

**Approved for use in**

**Summary of the Work:**

"Stargirl. From the day she arrives at quiet Mica High in a burst of color and sound, the hallways hum with the murmur of "Stargirl, Stargirl." She captures Leo Borlock's heart with just one smile. She sparks a school-spirit revolution with just one cheer. The students of Mica High are enchanted. At first. Then they turn on her. Stargirl is suddenly shunned for everything that makes her different, and Leo, panicked and desperate with love, urges her to become the very thing that can destroy her: normal.

In this celebration of nonconformity, Newbery Medalist Jerry Spinelli weaves a tense, emotional tale about the perils of popularity and the thrill and inspiration of first love."

(from Scholastic)

**Rationale:**

This novel is a high-interest story and is being recommended for a supplemental, whole-class text for 7<sup>th</sup> graders. The themes of non-conformity and true friendship will appeal to 7<sup>th</sup> graders as they grapple with their own identities and sense of belonging at this stage in their adolescence.

Jerry Spinelli's stories appeal to middle schoolers because of his real-life situations and relatable characters. The relevancy of the story to our 7<sup>th</sup> graders' lives makes this a story they are excited to read, which helps build a positive mindset around reading as well as reading stamina. Since Spinelli is a well-known author, students may be motivated to read more of his novels, such as *Crash*, *Wringer*, or *Maniac MaGee*.

**Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:**

Sutton, Roger. "Review of *Stargirl*." *Children's Literature Review*, edited by Scot Peacock, vol. 82, Gale, 2003. *Gale Literature Resource Center*.

"Social worlds of adolescents living on the fringe." *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, vol. 45, no. 2, Oct. 2001, p. 170. *Gale Literature Resource Center*,

Cooley, Beth. "Jerry Spinelli's *Stargirl* as Contemporary Gospel: Good News for a World of Adolescent Conformity." *Children's Literature Review*, edited by Lawrence J. Trudeau, vol. 200, Gale, 2015. *Gale Literature Resource Center*.

\* 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

**Noted Distinction:**

- Jerry Spinelli is a Newbery Medal-winning author who has published over 25 books.
- New York Times bestseller
- Top 10 ALA selection

**Readability**

- Lexile Score: 590L
- Readability Level: gr 6-8

**Learning Resources Guidelines**

- The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.

**Standard Alignment:**

RL.7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.7.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.7.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

**Approval:**

Submitted to Committee:

**Title: *Stargirl* by Jerry Spinelli**

**(Published in 2000 )**

full-text reviews.	Approved for Adoption:
<b>Notes on the Text:</b> <i>(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)</i>	<b>Connection to the Curriculum:</b>  Thematically, this novel pairs well with 7 <sup>th</sup> grade Commonlit unit 2, Adolescence. The essential question is explored throughout <i>Stargirl</i> -- What makes adolescence challenging? As the main characters of the novel navigate the politics of high school popularity, they learn important lessons about conformity, friendship, and what it means to be your authentic self.  Students will engage in class discussion to analyze the elements of fiction as they read this text. They will practice providing text evidence to support their ideas about a text and improve comprehension.
<b>Additional Connections:</b> <i>(AP, Honors, Essential/Applied, Dramas, Films, etc.)</i>	