* (Stone), and *The Smart Aleck's Guide to American History* ( Selzer).

Graphic novels are a great tool for reluctant or lower leveled readers. Graphic novels are narrative works that are written in the form of illustrations or a traditional comic. Some examples of quality graphic novels, according to the American Library Association, include: *Green Monk* (Dayton), *Brain Camp* (Kim), *Set to Sea* (Weing), and *Ghostopolis* (Tennapel).

A novel written in verse is a genre that is exceptionally popular among reluctant readers. Novels in verse are a style of writing that is in poetry form, rather than prose. Authors that write novels in verse frequently are Karen Hesse, Ellen, Hopkins, Sonya Sones, and Virginia Euwer

Wolff. Examples of quality novels in verse include: *Out of the Dust* (Hesse), *Identical* (Hopkins), *Realm of Possibility* (Levithan), and *Hard Love* (Wittlinger).

### **History of Young Adult Literature**

In 1985, the Project on Adolescent Literacy (PAL) began researching and investigating the needs of young adults who were in jeopardy of failing in school because of their lack of literacy gains (Davidson, 1993). This study continued for three years. In 1988, The National Assessment of Educational Progress did a series of assessments for adolescents' reading and writing achievement (Davidson, 1993). The results showed that 99.8 percent of thirteen year olds had basic level reading skills, 95.1 percent had attained the next level and 58 percent had intermediate level reading skills and were able to read text of newspaper difficulty (Davidson, 1993). The levels of this study had not increased or improved since 1974. These studies proved that the levels of literacy in the 1970s and 1980s were not nearly where they should have been and did not improve over the decade.

Literacy is defined as a “complex, dynamic, interactive, and developmental process of making meaning from text” (Davidson, 1993, p. 12). In order to allow for students to become proficient in literacy, according to Judith Davidson and David Koppenhaver, four things must occur: literacy instruction must be organized around the vision of literacy as a meaningful activity, the instruction must be responsive to developmental needs of students, instruction must be academically effective, and the concept that literacy allows access to the world of written word (Davidson, 1993).

## CHAPTER FOUR: WHY USE YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE?

The author of *From Hinton to Hamlet: Building Bridges Between Young Adult Literature and the Classics* and high school teacher, Sarah K. Herz, always believed that every student needed to read the classic works in order to become an “educated person” (Herz, 1996, p. 1). After fifteen years of teaching, she finally decided to give young adult literature a try. When she did, the entire atmosphere in her classroom changed. The students wanted to read and they were enjoying reading. “Their attitude about reading changed” (Herz, 1996, p. 3). On days when she read in class, there were not any discipline problems. An ecstatic Sarah Hertz said “it was quiet, reading was going on!” (Herz, 1996, p. 3). Most of the books the students were reading were books about adolescents dealing with real life issues. The books were science fiction, mystery, fantasy, and historical fiction. Some of the most popular titles were: *Go Ask Alice* (anonymous), *Hatchet* (Paulsen), *Lord of the Rings* (Tolkien), *Summer of My German Soldier* (Greene), *Killing Mr. Griffin* (Duncan), and *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* (Adams) (Herz, 1996).

The reading patterns that were taking place in her classroom were “most interesting” (Herz, 1996, p. 4). Students were recommending books to each other, sharing their favorite titles. Their comments were “insightful and critical” (Herz, 1996, p. 5). Without any teacher led instruction, they were comparing the young adult novels to other works they had read, making thematic and stylistic comparisons. “Reading became valued and important in [her] classroom” (Herz, 1996, p. 5). As a teacher and a literature lover, Herz said that while she loves the classics, she also found it rewarding to help her students find pleasure in reading and helping them to become lifelong readers (Herz, 1996).

Adolescent literacy has been neglected for far too long. Young adults are not proficient in reading. In Florida, high stakes tests like the FCAT are proving this fact. Many districts are not promoting literacy instruction past the early grades. This is influencing all students, but most notably the students who are passed from grade to grade and never fully proficient.

A student in my 11<sup>th</sup> grade English standard internship class falls into this category. He is an incredibly kind adolescent with an amazing sense of humor. He is respectful and a pleasure to have in the classroom. However, I noticed only weeks after being in the classroom that he could not read or write very well. I came across this student's writing after collecting an assignment and saw that his writing was exactly as he spoke. The word "the" was consistently written as "da," words were abbreviated, and formal paragraphs were nonexistent. The next week, we began a research project in the computer lab. My supervising teacher and I required that students use reliable sources, including journal articles and scholarly newspaper articles for the research. I quickly noticed that this student was looking at one article after another, without ever recording any of the information for his paper. I spoke with my supervising teacher later that day and he confirmed my assumption: this student was nearly illiterate. When I asked the question, how has he made it to the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, my supervising teacher shook his head and said he did not know. Somewhere along the way, a teacher was not able to reach this student, and no teacher afterwards took the initiative to compensate. Now, this student is in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, in theory should be preparing for college applications and testing, and he cannot read newspaper articles with any comprehension.

