

**Title of Session:** Language Arts Forum - Literature About Teachers

**Moderator:** Donna Hendry

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**DonnaH:** Lets begin with Introductions:)

**DonnaH:** My name is Donna Hendry, and I'm an educational consultant living in Connecticut:)

**MelissaAC:** Hi, I'm a pre service teacher attending the University of Houston

**CynthiaED:** I'm Nancy Sanchez, a student teacher at the University of Houston

**BjB:** I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania

**LindaAV:** my name is Linda, I am also attending UH

**DonnaH:** I think that's all of us:)

**DonnaH:** Tonight's topic, since its still Sept. I thought we could look at literature about teachers.

**DonnaH:** Stories that help students understand what teachers do, who they are...what makes really great ones:)

**LindaAV:** that reminds me of the book by Pat Palacco, "Thank you, Mr. Faulkner"

**DonnaH:** \*grins\* it's on my list!

**DonnaH:** Exactly that type of book.

**DonnaH:** The list I have would be good, for the most part for a character study. (I say most, because some are different levels than others:))

**LindaAV:** Would the Miss Nelson stories count?

**DonnaH:** Sound good so far?

**CynthiaED:** yes

**DonnaH:** I was thinking about that, Linda. And I couldn't decide:)

**LindaAV:** nod

**MelissaAC:** sounds good to me

**DonnaH:** Why don't we start with Dear Mr. Faulkner?

**DonnaH:** [http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0399231668/qid=63841697/sr=1-3/ref=sr\\_1\\_3/104-3243088-9897554?v=glance&s=books](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0399231668/qid=63841697/sr=1-3/ref=sr_1_3/104-3243088-9897554?v=glance&s=books)

**DonnaH:** (this is a link; you can click on it.) I use Amazon, not for any real reason, but when discussing books it sometimes helps to have a picture of it:)

**LindaAV:** we just read that book last week

**DonnaH:** that's okay.its "THANK YOU" I think i'm getting mixed up with Dear Mr. Henshaw:(

**LindaAV:** that's okay...)

**DonnaH:** When I say character study; its nice to share a good book with our students...but especially with these, they ALL understand what makes a good teacher....

**LindaAV:** I thought that "Thank You, Mr. Faulkner" was a good book. It's not too often that you find teachers like that

**DonnaH:** may not be ready to expound on it...but they do know some teachers are really awesome and some....

**DonnaH:** So books about teachers as characters are a good place to start character study, since they've all HAD teachers.

**LindaAV:** I had a few that I can remember.

**DonnaH:** [http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0060226064/qid=63842479/sr=1-27/ref=sr\\_1\\_27/104-3243088-9897554?v=glance&s=books](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0060226064/qid=63842479/sr=1-27/ref=sr_1_27/104-3243088-9897554?v=glance&s=books)

**DonnaH:** (one of my favorite teacher books)

**DonnaH:** My Great Aunt Arizona

**DonnaH:** What things made Arizona one of the "good" teachers?

**LindaAV:** I haven't read that book

**MarsR** joined the room.

**MelissaAC:** neither have I, I am not familiar with that book

**DonnaH:** Oh goodness! read it! \*giggle\*

**MarsR:** I've never read My Great Aunt... but Thank You, Mr. Faulkner is an excellent book

**DonnaH:** Wow, and here I thought that would be one EVERYONE would know \*grin\*

**CynthiaED:** I am all for books with teachers being portrayed in a good light there are too few of them

**DonnaH:** Does the character part make sense to everyone?

**CynthiaED:** yes it does

**CatherinMo:** yes

**LindaAV:** I think so

**DonnaH** nods then (have to check that I'm being clear enough \*grin\*)

**MelissaAC:** yes

**DonnaH:** Another story I've come across...

**DonnaH:** a bit more of a comedy...but does show another positive aspect of a teacher:

**DonnaH:** [http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0027754561/qid=63844084/sr=1-131/ref=sr\\_1\\_131/104-3243088-9897554?v=glance&s=books](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0027754561/qid=63844084/sr=1-131/ref=sr_1_131/104-3243088-9897554?v=glance&s=books)

**DonnaH:** "Mrs. Toggle's Beautiful Blue Shoe"

**DonnaH:** A teacher who is willing to play with her students.

**MarsR:** I like teachers displayed in a good light, but to be honest with you, as I child, I preferred the books about the mean teachers or the ones who do funny things like Mrs. Nelson is Back.

