

Approved for use in English I

Summary of the Work:

The Wave is based on a true incident that occurred in a high school history class in Palo Alto, California, in 1969. The powerful forces of group pressure that pervaded many historic movements such as Nazism are recreated in the classroom when history teacher Burt Ross introduces a "new" system to his students. And before long *The Wave*, with its rules of "strength through discipline, community, and action," sweeps from the classroom through the entire school. And as most of the students join the movement, Laurie Saunders and David Collins recognize the frightening momentum of *The Wave* and realize they must stop it before it's too late.

Rationale:

"In her 1963 book *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Jewish writer and philosopher Hannah Arendt coined the term "the banality of evil": this refers to the observation that evil is allowed to occur, not due to fanatical leaders and power-mongers, but by everyday people who accept what they are told by those leaders and believe that what the state does is justifiable. That is, the masses have a responsibility to speak up against power when it encourages immoral behavior. Their failure to do so is what allows the great atrocities of history, such as the Holocaust, to occur" (thebestnotes.com). Students will be able to observe and discuss this type of behavior within the novel in a setting that is somewhat controlled and relates to their modern, everyday lives.

Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

- * Print resources are available from the library media center and libraries in the district. Contact any library media specialist to view the scholarly sources.
- * Scholarly reviews are also available online through Books in Print and Gale. Contact the library media specialist to obtain username and password information to access the subscription database of full-text reviews.

Readability:

- Lexile Score: 770
- Readability Level: 5.2

Learning Resources Guidelines:

- The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.

Standard Alignment: [\(link\)](#)

Approval:

Submitted to Committee:

Approved for Adoption:

Notes on the Text:

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

The appeal of facism can be discussed in the context of this novel, along with the balance between individual freedom and the well-being of a community.

There is a clear connection between this book and mentality of the Nazis during the Holocaust. Some teachers may choose to use the movie *Swing Kids* in connection to this novel.

Connection to the Curriculum:

Establishing a sense of self is appropriate for this grade level and connects to other areas of freshman curriculum. The pressures and frustration of high school are also presented in a way that students at this level may connect to the characters and the events of the novel.

Additional Connections:

(AP, Honors, Essential/Applied, Dramas, Films, etc.)

This book has been approved and is used primarily by English I teachers.