

**NOVEL/BOOK-LENGTH WORK (Fiction, Non-Fiction, Drama) PROPOSAL**

**Proposal Request Information**

Prior to filling out this form, please read the [Novel Adoption Proposal Checklist](#) with pertinent policies regarding novel selection and adoption.

**Section I**

To be filled out by requestor/educator:

**Ia. REQUESTOR AND REVIEW TEAM INFORMATION**

School	Legend High School	
Date	9/23/20	
Requestor/Educator	Ander Pierce	
Email address	rapierce@dcsdk12.org	
Phone number	949 887 1356	
<b>Proposal Review Team Member</b>	<b>Reviewer's Name</b>	<b>Contact Information - email</b>
CIPG Strategist	Rachel Brown	rdbrown@dcsd12.org
Colleague	Jared White	jwhite1@dcsdk12.org
Parent #1	JD Brookhart	jdbrookhart@gmail.com
Parent #2	Rebecca Chapman	rebecca.chapman2006@gmail.com

**Ib. BOOK INFORMATION**

Title of proposed book	The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or, Gustavus Vassa, the African
Author (s)	Olaudah Equiano
Publisher	Digireads.com Publishing
Edition	
ISBN number	978-1-42096091-4
Copyright date	2018 (original publication: 1789)
Course and/or subject area in which work will be used	English Language Arts
Grade level(s)	11-12 - Committee Recommended 10-12
Dates the book information was displayed at the school and posted on the school's website (2 week min.)	Feb. 22-March 26, 2021 (Note: I requested that this title be posted on the school website and it never was because the person in charge of the website changed and that was never communicated).
Date the book was communicated to the School Advisory Council	March 24, 2021

### Ic. NOVEL DESCRIPTION

*An Interesting Narrative* is a unique autobiographical narrative within the World literary canon; moreover, the narrative offers us first hand accounts of life in Africa, England, the Caribbean, and colonial America. Olaudah Equiano as a youth in what is probably Nigera is kidnapped away from his family and sold into slavery first in Africa, and later in in the Caribbean. Eventually, Equiano will purchase his freedom, move to England, and become an important literary figure and voice for the abolition movement, influencing William Wilburforce (the English politician most responsible for the English aboishiopn of slavery).

This book will give students exposure to more diverse writers and allow them to read about first hand accounts of life in the 1700's. It is of great historical merit. Currently, we read several books that allude to this time period and the importance of the slave trade and its contemporary international realtions in defining our current world, but this book would offer a first hand account. Equiano offers patient wisdom as meets the cruel challenges he is faced with. He also is a model for responsibility and action in serving our fellow man.

### Id. ALIGNMENT WITH DCSD'S CURRICULUM

#### Colorado Academic Standards

The text meets Colorado Academic Standards, especially reading standards (2.2.B., 2.2.C, etc.). The standard 2.2.G includes the analysis for themes, purposes, and rhetorical features of non-fiction; to which, this novel is well suited. Students will also evaluate a "speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used" (1.1.C).

#### Higher Order Thinking Skills

The unit revolving around this novel will facilitate all levels of thinking. Novel studies in general are founded on remembrance and understanding. Students will identify and analyze narrative structures and rhetorical strategies, then apply these elements in a writing project.

#### 21st Century Skills and the 4 C's

I will offer a variety of potential applications using the 4 C's: students could achieve Critical Thinking through focused, careful analysis of the text and author's purpose. Creativity could occur as students craft their own memoirs; each student engaged in an open-ended personal discovery through writing. Collaboration could occur in student literary groups as they work together to analyze theme, purpose, symbol, plot, and other narrative structures, as well as identify and evaluate the use of rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, logos). Communication is inherent in the writing process. Students will choose the appropriate way to deliver a personal narrative (short story, speech, spoken word, etc.) and using the expected norms for the medium. All of these skills will aid them in information literacy, productivity, and social skills.

Ie. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Three recommendations, referrals or reviews must be included. Please use professional reviews (reviews from the School Library Journal, Kirkus, Booklist, Publisher’s weekly etc.). The District Library Media Center will be happy to direct you to these sources. List the sources of the reviews below and attach copies of all reviews.

