

Gracefully Grayson

Grayson, born male but identifying as female, hides her true identity until she tries out for the school play as the female lead. She struggles with the fall-out, including bullying at school and at home, until she accepts herself and lives according to her true gender identity. This novel for grades 6-8 deals sensitively and honestly with the struggles people face when who they are doesn't match what other people think they should be. Suitable for independent reading or a lit circle, the novel deals with self-identity, self-image, stereotypes, and bullying.

transgendertransgender

femalemale-to-femalestereotypestéréotypesbullyingbulliesgender identityDramafamilyfamiliesprejudiceactingidentityself-imageLGBTQ

CURRICULUM FIT

Does the resource support BC curriculum?

Extensively

The novel deals with the struggles of a transgender girl who is required to play the role of the boy marked on her birth certificate. As such, it links to the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity regulations and expectations from the Ministry of Education. It allows students to explore ideas within and beyond texts, as well as to recognize how language constructs personal, social and cultural identity. Through this novel, students will be able to exchange ideas and viewpoints to build shared understanding and extend thinking.

SUGGESTED CLASSROOM USAGE

The novel would work as an independent reading choice or a literature circle novel, particularly around themes of identity, self-image, stereotypes, and bullying. It could prompt conversations and debates around how gender is constructed in different cultures and societies. In a whole-class context, teachers need to be aware that the topic of gender identity can be

a sensitive one for students who are or who want to be transitioning, especially at grade 6-8 ages.

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Gender Roles, Identity & Sexual Orientation:

The novel deals with a young transgender girl who is expected (or feels she is) to live as a boy. The aunt expresses her belief that Grayson should be acting like a boy. Grayson is bullied because of his decision to audition for a female role in a play.

Belief System:

The Parent Advisory Council, headed by a certain group of parents, causes problems for Grayson's teacher for giving the female lead role to Grayson and alludes to his sexuality as a reason for why he did this.

Violence:

Grayson is attacked by bullies and pushed down the stairs, causing a broken arm.

Ethical:

The teacher who runs the extra-curricular drama program at the school is brought before the School Board for his decision to cast Grayson in the female lead.

Do the social considerations support, rather than detract from, student learning?

Extensively

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS COMMENTS:

The novel deals sensitively and honestly with the struggle people feel when who they are does not match what other people think they should be.

Grayson learns later in the book that she referred to herself as a girl when she was a young child, still with her parents, and realizes that she has been masquerading as a boy. Although the aunt is not initially supportive, as the novel progresses the reader can tell that she is trying to protect Grayson; her uncle, however, tries to be supportive throughout (although he doesn't always know how to).

GENERAL CONTENT

CONTENT

Is the resource engaging?

Extensively

Is the content current for the intended curriculum and grade?

Extensively

Is the content accurate for the intended curriculum and grade?

Extensively

Is the content timely and important for student broad understandings?

Extensively

AUDIENCE:

Is the content appropriate to the emotional maturity and cognitive level of students?

Extensively

Does the resource provide opportunities for creative and critical thinking?

Extensively

Can the content be differentiated?

Not at all or slightly

Can reading level be adjusted?

Not at all or slightly

Is the level of detail appropriate?

Extensively

Is the content of particular interest to male students?

Moderately

Is the content of particular interest to female students?

Extensively

Is the language use appropriate to the emotional maturity and cognitive level of students?

Extensively

The novel deals with a character who is biologically a boy even though she is a girl on the inside, which can be a difficult topic for boys. Grayson is welcomed into a group of older drama students when she auditions for and is given the female lead, which may be more engaging for girls. The males in the novel are mostly not supportive and the females are mostly supportive of Grayson, with a few exceptions.

TECHNICAL DESIGN

Does the resource make effective use of the medium?

Extensively

Is the resource easy to use?

Extensively

Is the use of font, text size and presentation uniform?

Extensively

Are extraneous elements/illustrations kept to a minimum?

Extensively

Because this is a novel, the only illustrations are on the front cover.

PRINT NOVEL

Does the text show insight into the complexity of the human condition?

Extensively

Does the text broaden students' experiences and understanding?

Extensively

To what degree is this text stylistically rich?

Moderately

PLOT DESCRIPTION:

Grayson wears long t-shirts over jeans so that when looking into a mirror, "he" can see the girl she truly is. Living with her aunt, uncle, and cousins, Grayson hides her knowledge that she is a girl from everyone until one day she decides to try out for the school play...for the female lead. This sets off a series of events that ends up with her accepting herself and choosing to live according to her true gender identity.

RELATED COMMENTS:

The author clearly articulates the thoughts and reactions of the main character, Grayson, as she slowly changes because of a growing need to be her true self. Self-identity versus how others see you is a large part of the novel.

GENRE:

Contemporary

LITERARY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Rich Characterization
- Well-developed themes

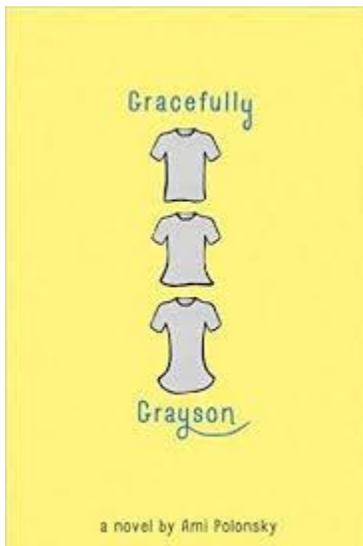
TYPE:

Novel

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

READABILITY:

- At intended grade level(s)



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Recommended Grades & Subjects/Courses

6-8

Evaluation/Record Entry Date

Dec/2017

Subject

English Language Arts

ID

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