

RALPH & PIGGY, MEET THE WILDER GIRLS

Pairing Young Adult Novels with Classics in Your Classroom

OUR WORLD IS CHANGING.

Teens want—and need—to read books that truly reflect our diverse societies and, even more importantly, our struggles. Contemporary young adult novels cover a variety of issues, and their use in conjunction with classic texts can highlight the universality of the human experience.



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YOUNG ADULT NOVELS IN THE CLASSROOM

English teacher Kim Herzog on why young adult literature matters in the classroom:

As a veteran English teacher, I have watched my students change with the world around them. Given their evolution, I have found it more and more important to find texts that mirror their voices and diversity. It is through young adult literature that my students find protagonists who are reflections of themselves, both physically and metaphorically. That is not to say that I have given up teaching the canon in favor of more contemporary voices. Instead I have realized the necessity of pairing classics with newer young adult titles. Through the creative integration of these texts into my curriculum, I have seen the engagement of my students surpass my expectations.

Pairing core texts with books featuring YA voices through book clubs, literature circles, and independent reading provides chances for contemporary voices to enter the classroom conversation, allowing for comparative analyses in writing, sketch notes, and other creative assignments that explore thematic landscapes. Students can also apply critical lenses while reading YA texts to see, for instance, the social and historical effects of the time in which the books were written on their messages. Textual comparisons can allow you and your students to explore what it means for a book to be timeless, which books should be included in the canon, and whether these newer texts will stand the test of time. Integrating YA breathes new life into curricula, allowing for added opportunities to engage even the most reticent learners.

A FEW WAYS TO USE YOUNG ADULT NOVELS IN THE CLASSROOM!

Young adult novels work well as . . .



whole-class supplemental texts



literature circle choices



independent reading choices



great book recommendations



In this guide, we've paired Rory Power's debut young adult novel, *Wilder Girls*, with William Golding's classic *Lord of the Flies* for an example of how to use a young adult novel as a whole-class supplemental text; we've paired *Wilder Girls* with six additional titles for a literature circle example; and we've identified readers who will love *Wilder Girls*, in addition to suggesting excellent independent reading projects for the book!

Young Adult Novels in the Classroom!

We've suggested pairing young adult novels with classics for engaging thematic discussions! In addition, we've grouped young adult novels to enhance cross-curricular connections.



YOUNG ADULT NOVELS AS WHOLE-CLASS SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS

Wilder Girls as a supplemental text when your class is reading *Lord of the Flies*

Discussion Questions

1. Authors often write dystopian literature as a reaction to something in contemporary society. Look at the worlds created by Power and Golding. What are the authors reacting to? What warnings do you see embedded in these dystopian texts? Are the warnings the same?
2. What is the effect of setting on individual characters? Consider both texts.
3. On page 6 of *Wilder Girls*, Power reveals that "There were about a hundred girls when it started, and twenty teachers. All together we filled both wings off the old house. These days we only need one." At this point, the author does not explain why the group is smaller now. How does this affect the reader?
4. Why do you think Power chose to have almost exclusively female characters in her text? What are the effects of this choice? Consider Golding's decision to include only boys on the island. How do these gender dynamics play out in each text? What characteristics are most emphasized in each?
5. Consider the ages of the main characters in *Wilder Girls* and *Lord of the Flies*. Why does it matter that these are not adults? How do you think each story would change if its protagonists were older?
6. At different moments in *Wilder Girls*, the author chooses to narrate in short, choppy, and incomplete sentences. Why does Power structure her sentences like this? How does this affect the reader's understanding of the characters?
7. The girls often choose not to share their thoughts and memories. What do you think they are trying to preserve by doing this? Is this also the case with the boys in *Lord of the Flies*?
8. Consider how the beast and the Tox are similar. Explain both in the context of literary devices. What do they reveal about society?
9. The Tox affects each character differently. Does its manifestation reveal something about each character?
10. Why do you think Power chose to change perspectives throughout the text? How does that impact your understanding of the characters?



Essay Questions on *Wilder Girls* and *Lord of the Flies*

1. What are the roles of nature and nurture in relation to one's development and identity?
2. What are the effects of isolation on individuals? On groups of people?
3. How does fear affect and shape social norms?
4. How might these novels be described as allegories? How do their messages overlap?
5. How do relationships affect our actions?





YOUNG ADULT NOVELS IN LITERATURE CIRCLES

Many classrooms use literature circles to dive into themes present in multiple texts. Small groups of students are able to discuss one text in-depth, while the class as a whole focuses on a particular theme. This is a great way for students to engage in critical thinking and discussion!