Many possibilities may explain this student is illiterate in 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Perhaps, he never had good reading teachers in elementary school. When students are not receiving any kind of

literacy instruction past elementary school, “it is ludicrous to assume that they can sustain proficiency in reading” (Irvin, 2003, p. 5). Maybe his family relocated frequently and he was unable to maintain a stable life. Recently, with Seminole County being noted for having a high homeless population, this student’s teachers have conferenced and predicted that this student is and has been living in a hotel. He takes a special city bus to this Seminole County school, more than 45 minutes away from where he lives. His mother used Seminole County’s Choices program to ensure that this student was educated in a suburban B rated school. It is unfortunate that the student cannot read. It is likely that I will never know for sure why this student is illiterate. There are too many factors to assume any one reason. Regardless, he has made it this far in the school system and will most likely continue to graduation.

Using tools like young adult literature may have enticed this student to want to read, or it may have been more familiar to him and he would have been more intrigued to read. Quality young adult books are written with character dialogue similar to current young adults. Topics and themes of young adult literature also parallel the lives of adolescents today.

According to Judith Irvin, Douglas Buehl, and Ronald Klemp, seven principles for adolescent literacy are worth consideration: (Irvin, 2003).

1. Adolescents deserve access to wide variety of reading material that they can and want to read.
2. Adolescents deserve instruction that builds both skill and desire to read increasingly complex materials.
3. Adolescents deserve assessment that shows them their strengths as well as their needs and that guide their teachers to design instruction that will best help them grow as



readers.

4. Adolescents deserve expert teachers who model and provide explicit instruction in reading comprehension and study strategies across the curriculum.

5. Adolescents deserve reading specialists who assist individual students having difficulty learning how to read.

6. Adolescents deserve teachers who understand the complexities of individual adolescent readers, respect their differences, and respond to their characteristics.

7. Adolescents deserve homes, communities, and a nation that will support their efforts to achieve advanced levels of literacy and provide the support necessary for them to succeed.

“When adolescents have the opportunity to make choices about what they read...they will read” (Groenke, 2010, p. xiv). Young adult literature is not only something that young people are reading for enjoyment, but also something that can be used as a tool in the classroom. The biggest misconception of young adult literature is that it is only for reluctant or struggling readers. Surely, young adult novels motivate the most reluctant readers to want to read.

However, adolescents as a whole enjoy reading young adult literature because it is “about adolescents, with adolescent readers in mind” (Groenke, 2010, p. 2). In any situation, when a person is interested in the topic or theme presented, there is an increase in motivation to learn or read about it. Young adults will have the desire to read when they are reading young adult books.

“Why do teachers feel that they have to teach the classics? What are the alternatives to having a curriculum comprised of just the classics? (Bushman, 1997).

Alan Sitomer, California's Teacher of the Year in 2007, is a firm believer in teaching using young adult literature (Groenke, 2010). He believes that young adult literature should be the "heart of the English curriculum" (Groenke, 2010, p. ix). His success as an English teacher is attributed to the fact that his school's core curriculum English standards were not text specific. Therefore, teachers can use essentially whatever text they wanted to teach, as long as they were teaching the core content area standards (Groenke, 2010). Sitomer uses young adult novels to teach contemporary books that the teenagers actually wanted to read. Sitomer "loves the classics," but also loved seeing "when students were able to actually read and comprehend history's most complex texts and enjoy them" (Groenke, 2010, p. ix). The best way his students were able to understand those classic works and enjoy them was through his use of young adult literature. "Kids want to read about real stories, real adventures, and real journeys about real kids" (Groenke, 2010, p. ix).

Another teacher, Susan Groenke, always wondered why teachers never used young adult literature in the classrooms at her school. She had always heard that young adult literature was "about teenagers dealing with life on their own terms as best they could. It honored teens' lives and their experiences, showed teens as capable, smart, and multidimensional" (Groenke, 2010, p. xii). "Teachers are torn between teaching the literature they feel will be most useful to their students and the literature that everyone else thinks they ought to teach" (Bushman, 1997, p. 143).

Much of young adult literature that is being published today is high quality literature and deserves to be recognized. It deserves attention in the schools and consideration for the classroom. Carol Jago, author of *Classics in the Classroom*, wrote about choosing books for

students as an art. She created six criteria to choose a book for her class to read: (1) the works must be written in a language suited for the author's purpose, (2) expose young readers to complex human issues, (3) include compelling characters, (4) discuss universal themes, (5) challenge young readers to reexamine their beliefs, and (6) tell a great story (Groenke, 2010). Following those criteria, incorporating quality young adult novels in a classroom will always promote and encourage deep and meaningful thought with students.