**DonnaH:** and there is nothing wrong with that:) I can think of a few teachers I've had \*shudder\*

**CynthiaED:** What grade is the teacher in the book teaching?

**DonnaH:** BUT we want them to see them from both sides.

**LindaAV:** Miss Nelson's books do that...

**LindaAV:** she likes to trick her students

**CatherinMo:** I guess it's important to show kids the different way we can portray a character

**DonnaH:** \*giggles\*

**MarsR:** that's true, but I'd rather they read a book that focused more on the child's character. I think they relate more to seeing good character in other children than in adults

**DonnaH:** That characters are different, just as people are...but there are things that are the same as well.

**DonnaH:** Students recognize teachers as a stereotype.

**CatherinMo:** absolutely

**DonnaH:** at least to begin with...that works to our advantage.

**MelissaAC:** that is def. true - I remember seeing my teacher at a grocery store once and being totally shocked

**MelissaAC:** in first grade, I thought the teachers had to stay at the school

**LindaAV:** There was an Arthur book that discussed that

**DonnaH:** because we can start teaching characterization from the stereotype (teachers have no lives, they are blah blah blah blah)

**LindaAV:** It was the one where the teacher stayed at Arthur's house

**DonnaH:** (Arthur's teacher sleeps over, I believe)

**LindaAV:** that's it

**CynthiaED:** So is it better for teachers to personify themselves as mysterious or real caring people

**DonnaH:** then, once the stereo type is in place, students start saying, well, I had a teacher that wasn't like that..

**CatherinMo:** would it be appropriate to contrast the different ways teachers are portrayed in different books to help teach characterization?

**DonnaH:** and they begin to see that characters AREN'T just stereotypes...and can work from that.

**LindaAV:** that would be a good idea

**DonnaH:** I would teach how they are the same first...but yes, I think once you have the basis, that is exactly what you should do.

**DonnaH:** sort of a Venn exercise.

**DonnaH:** Say, compare Mr. Ratburn with \*shrugs\* Mr. Faulkner.

**DonnaH:** How are they the same? THEN go to how are they different.

**LindaAV:** First off Mr. Ratburn is a "rat...(giggle)

**CatherinMo:** I see

**DonnaH:** Tell me if I'm wrong, but I've usually found that students have an easier time seeing commonalities than differences.

**MelissaAC:** that is def. true

**CatherinMo:** yes

**DonnaH:** (Linda...are you channeling one of your students?? \*giggle\*)

**CynthiaED:** the only differences that are easy for them to see are physical...

**CynthiaED:** I think commonalities are easier

**DonnaH:** Which is why I say start with the commonalities:) especially with the younger students.

**CynthiaED:** Also differences that are boldly stated

**DonnaH:** (like Linda's rat? \*giggle\*)

**DonnaH:** One more "strong teacher" book:

**DonnaH:** [http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/014050172X/qid=63844918/sr=2-1/ref=sr\\_2\\_1/104-3243088-9897554](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/014050172X/qid=63844918/sr=2-1/ref=sr_2_1/104-3243088-9897554)