**NOTE:** Because the book was first published in 1789, reviews from the publications listed above are not available. Hopefully these will suffice.

Review #1

*The Guardian* (Aug. 7, 2017)  
**100 best nonfiction books: No 79 – The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano by Olaudah Equiano (1789)**  
 The most famous slave memoir of the 18th century is a powerful and terrifying read and established Equiano as a founding figure in black literary tradition

Black literature begins with the slave memoirs of the 18th century. Equiano’s *Interesting Narrative* is the most famous of these, especially once it was taken up by supporters of the abolition movement, but he was not the first African slave to publish a book in England, or, if we remember Dr Johnson’s manservant, Francis Barber, the first to have some experience of London literary life.

In the book trade, *Letters of the Late Ignatius Sancho* (1782) were probably the first to mobilise English readers against racial discrimination and the horrors of the slave trade. Sancho would pioneer a flourishing genre that runs from Ottobah Cugoano in 1787 (*Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil and Wicked Traffic of the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species*) to Mary Prince in 1831 (*The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave*). Thereafter, during the 19th century, black literature would continue to flourish, in Britain, with Mary Seacole (no 62 in this series) and, in the USA, with Frederick Douglass (no 68). In the 20th century, this tradition was sustained by largely autobiographical prose, often focusing on the imaginative reworking of the slave experience. Some outstanding recent examples include Grace Nichols: *I Is a Long Memored Woman* (1983), Caryll Phillips: *Cambridge* (1991) and David Dabydeen: *Turner* (1994). All of these titles owe some intellectual debt to *The Interesting Narrative*.

Olaudah Equiano(c1745-1797), also known as Gustavus Vassa, was an African writer, born in what is now the Eboe province of Nigeria, and sold into slavery aged 11. Equiano subsequently worked as the slave of a British naval officer, purchased his freedom in 1766 and went on to write his popular slave memoir. No fewer than 17 editions and reprints, and several translations, appeared between 1798 and 1827. In hindsight, *The Interesting Narrative* became an influential work that established a template for later slave life writing and subsequently an important text in the teaching of African literature. Indeed, to Henry Louis Gates Jr, Equiano is a founding figure in the making of an authentic black literary tradition.

Inevitably, perhaps, *The Interesting Narrative* has been dogged by controversy from first publication. Equiano’s story was initially discredited as false (despite a preface including testimonials from white people “who knew me when I first arrived in England”). Even now, there are scholars who cast doubt on Equiano’s veracity, claiming that he plagiarised his story from other sources. Whatever the truth, the surviving text of his *Interesting Narrative* is

sufficiently its own, in style and character, to merit serious consideration. Equiano's story is certainly remarkable.

From the outset, he is concerned to establish his credentials as an ordinary, long-suffering African boy who has endured much and triumphed over adversity. He describes, at some length, the Eboe customs he has grown up with: circumcision, witchcraft and tribal patriarchy. As well as cataloguing his primitive beginnings, Equiano also celebrates the exotic and fabulous natural profusion of Africa, consciously playing to western fascination with the "Dark Continent": "Our land is uncommonly rich and fruitful, and produces all kinds of vegetables in great abundance. We have plenty of Indian corn, and vast quantities of cotton and tobacco. Our pine apples grow without culture; they are about the size of the largest sugar-loaf, and finely-flavoured. We have also spices of different kinds, particularly pepper; and a variety of delicious fruits which I have never seen in Europe; together with gums of various kinds, and honey in abundance."

Equiano, for all his modesty the hero of his own tale, also singles himself out for his natural eloquence. It's his strategy in the memoir to convince his readers of the injustice of slavery by writing withal in a tone of reason and conciliation. While he can pile on the horror of the "middle crossing", strangely, he lacks any resentment and does not castigate his white masters in print for their cruelty. His tone is nothing if not complicit: "I was named Olaudah, which, in our language signifies vicissitude or fortune; also one favoured, and having a loud voice and well-spoken."