Literature Circle Texts: *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood, *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins, *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy, *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath, *Wilder Girls* by Rory Power, *The Dark Descent of Elizabeth Frankenstein* by Kiersten White

Literature Circles: Focus Questions

Note: Once students meet for their first circle, encourage them to create their own questions based on their response to the readings and their areas of interest.

1. What is the effect of defining oneself in relation to others?
2. How can individuals determine whom to trust? What might cause this to change?
3. How can setting, and changes within it, influence the individual?
4. What do you notice about the style of writing, and how does it reveal deeper meaning in the text?
5. What responsibility do we have to one another? How is the social contract perverted in each of these texts?



YOUNG ADULT NOVELS FOR INDEPENDENT READING PROJECTS

Independent reading is a way to give students choice in what they read, and creative projects can offer different formative and summative assessments. Recommending independent reading books related to a unit's theme or genre allows students to think about connections between texts and lessons.

Projects: For *Wilder Girls*, students can showcase their creative thinking (either independently or in groups) using the following topics for exploration: Exploring the Wilderness Within/Loyalty and Betrayal/Reliance on Others versus Self-Reliance

1. (Poetry) Found Poem, Dual Narrative/Perspective Poetry, Blackout Poem
2. (Art) Alternative Book Cover, Sketch Notes, Game
3. (Technology) Podcast Episode, Vlog, Song
4. (Research) Using contemporary media, find connections to the text. Why might the author have chosen to explore these thematic landscapes?



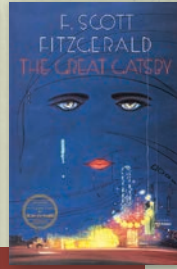
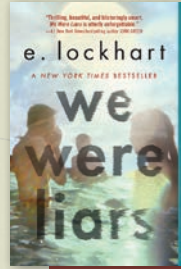
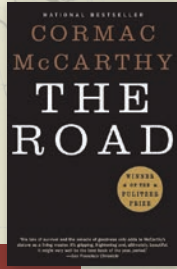
YOUNG ADULT NOVELS AS YOUR GO-TO BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

Students often look to the experts for advice on what to read next, and English teachers deliver!

Wilder Girls as a book recommendation for students who . . .

- enjoy books about alternative realities that are not too fantastical
- gravitate toward dystopian texts
- question authority
- value multiple perspectives
- LGBTQ books

RECOMMENDED YOUNG ADULT PAIRINGS BY THEMES



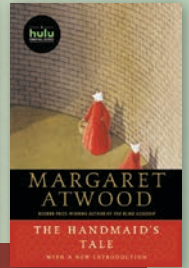
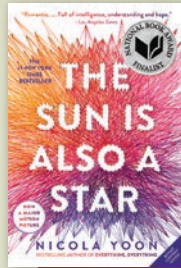
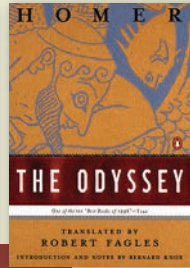
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morality, sacrifice, survival

family & relationships, morals & values in conflict, social class & expectations

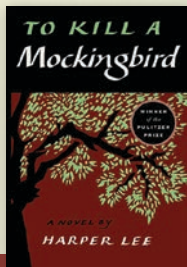
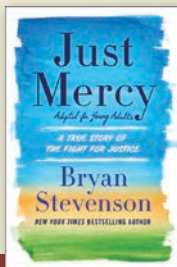
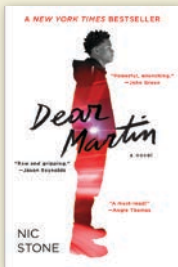
cultural diversity, dying & grief, justice & equality



