

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	Douglas County High School	
Date	1/14/2021	
Requestor/Educator	Ashley Bidinger	
Email address	aebidinger@dcsdk12.org	
Phone number	720-207-8768	
Proposal Review Team Member	Reviewer's Name	Contact Information - email
CIPG Strategist	Rachel Brown	rdbrown@dcsdk12.org
Colleague	Marika "Mo" Olson	molson1@dcsdk12.org
Parent #1	Stacy Hartman	stacy.hartman1@gmail.com
Parent #2	Kelle Szumilas	kellemdszumilas@gmail.com

Ib. BOOK INFORMATION

Title of proposed book	Scythe
Author (s)	Neal Shusterman
Publisher	Simon & Schuster BFYR
Edition	First Simon & Schuster BFYR paperback edition November 2017
ISBN number	978-1-53799-872-5
Copyright date	November 22, 2016
Course and/or subject area in which work will be used	Young Adult Literature
Grade level(s)	11th -12th - Committee Recommended - 9th-12th
Dates the book information was displayed at the school and posted on the school's website (2 week min.)	14 January, 2021
Date the book was communicated to the School Advisory Council	14 January, 2021

Ic. NOVEL DESCRIPTION

A world with no hunger, no disease, no war, no misery: humanity has conquered all those things, and has even conquered death. Now Scythes are the only ones who can end life—and they are commanded to do so, in order to keep the size of the population under control. The protagonists are chosen to apprentice to a scythe—a role that neither wants. These teens must master the “art” of taking life, knowing that the consequence of failure could mean losing their own.

Learning Objectives:

Internal Strife - A conflict a character(s) may face or have to overcome, or an ethical or moral dilemma to conquer.

Journey - The adventure or experience a character(s) takes that leads to self-realization, revelation or personal growth.

Id. ALIGNMENT WITH DCSD’S CURRICULUM

CAS 2020 Standards:

Read a wide range of literary texts to build knowledge and to better understand the human experience.

Demonstrate mastery of their own writing process with clear, coherent, and error-free polished products.

Gather information from a variety of sources; analyze and evaluate its quality and relevance; and use it ethically to answer complex questions.

The beauty of this novel and many YAL novels, is that even though they are generally fiction, the topics and characters feel real. Students connect and identify with what the characters go through. The setting inside Scythe is one where hunger, poverty, disease and death are a thing of the past. Many students, especially in the 20/21 school year, would be able to connect and learn from the story. It provides a safe place to have discussions about how the characters deal with moral dilemmas and how the characters form their identity. It would also provide an opportunity to research people who have had an important impact on or major contribution to human society.

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.

Review #1

School Library Journal (October 1, 2016)

Gr 8 Up-In a world in which humanity has conquered death (no aging, no disease, no poverty, no war), ruled by the Thunderhead, an omniscient evolution of today's cloud, Scythes are the only ones who are allowed to take a human life. They are considered to be the best humanity has to offer, and they roam the world "gleaning" people in order to keep the population in check. Scythes are treated like royalty and feared. The last thing Citra Terranova and Rowan Damisch want is to become Scythes, but when they are chosen by Scythe Faraday to become his apprentices, they are thrown into a life in which they need to master the art of death. They prove to be apt pupils, but when Scythe Faraday mysteriously gleans himself and Citra and Rowan are apprenticed to two other fearsome Scythes, they will have to put their skills to the test against each other. Intertwined with the fascinating concept of humanity conquering death and the idea of Scythes is the prospect that perhaps this is not the ideal world in which to live. Humanity has perfected itself-so what does that leave it to accomplish? Shusterman starts off this series in dramatic fashion as he creates an engrossing world that pulls readers in and refuses to let them go. VERDICT A truly astounding, unputdownable read and a fast-paced beginning to an excellent sci-fi series. A must-have.-Tyler Hixson, School Library Journal © Copyright 2016.

Review #2

Kirkus Reviews starred (August 15, 2016)

Two teens train to be society-sanctioned killers in an otherwise immortal world. On post-mortal Earth, humans live long (if not particularly passionate) lives without fear of disease, aging, or accidents. Operating independently of the governing AI (called the Thunderhead since it evolved from the cloud), scythes rely on 10 commandments, quotas, and their own moral codes to glean the population. After challenging Hon. Scythe Faraday, 16-year-olds Rowan Damisch and Citra Terranova reluctantly become his apprentices. Subjected to killcraft training, exposed to numerous executions, and discouraged from becoming allies or lovers, the two find themselves engaged in a fatal competition but equally determined to fight corruption and cruelty. The vivid and often violent action unfolds slowly, anchored in complex worldbuilding and propelled by political machinations and existential musings. Scythes' journal entries accompany Rowan's and Citra's dual and dueling narratives, revealing both personal struggles and societal problems. The futuristic post-2042 MidMerican world is both dystopia and utopia, free of fear, unexpected death, and blatant racism—multiracial main characters discuss their diverse ethnic percentages rather than purity—but also lacking creativity, emotion, and purpose. Elegant and elegiac, brooding but imbued with gallows humor, Shusterman's dark tale thrusts realistic, likable teens into a surreal situation and raises deep philosophic questions. A thoughtful and thrilling story of life, death, and meaning. (Science fiction. 14 & up)