## CHAPTER FIVE: WHAT MAKES A QUALITY YOUNG ADULT BOOK?

Young adult literature is a genre of literature that is beneficial, but how do we know a good work of young adult literature from a bad one? Teachers Susan Groenke, Alan Sitomer, and Sarah Hertz have used quality young adult literature in their classrooms. YALSA, the Young Adult Library Services Association, is a division of ALA, the American Library Association. The highest quality young adult novels can be found listed on the YALSA website. The Best Books for Young Adults, Popular Paperbacks, Young Adult Choices, Best Graphic Novels, Outstanding Books for the College Bound, Good Books for Reluctant Young Adult Readers, and award winning books are all honored through this organization (YALSA). See Appendix A for a complete list of young adult awards.

Several awards are given out annually that honor quality young adult works. The Margaret A. Edwards Award honors an author for significant and lasting contributions to the young adult genre of literature. In 2009, one of my favorite young adult authors, Laurie Halse Anderson, won this award. The 2010 winner was Jim Murphy, and most recently, Sir Terry Pratchett won for 2011 (YALSA). The Michael L. Prinz Award is an award for a book that exemplifies literary excellence in the young adult genre. The 2009 winner was the novel *Jellicoe Road* by Melina Marchetta. In 2010, *Going Bovine* by Libba Bray won, and finally, recently chosen, the 2011 winner was *Ship Breaker* by Paolo Bacigalupi (YALSA). The Alex Award is an honor given to ten books written for adults that have a special appeal to young adults ages 12 through 18. A few 2011 winners include: *The Boy Who Couldn't Sleep and Never Had To* by DC Pierson, *Room: A Novel* by Ema Donaghue, *The Vanishing of Katharina Linden: A Novel* by Helen Grant, and *The House of Tomorrow* by Peter Bognanni (YALSA). The William C. Morris

Award was first given in 2009 for authors of young adult works who are previously unpublished. In 2011, *The Freak Observer* was a novel that won written by Blythe Woolston (YALSA). Beginning in 2010, the YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction is the most recently created award. The 2011 winner was *Janis Joplin: Rise Up Singing* by Ann Angel (YALSA).

It is important that the young adult books chosen to read and pair with classic works are quality works. By using the Young Adult Library Services Association's book lists, teachers can ensure that the books assigned to students will be beneficial.

## CHAPTER SIX: HOW TO USE YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE IN THE CLASSROOM

“To engage today’s students in reading, we need to consider quality adolescent literature as a means to meet the needs of those individuals in our English classes who are not reading—especially students of average or high ability who choose not to read, and students who have not developed any interest in reading literature” (Herz, 1996, p. 12).

Reading the young adult novels before or after reading the classics may help students be more confident and independent readers. Those Young Adult texts also allow for integration of multicultural texts. The need for direct instruction diminishes, as the majority of the class would be engaged in activities and discussion because they are genuinely interested in the book (Herz, 1996). Chapter assessments and reading quizzes, discussions, reading journals, or peer writing logs are all ways to assess the knowledge of the student and the students’ progress. However, students are certainly more inclined to read a book they want to read, instead of a book from that initially did not spark their interest.

Many teachers feel guilty if they do not teach the classics. Despite the fact that many teachers want to teach works other than the classics, because many teachers have the goal to be a team player, working with the department following the curriculum, many times the classic works are just simply accepted and taught (Bushman, 1997). Colleges and universities expect high schools to teach certain works. Students should be familiar with a list of classics before entering college.

According to *Using Young Adult Literature in the English Classroom*, a survey that asked 322 public schools to list the most common books read in their classrooms, they listed the

following (Bushman, 1997):

- *Romeo and Juliet*
- *Macbeth*
- *Huckleberry Finn*
- *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- *Julius Caesar*
- *The Pearl*
- *The Scarlet Letter*
- *Of Mice and Men*
- *Lord of the Flies*
- *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*

When compared to a similar study that was conducted in 1963, few of the works have changed.

Many ways exist to incorporate young adult literature in the classroom to aid in the teaching of the classic works of literature. Pairing young adult novels with classics is one of the best ways to use young adult literature in the classroom. Reading a young adult book with similar themes, symbols, plot, and characters allows for the young adult to better relate to and understand the classic work.