**DonnaH:** "Crow Boy" by Taro Yashima.

**CynthiaED:** yes...that was a really nice book :)

**DonnaH:** I would use these books with younger children...but I do have a list of novels for slightly older children.

**LindaAV:** That was a good book

**LindaAV:** You could use that book for other things too.

**CynthiaED:** It was different from typical children's books

**MarsR:** sounds good, what is it about?

**LindaAV:** about a boy who looks different

**DonnaH:** Raised a bit more "poor" than the town children.

**DonnaH:** (\*country child)

**MarsR:** what was the teacher's role in the book

**DonnaH:** To show how this boy actually knew far more than the "city children" who teased him.

**LindaAV:** I believe we read it in Lit

**DonnaH:** So yes, you can talk about students having varied gifts, the ills of teasing

**CynthiaED:** Mrs. Davanon read it to my children's lit class

**DonnaH:** It's an excellent book.

**LindaAV:** It is a good book to use to show how everyone is different

**DonnaH:** When I was still in school, I went to conference with Yetta Goodman, and she used it in her presentation.

**MarsR:** I had Dr. Tyson, we didn't read that one. But I'll be sure and put it on my list of must reads.

**DonnaH:** Are we ready for a bit older books?

**JenniferYJ:** I had Tyson as well and don't remember hearing of that book, but it sounds very interesting

**CynthiaED:** yes

**CynthiaED:** bring it on

**DonnaH:** (Crow boy is a bit older book...)

**DonnaH:** [http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0152163751/qid=63842711/sr=1-36/ref=sr\\_1\\_36/104-3243088-9897554?v=glance&s=books](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0152163751/qid=63842711/sr=1-36/ref=sr_1_36/104-3243088-9897554?v=glance&s=books)

**DonnaH:** "the Secret School"

**DonnaH:** Works from many different angles.

**DonnaH:** But I would be sure to use it when you are teaching about prairie type schools.

**LindaAV:** It is hard to start a school like she did

**DonnaH:** "most students don't realize that to teach you really only needed to be 16 years old back then.

**LindaAV:** I think many people think it is easy to be a teacher

**DonnaH:** Exactly.

**JenniferYJ:** couldn't agree more

**MarsR:** I agree with Linda.

**CynthiaED:** what age would you use this book with?

**DonnaH:** With older kids...most are like...eh, the teacher has the answer book. it's a cinch.

**CatherinMo:** I'm feeling out of the loop b/c I haven't read any of these books

**DonnaH:** I wouldn't use it any earlier than 4th grade...probably more like 5th.

**JenniferYJ:** haven't heard of this book either

**DonnaH:** This one is fairly new to me.

**CynthiaED:** Would you possibly encourage this book with students who enjoy the Laura Wilder books

**DonnaH:** YES...that is one I was considering.

**DonnaH:** (just didn't pull the link up yet...) I think Laura's school career started with These happy golden years?

**DonnaH:** (checks)

**CynthiaED:** would it be a good book to read out loud to the students for about 10-15 min each day?

**CynthiaED:** even though they are in 4th grade?

**CynthiaED:** OHH you think her teacher inspired her?

**DonnaH:** yes. she was hired at the end of Little town on the Prairie.

**CynthiaED:** Can you imagine how hard it was to teach students from five to eighteen?

**DonnaH:** I started reading the little house books when I was in 3rd on my own...I don't see 4th being a problem.

**DonnaH:** Actually, Laura didn't really LIKE being a teacher.

**DonnaH:** which is an interesting counter to what we've been learning.

**MarsR:** Do boys like the Little House books?

**DonnaH:** Another "Teacher" book is Christy.

**MelissaAC:** I think you can even read it to younger grades - especially if you are discussing issues in social studies such as the past and historical differences

**DonnaH:** (and, Anne of Avonlea)

**CatherinMo:** or "Ann of green gables"

**DonnaH:** my daughter is in second, and she wants me to read it to her (she can actually read it mostly on her own...but not quite)

**DonnaH:** She isn't teaching yet in green gables.

**MarsR:** I really like Christy. Her story is similar to Laura Ingles.

**DonnaH:** She starts teaching in Avonlea:)

**DonnaH:** (I'm a real Anne fanatic \*giggle\*)

**CynthiaED:** Sometimes I think these books are easier to read aloud because the students can discuss things they do not understand

