

Sustained Silent Reading Program

Newberry High School

2006



Why an SSR program?

- Studies show that struggling readers read less than ten pages of text per day.
- SSR improves not only reading achievement but also attitude toward reading.
- Students with positive reading skills will improve their writing skills.



- SSR broadens background knowledge, which helps students make connections and understand new material.
- Most school reading material is assigned reading. SSR offers students an opportunity to read material of their own choice.
- The amount of time that students spend reading independently outside of school increases as a result of SSR.



Keys to success...

- Student Choice
- Non-Assessment
- Teacher Modeling



Student Choice

- Students must have choice over reading materials.
- Books are available on campus!
 - 100 wing—Room 104
 - 200 wing—Room 207
 - 300 wing—Teacher Workroom
 - 400 wing—F. Berry's office
 - And don't forget the library!



Non-Assessment

- SSR time must be non-threatening.
- If we want students to be lifelong readers, we have to show them the joy of reading.
- Reading logs can be used for accountability purposes.



Teacher Modeling

- Teachers must show the importance of reading.
- If students see the teacher devaluing the SSR time, then the students will devalue it as well.



What are the benefits?

- SSR allows the student to read long enough and often enough so that the act of reading becomes automatic.
- Since SSR is informal and free of strict assessments, students can gain a new perspective on reading—as a form of recreation.



- Students will also gain a positive attitude toward reading and therefore become lifelong readers!
- Better readers score higher on standardized tests.



What do the experts say?



Kylene Beers' *When Kids Can't Read What Teachers Can Do*

"As students move through school years, their resistance to reading grows...This sustained silent reading time offers students a chance to read what they want to read. This type of free-reading approach creates students who are more likely to read outside the school setting."



Richard Allington's *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers*

"Kids need to read a lot if they are to become good readers...To ensure that all students read a lot, schools need to develop standards for expected volume of reading (and writing)...But it's important that such a plan has the support of the teachers."



Jim Trelease's *The Read-Aloud Handbook*

"SSR is based upon a single simple principle: Reading is a skill—and the more you use it, the better you get at it. Conversely, the less you use it, the more difficult it is."



Findings from National Assessment of Educational Progress

- The amount of reading that students do in and out of school was positively related to their reading achievement, yet most students report relatively little reading in or out of school.



What causes most SSR programs to fail?

- Teachers (or aides) who are supervising instead of reading
- Classrooms/schools that lack enough SSR materials
- Schools that don't explain the purpose of SSR to students (impacts vocabulary, grammar, spelling, attitudes, etc.)



Books, books, and more books!

Books that your students will
want to read...



Ten Books a Teenage Boy Will Want to Read

- *Shooter* by Walter Dean Myers
- *Give a Boy A Gun* by Todd Strasser
- *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers
- *Whale Talk* by Chris Crutcher
- *Imitate the Tiger* by Jan Cheripko
- *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien
- *Bleachers* by John Grisham
- *Breathing Underwater* by Alex Flinn
- *Tears of a Tiger* by Sharon Draper
- *Jake, Reinvented* by Gordon Korman



Ten Books a Teenage Girl Will Want to Read

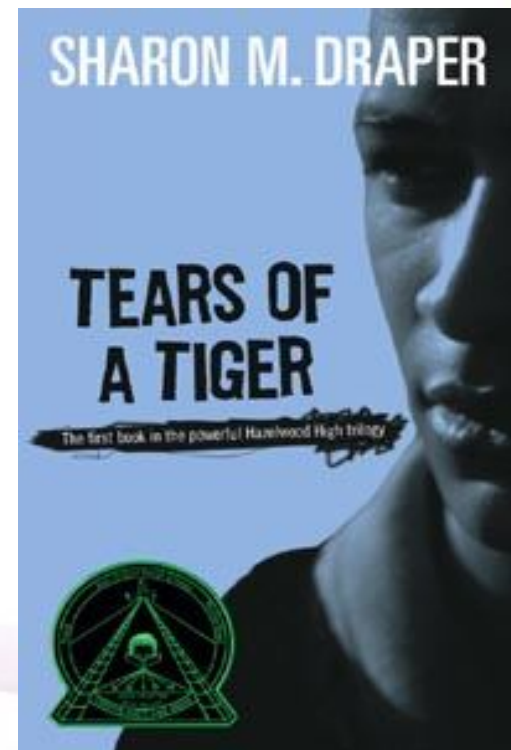
- *Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold
- *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson
- *Perfect* by Natasha Friend
- *Cut* by Patricia McCormick
- *Angus, Thongs, and Full-Frontal Snogging* by Louise Rennison
- *Diva* by Alex Flinn
- *Just Listen* by Sarah Dessen
- *It Happened to Nancy*
- *Sticks and Stones* by Beth Goobie
- *Slumming* by Kristen D. Randle



