

**Approved for use in English III**

<p><b>Summary of the Work:</b></p> <p><i>Jonathan Livingston Seagull</i> is a lesson in flight and the pursuit of excellence. It presents the themes “I think I can”, “The only thing we have to fear is, fear itself,” and “Whether you think you can or whether you think you can’t, you are right.” Life holds untold possibilities all of which are achievable. Bach challenges the status quo, embraces the outcast, and makes us think about our Gods, heroes, devils and geniuses. The novel appeals to our inner desire to become in our quest of perfection. The time and place are here and now.</p>	<p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>This book fits the junior focus statement to help “students develop a greater maturity, including a sense of personal responsibility and a personal academic commitment.” Jonathan, confronted with peer pressure and individual choice, is cast out only to find that now he is free to become himself. From this vantage point, with the help of his instructor, he begins to understand the flock, longing to teach those willing to follow. Soon his students are teaching others in an ever ascending spiral to perfection.</p> <p>While the novel is particularly effective for student reflection and self examination, it also serves as an excellent introduction to Transcendentalism in American literature and the works of Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman.</p>
<p><b>Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:</b></p> <p>Byrne, B., 1972. “Seagullibility and the American Ethos.” <i>Pilgrimage</i> 1:1, pp.59-60.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Print resources are available from the library media center and libraries in the district. Contact any library media specialist to view the scholarly sources.</li> <li>* 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.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Noted Distinction:</b></p> <p><b>Readability:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lexile Score: 813</li> <li>• Readability Level: 5.6</li> </ul> <p><b>Learning Resources Guidelines:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.</li> </ul> <p><b>Standard Alignment: (<a href="#">link</a>)</b></p> <p><b>Approval:</b> 1982  <b>Submitted to Committee:</b>  <b>Approved for Adoption:</b></p>
<p><b>Notes on the Text:</b></p> <p><i>(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)</i></p> <p>Students enjoy the positive messages put forth in the novel, a refreshing contrast to much of the literature in the American literature curriculum.</p>	<p><b>Connection to the Curriculum:</b></p> <p><i>Jonathan Livingston Seagull</i> deals with several themes in the study of American literature as designated by the District curriculum, including loss of innocence, coming of age, relationship with nature, alienation and isolation, survival of the fittest, rebellion and protest, and disillusionment.</p>

**Additional Connections:**  
*(AP, Honors, Essential/Applied, Dramas, Films, etc.)*

There is a soundtrack available (words and music by Neil Diamond) from a so-so quality film made on the novel.