Reading young adult literature in the classroom is has the potential to be beneficial to the students. In situations where there is extra time in a quarter or students simply are not connecting with the coursework, teachers can always assign a young adult novel just to get the students to read. Incorporating literature circles into the classroom, where students can chose to read one of

several presented young adult works and then have discussions with other students who chose that same novel is a great way to get students reading and discussing something they want to read. The goal of reading any work is for the students to connect. With the curriculums so strict in school districts today, just reading a young adult book in class when there are plenty classic works that could be focused on is rare. However, teachers need to be aware that young adult literature is beneficial, regardless how it is used.

See Appendix A for a chart of young adult literature and classic pairings listed based on the themes of the book.



## CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

### My Findings

After learning about young adult literature and the many benefits, I decided to take my research into the real world. During my senior internship in Seminole County, I surveyed nine English and Reading teachers about their use of young adult literature. The teachers ranged from ninth grade standard to twelfth grade Advanced Placement. At the beginning of the semester, I sent out an email explaining the purpose of my survey to all the English and Reading teachers at the school. The results of my survey were shocking. See Appendix C to see the questions asked in the survey.

Teacher A is an English II Standard instructor. When asked if this teacher used young adult literature in the classroom, the answer was no because there is a set curriculum already in place. Teacher A has been unable to find a place to fit in young adult literature during the year. The curriculum the class studied included several classic works of literature, including *Julius Caesar*, *Antigone*, and *Animal Farm*. To supplement those texts, Teacher A used short stories out of the assigned Prentice Hall literature textbooks. However, in the end, the most important question remained: Do you feel as though using young adult literature in the classroom is beneficial for the students? Teacher A's answer: Yes.

Teacher B is an Advanced Placement Literature teacher, who also teaches a section of English IV. All Teacher B's students were seniors. This teacher's answer to using young adult literature in the classroom was also no, however for very different reasons. There is not a need for young adult literature in an AP Literature class, this teacher informed me. The students only read what texts may be found on the Advanced Placement test. However, for English IV,

Teacher B's response was that the texts they read were British literature pieces. Of course, both sections study the classic works: *Beowulf*, *Canterbury Tales*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Importance of Being Earnest*, *Frankenstein*, *Brave New World*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and many works of infamous poetry. To supplement those texts, Teacher B uses "literary analysis." Unfortunately, this teacher did not feel that using young adult literature would be beneficial in the classroom. Although, perhaps this teacher is solely thinking of whether it would benefit the students passing the AP exam, in which case, due to the curriculum of the literature-based preparatory class, young adult literature may not be helpful. Regardless, Teacher B's answer was no.

Teacher C is an English III Honors teacher. This teacher does not use young adult literature in the classroom. Teacher C's reasoning for not using young adult literature was because the honors section has a heavy concentration of American Literature, which is generally taught within the context of American History. This teacher's curriculum included studying the following classics: *The Great Gatsby*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Ethan Frome*, *The Crucible*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, *Sun Also Rises*, and *Catcher in the Rye*. To supplement the classics, this teacher uses newspaper articles and music selections. However, in the end, Teacher C too believed that using young adult literature would benefit the students.

Teacher D is an English Speaker of Other Languages teacher. This teacher's focus is reading. Teacher D did agree to using young adult literature in the classroom. The classics that the students read included: *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Julius Caesar*, *Moby Dick*, *Jane Eyre*, and *Great Expectations*. Because Teacher D is an ESOL instructor, these complex texts are supplemented with ESOL accommodations for the students. The most

effective accommodation, this teacher believed, was graphic novel versions of all the Shakespeare works and most classics. Teacher D's reasoning for using this form of young adult literature in the classroom is to keep students interested and reading, to improve fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary skills, and to help with assessment. *The Lightning Thief*, *Hoops*, *Monster*, *Fever*, *Looser*, *Twilight*, and *The Contender* were all young adult selections that Teacher D incorporated to help students with their reading. However, this teacher did not use young adult literature as pairings to the classics, rather for connections and interest for the ESOL students. Teacher D too believes that young adult literature in the classroom benefits the students.

Teacher E is an English IV Honors and Advanced Placement English Literature teacher. This teacher does use young adult literature in the classroom. Some of the classic authors that are read in the class include: Shakespeare, Bronte, Milton, Swift, Chaucer, and Austen. To help with teaching those classics, Teacher E uses films, webpages, newspapers, magazines, journals, short stories, and poetry. This teacher's reasoning for using young adult literature is that it helps make literature relevant and it is appealing to students. Some young adult books read in Teacher E's classroom are *Not the End of the World*, *What Was Lost*, *Life of Pi*, and *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*. Although the only pairing that this teacher did between the classic works and the young adult stories was *Canterbury Tales* with *Anna of Byzantium*, Teacher E did believe that using young adult literature in the classroom is a good thing.

