



Whole Novels for the Whole Class: A Student-Centered Approach

By Ariel Sacks

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Work with students at all levels to help them read novels

Whole Novels is a practical, field-tested guide to implementing a student-centered literature program that promotes critical thinking and literary understanding through the study of novels with middle school students. Rather than using novels simply to teach basic literacy skills and comprehension strategies, *Whole Novels* approaches literature as art. The book is fully aligned with the Common Core ELA Standards and offers tips for implementing whole novels in various contexts, including suggestions for teachers interested in trying out small steps in their classrooms first.

- Includes a powerful method for teaching literature, writing, and critical thinking to middle school students
- Shows how to use the Whole Novels approach in conjunction with other programs
- Includes video clips of the author using the techniques in her own classroom

This resource will help teachers work with students of varying abilities in reading whole novels.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Reading this book is like having a powerful conversation with a colleague; a true professional development opportunity for educators as they explore how to facilitate authentic reading experiences for students--and a must read for any teacher who has wondered how to foster a community of readers and then step aside and watch them grow, learn and lead."

--Sarah Henchey, middle grades teacher, NBCT, member of CTQ's Collaboratory

"The first time Ariel Sacks tried the whole novels approach in a "typical" New York City School she reports it didn't work for half of the class. Rather than give up, she set about devising ways to make it work for the other half of the class. That attitude, along with her inviolable focus, faith and trust in her students, has resulted in the engaging "how to" for the whole novels approach to instruction. She has written a clarion call establishing the possibility of all of our children receiving what is currently available to only a few."

--Jon Snyder, Dean of Bank Street College of Education

From the Author

Dear readers,

Interacting with teachers around the ideas and methods of *Whole Novels For the Whole Class* has been the most interesting and enriching part of publishing this work. If you have ideas or questions, or want to share your plans or experience around implementing whole novels, get in touch! Try Twitter, the whole novels blog, or Whole Novels Facebook page. Thank you for thinking about a student-centered approach to teaching whole class novels with me!

Ariel

From the Back Cover

WHOLE NOVELS FOR THE WHOLE CLASS

Whole Novels for the Whole Class is the hands-on resource that teachers can use to help students develop a genuine love of reading and a community in which to practice it. Written by classroom teacher Ariel Sacks, this practical, field-tested book offers a step-by-step guide for implementing a student-centered literature program that promotes critical thinking and literary understanding through the study of novels and other texts. Rather than using novels simply to teach basic literacy skills and comprehension strategies, Sacks's *Whole Novels* method approaches literature as art.

This unique way into reading and comprehension is designed to align with the Common Core ELA Standards and is filled with tips for implementing whole novel studies in various settings. Using this novel

technique can help struggling readers gain the confidence to tackle grade-level novels independently, reluctant students become avid discussers of literature who can powerfully argue their points, and outspoken students discover new channels for their voices in writing.

While boosting reading comprehension, the whole novel approach can be successfully integrated into other classroom programs.

" Yes, yes. To read a well-crafted book requires a leap of faith, losing oneself for a time. And yet we don't practice—much less even encourage—that kind of reading in our schools. Ariel Sacks both makes the argument for doing so and offers the stories we need from classrooms where it's being done."

—**Deborah Meier**, teacher, author, and board member of the Coalition of Essential Schools

"Reminiscent of masterworks, Ariel's book is an exquisite blending of the best in literacy theory and classroom practice that could only be written by someone who actually does this every day with real students."

—**Renee A. Moore**, NBCT, English teacher, author, and education blogger

Users Review

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Emma Berkey:

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Kyle Cook:

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