The World Cookbook for Students (Review)

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Author Fichtelberg has 19 years’ experience as a youth librarian and a strong interest in speculative fiction, a genre that includes fantasy, science fiction, and horror. This new addition to the Genreflecting Advisory Series is the first readers’-advisory guide devoted to speculative fiction for teens (grades 6–12). Most of the book deals with fantasy, which reflects the current publishing environment.

The book’s structure is similar to other titles in the series, providing chapters on subgenres with annotated bibliographies followed by appendixes with indexes, lists, and resources. Following the pattern of Teen Genreflecting (2003), lists of highly recommended books appear at the end of each subgenre. The book also contains unique features, such as eight author interviews and an appendix on “Programming with Speculative Fiction.” A “Resources” section includes reference works and Web sites but no review journals. Authors, title, subject, and award indexes conclude the work.

One of the book’s greatest strengths is the amount of information for each item. Each citation contains the ISBN, additional formats (e.g., audio), awards won, and the recommended age range. Annotations are provided for all single titles. Series entries contain a group annotation. Fichtelberg uses the same age ranges—middle school (grades 6–8), junior high (grades 7–9), and senior high (grades 10–12)—as Teen Genreflecting. Some adult books are included (and identified with an A) even if they have sexually explicit or violent content.

Fantasy Literature for Children and Young Adults (5th ed., Libraries Unlimited, 2005) has a wider age-range scope and more comprehensive coverage of fantasy but does not include horror or science fiction. Public, middle-school and junior-high-school, and high-school libraries will find Encountering Enchantment a very useful addition to their reference collections. —Cynthia Crosser

YA/S: Though librarians are the primary audience, they can hand this book to teen readers to use on their own. MEQ.