

Fourteenth Goldfish, The

This engaging novel examines important themes such as death as a natural part of the life cycle, old age as an important stage in the human condition, friendship and how it changes over time.

CURRICULUM FIT

Does the resource support BC curriculum?

Extensively

THIS PRODUCT SUPPORTS THE CORE COMPETENCIES OF THE BC CURRICULUM:

- Reading
- Social Responsibility

This novel supports the development of critical thinking skills through the examination of complex themes and ideas.

SUGGESTED CLASSROOM USAGE

This novel would be suitable as a read aloud for grades 3 and up or as a literature circle selection for grades 4-7. Readers could examine the themes of aging and eternal youth, death as a natural part of the life cycle, old age as an important stage in the human condition, friendship and how it changes over time.

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Age:

Indignities and losses of aging are highlighted.

Ethical:

Main characters Ellie, Melvin and Raj attempt to break into Melvin's lab several times. Melvin plans to take full credit for discovering a new species of jellyfish, though it was sent to him by someone else.

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

Extensively

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS COMMENTS:

Over the course of the novel the characters come to accept the aging process as a natural and valuable stage of life.

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

Is the level of detail appropriate?

Extensively

Is the content of particular interest to male students?

Extensively

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

Ellie is a positive role model for readers as she accepts others as they are. She develops a friendship with Raj who adopts a Goth lifestyle and shows no embarrassment about associating with her teenage grandfather at school, despite his eccentric characteristics. She develops an admiration for him although he can be cantankerous, opinionated and difficult. She shows maturity in the way that she deals with the loss of a friend who has moved on. Examining the world around you through scientific eyes is encouraged and Ellie develops a love of scientific discoveries, while coming to realize that they can have both positive and negative consequences.

TECHNICAL DESIGN

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

Extensively

The larger text size will make reading easier for students.

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?

Extensively

PLOT DESCRIPTION:

Ellie is dealing with the challenge of a growing distance between herself and her former best friend. Her life becomes more interesting when her grandfather, Melvin, discovers a cure for aging, which he uses on himself. Her now teenage grandfather comes to live with her and continues to act like a cantankerous old man. Together they try to break into his lab to secure his work which he thinks will earn him a Nobel Prize. Through her

interactions with Melvin, Ellie learns to love science which leads her to evaluate the outcome of Melvin's discovery. Ultimately she teaches her grandfather the value of life's natural progression and he abandons publication of his discovery.

RELATED COMMENTS:

The novel is an engaging story that allows readers to examine deeper themes. Readers will find the characterization of the grandfather to be particularly rich and humorous.

GENRE:

Contemporary

LITERARY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Rich Characterization
- Well-developed themes

TYPE:

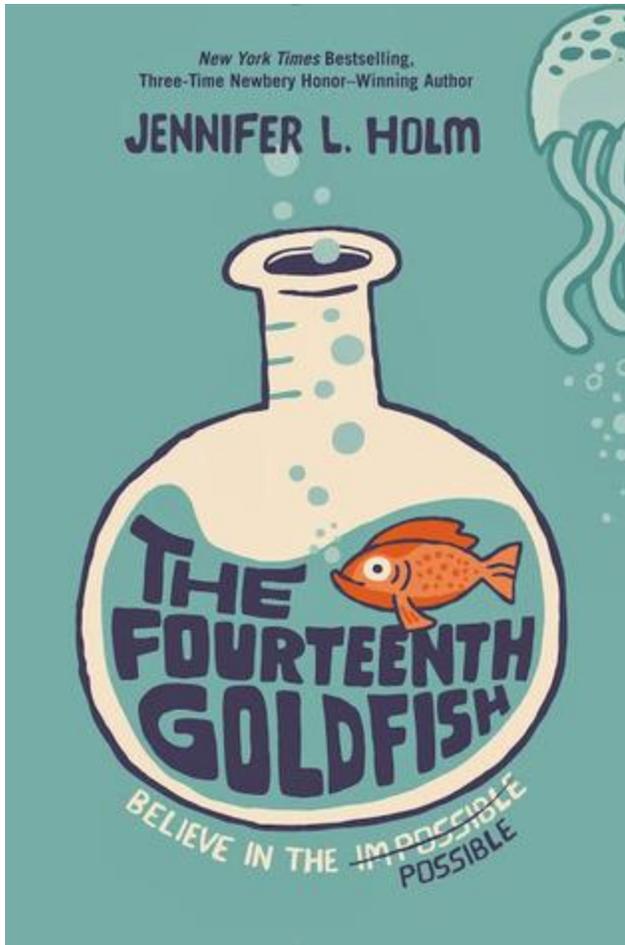
Novel

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

READABILITY:

- At intended grade level(s)

The Fourteenth Goldfish is a candidate for the 2015 Newbery Honor. The author is a three-time Newbery Honor winner.



Author/Publisher/Website

Holm, Jennifer L.

Copyright

2014

Primary Identifier

9780375870644

Recommended Grades & Subjects/Courses

4-6

Evaluation/Record Entry Date

Apr/2015

Subject

English Language Arts

ID

[View recommended grades and subjects](#)