

Under the Blood-Red Sun

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Tomi was born in Hawaii. His grandfather and parents were born in Japan, and came to America to escape poverty.

World War II seems far away from Tomi and his friends, who are too busy playing ball on their eighth-grade team, the Rats.

But then Pearl Harbor is attacked by the Japanese, and the United States declares war on Japan. Japanese men are rounded up, and Tomi's father and grandfather are arrested. It's a terrifying time to be Japanese in America. But one thing doesn't change: the loyalty of Tomi's buddies, the Rats.

Under the Blood-Red Sun Details

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
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Author : Graham Salisbury

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From Reader Review Under the Blood-Red Sun for online ebook

Phil Jensen says

This book is about a time when the United States responded to a terrorist threat by persecuting innocent people.

Hopepresley says

Something about this book has always intrigued me. After I read it, I knew why. This book has every element my middle school kids look for in a book. Baseball, gangs, bullies, strained family relationships, puppies, and misunderstood adolescents are the markers that will make the book familiar. I can feel my Mississippi kids balking at unfamiliarity related to setting and culture, so they will be glad to have those ideas and experiences to make the story more accessible. The deeper shocking and traumatic personal and family issues are what will make it disturbingly memorable. It is the middle school equivalent of Snow Falling on Cedars (which you should read if you missed it- the movie doesn't count).

I've only ever taught middle school, so I don't know if this is unique to this age group; but these kids thrive on grappling with concepts of fairness, social injustice, and political responsibility. Those aren't the words they choose; those are the ideas that move them. I know this from their comments : "That's not fair." and "They can't do that." And how those comments shift to questions: "How can they do that?" and "How can they stand it?" I know for many of them that they are on the doorstep of "How did they stop it?" and "How do we keep it from happening again?" And perhaps what I wish for everyone of them: "What do I need to do?"

I know it from their research on voter disenfranchisement, civil rights, and government shut downs. I know it from the way they word their public service announcements and the ways they demonstrate that they want to save the world from death and sadness. But more than anything, I learn it from the titles and authors they choose to read. From Things Not Seen to Stargirl, The Outsiders to Tears of a Tiger. From their love for Sharon Draper's and Laurie Halse Anderson's stories. From Hunger Games and Divergent series. From Milkweed, The Boy in the Striped Pajamas, Prisoner B - 3087, Between Shades of Gray, Berlin Boxing Club, and Night.

Under the Blood-Red Sun is straightforward. There is no complicated narrative structure or alternating point of view, but it delivers the back story the reader needs and plenty of perspective. 5th grade up would relate to this book. My tendency is to let kids be kids, so even though the reading is easy enough, the content is harsh for 4th and below. I would use this book as a lit circle, book buddy, extra credit, or ladder. Few students select it as free choice independent reading, It's been on my shelf for several years, rarely touched and never finished. I bought multiple copies this summer. I want my kids to meet Tomi. I hope his story helps them ask more questions, even if they don't know the answers.

Anthony B. says

Begin typing book review here...Under the blood-red by Graham Salisbury is a historical fiction book about

a Japanese family who lives on their neighbor's property in Hawaii. The Japanese bomb pearl harbor and their whole world is changed. This is a great way to see a window back in time to see how the Japanese lived and how they were treated during these times. Throughout the book you see Tommy (the main character) learn how to be the leader of his family while managing to stick up for himself against his neighbor Keet Wilson. You see this in the last chapter of the book. Keet sees Tommy cleaning Tommy's family katana in the woods. Keet starts firing his air soft gun at Tommy and his katana. When Keet runs out of ammunition Tommy gives Keet a warning about how he is going to get what he deserves. This shows how Tommy not afraid anymore and he can fight for his family.

booklady says

Young adult historical fiction for boys ages 10-15, even younger for mature readers. It shows life for Tomikazu, a young Japanese-American boy living In Hawaii just before and after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Tomi and his little sister, Kimi, both born in Hawaii, live with their parents, and grandfather born in Japan. Tomi has a group of friends, the Rats, from all different racial backgrounds, who love baseball. The story helps introduce young readers to life in 1942, the beginning of World War II and also what happened to some Japanese-Americans families during this time in our history. A Scott O'Dell Award Winner.

Veronica says

December 7th, 1941. The Empire of Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.... 2403 Americans were killed; many wounded. I've seen the movie. I've heard the stories. But I never even imagined the impact of the incident on the Japanese-American people. After the merciless bombing, many of the innocent, hardworking Japanese people hoping to find a better life in America were branded as enemy spies and dragged behind bars.