Teacher F is a teacher of standard English I. Unfortunately, this teacher did not use young adult literature in the classroom, mostly because the county requirements mandates what literature is used and not in a standard level classroom. The classic works that this person teaches

are *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Odyssey*, and various other classic short stories. To teach these works, Teacher F uses newspaper articles and historical documents. Even though the county mandates what literature this teacher is allowed to teach, Teacher F still believes that young adult literature would benefit students in the classroom.

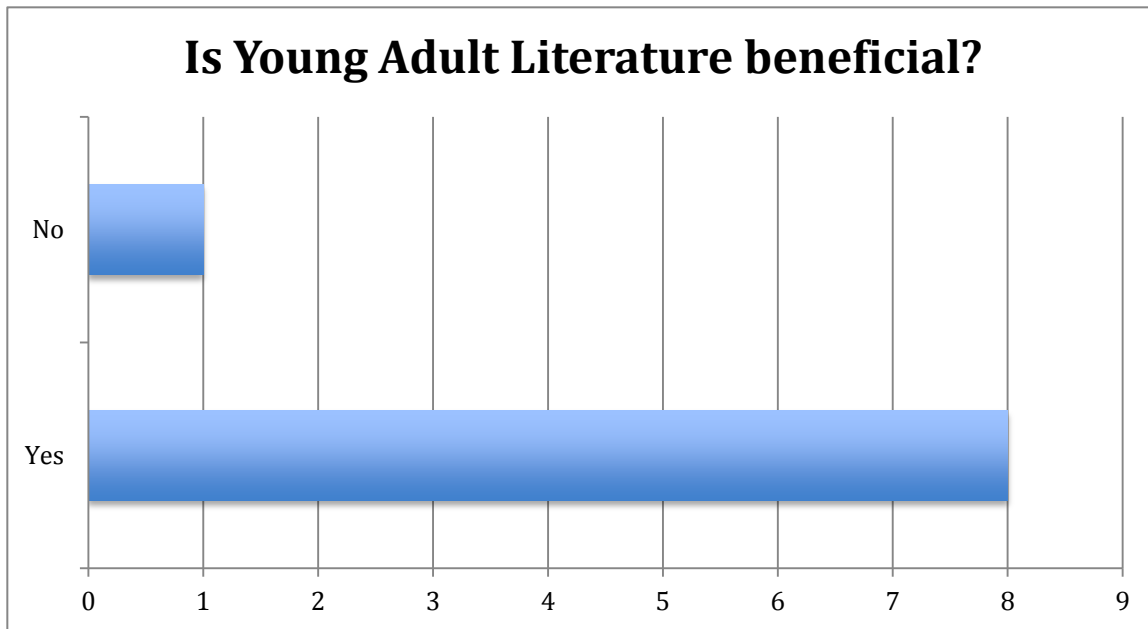
Teacher G is a teacher of intensive reading and advanced reading. This teacher too used young adult literature in her classroom. Because this subject was intensive reading, no requirements for classics are made. The goal of reading classes is to improve reading skills, including comprehension, speed, and fluency to pass FCAT and to supplement the classics being studied in the English classes. Teacher G does use young adult literature because plenty of modern young adult novels with the same themes as the classics make learning those classics more relevant. Students, especially less proficient readers, may identify more with those modern texts. Some examples of those young adult texts used include: *The Power of One*, *Anthem*, *A Child Called It*, *Go Ask Alice*, *Inexcusable*, *Sold*, *Enders Game*, and *The Lost Boy*. For this year, the teacher used *Romiette and Julio* as a pairing to *Romeo and Juliet*. Teacher G and those students are a perfect example of how young adult literature may provide reading benefits to students.

Teacher H is an English IV honors and standard teacher. This teacher does not use young adult literature in the classroom because the curriculum is already pressed to include too many works. Some classics read by Teacher H's students this year were *Beowulf*, *The Canterbury Tales*, *Sir Gawain*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Brave New World*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Frankenstein*. To teach these classic works, this teacher supplements with

journal articles and cartoons. Even though this teacher does not have time to teach any other books, Teacher H too feels it is beneficial to use young adult literature in the classroom.

Teacher I teaches English III standard only. This teacher does not use young adult literature in the classroom solely because the county curriculum for standard courses at does not allow time for it. The classic works studied this year included: *The Crucible*, *Of Mice and Men*, *The Great Gatsby*, and *Catcher in the Rye*. This teacher uses newspaper articles, online content, and videos to supplement those works. And again, even though this curriculum did not include young adult literature, Teacher I also believed that it would be beneficial for the students to read young adult literature.

All teachers except for Teacher B believed that young adult literature would benefit their students. Later when I inquired in person about Teacher B's response, this teacher clarified that it would not benefit those particular students because the goal of passing the AP English Literature test is foremost. No young adult novel would help with that examination. However, this teacher did state that most likely young adult literature would increase the student comprehension of the themes of the classic works of literature for the exam; however, time would never allow incorporating those young adult works. See Appendix D for a comprehensive chart of the survey results.