**CatherinMo:** I'm not familiar w. Christy

**LindaAV:** I haven't heard of Christy

**CynthiaED:** neither have I

**CynthiaED:** I have not been introduced to Christy either

**DonnaH:** "Its been done into a movie...give me a sec, and I'll pull the url

**MarsR:** I bet you've seen the TV show which starred the girl from ER.

**KarenL:** I remember Christy. Great book!

**DonnaH:** [http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0380001411/qid=63845882/sr=2-1/ref=sr\\_2\\_1/104-3243088-9897554](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0380001411/qid=63845882/sr=2-1/ref=sr_2_1/104-3243088-9897554)

**DonnaH:** \*nods to mars\* exactly

**LindaAV:** no, still don't remember

**CynthiaED:** I might have liked the book but I did not like the show or what I remember of it

**LindaAV:** must have been on cable

**DonnaH:** the movie first was good...the show after, like most shows taken from books was \*blech\*

**MarsR:** Linda, you must have been reading a book while the show was on.

**CatherinMo:** what was the show called?

**CatherinMo:** was it Christy?

**MarsR:** It was called Christy.

**DonnaH:** Okay. Another book?

**MarsR:** Back to what I was saying earlier, will boys listen to Christy or Anne of Green Gables? I've found that they usually turn their nose up at those kinds of stories.

**CynthiaED:** yes :)

**LindaAV:** probably, they like action books

**DonnaH:** I went to talk about that...and went on a tangent.

**CatherinMo:** my older brother liked Little House when we were young

**MarsR:** there's not a lot of action in Anne, but the Little House series has lots of action.

**MelissaAC:** there is a book about Laura's husband called like "Farmer Boy" I think

**DonnaH:** Why is it that books about "teachers" are usually from a girl's point of view?

**DonnaH:** \*nods\* yes, Melissa, that was the one:)

**MarsR:** Because most teachers are women.

**MelissaAC:** because most people associate teachers as women

**CynthiaED:** because several teachers are female...

**CynthiaED:** My son just spoke up and said that most of the books read to him were centered on male characters becuz the girls were more open minded about listening

**LindaAV:** I don't know**DonnaH:**

[http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0786814047/qid=63845051/sr=1-166/ref=sr\\_1\\_166/104-3243088-9897554?v=glance&s=books](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0786814047/qid=63845051/sr=1-166/ref=sr_1_166/104-3243088-9897554?v=glance&s=books)

**LindaAV:** I agree with your son, Ms. Deasy!

**KarenL:** So do I.

**DonnaH:** This one I have heard good things about...but have to admit to not reading it myself.

**MarsR:** Your son has a lot of insight. I'm impressed.

**DonnaH:** because historically, women were teachers, and men weren't?

**CynthiaED:** I have never heard of this book either

**CatherinMo:** me either

**DonnaH:** why should we have "girl books" and "boy books" whatever happened to "good books"? (not specifically to the group, but in general)

**CatherinMo:** well, I think that is our job as teachers

**CynthiaED:** There should be more books where the teachers are male...not just for children to read, but also for parents because I've noticed that several more parents are worried when their child's teacher is a male

**CatherinMo:** we need to find the books that all will enjoy

**CynthiaED:** I believe that but if the main character is a girl and it is her total point of view then boys label it a girl book

**MarsR:** Unfortunately, boys and girls have different interests and for a book to be "good", it's going to have to interest them.

**CynthiaED:** that's true

**CatherinMo:** I do agree, but there are many books that classes as a whole enjoy

**CynthiaED:** I think it is important for male teachers to be portrayed because our male students need more positive role models

**DonnaH:** around here, male teachers (elementary) are golden, because its so many of our students are missing that male role model.