Tears of a Tiger by Sharon Draper

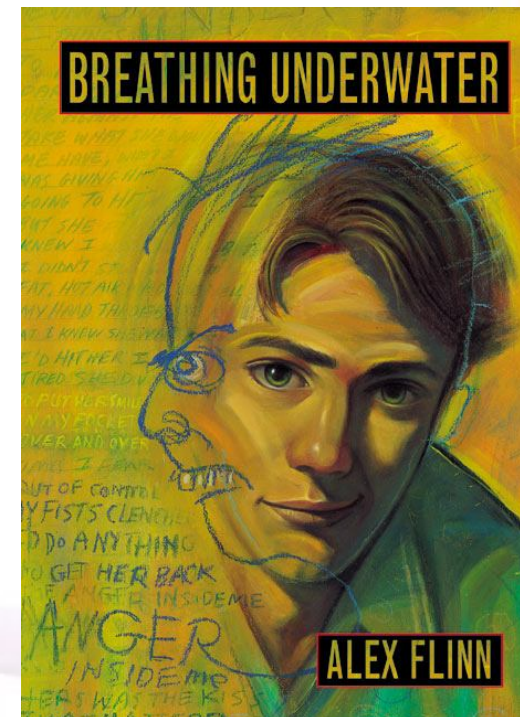
Star basketball player Andy Jackson can't recover from the depression building in him after his drunk driving results in the death of his best friend.

Although he tries to reach out, counselors, coaches, friends, and family all fail him. The story is told through English class assignments (including poetry), dialogues transcripts, police and newspaper reports, and letters.



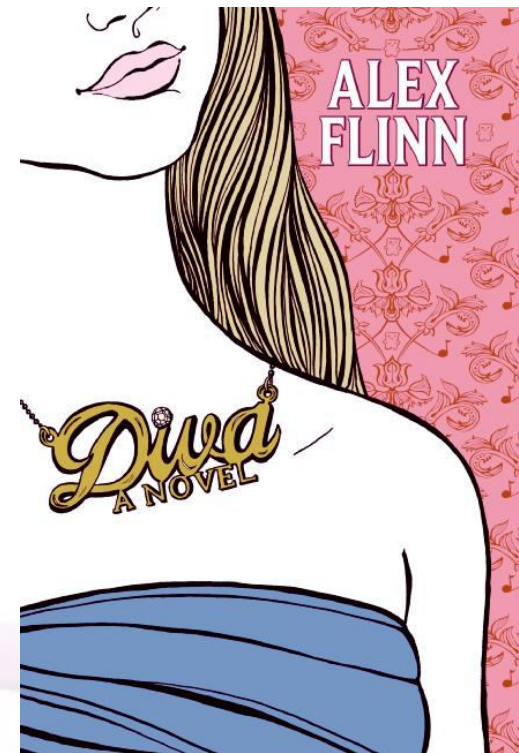
Breathing Underwater by Alex Flinn

It started as a slap. Only one. And then he used his fist when the anger got out of control. But his girlfriend Caitlin deserved it—hadn't she defied him and performed in the school talent show after he told her that everyone would laugh at her for be a no-talent fat slob? But that was a lie. Caitlin was beautiful. The only girl who understood him. Out of desperation, Nick mimicked the behavior he saw at home. Now he has to attend a Family Violence Class and keep a journal. It is through this journal that the true story emerges.



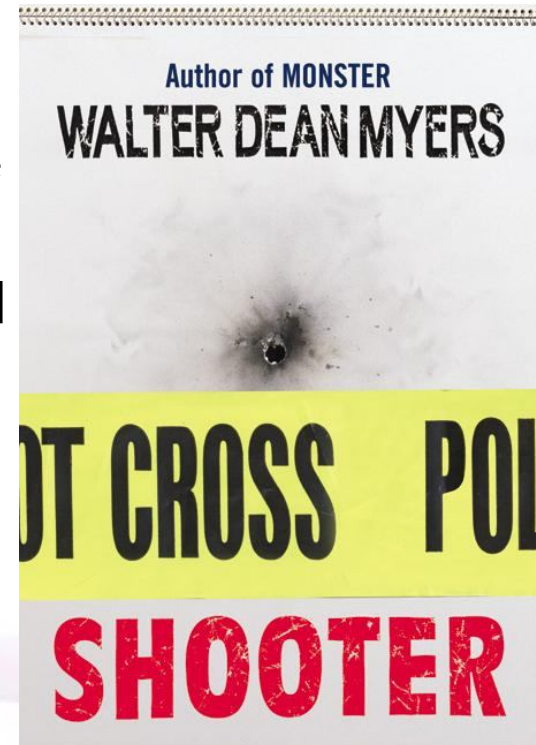
Diva by Alex Flinn

Diva is Caitlin's story. Some time has passed. Nick is abiding by the restraining order keeping him away from Caitlin, and she is still trying to understand herself. She no longer believes she is the fat no-talent Nick insisted she was, but she's still obsessed with her weight and unsure about trying out for a performing arts high school. Thrown into the mix is her mother, who acts like a teenager and is dating a married man.