Having established his origins, Equiano moves to describe his enslavement and transportation to the West Indies, and thence to Virginia, where he served as the slave of an officer in the Royal Navy, Michael Pascal, who renamed him "Gustavus Vassa" after the 16th-century Swedish king. Equiano travelled the oceans with Pascal for eight years, during which time he was baptised and learned to read and write. Pascal then sold Equiano to a ship's captain in London, who took him to Montserrat, where he was traded with a merchant, Robert King. While working as a deckhand, valet and barber for King, Equiano earned money by negotiating on the side, accumulating enough savings to buy his freedom.

From a documentary point of view, Equiano's account of life in mid-Georgian Britain is fascinating. He gets taken up by white society and patronised by the great and the good, but he is never quite free of floggings and incarceration. Nevertheless, he does manage to save the money that will buy his freedom.

What follows are Equiano's adventures on the high seas, mixed with his conversion to Christianity. In fact, Equiano spent almost 20 years travelling the world, including trips to Turkey and the Arctic. In 1786, in London, he involved himself in the movement to abolish slavery. He was a prominent member of the "Sons of Africa", a group of a dozen black men who campaigned for abolition. After the publication of *The Interesting Narrative*, Equiano travelled widely to promote the book, whose immense popularity became integral to the abolitionist cause and made Equiano a wealthy man. In 1792, Equiano married an Englishwoman, Susanna Cullen, and they had two daughters. He died on 31 March 1797.

After a strong opening in West Africa and his account of crossing to the West Indies, Equiano's personal story becomes fragmented by Abolitionist special pleading. He closes his account with an appeal to his readers' more tender sympathies: "Torture, murder, and every other imaginable barbarity and iniquity, are practised upon the poor slaves with impunity. I

hope the slave trade will be abolished. I pray it may be an event at hand. The great body of manufacturers, uniting in the cause, will considerably facilitate and expedite it; and it is most substantially their interest and advantage, and as such the nation's at large (except those persons concerned in the manufacturing of neck-yokes, collars, chains, hand-cuffs, leg bolts, drags, thumb-screws, iron muzzles, and coffins; cats, scourges and other instruments of torture."

Review #2

***Negro History Bulletin (Oct.-Dec. 1983)*** Accessed on JSTOR database  
Retrospective Glance: The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano Reconsidered

[Link to PDF of the review](#)

Review #3

***The Monthly Review (1789)*** Accessed on Gale Literature Resource Center database

[In the following excerpt, the anonymous critic favorably appraises “the sable author”—Equiano—and his *Interesting Narrative*.]

We entertain no doubt of the general authenticity of this very intelligent African's interesting story [*The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavas Vassa, the African*]; though it is not improbable that some English writer has assisted him in the compilement, or, at least, the correction of his book: for it is sufficiently well written. The narrative wears an honest face: and we have conceived a good opinion of the man, from the artless manner in which he has detailed the variety of adventures and vicissitudes which have fallen to his lot. His publication appears very seasonably, at a time when negroe-slavery is the subject of public investigation; and it seems calculated to increase the odium that hath been excited against the West-India planters, on account of the cruelties that some of them are said to have exercised on their slaves; many instances of which are here detailed.

The sable author of these volumes appears to be a very sensible man; and he is, surely, not the less worthy of credit from being a convert to Christianity. He is a Methodist; and has filled many pages, toward the end of his work, with accounts of his dreams, visions, and divine impulses; but all this, supposing him to have been under any delusive influence, only serves to convince us that he is guided by principle; and that he is not one of those poor converts who, having undergone the ceremony of baptism, have remained content with that portion, only, of the Christian Religion: instances of which are said to be almost innumerable in America, and the West-Indies; Gustavus Vassa appears to possess a very different character; and, therefore, we heartily wish success to his publication, which we are glad to see has been encouraged by a very respectable subscription. (pp. 551–52)

**SECTION II: Review Team Information**

Each review team member will complete an individual section for a formal review of the book based on your stakeholder perspective. All members of the site review team **MUST read** the proposed novel/book prior submission to **CIPG strategist for final review prior to submission to CIPG Director.**

