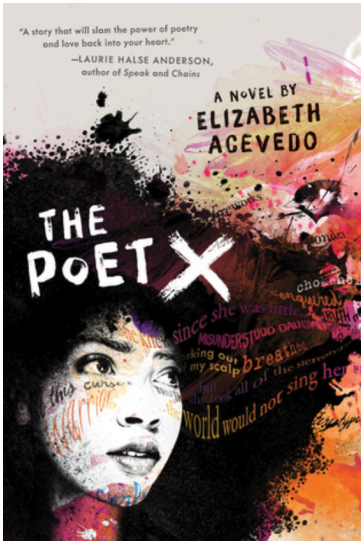
BOOK BUZZ BOOK REVIEW Spring 2019



Your Name: Amy Fink
District: Schodack Central
School: Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High
Date: 2/13/19

Title: The Poet X
Author: Elizabeth Acevedo
Genre: YA fiction, poetry
Grade/s: upper secondary
Audience: readers who like female protagonists, poetry slams, coming of age stories
Copyright Year: 2018

Summary: Xiomara Batista is a twin living in NYC whose parents moved from the Dominican Republic. Her parents are religious and have very strict expectations for Xiomara's behavior. She is not allowed to date and she must attend church and get confirmed. The Poet X is the story of an adolescent finding her voice as she learns about herself and her identity. She navigates feelings of sexual attraction, romantic love, authentic friendship, spiritual questioning, and familial bonds. Her twin brother is gay and closeted and she is both fiercely protective of him and terrified of what her parents would do if they found out. Her teacher encourages her to join poetry club which is where she finds that processing all of her complicated feelings about her life through lyrical verse is the best way for her to understand herself and how she fits into her world.

Your Opinion: I love that this book is narrative written in verse. It is different from any book I've read. I think it would engage high school students because the content feels authentic and X (the protagonist, Xiomara) wrestles with issues of internal and external conflict. I recommend it on audio, read by the author, for the intonation and pacing as intended and as spoken word poetry. This would pair well with a spoken word unit and/or a personal narrative unit. I think it is most appropriate for upper level students. In fact, I think it would be a great read for seniors as they begin to develop their personal narratives for college essays. It also has content that may be above the maturation level for upper middle graders to be able to manage effectively.

Booktalk - Use this section to jot down bullet points you would use for a book talk, for example a hook statement about the book.

Finding power in voice - what I want to say vs. what I actually say