

NEATE Fall Conference, Mansfield, MA, Oct. 30, 2015

For Better or Verse:

Using Verse Novels as Writing Exemplars in Middle and High School ELA Classes

Presenters:

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Padma Venkatraman www.padmasbooks.com @padmatv

Holly Thompson is author of the verse novels *Falling into the Dragon's Mouth*, *The Language Inside* and *Orchards*, winner of the APALA Asian/Pacific America Award. Longtime resident of Japan and NYU CWP graduate, she teaches creative writing at Yokohama City University, UC Berkeley and Grub Street.

Padma Venkatraman is the author of three critically acclaimed YA/middle grade novels (*Climbing the Stairs*, *Island's End* and the verse novel *A Time to Dance*), which were released to multiple starred reviews and won several awards and honors (e.g. ALA Notable; YALSA, Booklist, Kirkus, NYPL, CCBC, NCSS Best Books).

Presentation Description

Verse is a powerful vehicle for transporting readers across international borders. Authors of middle-grade and YA verse novels set outside the US will discuss the medium of verse as a means of enabling readers to connect with stories set in other countries and cultures. In addition, authors will model a close-reading exercise and a writing exercise using two recent award-winning verse novels, to show how multicultural verse novels can encourage all learners to hone their reading and writing skills.

Verse novels discussed in this presentation:

Venkatraman, Padma *A Time to Dance*

Thompson, Holly *Orchards*; *The Language Inside*; *Falling into the Dragon's Mouth*

Reader Guides to novels discussed:

[A Time to Dance](http://www.padmasbooks.com) www.padmasbooks.com

[The Language Inside](http://www.hatbooks.com) www.hatbooks.com

[Orchards](http://www.hatbooks.com) www.hatbooks.com