

Evaluation Rubric for Young Adult Literature

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NOT MET	ADEQUATE	CRITERIA	GOOD	EXEMPLARY
		Topics, situations, and actions are relevant to young adult readers' interests, questions, or lives.		
		Book holds readers' interest by invoking involvement with the story, character, and/or topic.		
		The overall theme is significant, relevant to young adult readers. The book has substance and offers insights into young adults' issues and problems.		
		Social issues and/or interactions are depicted realistically, not sugar-coated.		
		The book is unique and offers a new perspective or "take" on issues, topics, or life events young adults can relate to. It is not a clone of other books.		
		Author respects readers' insights, experiences, and intelligence. Author lets readers draw their own conclusions and avoids being didactic.		
		Storyline is relevant to young adult readers' interests, questions, or lives.		
		Story and plot invite reader to suspend disbelief – to accept the action, characters, and outcomes as possible within the book's framework.		
		Plot develops logically.		
		Actions make sense given the time, place, and people.		
		Questions are eventually answered. Ending satisfies reader, whether it's happy or sad or something in between.		
		Characters are multi-dimensional, not stereotypical.		
		Each character is fully developed through actions and/or exposition.		
		Characters are realistically developed and comparable in age to the readers.		
		Readers can identify and/or relate to the characters.		
		Book follows expected characteristics of its genre. Departures from expectations remain true to the genre. For example, in historical fiction, characters must be realistic for the time period. However, some characters may forecast future change, but within the realm of historical possibility.		

NOT MET	ADEQUATE	CRITERIA	GOOD	EXEMPLARY	NOT MET
		Language:	Language used by characters and/or narrator is appropriate for the story, characters, and audience.		
			Language advances the story, rings true, resonates with young adult readers, and realistic for situations.		
			Language is appropriate for time period and “true” to each character’s personality, circumstance, or worldview.		
			Author’s “voice” respects the readers. Author avoids condescending tone.		
		Accuracy:	Social, cultural, and personal attributes are realistic, presented without bias.		
			While characters, time periods, and plot may necessitate depiction of stereotypical behavior and/or attitudes, the work does not propagate biased attitudes/characterizations. The author does not inadvertently stereotype.		
			Books depicting real (or fictionalized) people, places, or time periods, do so with authenticity and accuracy, without bias.		
		Setting:	Descriptions let readers envision the setting – place, people, time period, etc.		
			Imagery and descriptions helps readers “step into” the setting and action.		
		Cover:	Cover is attention-getting without sensationalizing the theme or contents.		
			Cover relates to book’s contents, does not misdirect or “trick” readers.		
			Summary on book back and/or jacket is true to the book and helps readers determine if the book fits their interests.		

Some criteria were adapted from the following sources:

American Library Association, Young Adult Library Services Association. (n.d.). Teens’ top ten criteria. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/teenreading/teenstopten/ttcriteria>

Chatel, R. G., (2001). *Teens’ favorite books: An annotated bibliography and a rubric for literary evaluation of adolescent literature*. Retrieved from ERIC database (ED456424).

Grady, C. (2010). Evaluating science information with thinking routines. *Knowledge Quest*, 38(3), 52-55. Retrieved from <http://knowledgequest.aasl.org>

Norton, D. E. (2007). *Through the eyes of a child*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.