'Under The Blood-Red Sun' is the story of a young Japanese-American boy named 'Tomikazu Nakaji' and how his whole life turned upside down in the blink of an eye.

There are books that make me cry. And then there are books that make me cry every few chapters and this book is one of the latter.

This book, like most of the historical fictions concerning wars, make me feel so angry and frustrated because it's a war and I really don't know who to blame. Everyone was afraid of everyone. And scared people do really really stupid and unspeakably terrible things. The only thing I don't like about this book is the detailed baseball games which ,in my opinion, is irrelevant and unnecessary. I love the rest of the book. I feel so connected with the characters for some reason. I mourned Sanji's death with Tomi and Billy. I got scared as PaPa got arrested. I was touched by Billy's act of kindness towards Sanji's little daughter. I love Ojii-san as much as I hate him. I felt the fear and uncertainty of the Nakaji family as the Americans turned against them. This book is beautiful, gripping, heartbreaking and has a lot of truth in it.

Leanne says

I'm planning on making a list of historical novels about WWII for my seventh graders to choose from. Although Under the Blood-Red Sun isn't page-turning exciting, but it is very well written and entertaining. The novel offers an important point of view of WWII, that of a Japanese-American boy, Tomi, living in

Hawaii during the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

I loved the interactions between the characters. Salisbury gets not only island dialect dead on, but he is also able to capture the sense of humor and competitiveness of the different cultures in Oahu as well. Salisbury did an excellent job of portraying all the various pulls and conflicts in Tomi's heart. I loved all the baseball parts and I think a lot of boys would too. This book will definitely be on my list.

Ryan H. says

Under the blood red sun is a true story by Grahm Salisbury. The book is about a 12-year-old boy named Tomi. Tomi's family is very poor. Tomi is Japanese and his grandfather has a Japanese flag that he hangs outside to represent Japan. But later in the book, there is an attack planned by the Japanese. They bomb Pearl Harbor. Soon after the bombing the U.S government takes all Japanese locals and puts them in a training camp. Tomi's dad a fisherman is taken to the camps. Tomi has a plan to swim the camps and save his father. If you want to find out more read the book and you will be satisfied.

By Ryan Haugner

Heather Pola says

If only all students could have fiction blended with their semi-non-fiction text books. This book grew on me within pages and I found myself savoring it. Really people, when you're reading a good book and actually put it down, you feel like something is missing. Like you've left the world of THEM...the characters and setting. You find yourself wondering what's happening with them. So you grab the book and spin your eyes across the pages. For more of the good stuff! Under the Blood-Red sun takes you there! The character development and flow from chapter to chapter is absolutely stellar. I give this book a thumbs up for middle-readers and up. This book left me wanting more and I especially love the grumpy grandfather...stern and full of wisdom!

jv poore says

My son is reading this for his English class, but whenever he put it down, I picked it up. And was thoroughly engrossed. Reading schedule be damned, I was completely captivated by the bravery and strength of young Tomi and his Japanese-American family and I finished the book quickly.

Their Hawaii life wasn't easy, but it was manageable and generally good. Until Pearl Harbor is bombed. There's no denying the deplorable treatment of Japanese-Americans during this time, but Mr. Salisbury balances the bad with baseball and boys sticking together to bring hope and inspiration.

I don't know what Boy's English class has planned, but I assure you--I'll be reading more about Tomi.

Hank says

A perfect almost teen boy book, also enjoyed by dad. This is a perfect mix of sports and young male bravado with some important messages and themes thrown in. Some of the antagonists were fairly one dimensional and too true to the stereotype but it is a great story filled with love for family, horrible things wars bring and great friendships. Americas past actions are far from perfect and the internment of japanese-americans was one of the darker parts, this novel tries to show both sides good and bad without making too many strong judgements (until the afterword). My son is a reluctant reader, not only did he read this with his class willingly, he suggested we listen to it on a long vacation road trip. Recommended for any boys (or girls) 9-15

Alexander Johnson says

I really liked it!

Luke W says

Tomi, a Japanese boy who lives in Hawaii with his Mom, Dad, Sister, and Grandpa. They try to not do anything that will make people not like them, but there is a boy named Keet who has a problem with Tomi and his friend Billy. Tomi plays on a baseball team with his friends, they made the team. Other kids have made their own teams too. They like to play against each other. One day planes started flying over head one day, and they are Japanese planes. people around him already didn't trust him and his family. Even though his grandpa feels shame for Japans attack his dad and Grandpa get taken to jail. His mom loses her job too. This was the beginning of all the Japanese people going to those camps.