**CatherinMo:** my fourth grade teacher read us Super Fudge and we all loved it. We couldn't wait till the next day to hear what happened next

**DonnaH:** The readalouds I had...were in 5th grade...and they were "The Magicians Nephew" and "My Side of the Mountain"

**DonnaH:** A lot of teachers I know do Holes as a read aloud.

**CynthiaED:** I have never heard of the Magicians Nephew

**MarsR:** Good example Catherine. All kids usually like Charlotte's web too.

**DonnaH:** The Magicians Nephew is chronologically the first in the Chronicles of Narnia

**CynthiaED:** what is My Side of the Mountain about?

**CatherinMo:** the little girl I'm babysitting for right now is reading Holes

**CynthiaED:** I've heard of it before

**CynthiaED:** Ohh I love those books

**DonnaH:** Jean Craighead George is the Author...

**MarsR:** I LOVE Holes! That is a really good story.

**CatherinMo:** I haven't read it yet

**DonnaH:** about a boy from NYC who runs away to live on some derelict family land in the Catskills.

**DonnaH:** (I haven't either)

**CynthiaED:** Holes was an excellent book Louis Sachar(sp?) is an amazing author

**KarenL:** I have heard that. Didn't see the movie.

**DonnaH:** builds a home inside a tree, learns how to live off the land...very interesting book.

**KarenL:** Speaking of a home. That reminds me of a picture book titled Westlandia.

**MelissaAC:** I have seen the movie ads and admit I have not read it but would like to

**DonnaH:** I will...eventually...

**DonnaH:** I LOVE WESTLANDIA

**CatherinMo:** me too

**MarsR:** Another good one. The pictures are beautiful. We read that one in Lit. too I think.

**DonnaH:** one of my favorite picture books...only one I like better is Heatwave

**LindaAV:** I don't recall that book

**CatherinMo:** again, I haven't herd of it

**DonnaH:** (great modern day tall tale)

**DonnaH:** Both are really modern day tall tales.

**CatherinMo:** geeze! I am out of the loop

**MarsR:** Didn't'

**CynthiaED:** who is the author so I can look it up at the library

**DonnaH:** [http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0763610526/qid](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0763610526/qid%3D63846837/sr=1-1/ref=sr_1_1/104-3243088-) □ 63846837/sr=1-1/ref=sr\_1\_1/104-3243088-

9897554?v=glance&s=books

**DonnaH:** (weslandia)

**CynthiaED:** I recognize the cover but have never read it

**CatherinMo:** me too**DonnaH:**

<http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/isbnInquiry.asp?userid=2X1AIWVGR4&isbn=02775772&itm=2>

**DonnaH:** (heatwave...amazon doesn't list it)

**DonnaH:** However...time does fly when you're having fun:)

**MarsR:** Is it time to go?

**KarenL:** Already?

**MelissaAC:** I know, I have been here before and an hour is not enough to get to everything

**MelissaAC:** when everyone starts talking

**CatherinMo:** now I'm busy looking at the books

**CynthiaED:** Hope we did not annoy by straying off the subject

**DonnaH:** Gosh, no:)

**DonnaH:** I'm all about tangents \*grin\*

**CatherinMo:** it does go fast

**DonnaH:** But...before ya'll leave...

**DonnaH:** I have a couple more links for you (make it easier)

**DonnaH:** first:

**CynthiaED:** Is there a list of these books somewhere

**CatherinMo:** thanks for enlightening me, I now have a new list of books that I need to read

**DonnaH:** <http://www.backflip.com/members/donnamh/12559800/sort=0/>

**MarsR:** Thanks Donna. I learned a lot.

**DonnaH:** is a listing of all the books we shared tonight, with links...and a few extras we didn't get to:)

**CynthiaED:** Thanks...this will be very helpful. :)

**MelissaAC:** thank you so much

**CatherinMo:** thanks a lot Donna

**MarsR:** BYE! :)

**LindaAV:** thanks Donna, this was fun

**DonnaH:** (if you back up to the language link, you can chose Tall Tales, which include the other stories we discussed:)

**CatherinMo:** bye all

**CynthiaED:** thank you for the info and the list and your time

**CynthiaED:** okay

**LindaAV:** okay

**MarsR:** Bye Linda!

**MelissaAC:** bye everyone

**CynthiaED:** bye everyone...thanks Donna for everything! :)

**DonnaH:** Goodnight everyone:)

**DonnaH:** Thank you for coming:)