

The Unlikely Hero of Room 13B

By Teresa Toten

Grade Levels:

- Interest and Reading Levels, 8-12

Synopsis:

- When Robyn Plummer starts attending Adam Spencer Ross's young adult OCD support group which meets in room 13B, Adam decides to try to become "normal" to try to win her over. Adam's struggles with his OCD are clearly described, as well as his issues with his mother who hoards and his younger half-brother who suffers from anxiety. Members of the OCD group are clearly delineated, endearing, and bring humor into the story. Despite his illness, Adam is portrayed as a teen with typical struggles over such things as his parents' divorce, a long distance friendship, and first love.

Author Website:

- www.teresatoten.com

Curricular Connections:

- Psychology: characteristics of OCD, coping with OCD
- Family Living: the role of parents in the lives of adolescents; components of a healthy relationship; dealing with divorce
- Health: mental illness

Lesson Ideas:

- In a high school psychology class, use it as an outside reading to illustrate the symptoms and treatments for OCD. Could be used as a starting point for a discussion on how mental illness varies and can be treated successfully.
- In a family living class, this could be used as an illustration of the profound effects parents have on their children from an early age and into adolescence.
- In a health class, use in a unit covering various types of mental illnesses.

Common Core Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.3. Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Suggested Companion Titles:

- *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon
- *100 Sideways Miles* by Andrew Smith
- *Every Last Word* by Tamara Ireland Stone

Professional Reviews:

- *Booklist* (February 1, 2015)
- *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books* (June 1, 2015)
- *Horn Book Guide* (October 1, 2015)
- *Kirkus Reviews* starred (January 1, 2015)
- *Publishers Weekly Annex* (March 2, 2015)
- *School Library Journal* starred (April 1, 2015)
- *Teacher Librarian* (October 1, 2015)
- *Voice of Youth Advocate* (February 1, 2015)

Awards:

- Best Fiction for Young Adults 2016
- *Kirkus Reviews* Best Books of 2015 - Teens
- Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers 2016
- Schneider Family Book Award Teen Book 2016