Imagery-"His long sleeved khaki shirt, buttoned to the neck, and his wrinkled khaki pants made him look like he was one of the pearl harbor navy officers."

"A bundle of letters tied together with a red ribbon."

" White cushioned lawn chairs."

This book was a good book, but it wasn't really my favorite genre. War and conflict is not my favorite, But if it was I am sure that I would really like it. It was a longer book but it's still good so if i were you I would read the book. It had great detail and I loved that it had a sport in it. So read this book its great and will open your eyes to what Japanese people went through!

Taran K. says

Under the blood Red Sun, by Graham Salisbury, is a very interesting but sad book. This book really taught me the history behind the attack on Pearl Harbor, in a Japanese-Americans personal view. The main character, Tomi, is a Japanese-American kid. His mother, father, and grandfather all immigrated from Japan, looking for a better life.

On December 7, the U.S. declared war against Japan. Tomi and his friend Billy watched as Pearl Harbor was bombed. Japanese Americans at the time were closely watched, as people thought they might be signaling the Japanese who were bombing Hawaii.

Tomi experiences some challenges throughout this story, but overcomes them, because they don't hold him back. For example, American army men came to their house, and asked to see Tomi racing pigeons which belonged to his father, Papa. These men, thought that the birds were messenger birds, and that they were signaling to the Japanese. Tomi was forced to kill them. All of this was going on while Papa was in jail, arrested earlier when he came back from fishing.

The theme of this book, is to stay strong, and never give up. Tomi shows strength when his neighbor Keet Wilson, tries to intimidate him and threaten him with his mother's job, and their house, because the Wilson's own it. I would recommend this book to any classmate who has yet to learn about this part of the United States History!

Taylor Jaudes says

Under the Blood-Red Sun
by Graham Salisbury

Grade Level Read Aloud: 5+
Grade Level Independent: 6+
Genre: Historical Fiction

Living in the mainland of the United States in the twenty-first century, it is hard to imagine what life might have been like for a Japanese American in Hawaii after the attacks on Pearl Harbor. In the story, *Under the Blood-Red Sun*, Graham Salisbury writes in the perspective of an eighth grade boy whose Japanese heritage changes his life drastically when the Japanese attacked America to begin World War II on December 7, 1941. This incredible story makes you second everything and look deeper into what we often overlook.

Tomikazu, the main character, is introduced in the beginning as a boy living a normal life as a Japanese American at that time. As the story progresses you are introduced to the important people in his life and how they interact. He lives with his father a fisherman, his mother a maid, his little sister and his crazy loyal-to-Japan grandfather. He encounters bullies, has friendships and ultimately learns what is important in life. This book is a roller coaster of emotions and you never know what to expect.

If you were to look up a World War II fiction book, most of them are about the Americans or Jewish people in Germany and we seldom hear of the Japanese Americans and the struggles that they went through. In this book you are able to look through the eyes of a boy who was Japanese and called America his home. I love that the author is able to show the struggle that he has between keeping the honor of his Japanese heritage, while also living the life of an American. Learning about other cultures is so important, especially in America because we are made up of such diverse people.

It interested me that the author himself is from Hawaii and has written many books about WWII. I think that this helps to make the book more credible because he undoubtedly has come in contact with the people that he based his story on. He understands the races that make up the island of Honolulu and how they interacted then and now. I love knowing that he is knowledgeable on this subject because it makes the story that much more real.

Anne Osterlund says

Tomi's grandfather can be a problem, waving his giant Japanese flag and rambling in Japanese when all of Hawaii is on alert and on edge because of the threat of war. But Grampa can be cool too. At least *he* has the gumption to say what he really thinks, something Tomi is dying to be able to do with his jerk of a next door neighbor.

But Tomi knows he can't. He knows his parents' warnings about the war are real, that drawing attention to his family and their Japanese heritage isn't safe right now.

What he doesn't know is exactly where the danger may come from.

Under the Blood-Red Sun is a modern-day classic. The book is intermediate historical fiction dealing with the attack on Pearl Harbor and the aftermath for Americans of Japanese descent living in Hawaii during the attack--a setting and perspective I appreciated. The heart of the story focuses on Tomi's relationships with friends and family, though I have to admit my favorite scenes centered on baseball and a new batch of puppies!