Review #3

Horn Book Magazine (November/December, 2016)

With new technology, mortality has become a thing of the past, with one exception: “scythes” are responsible for “gleaning”—that is to say, killing—their fellow citizens to restrict population growth to a sustainable rate. Teens Citra Terranova and Rowan Damisch are both horrified and intrigued when Honorable Scythe Faraday selects them to be his apprentices, to train with him for one year and compete to see which one will become a scythe. Neither wants the role, but: “‘Therein lies the paradox of the profession,’ Faraday said. ‘Those who wish to have the job should not have it...and those who would most refuse to kill are the only ones who should.’” But then a dangerously radical scythe, who does enjoy killing, insists that the winner must glean the losing apprentice, setting off a cascade of events that leads to a much more personal, and deadly, contest. Using diary entries and character musings, Shusterman explores aspects of death, including the ways mortality lends meaning to life; his canvas is large enough that he can entertain both gruesome and humorous aspects, while the central question—could you kill if required to do so?—will keep readers transfixed. As events wind up, Shusterman’s moral questions become more and more pointed while the stakes become higher and higher, leading to a philosophical exploration of life and death packaged as a Jason Bourne–like high-action adventure. anita l. burkam

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) Ashley Bidinger

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the following grade level(s)	Y	Young Adult Literature is an ever changing genre that is uniquely modern and relevant to the Young Adults at its center.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	No, since Young Adult Literature is class for Junior/Senior level students it would not require parents permission. The reading level is for middle grades, but the subjects about dystopian harbingers of death, it is better suited for older students.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	It will allow for students to examine the ideas about society within the novel as well as be able to examine the larger society around them. This novel will engage students with high interest topics while participating in conversations about Utopia/Dystopia, the role of government, morality, mortality, justice, and power.
actively engages students through the text	Y	Yes, the topic is relevant and timely. Even if it is placed in the future the topics about society, morality, human worth, and power are very relevant.
facilitates learning that has long-term significance	Y	Yes, it is a novel that will capture student attention and keep them thinking about the topic longer after they are done reading.
Recommend novel for adoption	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Iib. EVALUATION of Book (to be completed by CIPG Strategist) Rachel Brown

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the following grade level(s)	Y	As with most dystopian literature, the content of the book will engage young adults. Although it does discuss the ending of life, the conversations around morality make this a book that will bring forth great conversations.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	Nothing is graphically described in the book.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	Due to the dystopian nature of the book, students will easily be able to connect aspects of the book to classes like psychology, especially Kohlberg’s theories on morality.
actively engages students through the text	Y	The plot twists throughout the book will keep kids guessing what else could happen. It will also make them question why those things happened in the first place.
facilitates learning that has long-term significance	Y	The conversations that could happen around morality and right from wrong will help students make choices now and in the future.
aligns with proposed connections to DCSD curriculum (Colorado Academic Standards, Higher Order Thinking Skills, 4 Cs, 21 st Century Skills, and Content)	Y	The novel definitely lends itself to showcasing mastery of a variety of Reading, Writing, Communicating standards especially the first one listed.
Recommend novel for adoption	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Iic. EVALUATION of Book (to be completed by a colleague) Marika “Mo” Olson

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the following grade level(s)	Y	Absolutely! Scythe is a thrilling read with thought-provoking themes.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	High-schoolers are ready for this story; and hopefully, it will stimulate conversations at home.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	In our chaotic times, we all desire simple answers, but would a utopian society be the best solution? Readers will learn that in a future world, death is a thing of the past. No one is hungry and no one is sick. Global society is not divided by education either because the Internet has evolved into an all-powerful sentient being and all knowledge has been acquired and there is nothing left to learn. (Sound familiar?)
actively engages students through the text	Y	People have embedded devices in their bodies that heal them from disease or accidents. However, overpopulation IS something that has to be dealt with, so "scythes" perform random exterminations; but how are their victims chosen, what method of extermination is used, and how are the scythes recruited?
facilitates learning that has long-term significance	Y	In this story, readers must decide if this is a utopia or dystopia, how do citizens “live” with the fear that they will be randomly chosen for death, what do citizens do with the forever-life they’ve been granted - is there still meaning?
aligns with proposed connections to DCSD curriculum (Colorado Academic Standards, Higher Order Thinking Skills, 4 Cs, 21 st Century Skills, and Content)	Y	Students will recall the: 1) Internal struggle: A conflict a character(s) may face or have to overcome, or an ethical or moral dilemma to conquer. 2) Journey: The adventure or experience a character(s) takes that leads to self-realization, revelation or personal growth.
Recommend novel for adoption		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

