

## Approved for use in English IV

### Summary of the Work:

"A dazzling, profound novel about a small town with a big dream—and the price required to make it come true. People say Beartown is finished. A tiny community nestled deep in the forest; it is slowly losing ground to the ever-encroaching trees. But down by the lake stands an old ice rink, built generations ago by the working men who founded this town. And in that ice rink is the reason people in Beartown believe tomorrow will be better than today. Their junior ice hockey team is about to compete in the national semi-finals, and they actually have a shot at winning. All the hopes and dreams of this place now rest on the shoulders of a handful of teenage boys. Beartown explores the hopes that brings a small community together, the secrets that tear it apart, and the courage it takes for an individual to go against the grain. In this story of a small forest town, Fredrik Backman has found the entire world."

Source: <https://fredrikbackmanbooks.com/books/fredrik-backman-beartown.html>

### Rationale:

*Beartown* is an ideal choice for the 12<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum because it tells the story of characters of similar age and experiences students could find themselves facing after they leave high school. As a novel, it allows students to discuss and understand complex issues from an objective point of view. It further allows students to become more sensitive to situations others might be going through. Positive outlets for dealing with stress, depression, and anger are examined, as well as the issue of peer pressure and when to speak up. Through examining fictional characters, students can openly discuss the hardships many of our youth face. This open conversation ultimately leads to a better understanding and more proactive problem-solving skills.

### Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

Eckert, Fred J. "BOOK Review: 'BEARTOWN'." *The Washington Times*, The Washington Times, 1 June 2017, [www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/jun/1/book-review-beartown/](http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/jun/1/book-review-beartown/).

"*Beartown* by Fredrick Bachman | Kirkus Reviews." *Kirkus Reviews*, Atria, 25 Apr. 2017, [www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/fredrik-backman/beartown/](http://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/fredrik-backman/beartown/).

\* 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.

### Noted Distinction:

- Lincoln Award: Illinois Teen Readers' Choice Master List
- TX Lariat Reading List
- Nutmeg Book Award Nominee

Source: <https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/Beartown/Fredrik-Backman/9781982177973>

### Readability

- Lexile Score: 840L
- Readability Level:

### 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.)*

*Beartown* deals with important, but occasionally disturbing, issues that arise in adolescent life. The issue of rape, substance abuse, and peer pressure. However, all these sensitive topics are dealt with and processed through in a positive, constructive manner.

### Connection to the Curriculum:

MT Common Core Standards

RL. 11-12.1,2,3,6

W.11-12.1,4, 9

SL. 11-12. 1,3,6

L. 11-12. 3, 6

### Additional Connections:

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