**IIa. EVALUATION of Book (to be completed by requestor/educator)**

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the <a href="#">following</a> grade level(s)	Y	Yes, I feel strongly that this is appropriate for students. While it does discuss human tragedy and cruelty, the text remains respectful of human dignity and does not offer any explicit examples that should concern parents or educators. It is very appropriate.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	No, as per my note above. This book does not require permission from a parent.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	Yes, the real human story in this book is both tragic and triumphant. It helps us understand the world and other experiences.
actively engages students through the text	Y	Yes, I think students will be impressed by the scale and scope of this man’s actual life.
facilitates learning that has long-term significance	Y	Yes, I believe that the connections that students make, and the empathy learned, will help them to engage in a variety of experiences throughout their life.
<b>Recommend novel for adoption</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

**IIb. EVALUATION of Book (to be completed by CIPG Strategist)**

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the <a href="#">following</a> grade level(s)	Y	This historical account of the journey of Olaudah Equiano is an honest account of experiences of a slave in a variety of different situations. Although the experiences that occur might be shocking to students, everything is handled in an appropriate way.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	Everything is covered in a respectful and appropriate way and nothing is too graphic for high school students.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	Most students have a general understanding of basic experiences of slaves as a result of social studies standards in different grades. They will be able to connect to that knowledge as they experience life from the point of view of Olaudah Equiano.
actively engages students through the text	Y	The experiences of Olaudah Equiano span different continents, which is different than most stories students read or hear when it comes to experiences of slaves. As a result, they will be able to remain captivated throughout the read.
facilitates learning that has long-term significance	Y	We need to learn from our past in order to not repeat the atrocities that our society has committed against different cultures, races, people, etc.
aligns with <a href="#">proposed connections</a> to DCSD curriculum (Colorado Academic Standards, Higher Order Thinking Skills, 4 Cs, 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skills, and Content)	Y	For upper class high school students, the complexity of this text will lend itself to opportunities for higher order thinking. As with any type of reading, any teacher can effortlessly apply a variety of Colorado Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Communicating especially those in Reading for All Purposes.
<b>Recommend novel for adoption</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

**IIC. EVALUATION of Book (to be completed by a colleague) Jared White**

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the <a href="#">following</a> grade level(s)	Yes	Upperclassmen (Juniors and Seniors). While the content and themes are grade appropriate for Freshmen and Sophomores, the prose style might be too complex for young readers.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	No	The text material complements content and ideas regularly taught in a secondary education history class.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Yes	Not only is the reading appropriate for teaching students the value of perseverance despite suffering and struggle, but the book can connect readers to historical and cultural events in British and U.S. history from a perspective they might not innately understand or be aware of.
actively engages students through the text	Yes	The protagonist is relatable and likable; the events are sometimes slow-paced but sometimes accelerate in an exciting and intense fashion; the dramatic (real) conflict and constant vulnerability of the main character creates for a compelling reading.
facilitates learning that has long-term significance	Yes	A challenging text that not only will help students grow in their reading comprehension ability, but also imparts important virtues such as resiliency and humility.
aligns with <a href="#">proposed connections</a> to DCSD curriculum (Colorado Academic Standards, Higher Order Thinking Skills, 4 Cs, 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skills, and Content)	Yes	This is an excellent text for professional educators to meet standards, evaluate and synthesize material, and to teach communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity.
<b>Recommend novel for adoption</b>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No



**IId. EVALUATION of Book (to be completed by Parent #1)**

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the <a href="#">following</a> grade level(s)	Y	For Juniors and Seniors. The reading is somewhat difficult and the material is appropriate and thought provoking
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	Nothing is out of line
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	It allow the reader to see the struggles in life and the attitude and fortitude to overcome obstacles
actively engages students through the text	Y	While it was a slower read it forced you to look at he struggles that others go through
facilitates learning that has long-term significance	Y	It show the attitude, effort and open-mindedness to overcome and be inclusive in a society
<b>Recommend novel for adoption</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes ✓ <input type="checkbox"/> No	

