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School: Yorba Linda High School

Grade: Senior

Book Title: *Where the Crawdads Sing*

Book Author: Delia Owens

Rate (1-5): 5

Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens tells the story of young Kya Clark, a girl left abandoned by her abusive father, as she grows up alone in the North Carolina marsh of the 1960s. The story is split into two different timelines that slowly connect over the course of the novel. The first is of Kya's adolescence and attempts to integrate herself into a society that has forgotten her. The second centers on a murder trial where prosecutors blame Kya, seemingly for only being an outsider. Kya is a heroic, brave, and stubborn character who is hard to root against, but she catches herself between deciding to align herself with college boy Tate Walker or football quarterback Chase Andrews. The themes of isolation, forgiveness, self-reliance, and nature are omnipresent throughout this book.

I really enjoyed *Where the Crawdads Sing* from the moment I picked it up. The novel is an easy read and the language is not difficult. I found myself continually rooting for Kya in a world that seemed to be out to get her. I also quickly became a fan of Jumpin' and his wife. The book is especially psychological, but not to the point that it becomes overbearing. I wouldn't characterize the book as filled with meaning or unique plot devices, but it is a fun read that is accessible to all. I could hardly put it down at certain points, and Owens makes clever use of the two timelines to create plot twists and evoke a continual sense of curiosity and mystery that kept me hooked.

I would recommend this book to everyone, whether you are a casual reader or a classical fan. It's a fast read, but it's interesting and has a great storyline. The movie is also worth your time, though the book is better. The courtroom trial evokes the same emotions as that in *To Kill a Mockingbird* and Kya's storyline is remarkably similar to Jeannette Walls in *The Glass Castle*. That being said, the novel tells a unique story that enchants and mystifies its readers.