



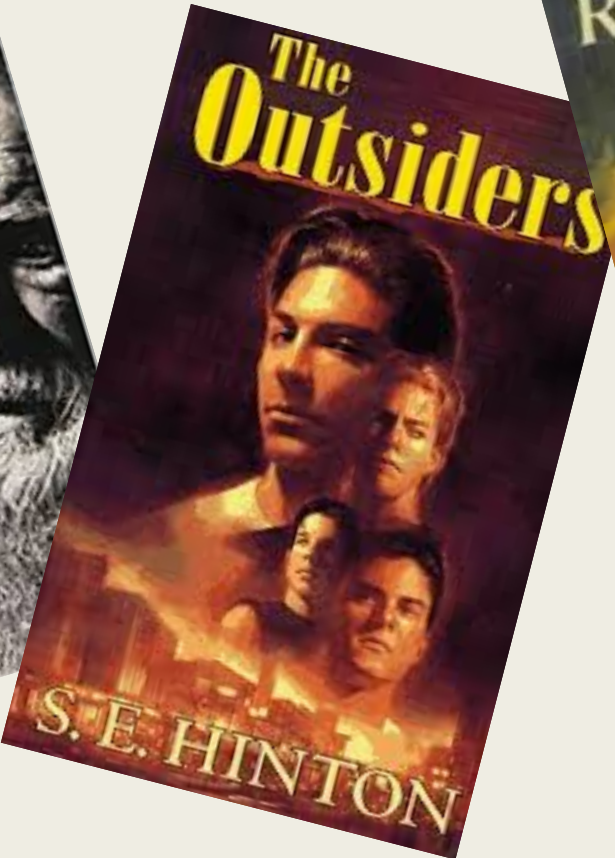
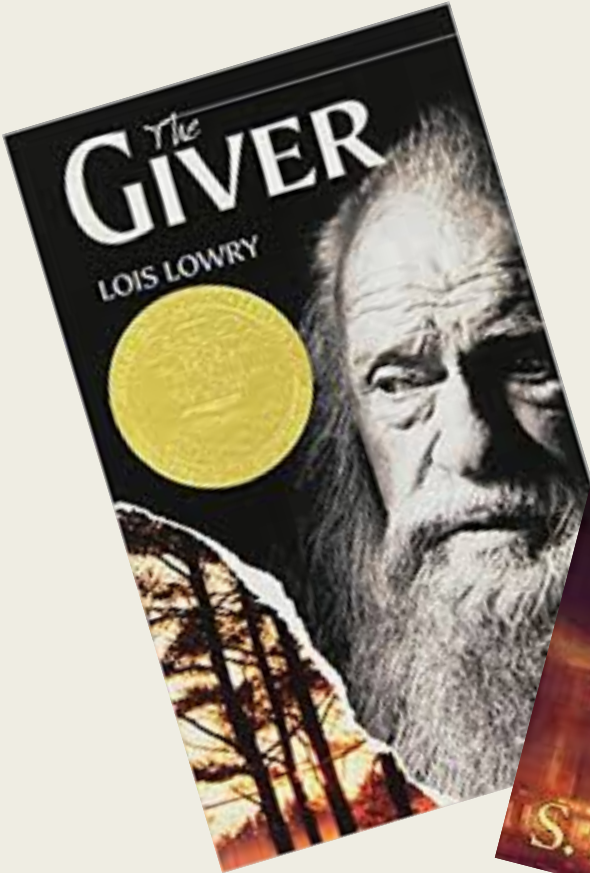
STATUS OF THE FIELD: POLITICS OF RESEARCHING & TEACHING YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

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Consider YAL We Grew Up Reading



Canonical YAL



Soter, A. O., & Connors, S. P. (2009). Beyond relevance to literary merit: Young adult literature as “literature.” *The ALAN Review* 37(1). Retrieved from <https://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/>.



Core Argument

YAL deserves an established place in high school curriculum because its literary merit is of high quality.



Defining Literature: Some Teacher Perspectives

- Based on readers' experiences
- Inaccessible to most readers/challenging – teacher needed as a guide
- Thoughtful political and social commentaries



Thoughts from Some Teachers

- We gravitate toward the canon because it is tried and true
- Perhaps the label of YAL outrun its usefulness
- There is comfort in saying that how it was 200 years ago
- There are tensions between our views and those of administration