**IIe. EVALUATION of Book (to be completed by Parent #2)**

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the <a href="#">following</a> grade level(s)	Y	This text is appropriate for junior and senior level students. The content involves descriptions of cruelty and discrimination that was faced by the author during his time as a slave as he was bought and sold around African countries and Europe.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	The content is appropriate for students to read and does not contain any crude or vulgar language; nor does it contain scenes that a parent would deem inappropriate to read and gain knowledge from the author’s experience.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	The perspective of the author enlightens students about the life of a slave from the time he was a child until he reaches adulthood. Students can make connections to the author and his life before he was taken from his home. The author also describes rich cultural experiences he had while being bought and sold over huge distances, which allows students to make abundant connections to various aspects of this story.
actively engages students through the text	Y	The author engages the reader throughout the text describing each of his “owners” in detail. The author sometimes even speaks to the reader as an audience, which is rather interesting and engaging and creates a style in its own.
facilitates learning that has long-term significance	Y	I see students gaining not only knowledge, but a deeper understanding of the experience of those who are subjected to extreme hardships in life and how these can be overcome. The effect of the book could potentially have a life-long influence on students who read it.
<b>Recommend novel for adoption</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

**SECTION III: Requestor/Educator & CIPG Strategist Level Process Review**

**IIIa. Grade Level Recommendations (to be collaborated on between Requestor/Educator & CIPG Strategist based on recommendations made by the review team)**

Place initials in the columns indicating level of recommendation. Complete by initialing for every grade level indicated on the chart below. Please include justification if necessary for the level(s) of recommendation below the chart.

**Note: If approved by the Board of Education, this novel can be used by all educators in DCSD. Please consider the use of this book for all PK-12 grades not just the grade or content you teach.**

Grade level	Recommended	Recommended: Requires parent notification and consent: The novel/book may contain some mature content and themes	Not Recommended: Content inappropriate for grade level(s)
PK/K			RB, RAP
1			RB, RAP
2			RB, RAP
3			RB, RAP
4			RB, RAP
5			RB, RAP
6			RB, RAP
7			RB, RAP
8			RB, RAP
9			RB, RAP
10	RB, RAP		
11	RB, RAP		
12	RB, RAP		

SECTION IV: Signatures/Approvals

IVa.

Does the evaluating <b>Educator/Requestor</b> recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Mar 31, 2021</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Evaluating Educator Signature <u><i>Richard Pierce</i></u> <small>Richard Pierce (Mar 31, 2021 11:53 MDT)</small>		

IVb.

Does the evaluating <b>CIPG Strategist</b> certify that the information on this form accurately reflects the process followed at the site?	YES	NO
Date <u>Mar 31, 2021</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Evaluating CIPG Strategist Signature <u><i>Rachel Brown</i></u> <small>Rachel Brown (Mar 31, 2021 12:00 MDT)</small>		

IVc.

Does the evaluating <b>Colleague</b> recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Mar 31, 2021</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Evaluating Colleague Signature <u><i>Jared White</i></u> <small>Jared White (Mar 31, 2021 12:45 MDT)</small>		

IVd.

Does the evaluating <b>Parent (#1)</b> recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Apr 2, 2021</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Evaluating Parent (#1) Signature <u><i>JBW</i></u> <small>Joseph brookhart (Apr 2, 2021 15:05 MDT)</small>		

IVe.

Does the evaluating <b>Parent (#2)</b> recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Apr 2, 2021</u>	Y	
Evaluating Parent (#2) Signature <u><i>Rebecca Chapman</i></u> <small>Rebecca Chapman (Apr 2, 2021 16:43 MDT)</small>		

**IVf.**

Does the evaluating Educator's <i>Administrator</i> recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Apr 3, 2021</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Signature <u><i>Staci Batterson</i></u> <small>Staci Batterson (Apr 3, 2021 10:38 MDT)</small>		

**IVg.**

Does the <i>CIPG Director</i> support adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Apr 4, 2021</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
CIPG Director Signature <u><i>Erica Mason</i></u> <small>Erica Mason (Apr 4, 2021 15:52 MDT)</small>		

**SECTION V: Superintendent's Approval**

**SUPERINTENDENT'S APPROVAL**

Does the Superintendent approve adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Apr 4, 2021</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Superintendent Signature <u><i>Corey J. Wise</i></u> <small>Corey J. Wise (Apr 4, 2021 18:56 MDT)</small>		

**SECTION VI: Board of Education Approval**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVAL**

Does the Board of Education approve adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date _____		
Board of Education Signature _____		

**OFFICE USE**

	DATE	INITIALS
Approved novel list updated (including recommended grade level)		
Approved form with BOE signatures scanned to CIPG folder on District server		