### Teaching Using Connections

One goal as language arts teachers is to assist our students to develop into lifelong readers. As teachers, we often assume that we are teaching literacy when we are teaching only literature (Bushman, 1997). “Literature is an experience, not information, and that the student must be invited to participate in it, not simply observe it from the outside” (Bushman, 1997, p. 49). If no one challenges the literature curriculum, everyone will continue believing that “if students can perform on tests, then it naturally follows that they must be gaining knowledge from and loving to read literature” (Bushman, 1997, p. 50) Unfortunately, that is not how students learn, nor is it how students become passionate about reading.

How we teach literature is just as important as what literature we are teaching. “A literary experience is fundamentally an unmediated, private exchange between a text and a reader...”(Bushman, 1997, p. 59). This private exchange is crucial, but some amount of teacher-

student instruction is required. Students make connections between the text and their experiences. One should consider the ways to help students to make these literary connections, including group discussions, plays, response reports, journal writing, personal essays, and Socratic circles. If we want our students to become lifelong readers, literature in our classrooms must allow students to make a connection between themselves and the novel they read.

### **Educational Implications**

As secondary English teachers, we want our students to become lifelong readers and learners. Our goal is to entice students by engaging them with the adolescent characters in books, the adventurous plots, the historical settings, as well as young adult issues. We want to motivate students to read and to appreciate reading for the rest of their lives. Young adult literature can motivate young people to engage in reading. The classic and infamous works of literature that have withstood the test of time also have intriguing plots and characters; however, because of the nature of most of the works, students either do not want to or are not able to actually comprehensively read them. Using young adult literature, which is already fascinating to adolescents, to make connections to these unfamiliar classics allows for the possibility of greater comprehension and understanding, but mostly with less apprehension and fear of the classic work.

Although my survey results were not what I had initially anticipated, I certainly learned a great deal from my review and survey. In researching, I discovered that the genre commonly known as young adult literature is extensive among adolescents. However, my interviews with current English teachers proved that while young adult literature is acknowledged, some teachers feel they are unable to take advantage of it. The curricula do not include young adult books

because the high school English curriculum is, for the most part, strictly mandated. While the schools' curriculum are not pushing for this beneficial genre to be read, most of the students, unfortunately, will not discover great award-winning young adult books on their own.

When the day comes that I have my own classroom, the question will arise: Will I find a way to incorporate young adult literature in my classroom? I hope that the answer is yes. After being in an 11<sup>th</sup> grade standard classroom for a semester, I see the tremendous time constraints that teachers face. Guiding standard students to finish just one classic work every quarter is challenging enough. Young adult literature, I firmly believe, though, is the answer. Students will comprehend the classics better. They will be interested in what they are reading because they are able to tie the themes and topics back to the young adult novel. Students will not be as reluctant to read a classic if they know they have already mastered the young adult version of it. Young adult novels could be the answer to less proficient, reluctant, lazy, hesitant, or disengaged readers, which unfortunately seems to be many of the current generation of young adults. However, maybe for now, the answer is relevant newspaper articles, young adult short stories, popular songs, and other popular culture references.

Realizing the dilemma of time in the school system, maybe American curriculum needs revamping. Until U.S. curriculum is revised, there may never be time for young adult literature to accompany the classic works. I just hope that I am still teaching when this day comes!

### **Future Research**

If I were to repeat this research and study, I would expand the population of educators surveyed. With the time constraint, realistically, I was unable to survey teachers at more than one high school. Initially, my goal was to survey several schools in Seminole County. Instead, I



interviewed English teachers of varying grade and difficulty levels at only one Seminole County high school. Regardless of the level of students, all the teachers surveyed for my study agreed that young adult literature would benefit the students when learning about the classics. It would be interesting to see whether schools of different socioeconomic statuses, student ethnicities, or counties within the state would agree with these teachers. Studying this topic over more counties would certainly yield interesting results. However, with more time and resources, I would absolutely pursue this research if given the opportunity in the future.

Also, I would interview each teacher in person. I chose to do an online survey that was emailed to the teachers simply because of a time constraint. I did not have enough time to personally sit with each teacher, nor did I want to impose and take up their time either. If given the chance to expand upon this research, I would certainly love to speak with educators in person. The amount of information, as well as personal opinions, I would be able to gather from in person interviews would be so much more extensive, and also more valuable, than an internet survey.

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## **APPENDIX A: BOOK AWARDS**



## **APPENDIX A: BOOK AWARDS**

### Alex Award

This award honors the authors of 10 books annually written for adults that have special appeal to young adults.

### Margaret A. Edwards Award

This award honors an author and a specific work for significant contribution to young adult literature.