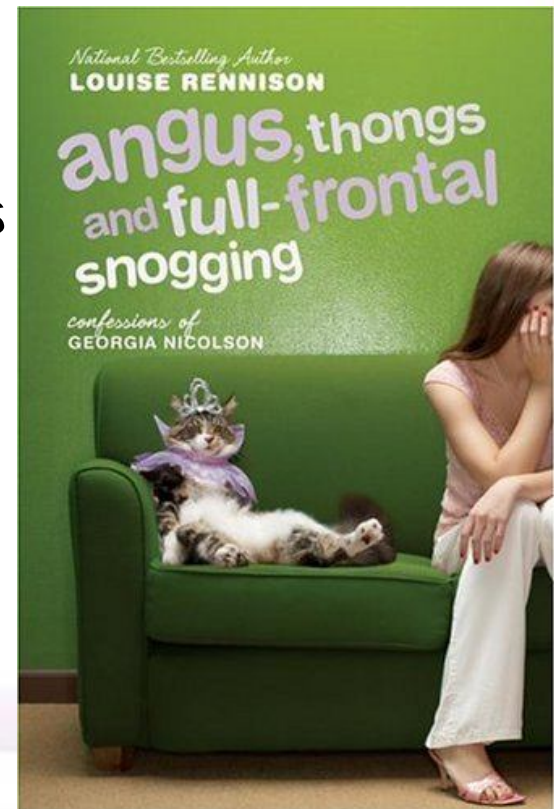
Shooter by Walter Dean Myers

Here is yet another story about a school shooting that begins with bullying and ends with disaster. Myers brings a new spin to this type of YA text by using different perspectives in the aftermath of the “incident” to reveal the characters and tell the story. The contrasts and contradictions in the various perspectives challenge readers to produce their own version of why two students became followers of a third and what could have prevented this tragedy.



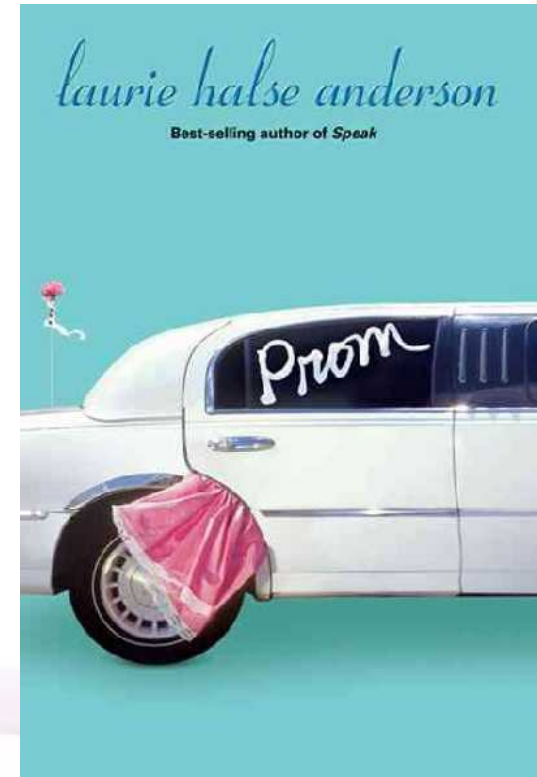
Angus, Thongs, and Full-Frontal Snogging by Louise Rennison

She has a precocious 3-year-old sister who tends to leave wet nappies at the foot of her bed, an insane cat who is prone to leg-shredding "Call of the Wild" episodes, and embarrassing parents who make her want to escape to Stonehenge and dance with the Druids. No wonder 14-year-old Georgia Nicholson laments, "Honestly, what is the point?" Definitely a *Bridget Jones* for high school girls!



Prom by Laurie Halse Anderson

Ashley Hannigan considers herself one of the “normal” kids. She is scraping through an urban Philadelphia school, cuts school regularly, but does enough homework to be sure she graduates. She is more interested in her boyfriend than school, even though he can be kind of a loser at times. She has no interest in prom—until the advisor runs off with all the money and her best friend pulls her into the planning.



Other popular books...

- *From Pieces to Weight* by 50 Cent with Kris Ex
- *Drive By* by Lynne Ewing
- *Party Girl* by Lynne Ewing
- *Harry Potter* by J. K. Rowling
- *The Beast* by Walter Dean Myers
- *Twilight* by Stephenie Meyer



Good books for you!

- *Kite Runner* by Khaled Housseini
- *For One More Day* by Mitch Albom
- *Running with Scissors* by Augusten Burroughs
- *The Mermaid Chair* by Sue Monk Kidd
- *Marley and Me* by John Grogan



NHS Success Stories

- Human Growth book clubs
- “I’ve read more books this year than I ever have!”
- Library Circulation
- The argument over *Drive By*
- *Hoops* stories
- 82% of 9-3s increased RIT ranges