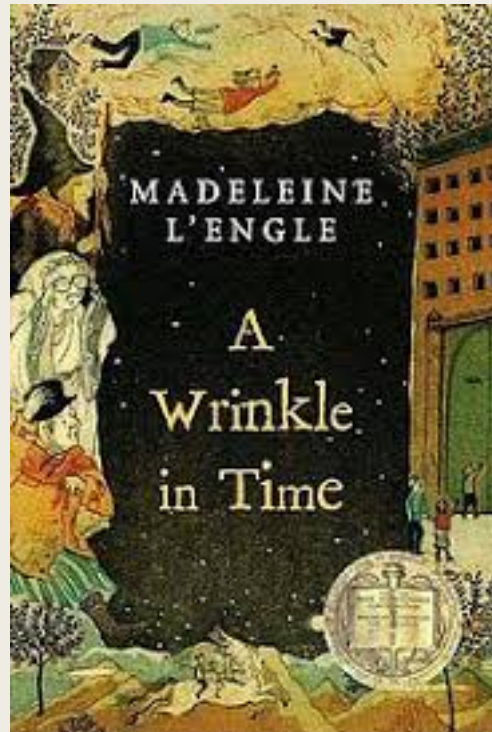


Making Arguments for Literary Merit

- Engage in department and/or school-wide evaluation of YA texts and comparing literary merit to that of canonical texts
- Discuss attributes of text that grow the readers we want to in a classroom and examine YAL under that framework
- Need for more empirical research on literary merit to support teachers in making case for inclusion

“Life, with its rules, its obligations, and its freedoms, is like a sonnet: You’re given the form, but you have to write the sonnet yourself.”

(A Wrinkle in Time, Madeleine L’Engle)



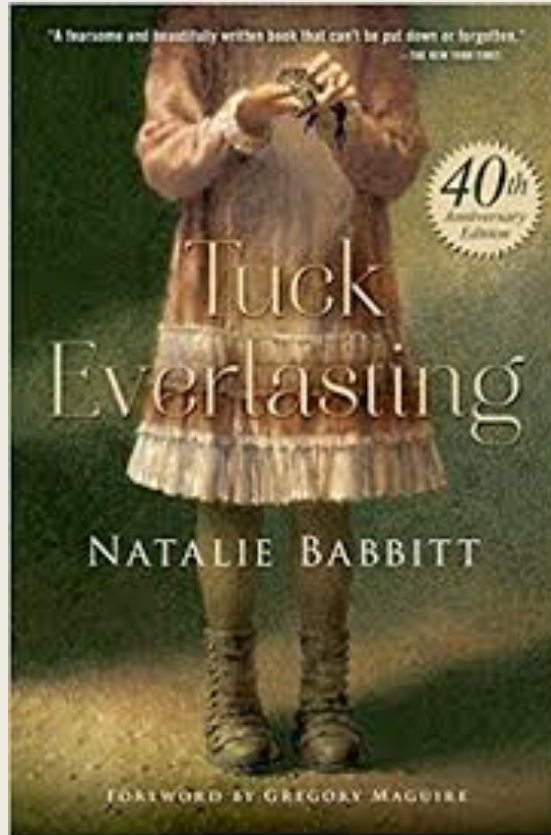
“Eleanor was right. She never looked nice. She looked like art, and art wasn’t supposed to look nice; it was supposed to make you feel something.”

(Eleanor and Park, Rainbow Rowell)



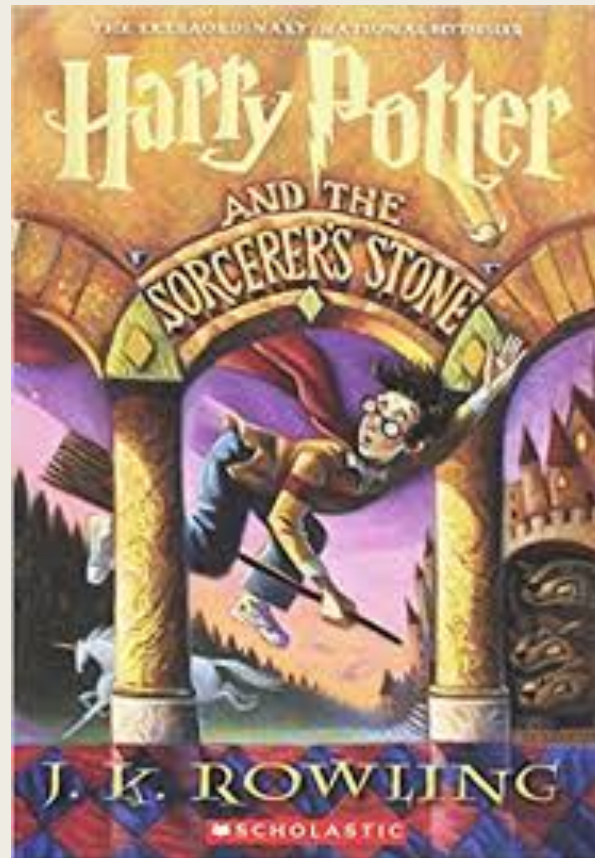
“Don’t be afraid of death; be afraid of an unlived life. You don’t have to live forever; you just have to live.”

(Tuck Everlasting, Natalie Babbitt)



**“It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies
but just as much to stand up to our friends.”**

(Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone, J.K. Rowling)



“We accept the love we think we deserve.”

(The Perks of Being a Wallflower, Stephen Chbosky)