### William C. Morris Award

This award honors a book written for young adults by a first-time, previously unpublished author. First award given in 2009.

### Michael L. Printz Award

This award honors excellence in literature written for young adults.

### YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults

This award honors the best nonfiction book for young adults. First award given in 2010.

**APPENDIX B: YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE, CLASSIC PAIRINGS**

## APPENDIX B: YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE, CLASSIC

### PAIRINGS

<b>Classic/Themes</b>	<b>Young Adult Works</b>
<p><i>1984</i> By: George Orwell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Danger of totalitarian government</li> <li>- Psychological manipulation</li> <li>- Control of information</li> <li>- Importance of language to an individual</li> </ul>	<p><i>The Chocolate War</i>, Robert Cormier <i>The Giver</i>, Lois Lowry <i>Feed</i>, M.T. Anderson <i>Ender's Game</i>, Orson Scott Card</p>
<p><i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> By: Mark Twain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Journey to find self</li> <li>- Surviving an intolerant and prejudice world</li> <li>- Surviving without role models</li> </ul>	<p><i>The Day They Came to Arrest the Book</i>, Nat Hentoff <i>Whale Talk</i>, Chris Crutcher <i>Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes</i> <i>47</i>, Walter Mosley <i>The Secret Life of Bees</i>, Sue Monk Kidd <i>Memory</i>, Margaret Mahy</p>
<p><i>Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl</i> By: Anne Frank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inner versus outer self</li> <li>- Generosity and greed during war</li> <li>- Struggles of adolescence</li> </ul>	<p><i>Number the Stars</i>, Lois Lowry <i>Summer of My German Soldier</i>, Bette Greene <i>The Kite Runner</i>, Khaled Hosseini</p>
<p><i>Brave New World</i> By: Aldous Huxley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of technology to control society</li> <li>- Happiness in truth</li> </ul>	<p><i>The House of the Scorpion</i>, Nancy Farmer <i>The Hunger Games</i>, Suzanne Collins <i>Candor</i>, Pam Bachorz</p>
<p><i>Catcher in the Rye</i> By: J.D. Salinger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Struggles of growing up</li> <li>- Isolation from society</li> <li>- Superficiality of the world</li> </ul>	<p><i>Ironman</i>, Chris Crutcher <i>Celine</i>, Brock Cole <i>Iceman</i>, Chris Lynch</p>
<p><i>The Crucible</i> By: Arthur Miller</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Religious intolerance</li> <li>- Chaos to tear apart community</li> <li>- Reputation based on moralities</li> </ul>	<p><i>The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane</i>, Katherine Howe <i>The HERitic's Daughter</i>, Kathleen Kent</p>
<p><i>Fahrenheit 451</i> By Ray Bradbury</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Censorship</li> </ul>	<p><i>Feed</i>, M.T. Anderson <i>The Book Thief</i>, Lisi Harrison <i>The Last Book in the Universe</i>, Rodman</p>

- Knowledge versus ignorance	Philbrick
<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> By: John Steinbeck - Denial of the American Dream - Importance of family and home - Exploiting poor people	- <i>Home Before Dark</i> , John Cheever - <i>Homecoming</i> , Cynthia Voigt <i>Out of the Dust</i> , Karen Hesse <i>Bud, Not Buddy</i> , Christopher Paul Curtis
<i>Great Expectations</i> By: Charles Dickens - Loyal and trustworthy friends - Belief that money brings happiness - Search for one's place in society	<i>Unlived Affections</i> , George Shannon
<i>The Great Gatsby</i> By: F. Scott Fitzgerald - Denial of the American dream - Moral decisions - "Winning at all costs"	<i>Dance on My Grave</i> , Adian Chambers <i>The Giver</i> , Lois Lowry <i>Celine</i> , Brock Cole <i>The Drowning of Stephan Jones</i> , Bette Greene <i>Unfinished Portrait of Jessica</i> , Richard Peck
<i>Hamlet</i> By: William Shakespeare - Dealing with loss of a parent - Abandoning morals for revenge - Taking a stand	<i>Siddhartha</i> , Hermann Hesse <i>Things Fall Apart</i> , Chinua Achebe <i>The Chocolate War</i> , Robert Cormier <i>Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes</i> , Chris Crutcher <i>I Am the Cheese</i> , Robert Cormier
<i>Julius Caesar</i> By: William Shakespeare - Betrayal - Leaders who abuse power	<i>Scorpions</i> , Walter Dean Myers <i>Out of Control</i> , Norma Fox Mazer <i>Running Loose</i> , Chris Crutcher
<i>Lord of the Flies</i> By: William Golding - Loss of innocence - Good versus evil - Standing up for personal beliefs - Need for rules for civil society	<i>The Goats</i> , Brock Cole <i>Killing Mr. Griffin</i> , Lois Duncan <i>The Drowning of Stephan Jones</i> , Bette Greene <i>The Wave</i> , Todd Strasser
<i>Macbeth</i> By: William Shakespeare - Ignoring morals for power - Deception - Gender expectations	<i>Lady Macbeth's Daughter</i> , Lisa Klein <i>Enter Three Witches</i> , Caroline B. Cooney <i>Macbeth, Manga Series</i> , Robert Deas
<i>The Odyssey</i> By: Homer - Journey or quest to prove oneself - Courage to face destiny	<i>So Yesterday</i> , Scott Westerfield <i>Hole in my Life</i> , Jack Gantos <i>I am the Messenger</i> , Markus Zusak <i>East</i> , Edith Pattou

