Empower adolescents with powerful texts

“Tough Talk, Tough Texts insists that we offer students books that are not simply larger, bulkier Hallmark cards but that instead challenge them to consider difficult issues, pushing them to think deeply and grow.”
—JIMMY SANTIAGO BACA

Strategic reading, critical examination of controversial topics, and civil discourse aren’t just for college preparedness—they are life skills. In Tough Talk, Tough Texts, Cindy O’Donnell-Allen shares small-group instruction that helps kids to succeed academically and change their world by using active literacy techniques to answer the challenging questions raised by challenging texts.

“English teachers can help students exercise literacy to promote civility and social justice. I’ve organized this book to reflect the sequence of support students need as they engage in tough talk about tough texts. You’ll find specific whole-class and small-group strategies, tools for documenting discussions, techniques that support student interaction, and resources for assessing students’ work.”
—CINDY O’DONNELL-ALLEN
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This isn’t impractical idealism. **Cindy O’Donnell-Allen** shows how to leverage challenging texts on challenging issues to maximize engagement and increase students’ agency in reading and in life. She shares all the know-how and nitty-gritty you’ll need:

- scaffolds for whole-class and small-group discussions
- methods for grouping students, setting norms, and using response tools
- strategies that sustain independent discussions and document them
- multiple techniques for summative assessment
- reproducible resources such as handouts, assignment sheets, and scoring guides.

*Tough Talk, Tough Texts* extends **Cindy O’Donnell-Allen**’s commitment to helping English teachers transform students’ lives and, in turn, our world. She has pursued this goal in a variety of roles, including:

- more than a decade as a classroom teacher
- author of *The Book Club Companion*
- Associate Professor at Colorado State University and Director of its Writing Project
- former Co-Chair of the National Writing Project’s Teacher Inquiry Communities Network.