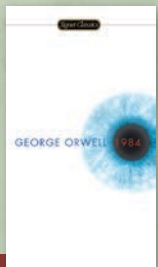
epic quests, good vs. evil

familial responsibility, fate vs. free will, love & relationships

freedom, gender inequality, survival

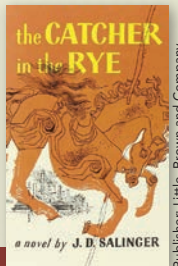


Publisher: Harper Collins

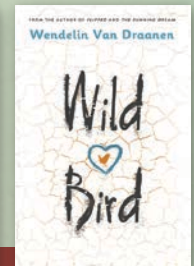


coming of age, justice & equality, racism & prejudice

technology, human & civil rights, morals & values in conflict



Publisher: Little, Brown and Company

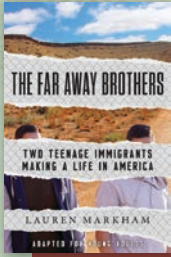


acceptance & belonging, coming of age, familial responsibility, grief

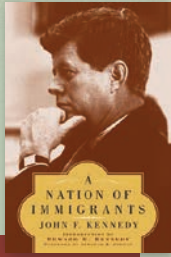
personal growth, survival



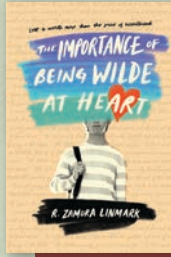
RECOMMENDED YOUNG ADULT PAIRINGS BY THEMES



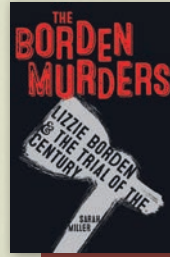
cultural heritage,
family & relationships,
immigration



Publisher: Harper Collins



cultural diversity,
relationships, societal
expectations



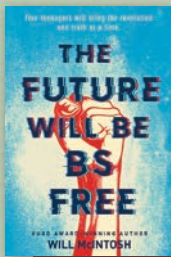
media hype,
nonfiction crime



morals & values
in conflict, peer pressure,
social hierarchies



Publisher: Scribner Book Company



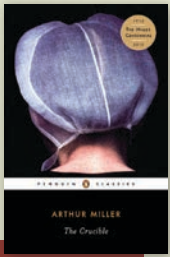
cultural diversity,
suppression of truth



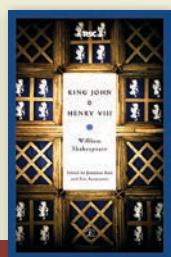
Publisher: Simon & Schuster



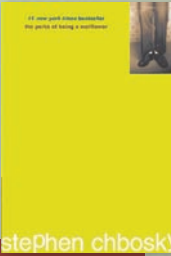
historical fiction,
legends & folklore,
reputation vs. integrity



historical fiction,
love & romance,
survival



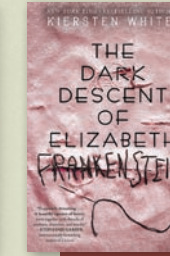
abuse,
coming of age,
perseverance



Publisher: Simon & Schuster



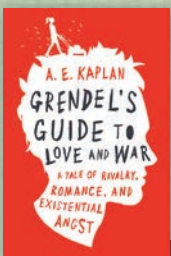
fairy tales,
good vs. evil



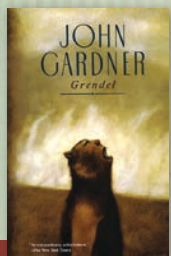
alienation & depravity,
horror & ghost
stories, survival



friendship & loyalty,
morals & values
in conflict



bullies,
heroes & heroism,
loyalty



love & romance,
self-esteem, morals &
values in conflict



Publisher: Harper Collins



abuse, relationships,
self-esteem



Publisher: Macmillan Publishers

CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS IN YOUNG ADULT BOOKS

Art, Music & Theater



Historical Figures & Historical Moments



English & Social Studies Classes with a Focus on Social Justice



Holocaust & Jewish Studies



CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS IN YOUNG ADULT BOOKS

Science Fiction, Dystopia & Artificial Intelligence



Short Stories & Anthologies



EXCELLENT INDEPENDENT READING BOOKS!

<p>mental health awareness, relationships</p>	<p>abandonment, dying & grief, family & relationships</p>	<p>determination, love & romance, responsibility</p>	<p>coming of age, love & romance</p>	<p>coming of age, heroes & heroism, grief</p>	<p>fairy tales & fables, familial responsibility, ghost stories</p>	<p>acceptance & belonging, home, sports</p>	<p>acceptance & belonging, cultural diversity, Native American interest</p>

EVEN MORE YOUNG ADULT TO COME!

Don't miss these phenomenal young adult novels, coming in fall 2019!

<p>family & relationships, love & romance</p>	<p>self discovery, music & theater, peer pressure, sexuality</p>	<p>gender issues, self-discipline, sports</p>	<p>historical fiction, magic, survival</p>	<p>cultural diversity, justice & equality, poverty</p>	<p>Holocaust & Jewish studies, courage & honor</p>	<p>art & music, family & relationships, good vs. evil</p>	<p>acceptance & belonging, disabilities & illness</p>	<p>growing up, racism & prejudice, self-discovery</p>