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

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the following grade level(s)	Y	The themes in <i>Scythe</i> are thought provoking and applicable to the world we're living in now - advances in technology, morality, mortality, friendships, loyalty, and so much more.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	High School aged students are mature enough to read and successfully process the topics in this book.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	While <i>Scythe</i> is based in a future utopian world, it has direct links to topics/issues we currently grapple with - and maybe even "dream" about. There's no hunger, disease or even war. Everyone has everything they need. But is anyone truly ever happy? Would we be happy? Additionally, students will be challenged to think about friendship, loyalty, power, and choices they may make in this so-called perfect world.
actively engages students through the text	Y	This book was fascinating and fun to read. The characters are well developed and the plot twists will keep students on the edge of their seats.
facilitates learning that has long-term significance	Y	While the book will challenge students to think deeply and reason through several tough issues, it will also provoke great discussions that will stick with them long after finishing the book.
Recommend novel for adoption	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

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

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the following grade level(s)	Y	High School students also struggle with personal identity, morality, and cultural acceptance - as do the characters in Scythe.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	This age group is quickly growing into adulthood and this book provides appropriate topics for young adults to discuss as they mature.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	The main characters: Citra and Rowan grapple with the choices they are given when chosen to be Scythe Faraday's apprentices. They learn that even though there isn't poverty, hunger, and racism, society isn't the perfect world that most believe. In this post mortal society, everything for survival is provided: food, shelter, education, medical care. It seems that most people now live to find new ways to have fun - without consequences. Does this really solve all of the world's problems? Or is there more?
actively engages students through the text	Y	This novel is written through the thoughts and journal entries of Scythe Faraday, Citra, and Rowan. It is action packed and keeps the reader engaged until the very end.
facilitates learning that has long-term significance	Y	The ideas expressed in this book promote thoughtful exploration. If you lived in this world: Would you challenge your position? Would you go along with everything because it was comfortable and expected? Would your ideas change as you learned more about who/what is in power? How would you maintain your individuality in this place? This novel brings these questions and more to a place where they can be discussed, considered, and pondered.
Recommend novel for adoption	<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			Not Recommended
1			Not Recommended
2			Not Recommended
3			Not Recommended
4			Not Recommended
5			Not Recommended
6			Not Recommended
7			Not Recommended
8			Not Recommended
9	AB, MO, RB		
10	AB, MO, RB		
11	AB, MO, RB		
12	AB, MO, RB		

SECTION IV: Signatures/Approvals

IVa.

Does the evaluating Educator/Requestor recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Mar 31, 2021</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Evaluating Educator Signature <u><i>Ashley E Bidinger</i></u> <small>Ashley E Bidinger (Mar 31, 2021 11:40 MDT)</small>		

IVb.

Does the evaluating CIPG Strategist 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 11:44 MDT)</small>		

IVc.

Does the evaluating Colleague recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Mar 31, 2021</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Evaluating Colleague Signature <u><i>Marika Olson</i></u> <small>Marika Olson (Mar 31, 2021 11:55 MDT)</small>		


IVd.

Does the evaluating Parent (#1) recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Mar 31, 2021</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Evaluating Parent (#1) Signature <u><i>Stacy Hartman</i></u> <small>Stacy Hartman (Mar 31, 2021 12:28 MDT)</small>		


IVe.

Does the evaluating Parent (#2) recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Mar 31, 2021</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Evaluating Parent (#2) Signature <u><i>Kelle Szumilas</i></u> <small>Kelle Szumilas (Mar 31, 2021 14:04 MDT)</small>		

IVf.


Does the evaluating Educator's <i>Administrator</i> recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Apr 1, 2021</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Signature <u> Katy Kollasch (Apr 1, 2021 04:35 MDT)</u>		

IVg.

Does the <i>CIPG Director</i> support adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Apr 1, 2021</u>	em	
CIPG Director Signature <u> Erica Mason (Apr 1, 2021 07:14 MDT)</u>		

SECTION V: Superintendent's Approval

SUPERINTENDENT'S APPROVAL

Does the Superintendent approve adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Apr 1, 2021</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Superintendent Signature <u> Corey J. Wise (Apr 1, 2021 07:20 MDT)</u>		

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		