

**Learning Resources/Textbook Suggested Material for School Board Approval & Public
Review: Language Arts
August 2014**

Instructional Resources:

The following resources are intended to support teachers in implementing the Albemarle County Language Arts Curriculum. Per School Board Policy IIAA, staff have reviewed the materials below and deemed them suitable to meet the specific curricular goals of Albemarle County Public Schools.

Novel: *Okay for Now* **Author:** Gary Schmidt **Grade Level Recommendation:** Grade 7 and above

[BOOK REVIEW:](#)

ABOUT THE BOOK

As a fourteen-year-old who just moved to a new town, with no friends and a louse for an older brother, Doug Swieteck has all the stats stacked against him. So begins a coming-of-age masterwork full of equal parts comedy and tragedy from Newbery Honor winner Gary D. Schmidt. As Doug struggles to be more than the “skinny thug” that his teachers and the police think him to be, he finds an unlikely ally in Lil Spicer—a fiery young lady who “smelled like daisies would smell if they were growing in a big field under a clearing sky after a rain.” In Lil, Doug finds the strength to endure an abusive father, the suspicions of a whole town, and the return of his oldest brother, forever scarred, from Vietnam. Together, they find a safe haven in the local library, inspiration in learning about the plates of John James Audubon’s birds, and a hilarious adventure on a Broadway stage. In this stunning novel, Schmidt expertly weaves multiple themes of loss and recovery in a story teeming with distinctive, unusual characters and invaluable lessons about love, creativity, and survival.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gary D. Schmidt is the author of *Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy* (2005), which won both Newbery and Printz Honors, and *The Wednesday Wars* (2008), winner of a Newbery Honor. He teaches writing in the English Department at Calvin College, in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

RECOMMENDED LINK

www.hmhbooks.com/schmidt

Novel: *The Fault in our Stars* **Author:** John Green **Grade Level Recommendation:** Grade 8 and above

[Book Review:](#)

ABOUT THE BOOK

Hazel (16) is fighting a severe form of lung cancer. Her parents force her to go to a support group, where she and her friend Isaac are always getting in trouble. When Isaac brings his friend Augustus (who is in remission) to group, they hit it off immediately. They make a deal that Augustus will read Hazel's favorite book "An Imperial Affliction" if she reads the novelization of his favorite game. Augustus loves the book, but it ended ambiguously. Augustus writes letters to Peter van Houten to find out how the book ends. Peter agrees to answer his questions, but he must come to see him in Amsterdam. On that trip, Augustus reveals that his cancer is back. After Augustus' death, Hazel is very depressed and wants to find the letter Augustus said he sent his own version of the end of the book to van Houten. The letter helps Hazel come to terms with his death and she tries to move on with her life happily. This is a romance for young adults.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

"John Green is the New York Times bestselling author of *Looking for Alaska*, *An Abundance of Katherines*, *Paper Towns*, and *The Fault in Our Stars*. He is also the coauthor, with David Levithan, of *Will Grayson, Will Grayson*. He was 2006 recipient of the Michael L. Printz Award, a 2009 Edgar Award winner, and has twice been a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize. Green's books have been published in more than a dozen languages." (<http://johnngreenbooks.com/bio-contact/>)

RECOMMENDED LINK

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/11870085-the-fault-in-our-stars>

Anthology: *An Introduction to Poetry* **Author:** X.J. Kennedy & Dana Gioia

Grade Level Recommendation: Grade 11 and above

[Book Review:](#)

ABOUT THE BOOK

Kennedy/Gioia's *An Introduction to Poetry*, 13th edition continues to inspire students with a rich collection of poems and engaging insights on reading, analyzing, and writing about poetry. The authors of this bestselling book are the recipients of many prestigious poetry awards. Features new to this edition include:

- **Exclusive conversation between Dana Gioia and U.S. Poet Laureate Kay Ryan**, offer students an insider's look into the importance of literature and reading in the life of this poet.
- **More than 50 new selections**—from a wonderful range of poets including Kevin Young, Bettie Sellers, Mary Oliver, David Lehman, Constantine Cavafy, Rainer Maria Rilke, Anne Stevenson, James Weldon Johnson, Alice Fulton, Jimmy Baca, Rita Dove, Gwendolyn Brooks, and Lorine Niedecker, among others.
- **New 2009 MLA guidelines**—provides students the updated source citation guidelines from the new 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook* and incorporates these in all sample student papers.

RECOMMENDED LINK

https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/320848.An_Introduction_to_Poetry