	<i>The River</i> , Gary Paulsen
<i>Of Mice and Men</i> By: John Steinbeck <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- exclusion from society</li> <li>- Keeping loyal friends</li> <li>- Dignity of each person</li> </ul>	<i>The Outsiders</i> , S.E. Hinton <i>Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes</i> , Chris Crutcher
<i>Pride and Prejudice</i> By: Jane Austen <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Importance of class and reputation</li> <li>- Overcoming obstacles for love</li> </ul>	<i>Pride and Prejudice and Zombies</i> , Seth Grahame-Smith <i>Prada and Prejudice</i> , Mandy Hubbard <i>Prom and Prejudice</i> , Elizabeth Eulberg
<i>Robinson Crusoe</i> By Daniel Defoe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overcoming obstacles</li> <li>- Sins resulting in punishment</li> </ul>	<i>The Island</i> , Gary Paulsen <i>One Fat Summer</i> , Robert Lipsyte
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> By: William Shakespeare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Innocent love</li> <li>- Suicide</li> <li>- Isolation from family</li> </ul>	<i>Romiette and Julio</i> , Sharon Draper <i>Scribbler of Dreams</i> , Mary Pearson <i>If You Come Softly</i> , Jacqueline Woodson
<i>The Scarlet Letter</i> By: Nathaniel Hawthorne <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alienation from community</li> <li>- Courage to survive injustice</li> </ul>	<i>Waiting for June</i> , Joyce Sweeny <i>Someone Like You</i> , Sarah Dessen <i>Speak</i> , Laurie Halse Anderson
<i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> By: Harper Lee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coming of age</li> <li>- Fitting into community</li> <li>- Innocence of children regarding prejudice</li> <li>- Racism and intolerance</li> </ul>	<i>Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry</i> , Mildred Taylor <i>Up Close: Harper Lee</i> , Kerry Madden

\* This table was constructed at the conclusion of my research. Due to previous knowledge of many of the listed young adult works, I paired each commonly read classic work with several young adult novels.

## **APPENDIX C: SURVEY**

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1. What is your name and what grade/class do you teach? If you wish to remain anonymous, please type N/A.
2. Do you use young adult literature in your classroom?
3. If you do NOT use young adult literature in your classroom, please specify why.
4. Does your curriculum include studying any classic works of literature?
5. Do you use any supplemental texts to help teach those classics? (ie: newspaper articles, short stories...)
6. If you DO use young adult literature in your classroom, why do you use it?
7. Please name some young adult books used in your classroom. If you do not use YA lit, please put N/A.
8. If you use young adult literature to help teach the classics, please name some YA lit/classic pairings. If you do not use YA lit, please put N/A.
9. Overall, do you feel as though using young adult literature in the classroom is beneficial for the students?

## **APPENDIX D: SURVEY RESULTS**



## APPENDIX D: SURVEY RESULTS

Teacher	Subject/Level	Use YAL?	YAL Books Used	YAL/Classic pairings	Beneficial ?
Teacher A	English II Standard	No	N/A	N/A	Yes
Teacher B	AP English Literature, English IV	No	N/A	N/A	No
Teacher C	English III Honors	No	N/A	N/A	Yes
Teacher D	ESOL, Reading	Yes	<i>The Lightning Thief, Hoops, Monster, Fever</i>	N/A	Yes
Teacher E	AP English Literature, English IV Honors	Yes	<i>Life of Pi, Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time, What Was Lost</i>	<i>Canterbury Tales with Anna of Byzantium</i>	Yes
Teacher F	English I Standard	No	N/A	N/A	Yes
Teacher G	Reading	Yes	<i>A Child Called It, Go Ask Alice, Sold, Ender's Game, The Lost Boy</i>	<i>Romiette and Julio with Romeo and Juliet</i>	Yes
Teacher H	English IV Standard and Honors	No	N/A	N/A	Yes
Teacher I	English III Standard	No	N/A	N/A	Yes